

The Higher Education Workplace

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We Are Not the Enemy

Positioning HR as a Trusted Ally

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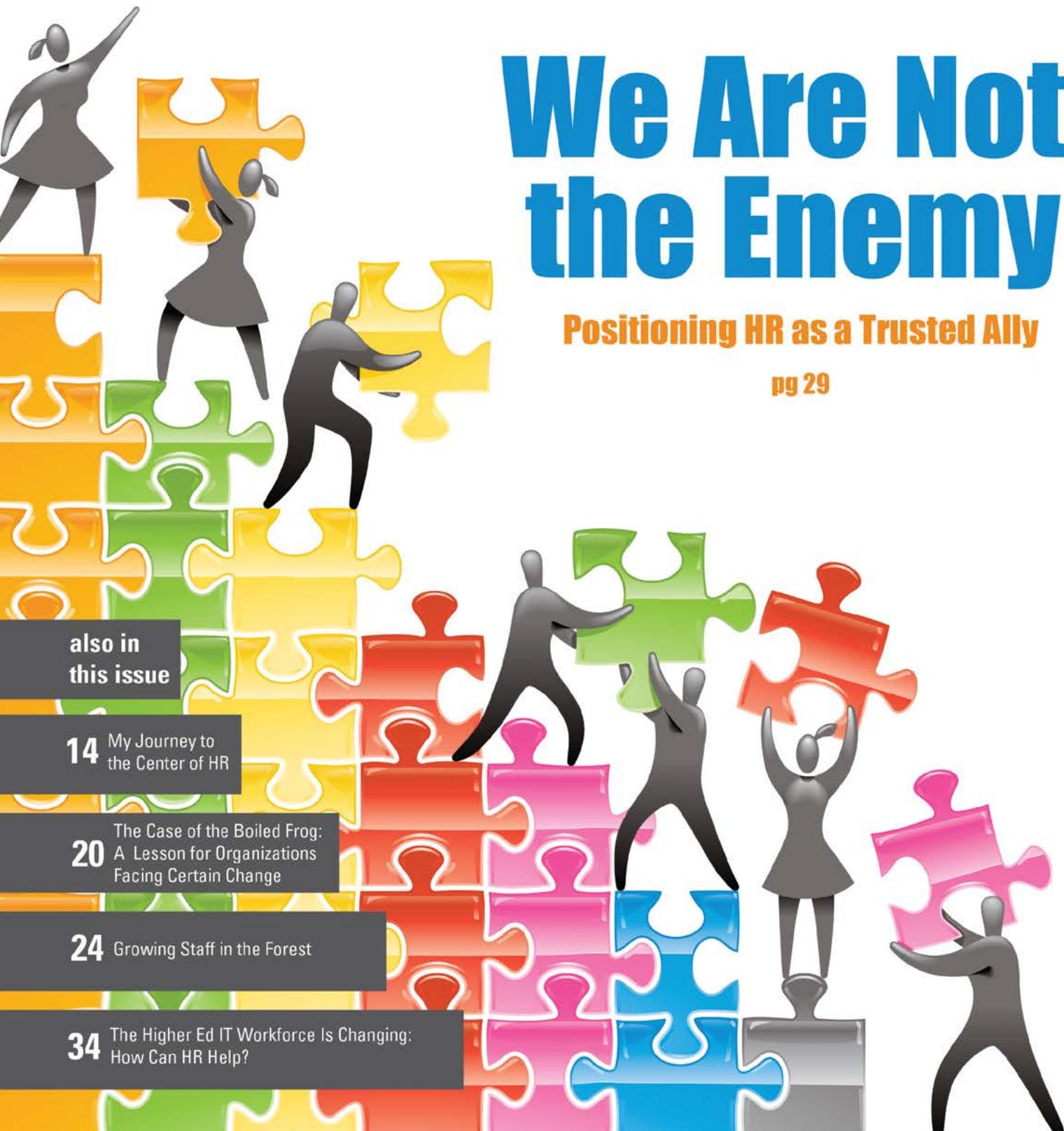
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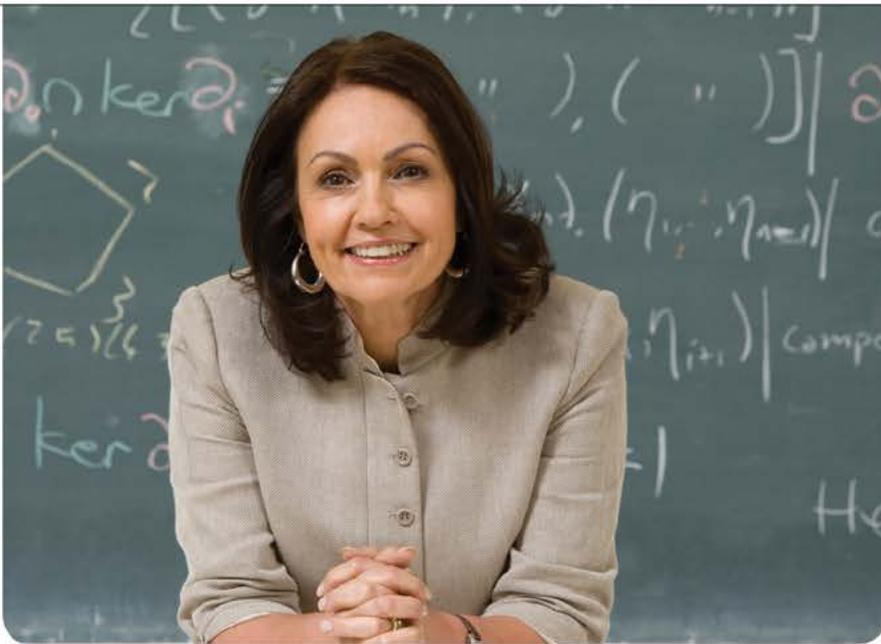
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HR as Organization Leader

By Andy Brantley, CUPA-HR President and Chief Executive Officer



There are many opinions regarding the work HR must view as essential in order to be relevant now and into the future. This is often difficult to absorb as we rush about our day dealing with the latest legislative or regulatory compliance challenge, the challenges of recruiting and retaining talented individuals, balancing benefits budgets, etc. The bottom line is that our future relevance will be less about the support roles we perform and more about the leadership roles that are integral to organizational success. In other words, it's not ok to be "just" an HR leader.

