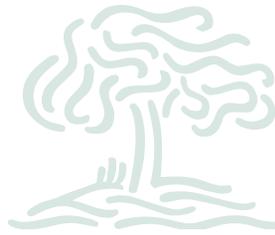




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# EDITOR'S LETTER

# HR PROFESSIONAL

VOL. 27, NO. 2 February 2010

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## LOOKING BACK

**F**ipping through the past 25 years of *HR Professional*, I was struck by the French proverb: “plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose” (the more things change, the more they stay the same). While the players—government leaders, consulting companies, academic experts—have changed, the issues, largely, remain the same. *HR Professional's* archive is full of articles about employment equity, sexual harassment, hiring older workers, recessions and layoffs, engagement, recruiting and performance management.

Having said that, there has been a fundamental shift. While HR professionals will always have their tactical responsibilities, the relevance and frequency of the strategic discussion has increased tenfold. Human capital issues are now intrinsically tied to business performance.

Through it all, *HR Professional* has been there to research and evaluate best practices and trends to help you make informed decisions.

To commemorate this silver anniversary, all *HR Professional* covers will feature a special 25th anniversary logo for the duration of 2010 (see right).

**25**  
HR Professional

### Looking forward

For *HR Professional's* annual trends issue, we polled experts in fields ranging from recruiting, digital media, academia, talent management and compensation to find out what's on the HR horizon for 2010 and beyond—read all about it on page 24. We've also got articles on the changing rules of civil procedure, on page 17; research findings of HRPA's study on internationally educated human resources professionals, on page 18; and communicating total rewards, on page 47.

*Meredith Birchall-Spencer*

Meredith Birchall-Spencer  
Editor





## “How do I know that a potential hire is going to fit our culture?”

Unfortunately, you can't know for sure. But there are ways to greatly increase your chances of finding the right fit. One is to work with a recruiter who truly understands the importance of corporate culture.

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# CONTRIBUTORS

FEBRUARY 2010



## DR. KARYN GORDON

A leading authority on gen Y, Dr. Karyn Gordon is an author, radio host and public speaker who specializes in corporate and family consulting. Read her revelations about the “entitled” generation, on page 40.



## MEIGHAN FERRIS-MILES

Meighan Ferris-Miles, a lawyer at Shields O'Donnell MacKillop LLP, co-authored an article on Ontario's new Rules of Civil Procedure and its impact on employment litigation, on page 17.



## JON WORTMANN

Jon Wortmann is an advisor and speaker on leadership and communication. He lends his considerable expertise on the subject of dealing with defensiveness in your organization, on page 37.



## JUSTIN RAMESAR

Justin Ramesar, M.HRM, reveals the findings of HRPA's cutting-edge research project about the employment barriers facing Ontario's internationally educated HR professionals, on page 18.



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# LEADERSHIP MATTERS

BY ANTOINETTE BLUNT

## MAINTAINING RELATIONSHIPS VIA TELECOMMUTE

**B**etween fears around pandemics and continually evolving communications technology, the arguments for telecommuting are becoming more persuasive.

There is no doubt telecommuting is convenient for employees, who avoid rush-hour traffic and long commutes. Meanwhile, on the corporate side, having employees work from home can mean considerable cost savings. Teleconferencing and webcasting technology are readily available to support the concept. Systems such as Skype and SightSpeed allow workers to virtually connect face-to-face, albeit through a screen.

Another compelling reason for employees to work from home arose last fall when the threat of H1N1 flu became reality. With fewer opportunities for large numbers of people to congregate and fewer opportunities to transmit infections, the healthier the workforce will be—and that translates into efficiencies and effectiveness for employers.

Of course, telecommuting is not an option for all companies. Factories and service-based organizations that produce goods or serve customers in person cannot offer this option to employees, but, while clearly limited to certain fields, the idea does work well for many businesses.

### Telecommuting challenges

Telecommuting does come with drawbacks, particularly for HR. First, because employees are working from home with limited to no supervision, managers must hone their supervisory skills to find ways to measure the quality and effectiveness of work and work processes, and to evaluate an individual's performance. But HR can manage this through indirect means—reports, customer satisfaction and gathering feedback by contacting customers directly.

The second challenge—of maintaining effective dialogue—is a little trickier. Telecommuting is wonderfully efficient in many ways, but nothing beats getting together in person. Maintaining a relationship with employees without face-to-face contact is challenging.

To that end, it is important for HR to find a way to stay connected to employees and keep employees connected to each other. That does not necessarily mean monthly staff meetings, but rather something less frequent and more value-added. It might, for example, be an annual general meeting that also includes a staff meeting, socializing, as well as a conference and a learning opportunity. Such an idea has the dual purpose of being cost-effective while building team relationships. Like weekend baseball tournaments, road races and golf games that bring the team together, this could have the same effect. What we do not want is to end up losing the human element. We need the sense of connectivity where employees feel valued by the company.

Even without the pitfalls of telecommunication, we already have a problem with the new generation of workers not being as connected to the workplace and each other as baby boomers—many of whom worked for the same company their entire career. With telecommuting, if employees have minimal to no contact with an employer, it could exacerbate retention problems.

It is clear we are on the verge of a new horizon. There are some significant advantages based on the economy, the global downturn and the ever-increasing realization of pandemics. But if we go too far, if we do not have opportunities for people to get together, we run the risk of having employees who are not 100 per cent engaged. At the end of the day, human relationships are what keep people connected, productive, innovative and creative. In short, it is easy to see there are some important workplace gains from technology, but we cannot let it go too far. **HR**



*Antoinette Blunt is chair of HRP's board of directors.*

# UPFRONT

TEAMS | COURTS | PENSIONS

LET'S MEET  
AT 3 P.M.



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Source: [www.whenisgood.net](http://www.whenisgood.net)

## GREEN BELIEFS WIN

### LEGAL PROTECTION

A U.K. court has ruled that an employee's green beliefs warrant the same protection in the workplace as religious convictions.

The ruling came after Tim Nicholson, former sustainability director at Grainger, a large U.K. real estate developer, claimed he was wrongly dismissed because of his deeply held environmental beliefs.

Nicholson claims his firing last year was a direct result of his green opinions—which put him at odds with other senior executives at the firm. He took the company to an employment tribunal to seek compensation, and asked the court to allow him to use special legislation that protects religious and philosophical beliefs at work—the U.K.'s *Employment Equality (Religion and*

*Belief) Regulations, 2003*. He claimed his environmental and climate change concerns amount to a philosophical belief under the regulations.

In November, a judge agreed: "If a person can establish that he holds a philosophical belief, which is based on science as opposed, for example, to religion, then there is no reason to disqualify it from protection," said the court.

The decision means U.K. workers who are victimized for their strong environmental views—such as how a company deals with cutting carbon emissions, manages waste or uses aviation for business travel—can bring compensation claims against employers.

Source: [www.timesonline.co.uk](http://www.timesonline.co.uk)

## Government UNVEILS PENSION REFORMS



Federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty proposed pension reforms in October, including raising the threshold at which plan sponsors can over-fund their pension plans, from 10 to 25 per cent of the fund's assets. Some pension consultants say the ability to over-fund plans would have mitigated damage to asset valuations brought on by the global financial crisis.

Under the proposed legislation, employers must fully fund pension benefits when a plan is terminated. At present, employers must fund only 80 per cent of benefits. The bill will also prohibit employers from taking a contribution holiday unless they provide a five per cent funding cushion and will change the solvency funding methodology to make it less volatile by basing the funding requirements on a three-year average.

Flaherty says the reforms are meant to protect plan members, make it easier for participants to negotiate changes to their pension arrangements, improve the framework for defined contribution plans and for negotiated contribution plans, and modernize the rules for investments made by pension funds.

The proposed changes come after a year of consultations with Canadian stakeholders that sought feedback on issues such as the pension surplus threshold and whether alternative designs—besides defined contribution and defined benefit—should be allowed.

Source: *Benefits Canada*



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- LACTATION ROOM BE USED FOR NAPS

Source: CareerBuilder

## COURT WEIGHS PERIODIC

# Criminal Record Checks

Employers' practice of periodic criminal record checks may unreasonably infringe on employee privacy rights.

In *Ottawa (City) vs. Ottawa Professional Firefighters Association*, [2009] O.J. No. 2914 (Div. Ct), the City of Ottawa required all firefighters to consent to a criminal record check every three years. Failure to consent would lead to discipline up to and including dismissal. The union challenged the policy, alleging it infringed on firefighters' privacy rights under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (MFIPPA). An arbitrator agreed and concluded the policy was unreasonable.

The arbitrator said employees have a right under MFIPPA to keep information regarding their criminal history private unless they give written consent to its

release. The arbitrator held that it may be reasonable to oblige an employee to consent to periodic criminal checks where their position is safety or security sensitive: such as an employee working with young children or a police officer.

### HR takeaways

Employers should carefully select the classes of employees it wishes to subject to ongoing background checks, and be prepared to provide evidence that those employees occupy safety- or security-sensitive positions. Second, the judicial system is becoming sensitive to protecting employee privacy. Some judges have permitted employees to bring lawsuits against their employers to recover damages for invasion of privacy.

Source: Shields O'Donnell MacKillop LLP

# DAVID SUZUKI AT WORK PROGRAM

Want to bring a little David Suzuki-style environmentalism to your workplace? Sign up for his David Suzuki at Work program, a free toolkit distributed by the much-loved environmentalist's foundation.

The program is broken down into five sustainability goal areas: waste reduction, energy conservation, water use, transportation and healthy workplaces. It features easy-to-follow steps on building teams, winning management and employee buy-in, assessing workplace culture, choosing goals and plotting a roadmap for sustainability success.

For workplaces in Toronto and Vancouver, the foundation has trained several ambassadors—volunteers who will travel to your workplace to help start the process. "They provide a two-hour, interactive workshop that looks at how a team can build a business case around the organization's culture, where they can make a difference in terms of sustainability goals; what levers to pull," says David Suzuki Foundation manager of community leadership Aryne Sheppard. "Then it's about brainstorming and coming up with concrete



action items to leave with. The foundation follows up in six months to see how things are going and to offer support." **HR**

For more information, check out [www.davidsuzuki.org/NatureChallenge/at\\_Work/sign\\_up.asp](http://www.davidsuzuki.org/NatureChallenge/at_Work/sign_up.asp)

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## NEW RULES CHANGE EMPLOYMENT LITIGATION LANDSCAPE

**A**mong the most recent changes to impact employment law are the significant amendments to Ontario's Rules of Civil Procedure introduced on January 1, 2010.

Known simply as "the rules," the Rules of Civil Procedure govern the conduct of the parties in a civil action, such as a claim for wrongful dismissal, and provide the procedural framework by which the court will handle the dispute. While the amendments were designed to make the civil justice system more accessible and affordable for the public, the changes pose problems for employers, including increased costs and duration.

### Impact on employers

Specifically, HR professionals should be aware of the following changes to the rules:

“These changes will result in more wrongful dismissal claims being decided by way of summary judgment.”

### Increased cap for small claims court actions.

The previous cap was \$10,000. Under the new rules, the cap is \$25,000, which means more wrongful dismissal claims will fall within the jurisdiction of small claims court and claimants will often not be represented by legal counsel, which will make it difficult for employers to negotiate reasonable settlements with the claimants.

### Increased cap and discovery for simplified procedure actions.

The cap has been raised to \$100,000, from \$50,000, which will also result in an increase in wrongful dismissal claims within the jurisdiction of the simplified procedure.

Under the new rules, the simplified procedure is also less streamlined than it was before and the parties will now be permitted to engage in limited examinations for discovery (up to a maximum

of two hours). There will be an increase in costs related to this as limiting the time does not limit the cost of the discovery (discussions with the client, scheduling, travel time, etc.). On a positive note, limited discovery presents the opportunity to learn further particulars of the employee's case before proceeding to trial and could result in settlement without proceeding to trial.

**Evidence on summary judgment motions.** There has been an increase in the number of employees that are bringing motions to have their action disposed of by the court without a full trial. Under the new rules, judges will be able to weigh evidence, evaluate credibility, draw reasonable inferences and order oral evidence to be presented on such motions, where they could not before.

These changes will result in more wrongful dismissal claims being decided by way of summary judgment. Employers should be aware of this, particularly as a judgment may occur before the notice period is over and, therefore, before mitigation can be fully evaluated.

### Other changes to civil actions over \$100,000.

One of the most significant changes to civil actions over \$100,000 is the "one day rule," which limits the length of

examinations for discovery. Pursuant to this new rule, a party can examine the opposing party or parties for a maximum of seven hours. The time limit applies regardless of the number of parties to be examined. It can, however, be varied by consent of the court.

In addition, the scope of discovery has been refined. Previously, every document "relating" to any matter in issue was required to be disclosed. Under the new rules, disclosure is required for every "relevant" document, meaning the ability of employees to go on evidentiary fishing expeditions is limited, as is the expense associated with far-reaching production obligations—a positive change for employers. **HR**

*Meighan Ferris-Miles is a lawyer at Shields O'Donnell MacKillop LLP and Malcolm MacKillop is the firm's managing partner.*

## INTEGRATING INTERNATIONALLY EDUCATED HR PROFESSIONALS

**O**ver the past year, the research team at the Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA) completed a qualitative research study consisting of a literature review and focus group consultations with 107 participants from 34 countries, to understand the perceptions internationally educated Human Resource Professionals (HR IEP) and employers have of HRPA and the CHRP designation. The results identified a number of barriers HR IEPs face upon entering the profession in Ontario.

The study found that 64 per cent of the participants hold a bachelors or master's degree from their home country, which is higher than the average Canadian statistics. Ninety-four per cent of the participants immigrated to Canada with the intention of pursuing a career in HR while only 48 per cent were successful in finding an HR job within two years of arriving in Ontario.

In an effort to accelerate the integration of HR IEPs into the Ontario HR profession, HRPA developed the HR IEP Integration Strategy, which

in a shorter amount of time. In response to the research findings, HRPA has also developed and launched the Alternative Routes program, allowing HR IEPs to have their international experience and education verified so they can sit the CHRP examinations within six months of arriving in Ontario.

### Transition programs

There is a significant need for HR IEP-specific training programs to educate participants about the required employment law framework of Ontario's organizations. Along with pre-employment education, there is also a need for post-employment coaching between HR IEPs and their immediate manager.

### Stakeholder alignment

The results also indicate that stakeholders such as the regulatory body, employers and integration agencies need to expand their collaboration efforts to ensure that highly skilled professionals do not fall through the cracks. Within this pillar, stakeholders have the opportunity to combine efforts in educating employers about the significant, long-term value HR IEPs' bring to their organization. There exists a need, from the employers' perspective, to have access to middle-management cultural competency training to help mitigate the voluntary turnover common of HR IEPs about six months into the employment contract. Middle managers need to be trained on how to conduct performance and coaching conversations with people from different cultural backgrounds.

The regulatory body's acceleration of the professional certification process, providing an employment law skills course and ensuring middle managers are equipped with the tools to conduct culturally sensitive performance reviews and coaching discussions, Ontario employers will be well positioned to reap the competitive rewards of hiring internationally educated HR professionals to their organizations. **HR**

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*Justin Ramesar, M. HRM, is the project manager for the Internationally Educated Human Resources Professional research project and chapter relations specialist at HRPA.*

“The results identified a number of barriers HR IEPs face upon entering the profession in Ontario.”

focuses on three areas: the regulatory body, transition programs and stakeholder alignment.

### Regulatory body

As the regulatory body of the HR profession, HRPA has a significant role to play in the recognition of international experience. Promotion of the CHRP designation and its academic requirements with the HR IEP community is one way to accelerate their integration. The creation of an online information resource directing IEPs to the appropriate bridging, mentorship and professional networking opportunities will enhance their chances of gaining relevant employment

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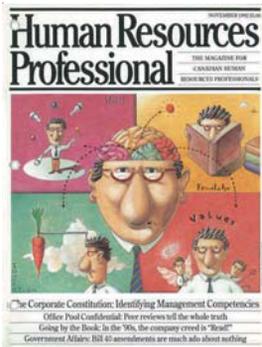
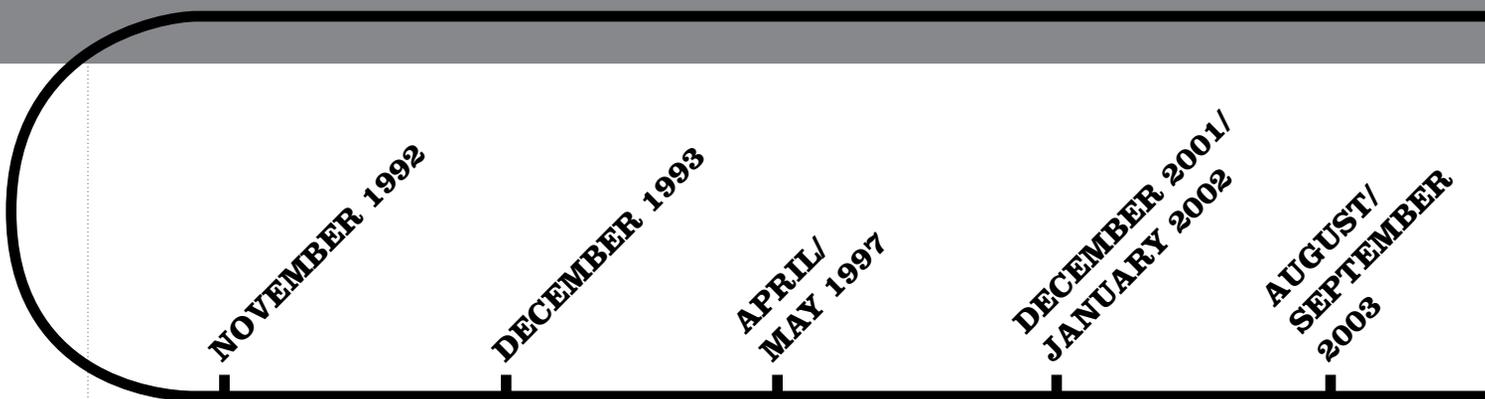


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# HR RETROSPECTIVE

HUMAN RESOURCES HAS UNDERGONE TREMENDOUS CHANGE SINCE THIS MAGAZINE BEGAN CHRONICLING THE PROFESSION 25 YEARS AGO. FROM ITS EARLY DAYS AS AN ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTION TO HR'S NEW ROLE AS A FULL STRATEGIC PARTNER, HERE'S A LOOK BACK AT RECENT HR HISTORY, AS TOLD THROUGH THE PAGES OF *HR PROFESSIONAL*



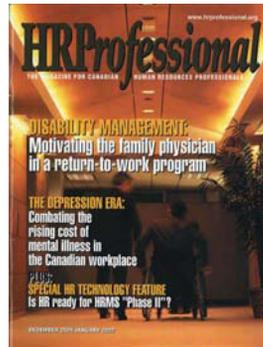
**TERMINATOR:**  
*HR Professional* magazine explores a new cause for dismissal: disruption of corporate culture. Courts find employees can be fired for cause based on untidiness and unsociability with staff.