I am one of the rare HR professionals with undergraduate and graduate degrees focused in human resources. I left college with a great foundation in the core areas of human resources ... ready to tackle the most challenging employment, compensation or benefits challenges of the organization that hired me. Little did I know at the time that my academic work was significantly enhanced by my working experiences as a resident assistant and graduate resident, a conference manager during the summers and a leader of a prominent campus student organization.

I began my career in human resources at the Chrysler Corporation. As I learned my responsibilities as a labor relations representative, it was imperative for me to know the functions of all the core areas of HR. Knowing these core areas was critically important, but I quickly realized that my success or failure was not just based on my knowledge and understanding of HR.

When I was 27 years old, the University of North Carolina at Asheville took a risk by selecting me as its director of human resources. I was young, but eager to learn and contribute. I worked with my staff to ensure that we all had the core technical HR knowledge necessary to meet and exceed the expectations of the campus community. I also had almost daily interaction with the chancellor and vice chancellors and served on several campus-wide committees (higher education loves committees!).

My next career experience, as director of HR at Davidson College, was transformative for me. I was given the opportunity to design new benefits plans, new classification/compensation systems, redesign recruitment and selection processes, implement a new HR information system and incorporate meaningful performance planning and review into the culture for the first time. The core HR competence that I developed for myself and instilled in my HR colleagues was the baseline that opened the door for broader, more meaningful leadership of the entire campus. My position as chief HR officer at the University of Georgia provided similar opportunities on a much larger scale.

The common theme through each of these experiences is that I made it my business to know the business in which HR was functioning. I did not wait to be "anointed or appointed" to committees or task forces. I asked questions, expressed interest and worked hard when given the opportunity to participate and lead. The HR organization that my colleagues and I created was not "HR in a box," but rather an integral part of the life and leadership of the campus.

Are you and your HR colleagues viewed as critical to the development and execution of your organization's mission and key work? How can the core work of HR be used to emphasize that those in HR are willing, responsible, well-informed, effective, creative leaders? I encourage you to use the CUPA-HR Learning Framework (www.cupahr.org/learning/framework.aspx) to help define the work, and the leadership responsibilities, for you and your HR colleagues.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andy Brantley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Andy Brantley | CUPA-HR President and CEO

Working Differently

Office hours? There's no such thing. A desk? Only if you want one. A set schedule? Not here.

This is the philosophy of the Missouri Research and Education Network (MOREnet), an operating unit of the University of Missouri System that provides Internet and IT services to higher education, K-12 schools, libraries and other affiliates. For the past two years, the organization has been operating a pilot of the results-only work environment (ROWE) model, wherein employees focus on results rather than the number of hours worked. At MOREnet, there are no required office hours or meetings, and employees can work whenever and wherever is most convenient for them (with certain ground rules) and are encouraged to find the work/life balance that best meets their needs.

Why ROWE?

In 2010, MOREnet endured a loss of state appropriations (representing roughly 45 percent of its operating revenues), a 158 percent increase in membership fees, layoffs and a hiring stop, a physical relocation, and a mandate to become self-funded. Among the many repercussions of this disruptive change was a decrease in employee morale and engagement. MOREnet had always been a stable organization and employees, whose average tenure was nearly 12 years, had never experienced a shake-up of this magnitude. MOREnet's executive director, John Gillispie (who came on board in January 2010 after the organization's first and only executive director retired the year prior), knew he needed to be truly innovative in order to overcome the funding challenges the organization faced as well as hold on to his best and brightest employees. Enter the ROWE model.

ROWE has been used in the past by companies like Best Buy, Gap, Banana Republic and several smaller businesses to motivate, engage and retain their best people. With ROWE, employees are free to work when, how and where they'd like. Companies and organizations stop paying employees to simply show up to work and instead pay them for producing results. ROWE is not a traditional flexible schedule or telework arrangement. It is a way for employees to navigate the everyday demands of life while also meeting the expectations of the organization. It's not easy to implement, as it requires culture change on a grand scale. And it's not for every workplace. But for MOREnet, it helped create a high-performance, high-commitment organization that has been able to flourish despite the challenges it has faced.

How It Works

At MOREnet, exempt employees have no core office hours and are able to choose when and where they work. In other words, says Gillispie, "they get to work in whatever way allows them to produce the best results." For some, that means working from 6 a.m. until 1 p.m. each day. For others, it means taking Fridays off. For others still, evening work best suits their situation. Many employees work different schedules each week. And some, like Gillispie himself, prefer the eight-to-five, Monday-Friday office setting (MOREnet provides traditional office space for all employees, as well as meeting rooms).

There are only a couple of ground rules: 1) every employee must be reachable and respond as if he or she were in the office or must let coworkers know when he or she will be reachable and/or returning calls or e-mails, and 2) the call center must take calls from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday (and yes, even call center employees work from where they want). The ROWE model at MOREnet applies to all employees, but exempt employees and non-exempt employees are required to be treated slightly differently due to federal wage and hour laws. Non-exempt team members are required to track and report their hours and paid leave time and are expected to work a 40-hour week; however, they still enjoy the benefit of working where they want.

Gillispie admits that for those who have never worked in a ROWE organization, the thought of giving employees complete control over their work time and effort can be unsettling. But, he says, "if you have the right people working for you and the right performance metrics in place and establish clear goals and expectations, it may well be the best thing you could ever do for your organization."

And although some may think that this type of work environment provides safe harbor for poor performers, Gillispie refutes that notion outright. "I believe that a ROWE employer attracts the best of the best talent. Only high-performing, self-motivated, dedicated individuals will succeed in a ROWE workplace. What I've found is that poor performers will usually self-select out before the need arises to let them go. They usually realize early on that they are unable to compete in such a high-performing, results-oriented organization."

Benefits of ROWE

Since the ROWE model was implemented in 2013, MOREnet has seen a significant decrease in turnover, a decrease in reported sick time, a decrease in reported vacation time, fewer unplanned absences, and an increase in employee engagement and job satisfaction (as measured by climate surveys). Morale is high, productivity is up, organizational goals are being met or exceeded, and costs are down.

Employees have also realized many benefits. By being able to work on their own terms, many employees report saving hundreds of dollars per month — by using less gas, by not having to purchase professional clothes, by not having to utilize childcare services, by being able to exercise regularly and eat at home, etc. “Our employees absolutely love this new way of working,” says Gillispie. “And it shows in the work they’re producing, their loyalty and the way they’re interacting with our customers. Our people really do love to come (or *not* come!) to work.”