**BALANCING ACT:**  
Organized labour and equity-seeking groups clash over the seniority provisions in the Ontario NDP government's Bill 79, employment equity legislation.



**SURF'S UP:**  
*HR Professional* explores the recruiting possibilities of the newfangled World Wide Web and reports that only 12 per cent of Canadians have surfed the "Internet."



**BRAIN STRAIN:**  
Workplace stress costs Canadian businesses an estimated \$12 billion annually—which marks a huge shift from physical to stress-related disability costs.

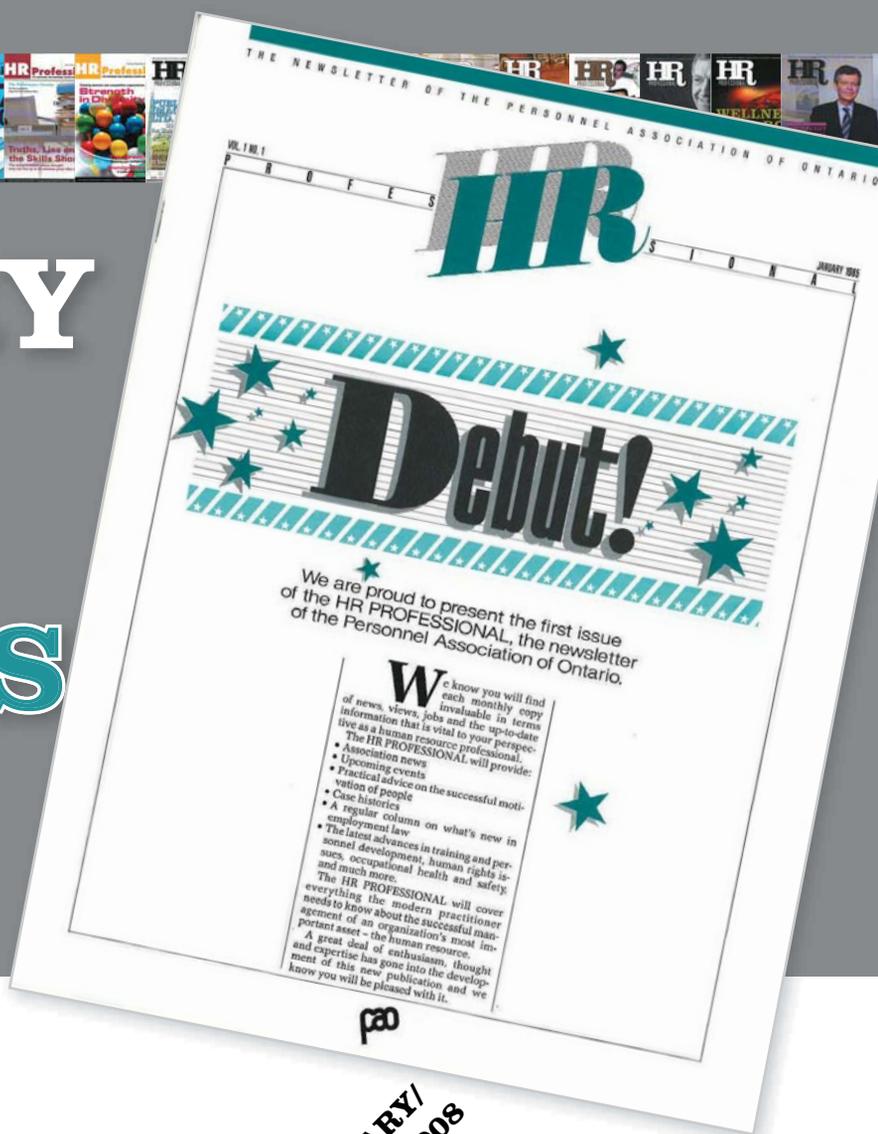


**A SEAT AT THE TABLE:**  
*HR Professional* looks at HR's burgeoning quest for the key to the C-suite with a profile on how epost HR director Daryl Gauthier earned a spot on the executive team.



# JANUARY 1985

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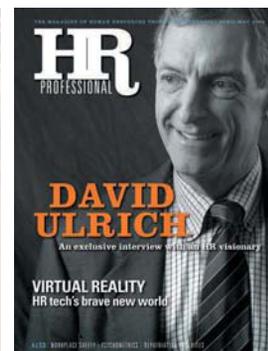
**MR. MOM:**  
Statistics Canada reports that 9,300 men received parental benefits in 2004—up 17 per cent over 2002. Workplaces must now address men's work/life balance concerns.



**THE BOOMERS:**  
*HR Professional* sorts through the hype around retiring baby boomers, a decrease in the working-age demographic and looming skills shortages.



**GREEN WORKPLACE:**  
Sustainability becomes part of the business lexicon and visionary David Suzuki speaks out about what organizations can do to solve the climate crisis.



**HR ICON:**  
David Ulrich speaks to *HR Professional* about HR's value proposition and the evolution of the profession over the past 20 years. His mantra: "HR must give value or give notice."

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# THE NEW NORMAL

After talking to reams of experts about what trends to expect in HR in 2010 (and the next decade, really), the pervading theme is “no risk, no reward”

BY LESLEY YOUNG

**T**HE RECESSION OF THE PAST 18 months has brought a number of workforce issues into clear focus. Leaders aren't leading well. Executive pay is dynamite. Shareholders and employees demand Windex-like transparency. Employee engagement no longer cuts it.

Here's what to expect, along with advice from the world's leading experts, to help you seize the moment and carve out a place in the new normal.

## LEADERSHIP

### Innovative thinking saves the day

Senior executives are all too aware of the shortage of available leaders, says Dr. David Weiss, president and CEO of Weiss International in Toronto, and author of *The Leadership Gap*. “It's seen as a priority and they are turning to HR professionals to contribute

some solution,” he says. Beyond the question of whether a company has a sufficient number of leaders, is whether its leaders are capable of the innovative thinking necessary to lead in this economic environment. CEOs expect HR to find and nurture leaders who excel at *not* having the answer, says Weiss. Meaning, today's leaders need to be capable of exploring complex topics, working with teams to help them understand the root cause of problems and facilitating others in discussions that lead to answers.

### Show them what it means to lead

As work becomes more complex, managers are not only having a harder time mustering the horsepower to work harder and faster, they've also fallen off the job description track, says Julian Chapman, vice-president of coach-

ing and facilitation at Toronto's Forrest & Company. “The biggest issue today is that leaders do not understand what it means to be leaders.”

So what is the role of leaders? “They should be managing talent, and using their judgment and discretion to find and develop talent within. Too many basic management accountabilities tend to get pushed to HR,” says Chapman. Since holding onto people is more important than ever, HR will quickly discover that they need to hand back talent management to leaders and coach them on it.

Dave Ulrich, co-founder of The RBL Group and professor of business at the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business, adds that there is a growing recognition that customer wants and expectations should drive an organization. “HR needs to make sure that competency

“CEOs expect HR to find and nurture leaders who excel at *not* having the answer.”



ILLUSTRATION: PAUL DAVIZ

models for leaders inside a company align with customer expectations outside the company.” Of course, this requires that HR anticipate and understand the company’s customer expectations, and rebuild the company culture from the outside in.

## STRATEGIC WORKFORCE PLANNING

### Become a casting director

Monica Belcourt, director of the School of Human Resources

Management at York University in Toronto, envisions a new HR world order. She says that fear over pandemics, rising concerns about security issues including workplace violence (to wit: the recent hostage-taking at Edmonton’s Workers Safety and Insurance Board office) and the cost of commuting (gas prices plus the environmental footprint) will compel employees to work off-site. “They won’t necessarily want to work from home. But they are no longer

going to want to go to their place of work.”

While technological advancements are enabling this trend, the real driver is the demographic itself, says Belcourt. Today’s young workforce was raised to take initiative on their own and develop trust quickly between each other, even virtually, unlike older generations whose trust is built face-to-face over a long period of time.

So what does this mean for HR? “HR’s role will be like a casting director or outsourcing manager,” says Belcourt. HR will need to either develop a whole new set of skills at warp speed to ensure employees have what they need to accomplish a job, or the function itself will become a technologically advanced outsourcing department. (Most employees will be on contract, she adds.) Longer term, the U.S. Society for Human Resources Management predicts this to be *de rigueur* by 2015.

### Work on your global readiness plan

“Strategic HR planning has never been more critical for long-term success,” says Antoinette Blunt, president of Sault Ste. Marie, Ont.’s Ironside Consulting Services Inc. and board chair of the Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA). She explains that your HR planning function needs to incorporate all elements of the global economy as they impact your company (if it doesn’t already). “We never used to have to worry about not finding the skill sets we need in our community, for example. Now, we’re faced with so much more and readiness is crucial.”

Blunt adds that since younger workers do not stick around long, HR needs to plan intensely to capitalize on those workers’ skills and knowledge for the short period of

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time they are with the company. “So when a vacancy arises, HR shouldn’t be looking to fill the responsibilities of the current role. It needs to hire different sets of competencies that will get the company where it needs to be 10 to 15 years from now to avoid skills gaps as workers move through the workforce more quickly.”

**Be a change-management guru**

Implementing change management has become a standard expectation of HR departments and HR professionals, says Weiss, but HR needs to identify change at an earlier stage. “Organizations are recognizing that change emerges from innovative ideas that are essential for success,” he says. By involving itself in change management at an earlier stage, HR can add value by facilitating innovative-thinking processes.

“HR’s role then is to facilitate and stimulate thought in addition to taking the thought once it is developed and helping people accept the change associated with the innovative idea,” says Weiss. “HR is not expected to have the innovative answers, but it should have the expertise to facilitate the innovative thinking process.”

**TALENT MANAGEMENT**

**Think mobilization, not engagement**

All CEOs talk about engaging the workforce, because squeezing more out of what you’ve got suits the economic times. However, there’s

a big difference between engagement and what organizations really need, which is “mobilization,” explains Madeleine Chenette, senior partner and chair at Montreal’s SECOR Consulting.

“You can think saving the environment is important, and still not act accordingly; for example, you don’t take public transit to work,” she explains. “Mobilization, on the other hand, is the combination of having the right attitude and the actions related to it.” Chenette says mobilization is a learning curve for some organizations, but given the economic environment, she anticipates intense pressure on HR to deliver it in 2010 onwards.

Ulrich seconds this trend: “HR must continue to create value through individual ability (talent) and organization capability (culture). Because of globalization, the economic recession, technological and demographic changes, employees need to be more than committed (engaged and show up). They must actually want to *contribute* to the workplace because they find meaning and purpose.” Engagement is about being present, explains Ulrich. “Contribution is about the heart and soul. You can be engaged and do something, but not find meaning in it.”

According to Ulrich, some employees might feel engaged and have an attitude of gratitude that they have a job (and engagement survey scores are high), but if they

don’t find real meaning in the work they do, they are not fully present and that’s not sustainable. Ulrich says HR needs to help line managers connect to employees’ identity, purpose, learning, growth, workplace happiness and relationships in order to evolve from mere engagement to true contribution or mobilization.

**HR recruitment: open 24/7**

“A lot of organizations have blocked staff from using social media entirely,” says Arie Singer, director, digital strategy at TMP Worldwide in Toronto. “This is a huge mistake.” Why? Referrals are critical. “This is how people are looking for jobs,” says Singer. “Job-seekers also want to be able to find information when and how they like. HR recruitment has to be open 24 hours a day.”

HR’s post-and-pray attitude is no longer sufficient, says Singer. “You have to cast the net broad and wide to find the right candidate, and they are not always in the same spot every time.” You can expect more and more companies to take advantage of social media and have two-way conversations (not top-down conversations) with current and prospective employees, explains Singer. “And frankly, HR needs to see what is being said out there and augment any negative dialogue with positive dialogue.” Jump right in because Singer predicts online job networking to be commonplace within the next year or two.

“HR will need to develop a whole new set of skills at warp speed to ensure employees have what they need to accomplish a job.”

**Think individual, not generational**

Chapman's witnessing a trend he'd like to nip in the bud. Organizations are excessively concerned about generation Y—who they are and what they want. "Remember, it's not a matter of what the workforce wants. It's a matter of what the organization needs," he says. Chapman cautions not to turn the arrival of this generation into an HR initiative about what makes these employees tick. Instead, he urges

a lot more vocal in terms of what works and what doesn't work."

**Becoming the executive pay police**

These days, company stakeholders are making more demands than ever of executive compensation, says Robert Levasseur, senior consultant, executive compensation, at Watson Wyatt. "Governing executive pay is becoming much more complicated. HR is spending more than 75 per cent of its time dealing with executive compensation

jobs and pensions while executives still receive bonuses.

**Switch pension plan gears**

A recent survey by Mercer consulting shows that most HR professionals perceive themselves as facilitators of defined contribution (DC) plans rather than providers of adequate retirement income for employees. "They see the primary benefit of setting up a DC plan as offering a competitive benefit," says Oma Sharma, national partner at Toronto-based Mercer.

**“Your HR planning function needs to incorporate all elements of the global economy as they impact your company.”**

HR to focus on the individual. "At the core, it is about understanding individual people, who have individual values, and looking at those on a case-by-case basis. Use your judgment and discretion and if you feel out of sync, simply adjust."

**COMPENSATION**

**Employees will take charge**

Liz Wright, office practice leader, compensation, at Watson Wyatt in Toronto, says that during the recession, businesses were so concentrated on survival they largely ignored their talent base. "The next little while will be all about re-engaging talent," she says. Salary freezes are over, so HR will need to ensure competitive salaries and rewards are in place. Wright adds that employers' incentive plans have been overly complicated for too long. "In the future, employees are going to be

issues for what amounts to three per cent of the workforce. It's quite draining."

Don't expect this to change any time soon. Negative perceptions around executive pay will continue to place pressure on HR to come up with equitable solutions that still motivate into 2010. Take the causes of the financial meltdown: according to Nadine Cote, senior counsel, employment law and executive compensation at David LLP & Manulife Financial, control functions (chief financial officer, chief regulatory officer, for example) may end up being paid differently than the rest of the organization (e.g., no more incentive pay). "HR may be asked to ensure that compensation plans do not motivate risky behaviour."

Meanwhile, HR will also be facing "pay equity" issues for a while to come, predicts Cote. Employees will not stand by while they lose

However, HR will need to align employee expectations, who more often than not believe that an employer is looking after their retirement needs.

Why does this matter now? "If employees reach the age of 65 and they can't afford to retire, you will have a workforce management problem on your hands," says Sharma. She predicts that HR will need to switch pension plan gears and become more active in helping employees retire, including relying on more automatic enrollment and auto-escalation tools (because of what Sharma calls a lot of "DC plan inertia" on the part of employees), and possibly more wealth-management expertise. "In that vein, we can expect to see companies offering more investing products that transition employees into retirement." **HR**

*Lesley Young is a freelance writer based in Newmarket, Ont.*



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# HELPING THE SANDWICH GENERATION CARE FOR AGING PARENTS

BY PATTI LANE

**M**ANY BOOMERS FIND THEMSELVES TRYING to stretch their workday to include driving their mother to the doctor, caring for ill parents or checking out retirement homes for their father-in-law. In 2007, two million Canadians aged 45 to 64 were helping to care for seniors who had long-term health problems, according to Statistics Canada. Almost three-quarters of those caregivers were employed. And with Canada's population of seniors expected to double in 20 years, more employees will be juggling elder care with work.

That struggle to balance jobs and family responsibilities can take a heavy financial and emotional toll. "Caregivers are dealing with guilt and lack of time," said Greg Charyna, co-owner of the Saskatoon office of Home Instead Senior Care, which provides at-home assistance. According to a Home Instead survey, the average elder caregiver has been at it for four years.

Businesses also risk increased absenteeism, lower productivity,

workplace interruptions and difficulty retaining skilled workers as employees take time off or even quit to look after their parents. Canadian companies lose an estimated \$4 billion a year due to absenteeism and indirect costs associated with elder care, said Gillian Joseph, research associate at the Centre for Families, Work and Well-Being at the University of Guelph.

"Companies have focused more on child care, but as our population is aging, it's more and more important for our middle-aged employees to have that support," said Joseph. Some organizations are starting to recognize these challenges and introduce programs to lighten the load.

## JUGGLING ACT

"Our employees are sandwiched between so many different demands and we're trying to help them balance various commitments they have in their lives," said Gabriella Zillmer, senior vice-president of human resources at the Bank of Montreal.

Employees can arrange alternative work arrangements: a flexible work week, early or late start times, a compressed work week, job sharing or permanent part-time. "People care days" allow employees to take three or four paid days off to respond to unexpected family illnesses or emergencies.

Some companies provide long-term unpaid leave with full benefits. "Extended leave is designed to help an employee stay with us in the longer term by helping them with their short-term needs," said Zillmer.

"Flexibility is key so that people can select what's important for them," explains Beverley Simonsen, director of total rewards at Deloitte.