Challenges of ROWE

Although Gillispie is a champion of the ROWE model, he does admit that this type of work environment is not without its challenges. For starters, he says, “managers have traditionally been taught to manage time instead of results, so there must be a focused, sustained effort to train managers on how to nurture and manage a results-based culture.” And because this type of work arrangement is foreign to so many, “it requires a sharp learning curve — for employees, leaders and the organization itself.” There’s also the upfront investment in new technology required to pave the way for a work-from-anywhere approach. And onboarding can be a challenge simply from a logistical perspective. Additionally, many types of performance management systems won’t work within a ROWE workplace. “You may need to grow your own in order to measure what you really need to measure,” says Gillispie.

If you’re looking into a ROWE model for your organization, Gillispie suggests partnering with human resources, risk management and legal counsel to address any liability or other compliance issues that may arise.

How Can HR Help Support Flex Work?

The University of Missouri System’s human resources organization has been integral to the success of MOREnet’s unique work arrangement. From helping envision what the ROWE model might look like at MOREnet to serving as

a source of information around compliance-related issues to helping train managers around this new work style and more, HR has offered support and expertise all along the way. Says Jill Wood, director of talent management for the University of Missouri System, “Offering flexible work arrangements, whether on the scale of ROWE or something smaller, can have a significant impact on employee productivity, engagement, morale and loyalty, and can be a huge draw for talent.”

Wood adds that there are several ways in which HR can support and encourage flex work environments. “We can articulate the benefits of such an arrangement to employees and the organization; provide training to managers and employees around flex work options and considerations, managing remote employees, and setting goals and expectations in this type of environment; be a role model within our organizations by offering flex work in our own departments; and last but not least, be open to exploring new options when it comes to how work gets done.”

That last one is a biggie, says Gillispie. “When I brought the ROWE idea to the table, I wasn’t immediately shut down with a ‘this will never work’ speech. Instead, we engaged in a ‘how can we make this work’ discussion.”

Bringing Out the Best in People

In today’s mobile, technological, multitasking world, we need to think differently about how we get work done. Just because an employee is present in an office eight hours a day five days a week doesn’t necessarily mean that individual is producing results. Different people have different work styles — some are early to rise, some are night owls; some prefer a desk and a computer, some would rather work on a tablet on a park bench; some need routine, some would rather take things as they come.

By leveraging employees’ different work styles, habits and preferences, MOREnet has created an employee-driven, high-performing, results-oriented work environment. “The ROWE model is based on autonomy, accountability and trust,” says Gillispie. “Our team members appreciate the freedom we give them to work how they choose and the trust we place in them to deliver results. And because of this, we get their very best efforts each and every day.” 

Creative Ways to Increase Workforce Diversity

With student demographics becoming more and more diverse, colleges and universities across the country are focusing increasing attention on workforce diversity. In addition to traditional diversity recruiting efforts and long-term strategic plans, many institutions are also using smaller scale approaches to bring diverse talent on board.

Two such approaches are Duquesne University's Minority Development Internship Program and University of Rochester's Teen Health and Success Partnership. These unique, creative, relatively inexpensive programs are making a real impact in bringing about culture change and diversifying the workforce on these two campuses.

Duquesne University's Minority Development Internship Program

In its 2003-08 strategic plan, Duquesne identified a need to promote a more diverse and inclusive workforce and workplace that supports a successful C-suite succession and the professional development of women and minorities. In 2007, Duquesne's human resources department created the Minority Development Internship Program (MDIP) to help meet these needs.

What Is It?

MDIP provides full-time temporary employment opportunities to unemployed and underemployed college-educated minorities. Interns are placed in various departments within the university's management and business and enrollment services divisions and provided with tools and resources (including managerial training) to help them hone their skills and grow professionally. Internships can be either a one- or two-year appointment. The goal of the program is permanent placement of the intern within the university by the end of the appointment.

How Does It Work?

Human resources works with the participating departments to identify projects or short-term assignments on which interns can work. Interns are then placed for a three- to six-month rotation in one department before being moved to another department for the same amount of time. Each intern can potentially work in up to eight different departments over the course of a two-year

appointment, providing participants with exposure to many different areas of the university. Interns are evaluated after each rotation in several job performance areas — attitude, dependability, flexibility, quality of work, quantity of work and attendance/punctuality. In addition, intern supervisors provide a summary review, goals for the next 30 days and recommendations for improvement. Areas in need of improvement are addressed through training and mentoring.

Outcomes

Since the program's introduction, eight of the 10 interns have obtained permanent employment at Duquesne (one is still active in the program and the other pursued a different career opportunity). Expanded in 2010, the program now includes an internship track designed to build clerical skills, and three of the four interns who have participated in this program have obtained full-time employment at the university. Permanent positions filled by former interns include account analyst in the office of the comptroller, HR administrator, assistant resident director, administrative assistant and assistant director of enrollment services.

"From an employer's perspective, the benefits of investing in the MDIP diversity initiative have been significant," says Marla Bradford, senior employment recruiter at Duquesne. "It has helped the university build relationships with the business community and has strengthened Duquesne's commitment to endorse an inclusive workplace culture that values diversity and attracts, develops and retains talented employees of all backgrounds."

Adds Duquesne President Charles Dougherty, "We recognize the importance of increasing opportunities for individuals in underrepresented groups, and the Minority Development Internship Program helps us to do just that. I'm incredibly proud of the successes of our interns and our efforts to create opportunities for all members of our community."

University of Rochester's Teen Health and Success Partnership

The University of Rochester Teen Health and Success Partnership was created to help improve the Rochester City high school graduation rate, increase urban youth

inclusion cultivates excellence

college enrollment, and increase urban youth exposure to academic and healthcare careers. The program also serves to create a pipeline of diverse professionals in the Rochester area and to diversify the university's present workforce.

What Is It?

The Teen Health and Success Partnership provides job opportunities at the University of Rochester (UR) for urban youth at risk of dropping out of high school. Through the program, teens are assimilated into the UR workforce and are provided with opportunities for employment advancement and access to UR resources. The program collaborates with Rochester community agencies and uses UR employment as an incentive for area students to graduate from high school and enter college or a trade school.

"This program is not an internship or co-op, but rather a continuous employment opportunity for Rochester-area high school students," says Dr. Suzanne Piotrowski, program director. "It provides long-term advocacy, academic resources, life skills development and job training to underrepresented minority youth."

How Does It Work?

More than just an employment opportunity for teens, the program provides participants with the many resources offered to UR employees. "The word in the halls of Rochester City high schools is that UR is a great place to work," says Piotrowski. As employees of the university, program participants have access to healthcare services, libraries and computer labs, counseling services, college application preparation support, academic tutoring, leadership and management skills workshops, and campus social, cultural and athletic events.

In addition to providing support and opportunities to minority teens, the program has helped to increase the diversity of UR's workforce. The employed teens come from many diverse cultures, and several are bi- or trilingual. Ninety-nine percent self-identify as non-Caucasian, and all of the employed students are the youngest within their departments. "Age and socioeconomic diversity are the prominent institutional cultural changes we've observed as these teens interface with their coworkers, worksite supervisors, medical center patients, customers, and undergraduate and graduate students, thus helping to expand UR's cultural knowledge and understanding," says Piotrowski.

The program also provides opportunities for UR staff and faculty to develop professional relationships with urban youth and provide life transforming opportunities and relationships.

Integral Role of HR

Although the program is administered through the University of Rochester Medical Center, UR's human resources team has played a crucial role. "Employment of teens in healthcare and university campus settings requires careful attention to child labor laws, OSHA standards, HIPAA requirements, and worksite supervisor and coworker training and support," says Piotrowski. "We collaborate closely with human resources in all these areas."

HR has also assisted in the strategic development of workflow, communication and support/resource protocols and created a tailored orientation process for the teens.

Outcomes

Since its inception in 2009, the program has grown from 11 to 144 employed Rochester urban teens. Forty-one UR departments employ these teens. "The students are actively contributing to UR's daily operations while successfully achieving their academic and employment goals," says Piotrowski. "The students enhance UR daily operations by providing excellent customer service, enhancing both the age and cultural diversity of the UR workforce, improving worksite spirit de corp with youthful energy, providing a budget-efficient workforce, and providing opportunities for adult staff to mentor and supervise."

The high school graduation rate for UR employed teens is 100 percent compared to the 45 percent overall graduation rate in the Rochester City School District. Eighty-three percent of the program participants are currently attending college or trade school. Sixty-two percent of the employed teens have been promoted in their employment positions, with the annual employment retention rate at 82 percent.

Nationwide, few healthcare facilities or universities employ teens on a continuing basis. Because of this, Piotrowski says UR's Teen Health and Success Partnership could become a national model. Program staff are already working with healthcare systems in Buffalo and Syracuse to see if the program could work on their campuses. 

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A Grassroots Approach to Wellness at Babson College

“No money? No problem!” This was the mantra of Babson College’s HR team after being unable to secure funding for a new wellness program on campus a few years back. Instead of abandoning the idea, HR got innovative. And thanks to the efforts of two dedicated and driven HR staff members, Babson now boasts a robust health and wellness program.

Prior to 2009, Babson’s workplace wellness efforts had fallen flat. Programs were not well attended, participation was low and offerings were slim. That year, the HR team decided to revisit the topic of wellness on campus and conducted a survey to determine what employees were looking for in a workplace wellness program. Armed with the results of the survey and a recommended plan of action, HR went to the budget office to ask for support.

“Unfortunately at that time, due to the recession, there was really no wiggle room in the budget for anything extra,” says Kate O’Leary, manager of compensation and recognition at Babson. “It was disappointing, but we felt strongly about reinstating a wellness program, and the campus community was eager for new and different wellness opportunities, so we went back to the drawing board.”

By cold-calling and negotiating with several local vendors and fitness instructors and tapping into Babson’s own population, HR was able to bring a variety of wellness programs to campus for a reduced rate or free. “Instead of offering monetary incentives for employees, we provided the convenience factor, which can be a huge motivator,” says O’Leary. “Through the wellness survey, we found that our employees wanted to be able to do a quick workout on their lunch break without having to leave campus. They wanted opportunities to try new and different kinds

of exercise routines. They wanted variety in educational programming. They valued a holistic approach to wellness. So bringing these kinds of wellness offerings to where they are, instead of putting the onus on them to go out and find them, has really driven participation.”

For the first couple of years, participants in exercise classes or wellness seminars were charged a nominal fee to attend. The money that was collected went back into the wellness budget to build funds for more and better programs. Over the next few years, the program evolved and money was secured so that all offerings are now free to

college employees. Offerings include a couch-to-5K program; a steps challenge; a swim program; Zumba, yoga and boot camp classes; weightlifting; meditation; tai chi; and a variety of educational seminars and workshops.



“In addition to our formal offerings, we encourage employees to be creative when it comes to wellness by holding walking meetings, taking a walk at lunch and offering healthier food choices around campus,” says O’Leary. “Our wellness programming, which encompasses physical, mental, emotional, nutritional, spiritual, environmental and financial wellness, acts as the driver in creating the foundation for a healthy work environment.”

What started as a grassroots effort by Babson’s human resources team is now a branded, marketed, fully funded wellness program — Be Well @ Babson. “We’re proud of how far we’ve come with our wellness offerings over the past few years,” says O’Leary. “The big lesson here is ‘Where there’s a will, there’s a way!’ Wellness programs don’t need to be extravagant or expensive to create a value-add. Work with what you’ve got, and you may be surprised at the end result!” 

Student Workers and the ACA

By Josh Ulman and Christi Layman



The Affordable Care Act has posed some unique implementation challenges for higher education. While much of the press over the last few years has focused on higher education's struggle to determine how best to calculate adjunct hours under the ACA, the impact of the ACA on student workers is another pivotal issue for colleges and universities that is rapidly gaining attention.

Under Section 4980H of the Internal Revenue Code, which was added by the ACA, large employers (those with 50 or more employees) must provide full-time employees with health insurance coverage or possibly face tax penalties. The ACA defines a "full-time employee" as one who works 30 or more hours per week. Thus, the law requires colleges and universities to offer health insurance coverage to student workers if the student works 30 hours or more per week for at least three months (though the agencies enforcing the ACA have provided a limited exemption for students on federal and state work-study programs). This requirement is known as the 30-hour rule.

Student workers typically obtain healthcare through ACA-regulated student health plans offered by the college

or university, which institutions may subsidize through their financial aid programs or provide at no cost as part of a graduate school award package, or through their parents' health coverage (until they are 26). Requiring schools to also offer healthcare to student workers under an employee plan is redundant in the vast majority of cases. Yet, the burdens of offering students enrollment under employer plans and complications of COBRA and other requirements can impose significant costs on the institution.