## PROVIDE OPTIONS

Technology makes working off-site possible, but some companies even provide job rotation options. "Employees who travel or have unpredictable schedules can rotate internally with other people in the organization for six to 12 months, for example," says Joseph.

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Beyond giving time off, organizations can help with elder care in other ways. Deloitte employees can access family support services ranging from home care for an elderly parent to taking someone to an appointment, says Simonsen. The program builds on Deloitte's emergency child care service and allows for three free visits per year.

Elder care is often crisis-driven and many companies provide a one-stop source for information on community programs for home-care assistance, housing options and support services. "That just saves so much time and effort for the caregivers and takes a big load off," said Joseph.

Employee assistance programs have also evolved to include confidential counselling to help employees work through a potentially stressful time.

### MISSING LINK

Companies need to communicate elder-care options to employees and supervisors. "My research has found that managers are the most important link," says Joseph. "Managers not only give employees permission to take advantage of corporate policy but also in the informal sense, the manager is the one to say 'go ahead and take a few hours off and make it up at the end of the day.'"

Employees who are worried or distracted about elderly parents are going to have difficulty focusing at work. "Ultimately, that can lead to longer-term illness or short-term stress," said Zillmer. "By making sure we have tools available, there are benefits to us in helping employees work their way through it, so that when they're at the job they can be focused on our customers without worrying about other things." **HR**

*Patti Lane is a Toronto-based freelance writer whose articles have appeared in BusinessWeek, Time, The Globe and Mail and the National Post.*



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# TALENT MANAGEMENT

BY DIANE HORTON AND CHUCK HAMILTON

## IBM WORKS SMARTER USING TECHNOLOGY

**H**umanity is at an exciting point in history. For the first time in history, the world is connected economically, socially and technologically, with people, systems and organizations interacting with each other in entirely new ways.

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This year, 30 billion radio frequency identification tags will be embedded into our world, giving us the ability to measure, sense and see the exact condition of everything from traffic congestion to where that steak on our plate was born and raised.

team of new bugs and fixes in software development projects.

Examples like these illustrate how new technologies are enabling smarter work all over the business landscape.

### Knowledge transfer

Informal learning—those lessons learned almost serendipitously, by random-chance conversations with colleagues or superiors—is perhaps the biggest undiscovered treasure in today's workplaces and something that is becoming increasingly difficult in our cross-geographical work worlds.

This is particularly true at IBM, with close to 400,000 employees worldwide. In response, IBM built a Virtual Speed Mentoring facility in Second Life, a 3D virtual world, and holds informal meetings where avatars representing mentors and protégés “talk” in 15-minute intervals. The exchanges take place in a relaxed and intimate virtual setting.

In fact, 85 per cent of participants report the events helped them achieve their learning objectives. Interestingly, a survey of those who participated suggests people represented as avatars are more comfortable asking questions they might not otherwise ask in person.

### The future

Looking ahead, imagine what you could do from a virtual world, or your desk, home or neighbourhood coffee shop with these tools. You could form your own network of experts, bid for a project, find talent to complete it, meet customers, or collaborate with your partners and colleagues.

The results would be astounding. Costs would go down. Stronger relationships would be fostered. Untapped sources of expertise would emerge. New markets would be realized.

We have an opportunity to transform the way we work. By investing in “smart” systems, we could energize people, use resources more efficiently and increase productivity while cultivating an environment of innovation. **HR**

*Diane Horton is a partner in IBM's Human Capital Management Consulting Practice and Chuck Hamilton is an IBM virtual learning leader.*

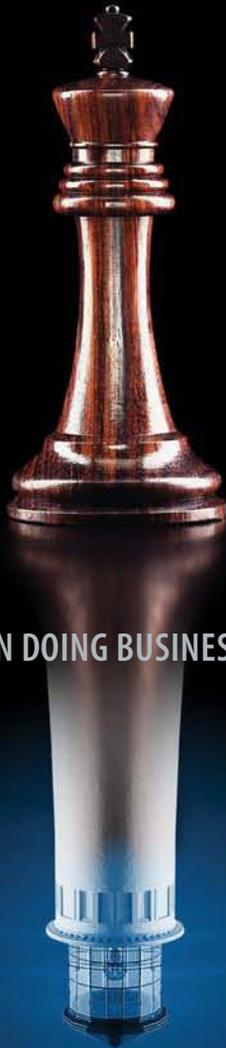
“As more people become mobile web users, the concept of “the office” will become obsolete.”

This means we can respond to changes quickly, accurately and securely, and get better results by predicting and planning for future events. This is an opportunity to transform the way we work to be more productive, efficient and resilient—in short, “smarter.” As more people become mobile web users, the concept of “the office” will become obsolete.

At IBM, social networking tools such as blogs and networks such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter have become invaluable business tools. More than 250,000 IBMers are on LinkedIn, more than 40,000 use Facebook, 16,000 use internal blogs and 1,000 use Twitter.

### Technology in action

A team of researchers at an IBM lab in the U.K. arranged to have the local transit bus tweet its location and status, so they know exactly when it will arrive. Other IBMers are using Twitter for monitoring tools, such as alerting a project



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## OVERCOMING DEFENSIVENESS

**A**n under-diagnosed pandemic is affecting offices across the globe: defensiveness. And the signs are easy to spot: negative energy, distrust, fragile relationships and stunted productivity.

For instance, a female manager in her late-30s likes to tell people exactly what she thinks. She values honesty and direct communication. One of her direct reports is male, in his mid-40s with performance issues. Every time he misses a deadline, she tells him in a way that makes him feel like his mother has scolded him. When she confronts him, he gets defensive, distracted and falls further behind in his work—a classic case of defensiveness disease to which any department can easily fall prey.

Of course, defensiveness is not a disease, but it spreads like a virus. Defensiveness comes from our attitudes about situations, and attitude is based on perception; if we perceive another person is attacking us or failing to understand our point of view or capabilities, defensiveness results and productivity suffers.

“The cure for defensiveness is trust.”

### Changing the attitude

You have to see that the other person has value, even if you

need him to change his behaviour. In our case study, the manager needs to sit down with her employee and say, “I’d like to follow up from this morning’s meeting and I’m really glad you shared this information with me.” Remember, you’re not saying that it’s OK your teammate is missing deadlines or even with his reaction to your feedback, you’re recognizing that you were perceived in a way that didn’t work for your employee.

You can then say, “I didn’t know that’s the way you felt. If we’re going to work together, we have to find a way to resolve it. Here are some of the things you mentioned and I’m working on these things.”

It’s often best to end the conversation there and work on the deadline issue in the next conversation. If your teammate is defensive, he can’t hear valid changes he needs to make, and if you’re defensive, it’s tough to offer criticism in a tone that won’t shut him down.

Start the next conversation talking about what your subordinate thinks *he* is good at—not what *you* think he’s good at. You’re building a relationship so you can improve performance and for that to happen, your teammate has to trust you.

### Deal with defensiveness

- Check your attitude. What you think becomes your tone.
- Analyze what the other person thinks they’re good at and validate it. Validating is not agreeing, rather showing that you value the person’s ability to contribute.
- Choose your language carefully. Avoid the word “but”—it implies criticism or judgment is coming next and negates whatever sentiments preceded it.
- Frame conversations ahead of time to make sure you avoid trigger words.

The cure for defensiveness is trust. Paying attention to the way you communicate creates endless opportunities to build the comfortable relationships that produce the best work. **HR**

*Ethan Becker, president and senior coach for the Speech Improvement Company, Inc., specializes in motivating teams and strengthening executive communication. Jon Wortmann is an advisor and speaker on leadership, communication and building trusted relationships.*

## EXAMPLE: ASKING FOR A BUDGET

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## FEEDBACK THAT GETS RESULTS WITH GEN Y

**R**ecently, I led an all-day training session on building a leadership presence for a group of generation Ys. We focused on techniques for resolving workplace conflicts and giving and receiving feedback. Many participants said they wished their managers would also learn how to effectively give feedback. So, here are seven tips I recommend for giving gen Y employees feedback that gets results.

### 1. **Gen Y loves feedback—if it's done in the right way**

Contrary to popular belief, gen Y's love feedback. They are used to hearing lots of praise, so the key to helping them "hear" negative the feedback is to focus first on what they did well (be authentic and genuine) and then share any areas for growth. If you only focus on what they are doing poorly, they will feel disrespected and unmotivated to improve.

email what you liked about their recent presentation, for example, will go a long way.

**4. Make it short and to the point**  
Remember they like things to happen quickly, so short, to the point grabs their attention. Don't make it any longer than it needs to be.

**5. Use technology**  
A recent study demonstrated that younger gen Y's were likely to break up via text messaging because it was easier than face-to-face confrontation. Gen Y's are used to giving and receiving feedback via technology and although they still love feedback in person, technology is a simple tool to voice feedback quickly, so use it.

**6. Make it specific**  
Many gen Y's have told me that when they do receive feedback, it's too vague. Comments like "good job" or "you did well today" don't tell them very much. Be specific about what they did that was good or not. When we give the reasons behind the feedback it carries much more power.