This article will examine higher education's reaction to the ACA's 30-hour rule on student employment, the IRS's current position on ACA coverage for student workers, and what changes to the ACA may be forthcoming.

Higher Ed's Reaction

The impact of the ACA's 30-hour rule on student employment has moved to the forefront of college and university employment policy priorities with the ACA's employer mandate going into effect on January 1, 2015, requiring employers with more than 99 employees to provide health insurance to at least 70 percent of their

full-time workers. Starting in 2016, employers will need to offer coverage to at least 95 percent of full-time workers.

On the one hand, campus jobs provide students with funding to help support their educational progress and with valuable work experience. On the other hand, opening employee health plans up to students will impose substantial administrative and financial burdens on institutions. The cost of offering, enrolling and terminating coverage, including offering COBRA, for short-term student workers could be significant, even for small and mid-sized universities where student employees can still number in the thousands.

The ACA also imposes an additional administrative burden on institutions by requiring them to track the work hours of students to ensure that they are not exceeding the 30-hour threshold. This can be particularly challenging for jobs where employees have been paid a stipend of a fixed amount and hours have not been traditionally tracked, such as resident hall assistants, newspaper editors or team managers for athletic teams.

In the face of increasingly tight budget constraints, many institutions feel they have no choice but to cut student work opportunities to avoid additional costs of offering students coverage under the employee plan. Thus far, at least 122 schools have announced new policies capping hours for students and faculty. These schools range from large to small and public to private.

The latest institution to make headlines for its new policy is the University of Colorado at Boulder (CU). CU recently announced that it is limiting the number of hours students can work on campus. Like other institutions that have made this decision, at CU all types of student jobs will be affected by the limited hours, from teaching and research assistants to student health aides and library staff. The new policy for the Boulder campus limits students to 50 hours every two weeks, or 25 hours per week during the fall and spring semesters. The CU policy will allow students that work on campus over the summer months to work up to 40 hours per week, since the university uses a weekly average over the entire year to calculate eligibility for employer-provided healthcare. The university has estimated that it could cost more than \$1 million to provide employer-sponsored health insurance to student employees who regularly work more than 30 hours a week.

IRS's Current Position

CUPA-HR has had an ongoing dialogue with the Obama administration and the IRS since May 2010 on a variety of ACA-related issues. From early on we cautioned that the employer mandate, if applied to students, would likely cause colleges and universities to curb hours for student workers.

Many institutions have been forced to cut student work opportunities to avoid ACA-related healthcare costs.

In March and July 2013, CUPA-HR, along with the American Council on Education and other higher ed associations, engaged the IRS directly with regard to student employment as it began drafting implementing regulations. We explained that students work primarily to earn funds to pay for their education or related living expenses; that full-time students generally have access to health coverage through their parents or ACA-compliant student health plans; and that their relationship with the college and university is primarily academic. In our view, applying the ACA to student workers makes little sense and hurts students and higher ed institutions alike.

CUPA-HR also described the unique burdens campuses will face in tracking student work hours in order to comply. While students rarely hold a single job on campus where hours exceed the ACA 30-hour threshold, there are instances where students may combine one or more jobs that together may exceed the threshold. Additionally, tracking hours on multiple jobs presents a difficult issue and may result in limiting such opportunities. Many students are not paid on an hourly basis, so their hours are not tracked. Examples include resident assistants, graduate assistants, undergraduate student government officers and students in an internship.

Therefore, CUPA-HR asked the IRS for three distinct safe harbors. First, we asked for a "nature of work" safe harbor, which would track existing rules and guidance under the Fair Labor Standards Act in the Department of Labor's Field Operations Handbook for certain sections pertaining to participation in extracurricular activities, trainees/internships, students training for certain paramedical careers, graduate student research assistants, and those participating in bona fide educational programs, such as resident hall assistants or dormitory counselors. Second, we

asked for a “work-study” safe harbor, where the IRS would exclude from calculations under ACA Section 4980H the hours worked by a student as part of a work-study program. Third, we asked that students engaged in work as part of an internship or cooperative educational program sponsored by a college or university be deemed per se seasonal employees.

The University of Colorado has estimated that it could cost more than \$1 million to provide employer-sponsored health insurance to student employees.

In February 2014, the IRS released its guidance and granted a “work-study” safe harbor, where the hours worked by a student as part of a federal work-study program or similar program of a state or political subdivision thereof are excluded from calculations under ACA Section 4980H. Unfortunately, the IRS stopped there and did not include any other safe harbors for student workers.

What Now?

CUPA-HR continues to engage with the IRS about granting the requested safe harbors and for sub-regulatory guidance that provides alternative methods for calculating hours for student workers paid via salary or stipend, particularly graduate student research assistants and resident assistants. While outcomes are uncertain, the IRS has been responsive.

We are also working with members of Congress on possible legislative solutions. CUPA-HR is actively supporting two tracks of legislation that would provide relief to colleges and universities from the burden of unnecessary and duplicative healthcare costs associated with covering student workers. The first track would exempt from the employer mandate full-time students working at the college or university in which they are enrolled.

Rep. Mark Meadows’ (R-NC) Student Worker Exemption Act of 2014 (H.R. 5262) and Rep. Michael R. Turner’s (R-OH) Student Job Protection Act of 2014 (H.R. 5298) will both provide much needed clarity and relief for colleges and universities with regard to the treatment of student workers under the ACA. CUPA-HR and other higher ed

associations have endorsed both bills, and both are gaining support as awareness of the issue grows. We expect the bills to be reintroduced in the upcoming 114th Congress, with fair chances of support and passage in both the House and Senate with increased and new Republican majorities.

The second track of legislation would increase from 30 to 40 the number of hours an employee must work to be considered full-time. The Save American Workers Act (HR 2575) passed the U.S. House this Congress with 18 Democrats supporting the bill. Currently its prospects for passage in the Senate are bleak. However, when Republicans take over the Senate

majority in 2015, the legislation is expected to have significant support. In fact, following the November 4 elections which swept Senate Republicans back into power, the likely new Senate majority leader, Mitch McConnell, expressed that one of his top priorities will be changing the ACA’s “deeply unpopular” 30-hour rule.

In the meantime, CUPA-HR will continue to advocate for changes to the employer mandate and will continue to provide resources to help institutions navigate the complexities of the Affordable Care Act. 

Josh Ulman is chief government relations officer for CUPA-HR. He can be reached at julman@cupahr.org.

Christi Layman is manager of government relations for CUPA-HR. She can be reached at clayman@cupahr.org.

To find more news and information about the Affordable Care Act and how it impacts higher ed institutions, visit www.cupahr.org/advocacy. And join us on January 13 for the webinar “The Affordable Care Act on Campus in 2015: Are You Prepared?” Register at www.cupahr.org/events/webinars.

You can also view CUPA-HR Chief Government Relations Officer Josh Ulman’s presentation from the CUPA-HR Annual Conference 2014, which touches on several aspects of the ACA, at www.cupahr.org/advocacy/acon2014-ulman.aspx.

THE CHRONICLE of Higher Education

Dear CUPA-HR Members,

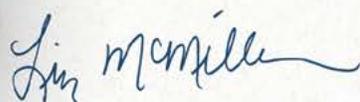
As a Mary Ann Wersch Premier Partner, we value the opportunity to work together with the CUPA-HR community to advance the conversation around diversity on campus.

The Chronicle is proud to partner with CUPA-HR to examine diversity, equity, and inclusion on campus. This year, we hosted diversity panel discussions at CUPA-HR's Eastern Region and Annual Conference & Expo, offering candid insights from higher-education experts on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

The Chronicle is also proud to co-develop the Share Your Story multimedia initiative with CUPA-HR, built on the active engagement of HR professionals in sharing their insightful experiences on DEI.

Thank you for your participation on this very important topic, and for playing an important role in shaping the future for your campus. We look forward to further examining diversity with you through these discussions and by continuing to provide news, data, and hiring solutions to further your efforts.

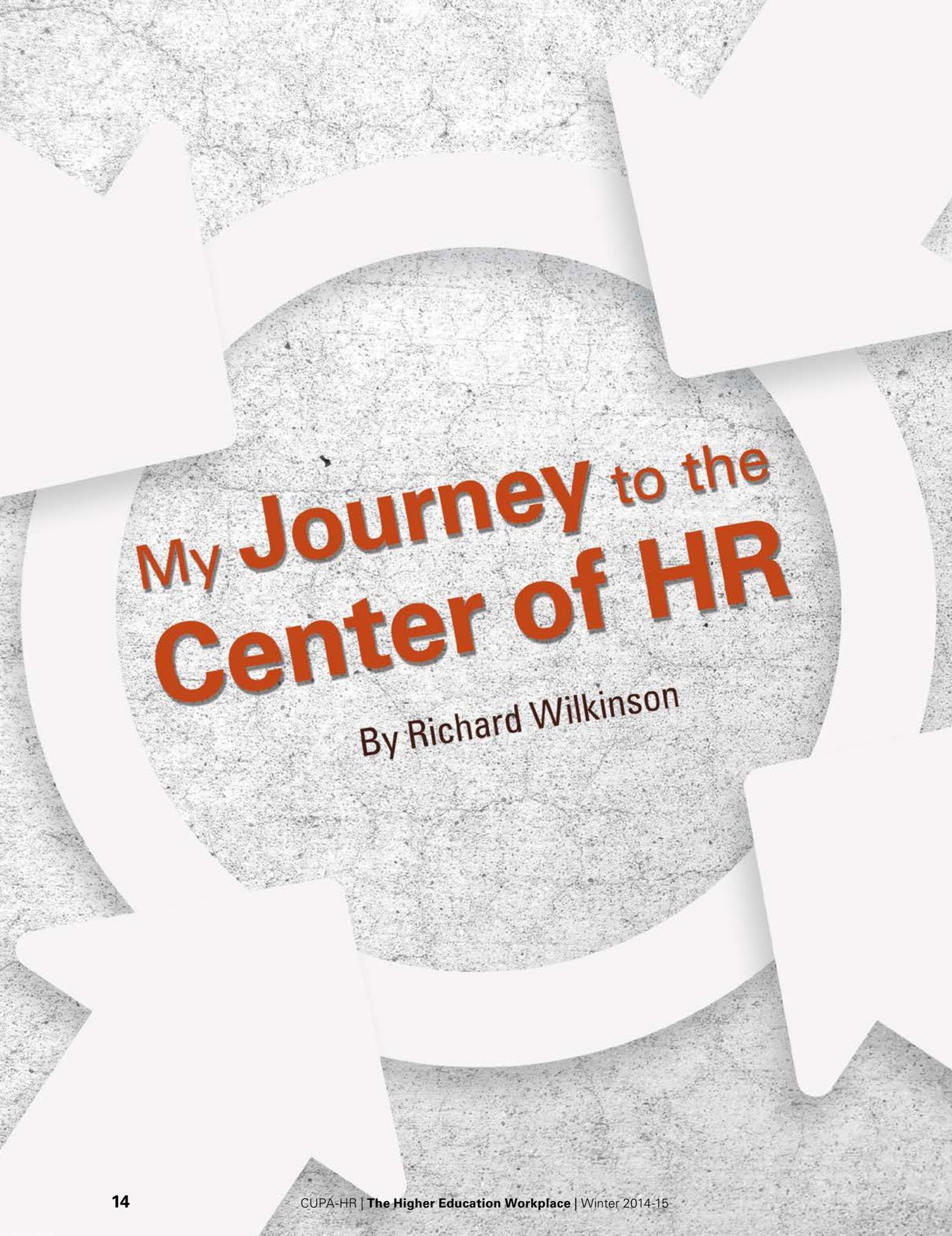
Best regards,



Liz McMillen
Editor



Mireille Grangenais
Publisher



**My Journey to the
Center of HR**

By Richard Wilkinson

“Human resources practices do not impact the culture of an institution; they are the culture.” – Peter Block in the book Stewardship

What principles underpin HR practices? From what wellsprings of thought do we draw the certainty for what we do? What ultimately is the purpose of our work? My journey to unearth these answers began in 1995, when I returned to school to study organization development. At that time I was already certified as an SPHR, had a master’s degree and had been serving for 10 years as the HR director for the City of Redmond, Washington. School called to me as a means to reenergize and reimagine my career.

In 1997, toward the end of the academic program, I heard Dr. Margaret Wheatley, author of the popular book *Leadership and the New Science*, speak at an event. She posed the question, “What is the covenant promise your group makes to the organization as a whole?” In other words, for what fundamental purpose was human resources created? Despite my experience and credentials to date, I had yet to develop a succinct and convincing answer to that question.

The Principles of HR

Wheatley's question sent me on an internal voyage. First, I mulled what core principles informed HR practices. In my view, there are four: HR as catalyst, HR as cultural architect, HR as relationship builder and HR as the heart of the organization. Let's take a closer look.