**7. Get them to ask for feedback from their peers**

It's one thing to be given feedback from people who have higher authority, it's expected—but it can be extremely powerful for gen Y's to hear feedback from colleagues and peers whom they already trust. **HR**

*Dr. Karyn Gordon is a gen Y expert, corporate and family consultant, motivational speaker, media personality and author.*

“Waiting months after something has happened is a **lost opportunity** for growth.”

**2. Give frequent feedback**  
Talk to any gen Y'er and he will probably tell you that the traditional quarterly performance review is not feedback, it's history. Waiting months after something has happened is a lost opportunity for growth. In order to make these performance reviews helpful, gen Y's need feedback on a weekly or bi-weekly basis.

**3. Make it informal**  
While baby boomers and gen X's generally prefer formal feedback, gen Y's like informal feedback. When feedback is really structured and formal it may seem forced and less genuine. Telling them in passing or via

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## MOST CANADIANS VIEW THE PUBLIC SECTOR AS A GREAT PLACE TO WORK

**I**t's not often we hear terms such as "rewarding" and "dynamic" used to describe public sector work but this is how most Canadians view public sector careers, according to a survey of 1,000 Canadians conducted for Monster.ca during the summer of 2009.

The study explored views of public sector and private sector work, as Canadians were coping with the impacts of the recession, while simultaneously watching several high-profile public service strikes take place around the country.

The survey found 53 per cent of those questioned believe there are more advantages to working in the public sector than the private sector.

### Is the grass greener?

"Our sense is that Canadians feel the public sector offers far more than job security," says Peter Gilfillan, senior vice-president of international

private sector workers said so, while 77 per cent of public sector workers agreed.

Each year, government recruiters fan out across the country trying to encourage college and university graduates to consider public service work as their No. 1 career choice. If the poll is any indication, their jobs should be getting easier. For many, it seems the recession heightened their appreciation of government work and its benefits. In the Ontario Public Service, for example, applications rose steadily over the past year for relatively few public sector openings.

Some negative views of public service careers persist. For example, the Monster poll asked if Canadians think government workers do a lot of paper pushing. Of those in the private sector, 83 per cent answered yes, while 72 per cent of public service workers also agreed.

Whether people work inside or outside government, the Monster poll also found a high level of job satisfaction, with 88 per cent of public sector workers, and 89 per cent of private sector workers, saying they are satisfied with their work.

Public and private sector attitudes were slightly different where the Monster poll asked Canadians about the single, most important thing that would improve their overall day-to-day enjoyment of their job. Government

workers rated making more money first (29 per cent) followed by less office politics (12 per cent) and more recognition for their work (10 per cent). Private sector workers would also be happier with a bigger pay cheque (25 per cent), choosing more job flexibility second (13 per cent), and less office politics third (10 per cent).

In general, the survey found Canadians think highly of public sector work and its value and most of those surveyed see more advantages to working in the public than in the private sector. **HR**

“For many, it seems the recession heightened their appreciation of government work and its benefits.”

sales and general manager for Monster Canada. "Our survey found that most of those questioned believe public sector work is rewarding. That says a lot about the value of public service careers."

The Monster poll, conducted by Harris/Decima, asked Canadians if they would describe public sector work as "boring" or "easy." The majority said no. In fact, most public sector workers (83 per cent) describe their workplace as dynamic. Further, many private sector workers agree (72 per cent). As to whether public sector workers are well compensated, 88 per cent of

*Danna O'Brien is a senior strategist at Playbook Communications in Toronto.*



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## COMMUNICATING COMPENSATION

**W**hile you understand what a great compensation deal you provide employees, your workers may not realize that those vacation days, RRSP matching, training opportunities and massages are all part of their rewards package. *HR Professional* talks to two professionals on how to best communicate total rewards.

Ask an employee about their compensation package and you might get a very different answer from what the HR department has to say. While it's clear to HR what comprises a worker's total rewards—pay, benefits, recognition and performance, career development and work/life programs—often an employee will only consider salary and benefits. And that's often because they just don't know what kind of investment the organization has made in them.

### Make a statement

Jim Stoeckmann, a senior practice leader at WorldatWork, a not-for-profit knowledge leader in total rewards, compensation and benefits, says the easiest way to relay this information is via a total-rewards statement. "It's a document that itemizes what the organization is investing in an employee: salary, promotion or merit increase or other increases received, variable pay opportunities, medical benefits, time off, retirement savings, training—anything with a dollar value," he says. "The statement should itemize everything of value, not just so they understand the investment, but also to remind them of all the benefits they're eligible for. Even things like payroll taxes have to be communicated so employees really understand the total investment organizations make in them."

And in drafting your employee benefits materials, don't make the mistake of assuming your audience has the same level of knowledge that you do. When you're explaining procedures or coverage, don't leave anything out or you'll risk some seriously disgruntled employees, says Scott Watkinson, a Toronto-based employee communications consultant. "Consider medical



ILLUSTRATION: MICHAEL EDDENDEN

benefits coverage. People might get a procedure done and submit a claim, only to have it rejected because it's not covered—and they didn't know or understand," he says. "It's critically important that you spell things out."

While detailing your benefits materials, you must also avoid all HR benefits jargon. Use clear, plain language.

"Explain things in an intuitive way," says Watkinson. "Think things through step-by-step from the beginning. You have to use examples that help people understand the implications of the choices you're asking them to make. Rather than giving a long-winded explanation of everything it might cover in technical terms, just break it down using realistic examples."

### Testing

The only way to ensure your benefits materials are effective is thorough testing. Ideally, you should be doing two sets of tests, according to Watkinson: an initial test to find out what people understand their benefits to be; and their issues with current materials, and a second test with reworked materials to ensure clarity.

Watkinson recommends one-on-one testing with employees. "Pick a representative cross-section of workers, give them prototypes of the new materials, and ask them to do very specific tasks: 'tell me what your dental coverage for your children's orthodontics is.' You don't do this in a group session because people typically won't read

## HR 101

in a group. They sit at home trying to work through the information on their own and that's the environment you need to recreate if you're going to test them realistically."

### **Messenger**

The employee's supervisor or manager is the best person to sit down and explain an employee's

total-rewards package, so take the time to ensure they're completely versed in their reports' total-rewards elements, why they're offered and how to access them. "And remember this communications works both ways," says Stoeckmann. "You can learn from frontline leaders how rewards are perceived by employees."

### **When**

Communicating total rewards effectively means using all available opportunities: initial recruiting, sign-on and onboarding phases, as well as opportunities throughout the employment relationship like promotions and transfers.

If you happen to know about significant life events, like marriage or children, take advantage of these times to communicate benefits that relate to this new life stage—like family medical and dental benefits, says Stoeckmann. "You might not know those specific occasions, but if you know an employee's age you can infer that they'd be more interested in benefits as they hit their 30s and start having families, or are approaching retirement."

### **Strategic rewards**

Your organization's rewards strategy is one of your biggest weapons in the war for talent. If you study and understand your local labour market and find out what its needs and interests are, you can think through what you have to offer employees and prospective employees, do a total-rewards inventory of your organization and "then communicate that in a holistic fashion to employees and frontline leaders," says Stoeckmann. "It's important to be singing from the same songbook in terms of what you are as a company, what you invest in employees and why you've chosen that investment strategy. You've taken a look at your talent and their needs and tried to identify programs that you can afford and that, in your view, are going to attract, retain and motivate them." **HR**



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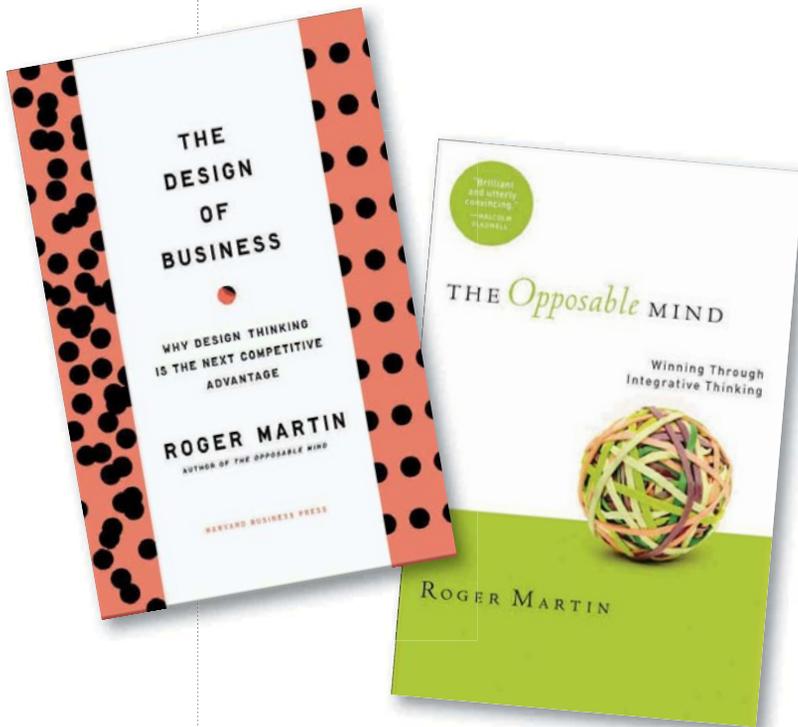


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Martin is the dean of the Rotman Business School of Management at the University of Toronto, and author of *The Design of Business* (2009) and *The Opposable Mind* (2007), both published by Harvard Business Press.