Principle #1 — HR as Catalyst

We can be a catalyst for an organization's success through our focused attention on people and people issues.

How many studies do we need to validate the principle that people matter? At least as far back as the 1952 study of management practices in the Yorkshire mines we have known that people-centered practices yield the most productive outcomes. Fast forward to 2013 and Liz Wiseman's *The Multiplier Effect*. Same findings. Empowering practices yield productive outcomes at the rate of more than twice that of traditional, control-oriented approaches.

Consider further the multiplicity of practices where HR is (or can be) a catalyst for organizational success: sourcing talented candidates, facilitating effective selection and onboarding, encouraging management excellence, keeping compensation competitive, supporting employee growth and championing betterment of the organization. In all these ways HR practices pervade organizational life. The clarity and energy with which HR drives integration of these practices into the day-to-day workings of the organization has much to do with the impact we have.

Principle #2 — HR as Cultural Architect

We create an organization's culture through the people we hire, the policies we adopt, the decisions we make and the practices we follow. Employees embody the culture.

The premise behind this principle is simply that our decisions matter and have far-reaching ripple effects. Early in my graduate studies I realized that organizations are expressions of our collective imagination, for better or worse. Thus, the integrity and intentionality we bring to the kind of organization we are striving to create, that we exemplify in our day-to-day and long-term strategic HR work, is a product of many choices; but these are choices nonetheless, not inevitabilities.

Principle #3 — HR as Relationship Builder **We build and nurture relationships.**

Relationships and relationship building are the sine qua non of HR. I was emboldened to this principle by Wheatley's writing. In *Leadership and the New Science*, she wrote, "The participatory nature of reality has required scientists to focus their attention on relationships. No one can contemplate a system's view of life without becoming engrossed in relational dynamics. Nothing exists independent of its relationships, whether looking at subatomic particles or human affairs."

Principle #4 — HR as Heart of the Organization **We embody courage, compassion and commitment.**

Courage is needed to face squarely the multiplicity of challenges we encounter, both large and small, individual and system-wide. How willing are we to speak truth to power? To advocate for change when change is needed? Courage and imagination are needed to consider creative solutions to organizational practices and cultural conundrums. We must often draw on our courage in order to communicate with others information they may not wish to hear.

We need compassion to appreciate another's reality so that we can make more informed decisions. HR is such personal work. Wouldn't you want an HR business partner who's compassionate? Author and consultant Peter Block has this to say about HR: "We have 'human' in our name. We should take that seriously. We have to provide an alternative voice to the one that argues for control and consistency. Our function is to stand for the restoration of humanity in the systems world."

Our reliability manifests our commitment. In the end, can others count on us to deliver on our promises, to balance individual and organizational interests, and to do so with integrity and empathy?

The Purpose of HR

No sooner had I satisfied myself with the four principles essential to HR than I was compelled to ask what lay at the intersection of these four principles. In the four-box model in my mind, what was at its center? What bedrock supported the principles? What was our purpose? Here's where my thinking led me. HR's ultimate purpose is to build positive, productive organizations. All our endeavors must be directed toward this central aim — to create organizations where the human spirit thrives in furtherance of the mission. Shouldering HR with the responsibility of building positive, productive workplaces is a big leap from more conventional perspectives of HR's purpose. Yet, whether you buy this view of HR's purpose or not, and regardless of our understanding of the fundamental nature of our work, what we pursue and how we pursue it has enormous consequences for our institutions and their employees.

However, I resist defining “positive” too narrowly. I want others to find room to expand on the word in their own way. The word “positive” has a certain elasticity to it, yet suggests an optimistic trajectory. For me, “positive” synthesized in a single word my take on organization development as intentional, collaborative efforts to make the workplace better — that is, more humane, more productive and more resilient.

In this view, all HR professionals are, or can be, organization development practitioners. Over time my thinking about the meaning of “positive” has gravitated

HR’s ultimate purpose is to build positive, productive organizations; therefore, all of our endeavors must be directed toward this central aim — to create organizations where the human spirit thrives in furtherance of the mission.

toward the notion of healthy workplaces — ones that are energetic, synergistic, empathetic, conflict-positive and trusting. Still, seeing the essence of HR as building positive, productive workplaces has served me well in grounding my HR/OD practice on a meaningful foundation.

My motivation to share my principles and purpose of HR was prompted recently upon reading a former colleague’s book, *Reclaiming the Soul of Human Resources*. The author, Cathy Raymond, published the book in 2011, shortly after retiring from her position as the HR director for the City of Olympia (Washington). Raymond writes, “Human resources exists to nurture and protect the human spirit.

Everything we do — decisions we make, policies we write, contracts we negotiate, class and pay studies we conduct — all should be directed toward supporting and developing employees, so they can achieve their personal and professional best.”

When I read this it rekindled my belief in the strong organization development lens through which I view the work of HR. When I consider the objectives of so much of HR’s most constructive initiatives, whether it’s employee engagement, great places to work, retention, talent management, principled negotiations, being an employer-

of-choice, leadership development or strategic partnerships, we in HR are striving to create the conditions that unleash the talents of employees so that their best selves flourish in pursuit of the institution’s mission. We advocate, coach and train managers toward practices that foster employee growth and away from those that restrain performance.

In the end, I believe Raymond’s view is spot on — that HR is spirit work, and that we are about fostering hope and resourcefulness, about

helping make memorable our collective journey at work. And it is when we in HR embrace our purpose to build positive, productive organizations, to be a catalyst for success and a cultural architect, that we can lift the human spirit and in that way create organizations where we would want our children to work, where energy is unleashed, and where ingenuity is at play each and every day. 

Richard Wilkinson is associate vice chancellor for organizational effectiveness and development at the University of Washington Tacoma. He can be reached at rcwilki@uw.edu.

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With turnover low and a large pool of talent available, some institutions are unaware that there is a new war forming: the War for Stars. High performers and staff with scarce skills are in demand and are seizing opportunities outside of your institution.

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The Case of the Boiled Frog

A Lesson for Organizations Facing Certain Change

By Joel Myers

I'll never forget my high school biology teacher, Mr. Conwood. He told me that if you place a frog in a vat of water and apply heat very gradually, the frog will stay put. In fact, Mr. Conwood stated that the frog will actually allow itself to be boiled to death. He explained that the frog wouldn't detect the gradual increase in temperature in time to react. Gruesome, I know, but the inherent lesson is thought provoking.