**“To be honest, my criticism of the HR function is it errs on the side of reliability over validity.”**

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# INTERVIEW

**HRP:** You've been writing about business design for more than five years, but to most people the concept is still pretty abstract. For those who aren't familiar, what is design thinking?

**RM:** There are two fundamentally different forms of thinking people tend to use. One is analytical thinking, which is what dominates the world of business and uses quantitative data analysis to make decisions. This inductive and deductive reasoning is the kind of thinking we're taught throughout our university careers to declare propositions to be true or false. Doing statistically significant research samples on what our customers think, for example. This form of thinking is the dominant form of thinking in the business world.

Then there is intuitive thinking, which is knowing something to be true without explicitly reasoning it. You've probably heard an experienced business person say, "This is my gut feel." They instinctively think they have the right answer.

For me, both of those dominant forms of thinking have their limitations. Design thinking is the combined state of thinking, which takes the best of each of those types of thinking to make something better.

The problem with analytical thinking is that you cannot prove anything about the future in advance. So if you insist on having everything proven by the numbers, innovation gets crushed. In intuitive thinking, you've got someone in your company who is a source of great inspiration and creativity but has no idea how they do what they do. When the person with the proverbial "golden gut" leaves that company, the organization has got a big

problem on its hands. Take Issy Sharp, the founder and CEO of [hotel chain] Four Seasons, as an example. He is an intuitive thinker. He knows what he wants to do but he doesn't know why, which doesn't help for replication within his organization.

I believe that design thinking is what combines the two and is based on abductive logic—the third form of logic. Most people have probably never heard of this logic because it isn't commonly taught. First coined by early 20th-century philosopher Charles Saunders Peirce. He believed you can't demonstrate any new idea was brought about by inductive or deductive logic, so there must be another kind of logic. Abductive logic is the best explanation, or the logical leap of the mind. So if you see something that doesn't fit a deductive pattern or there aren't enough facts, you use abductive logic to get at what might be true, not what is declaratively true. And that form of logic invents the future because it's a more systematic form of thinking than knowing without reasoning. For example, you notice something, then you try to understand it, then you test your theory. You look at the results and determine if it was a good inference or a bad inference. If you are in the mode of either intuitive or analytical thinking alone, you won't be able to have that conversation. So abductive or design thinking moves knowledge forward on a more consistent basis.

**HRP:** Does this only apply to CEOs and R&D departments, or can it extend to human resources and operations from managers to frontline workers?

**RM:** Everyone who makes decisions can and should be a design



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# INTERVIEW

thinker. Take compensation, for example. You can be completely analytical and say, “this is how much this level of job pays and it’s not changing because this is how we’ve always done it.” Or you can say, “I’m seeing generation Y behaving differently from generation X in terms of what seems to make them happy about their benefits packages. Unfortunately, we don’t have enough headcount to justify redesigning the benefits offering, but if we wait too long, we’ll lose our 20 best people. So I’m going to watch them behave and try to figure out what we could change, even though we don’t have comprehensive data on it.”

To be honest, my criticism of the HR function is it errs on the side of reliability over validity. It favours a consistent outcome as opposed to the best outcome. I don’t know how many times I’ve heard someone in HR say, “We couldn’t do that because that would go against our rules and procedures.”

**HRP:** What would be required for design thinking to happen at the organizational level?

**RM:** Ban the words “prove it.” It’s as fundamental as that. If you have to prove it all the time, you will be guaranteed no new ideas. So that’s what is critically important—nothing that has ever been created that’s new in the world was proven in advance. I would also say organizations need to recognize that they need both validity- and reliability-oriented people in their organizations. Reliability-oriented people think validity-oriented people are irresponsible and validity-oriented people think reliability-oriented people are opposed to progress, so they tend to battle each other instead of working together. Reliability-

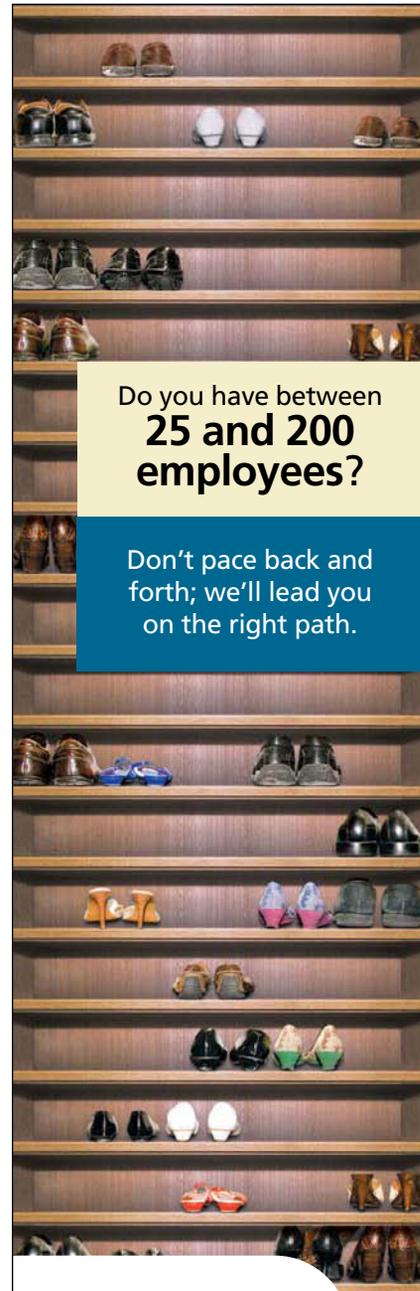
oriented people should acknowledge that they can keep the trains running on time but need validity-oriented people to tell them what direction the trains should be going in and vice versa. That’s why great CEOs often have CFOs who are very unlike them. While they don’t always get along, they know they need each other.

**HRP:** Are there any Canadian companies that have successfully utilized design thinking?

**RM:** There are several: Four Seasons, Cirque du Soleil, Research in Motion. Central to Cirque du Soleil’s company values is the idea that employees have to understand and appreciate the differences between creative types and business folks and accept that one can’t work without the other. For example, the creatives understand they need business people to orchestrate the 16 touring groups, 3,500 employees, etc. The organizers understand if they squelch the creatives there will be nothing to organize. You hear people throughout the company talk in those terms and, as a result, they are able to continually innovate. First the company only did travelling shows, then they did permanent shows, then they did a Beatles-music show, an underwater show, etc. Instead of saying, “Now we’ve got a formula and we can hone and refine that formula,” they’ve expanded and continue to innovate.

**HRP:** What kind of talent management strategy do you need to employ in design thinking? Do you try to get both sets of qualities in each hire?

**RM:** Because there aren’t that many design thinkers out there, you will need to look for and



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# INTERVIEW

put in key roles, the few that you can find and then you've got to make sure the rest understand and appreciate each other. The CEO has to understand that the paradox between the two groups exists and their job is to manage it.

**HRP:** I want to talk about leadership for a minute. In *The Opposable Mind*, you say that a leader's aptitude in integrative thinking is the key to success. Can you explain how it ties into design thinking?

**RM:** *The Opposable Mind* was more about the individual. *Design of Business* is more about the organization. To be successful, an executive must refuse to accept an unpleasant tradeoff and instead innovate a better solution—that's integrative thinking. *Design of Business* explains how you do that.

**HRP:** How do you teach people to go with their gut instinct when everything we've learned runs counter to that?

**RM:** It's very difficult. Much of our academic education tells us to ignore our intuition and focus only on the analysis. People are used to compartmentalizing the world. It's hard to fight that modernist tradition.

**HRP:** Do you feel most companies must operate like a Four Seasons or Cirque du Soleil if they want to succeed?

**RM:** I think we are approaching the extreme of this modernist analytical pendulum swing. I think it's going to swing back. So you'll see more companies recognizing the need for innovative strategies and incorporating design thinking into their organizations like Four Seasons and Cirque do. **HR**



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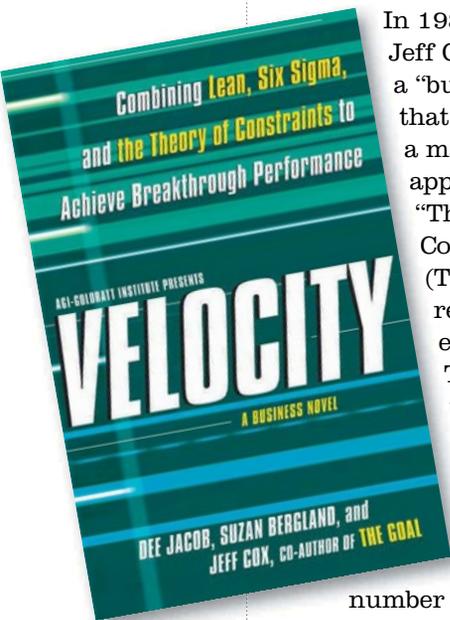
BY JAY SOMERSET

## WHAT'S WORTH READING

***Velocity: Combining Lean, Six Sigma and the Theory of Constraints to Achieve Breakthrough Performance, a Business Novel***

By Dee Jacob, Suzan Bergland and Jeff Cox

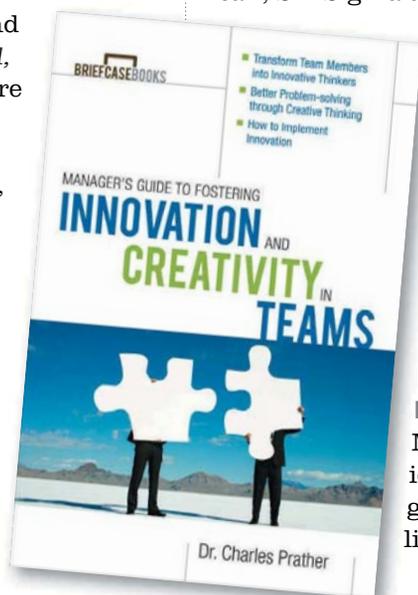
Free Press, 2010



In 1984, author Jeff Cox published a “business novel” that explained a management approach called “Theory of Constraints” (TOC) in a readable, enjoyable way. The theory—that companies are most often hindered from reaching their goals by only a small number of constraints,

which can be overcome by restructuring—proved popular, and the book, *The Goal*, went on to sell more than two-million copies.

Now Cox is back, this time to help co-authors Dee Jacob and Suzan Bergland—both principles at TOC founding firm GI, Goldratt Institute—convey a new management system:



Velocity, and once again, it's set in novel form.

Velocity combines TOC with two other, widely popular management systems: Six Sigma and Lean Theory. In the book, fictitious company Hi-T battles a common problem: bottlenecks in sales, manufacturing and product development. At first, Hi-T focuses on local improvement, but this “fix” fails to work. Frustrated, Hi-T eventually embraces a more holistic view of the entire company, and when this happens, the company's fortunes turn around.

It's hard to say whether or not Velocity as a system would be better explained in a non-novel format. Perhaps a straightforward business book would be easier to flip through and absorb. That said, Cox does a great job conveying Velocity and showing why a hybrid system that takes elements of Lean, Six Sigma and TOC is the best approach.

***Managers Guide to Fostering Innovation and Creativity in Teams***

By Charles Prather

McGraw Hill, 2010  
Most companies reflect the general public: there are



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## OFF THE SHELF

leaders and followers, detail-oriented workers, pragmatists and innovators. There are those that work best in isolation, and those that thrive through teamwork. Now imagine a world where almost everyone thrives in team-based situations and where creative problem solving is common to everyone. This isn't just fantasy, believes author Charles Prather, it's possible.

Prather's book offers practical leadership techniques, with a focus on creating an environment for innovation to take root. After all, you can't just hold a meeting and say "let's get innovative."

Instead, Prather packs straightforward ideas for fostering creativity, offering the reader actual exercises to try out. For example, instead of

simply suggesting a brainstorming session, Prather digs into the "how" of brainstorming, including common hindrances, and suggests ways to break through obstacles toward creative problem solving.

This tightly written, focused book is full of such tips, making it easy for a manager to apply concepts quickly and, hopefully, effectively.

That said, this book isn't a cure-all fix for stagnant companies. Innovation requires deep thinking that goes beyond simple exercises and brainstorming sessions. It's tough, which is why so few companies can truly be called "innovative."

Of course, the first step is simply thinking about innovation, and this is where this book shines. Featuring checklists, exercises and clearly defined concepts, Prather does a good job of demystifying innovation and preparing the reader for the next step: implementation. **HR**

*Jay Somerset is Toronto-based freelance writer and editor.*

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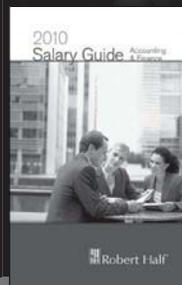
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When you're the chair, you're expected to be in charge. It's helpful to acquire some knowledge of the fundamental rules of parliamentary procedure, such as debating protocol, closing off a debate and voting procedures. To consistently run effective and efficient meetings you need to adhere to some basic rules.

“In addition to enhancing your reputation as a leader and a person worth listening to, gaining a reputation as a person who runs effective meetings will increase your self-confidence.”

**Carefully review the agenda.** Identify potential problems (especially possible personal confrontations among attendees) and decide how to deal with them.

**Control the seating.** Arrange for people who might argue with each other to sit on the same side of the table to minimize confrontations.

**Start on time.** Even if only one other person has arrived. It won't take long for the number of latecomers to diminish with each meeting.

**Communicate goals.** Open with a brief statement of what you expect to accomplish, announce the time of adjournment and stick to it.

**Mitigate distractions.** Ask if anyone is expecting any emergency messages on their cell phones or PDAs and ask them to turn them to vibrate and leave the room if they must answer. Instruct everyone else to turn off their devices.

**New business.** Determine if anyone has anything new to add to the agenda. If there isn't enough time to deal with an item of new business, defer the item or an existing one. Announce the decision right away.

**Be confident and enthusiastic.** But also keep the meeting moving, on schedule and on topic. Watch your tone of voice and body language; you always want to convey an image of leadership.

**Watch timing.** Keep breaks to a minimum but never go more than two hours without one.

**Listen intently to all speakers** and don't let anyone dominate the discussion.

**Be reserved.** Don't introduce your own thoughts until it's obvious no one else is going to raise your points.

**Encourage participation.** You want everyone involved but never force anyone into speaking.

**Keep a record.** Articulate when the minutes will be distributed and stick to it. Make

sure they clearly outline the actions required and who is responsible for the actions being taken.

**Make your own notes of key points.** Don't rely on the accuracy of the minutes.

In addition to enhancing your reputation as a leader and a person worth listening to, gaining a reputation as a person who runs effective meetings will increase your self-confidence. **HR**

*Lyman MacInnis is a Toronto-based executive coach and author of *How to Succeed in Anything by Really Trying* (Random House Canada, 2009).*

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## TAMING THE E-BEAST

**W**e're in the midst of an epidemic deficit of focus and attention. Ned Hallowell, psychiatrist, author and founder of the Hallowell Center for Cognitive and Emotional Health in Sudbury, Mass., began his career treating attention deficit disorder (ADD) in kids.

Hallowell has found that managers and professionals in the 21st century suffer from a newly recognized neurological phenomenon that he calls Attention Deficit Trait (ADT). "It isn't an illness; it's purely a response to the hyperkinetic environment in which we live... people with ADT have difficulty staying organized,

setting priorities and managing time, and they feel a constant low level of panic and guilt." Hallowell finds that the benefits of multi-tasking are illusionary and a big part of the ADT epidemic of the last 10 years. Many people believe that younger generations raised in an environment of juggling multiple technologies at once are better at multi-tasking but studies have shown that to be false. Stress research has found that shifting attention every few minutes to respond to incoming electronic messages increases levels of cortisol (a stress hormone), which decreases memory function. Studies by Glenn Wilson, a psychologist at London University's King College, showed an average IQ loss of 10 points among 1,100 electronic communicators who were flipping back and forth between tasks, conversations and their electronic messages.

### Can you afford to lose 10 IQ points?

I know I can't. By point of comparison, marijuana smoking causes only a four-point IQ drop. So, you'd have to miss a whole night of sleep in order to get to the significant 10-point drop caused by the technology distractions measured in the study.

### Tips to reducing our ADT

1. Turn off all pop-ups, texting, instant messages and notifications. Check your messages at a few set times per day and stick to a strict time budget. Review them all quickly then prioritize them.
2. Train your colleagues, boss and fellow team members not to expect instant responses to electronic messages. If the issue is urgent, suggest that they phone you or visit.
3. Set clear boundaries around when you will not be available and won't be responding to electronic messages. Employ the 7:00 to 7:00 Rule; you're not responding to electronic messages between 7 p.m. and 7 a.m. on days off, holidays or weekends. If you do want to take care of some messages during those hours, compose them and set them to send during your work hours to avoid the perception of breaking your own rule.
4. Don't leave messages sitting in your inbox. File, delete or reply to all of them within the time frame you've allocated.
5. Turn off all communication devices when you're in meetings.
6. Avoid circular discussions. Pick up the phone and arrange a meeting.
7. Establish ground rules or protocols within your management team, colleagues and boss on how you use technology.

It's easy to slip into bad habits when using today's electronic tools. Take a step back periodically and re-evaluate whether you're using technology effectively. Take a short quiz at [www.hrpa.ca/hrprofessional/ebeast](http://www.hrpa.ca/hrprofessional/ebeast) to help you determine if the E-beast is on a destructive path through your life. **HR**

*Jim Clemmer is a keynote speaker, workshop leader and management team developer on practical leadership. His new book is Growing @ the Speed of Change: Your Inspir-actional How-To Guide For Leading Yourself and Others through Constant Change.*



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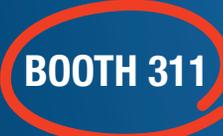
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