A similar phenomenon occurs all too often in organizations when resistance to change overpowers the instinct for survival. In many cases, previously successful

organizations and inspired leaders rest on their laurels and trust that their "normal" will last forever. Only when they are in crisis, and sometimes not even then, do they recognize the wisdom of change.

Public higher education already knows this. Many state-funded institutions are facing crisis. In his article "HR as Entrepreneur" in the spring 2014 issue of *The Higher Education Workplace* magazine, University of California San Diego Chief HR Officer Tom Leet stated that total state funding as a percentage of operating budget at his institution decreased from 40 percent to 6.6 percent over

the past 25 years. In Tennessee, state appropriations for public universities have decreased by 31.2 percent over the past 10 years. There are countless other examples of these types of budget cuts, as this appears to be the new normal in higher education.

So how does an institution deal with this kind of change? There's a right way, and there's a wrong way.

The Wrong Way to Face Change (and Remain Stalled)

Too many organizations too often employ one of three knee-jerk reactions when change comes knocking: learned helplessness, group-think and irrational pursuit of efficiencies.

Too many organizations all too often employ knee-jerk reactions when change comes knocking.

Learned helplessness occurs when the future looks bleak. In this situation, there appears to literally be no viable way back to steady footing. The administration basically gives up any semblance of vision. While hoping they can keep it together, they hold out for a miracle funding source or breakthrough idea to save the day. In my geographic area, two colleges have demonstrated this response, and both met similar fates.

Group-think is common in complacent organizations where no one wants to take the risk of proposing an out-of-the-box idea. In this scenario, the most mediocre and unimaginative plans are endorsed and carried forward even when the probability of success is minuscule.

Irrational pursuit of efficiency is an oxymoron of sorts. Executing the wrong strategy — even one that favors efficiency — can be lethal. Holding back resources when

survival depends on them can kill a business, a new market strategy or a product launch. Efficiency for efficiency's sake simply isn't a winning change management strategy.

The Right Way to Face Change (and Move Forward)

When an organization is stalled (or even in a downward spiral), how can it recover and begin to make changes for the better? It takes lots of energy, strong leadership, a willingness to resist the urge to preserve the status quo, and a commitment to define a "new normal."

Find alternative funding sources. The current trend in higher education is to raise tuition to cover the shortfall in public money. At some point (probably sooner rather than later), students will no longer be able to fund their college education. Current average student debt upon graduation is \$33,000 and increasing. This will cause the number of full-time-equivalent students to decrease, which will impact funding further for states that use enrollment as a factor for allocations.

Turn cost centers into profit centers. Leet shared in the aforementioned *The Higher Education Workplace* article how the UC San Diego HR organization transformed itself into a shared services center that marketed recruiting, background checks and other services to sister organizations and area research centers at a profit.

Recognize the full potential of online learning. Technology has come a long way. Online learning can be stimulating, effective and cost-efficient. Students benefit from scheduling ease and don't suffer geographic penalties. Online courses also make it possible for colleges and universities to employ faculty members located outside of the immediate geographic community. A reduced need for physical infrastructure can be a win-win for everyone concerned.

Innovate to Change

One of the best ways to navigate change is to embrace innovation, both individually and organization-wide. Think about things differently. Stretch the realm of possibility. Shake things up. Frame ideas in a new context. Bottom line: break out of the status quo. In a previous issue of *The Higher Education Workplace* magazine, innovation thought leader and futurethink founder Lisa Bodell offered some great tips for ramping up innovation in an organization. In case you missed it, you can read the article at www.cupahr.org/hew/featured.aspx.

Think forward. One state that I'm familiar with has two higher education systems on opposite ends of the state. For many years, one system had a medical school and the other did not. The medical school had a captive audience and, as is often the case, took that advantage for granted. For many years, it attracted in-state students from near and far across the state. The medical school practiced the "boiled frog" principle and ignored increasing frustration from students and politicians on the opposite end of the state who felt geographically disadvantaged.

Eventually, a strong lobby in state government was successful in getting money appropriated for the competing in-state collegiate system to build its own medical school. Granted, this was an expensive proposition. A more economical alternative would have been for the original medical school to address the geographic separation and opportunity by creating an alternative campus. It would have saved duplicated administrative costs as well as satisfied the accessibility issue.

Become more efficient at the things that matter. Avoid increasing costs without corresponding benefits. More institutions are turning to non-tenure-track faculty appointments, which can permit greater staffing flexibility at less long-term cost.

Pursue grant funding. Not every college or university should be characterized as a research institution. There aren't enough grant funds to sustain the old guard's blind

pursuit of research. Still, there are grant opportunities in a variety of areas that will help offset costs and create practical learning opportunities for students.

Increase focus on philanthropic donations. Planned giving and growth in endowment funds can provide scholarships for qualified, deserving students.

Get creative with your human resources. If a function or role does not directly support the core purpose or vision of the institution (e.g., teaching or research), it's a candidate for outsourcing or changing to part-time status. Custodial, grounds or maintenance services are obvious candidates. Clerical support and other key support staff may be busy during the academic term or when enrollment processing is at its peak, but may be underutilized during other times.

At the end of the day, success going forward will be determined by a desire for excellence and our willingness to reimagine our futures. Take time to think through what the new normal might look like at your institution. Don't let your comfort zone put you to sleep, or you might be in danger of becoming a boiled frog. 

Joel Myers is a principal at The Centre Group, an HR management consulting firm specializing in compensation programs, employee attitude research and leadership skills training. He can be reached at jmyers@thecentregroup.com.

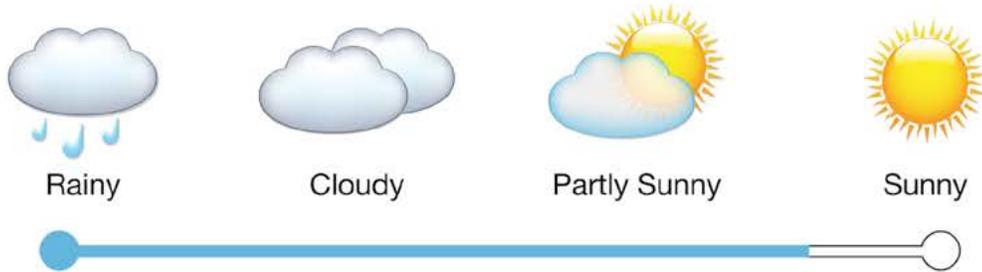
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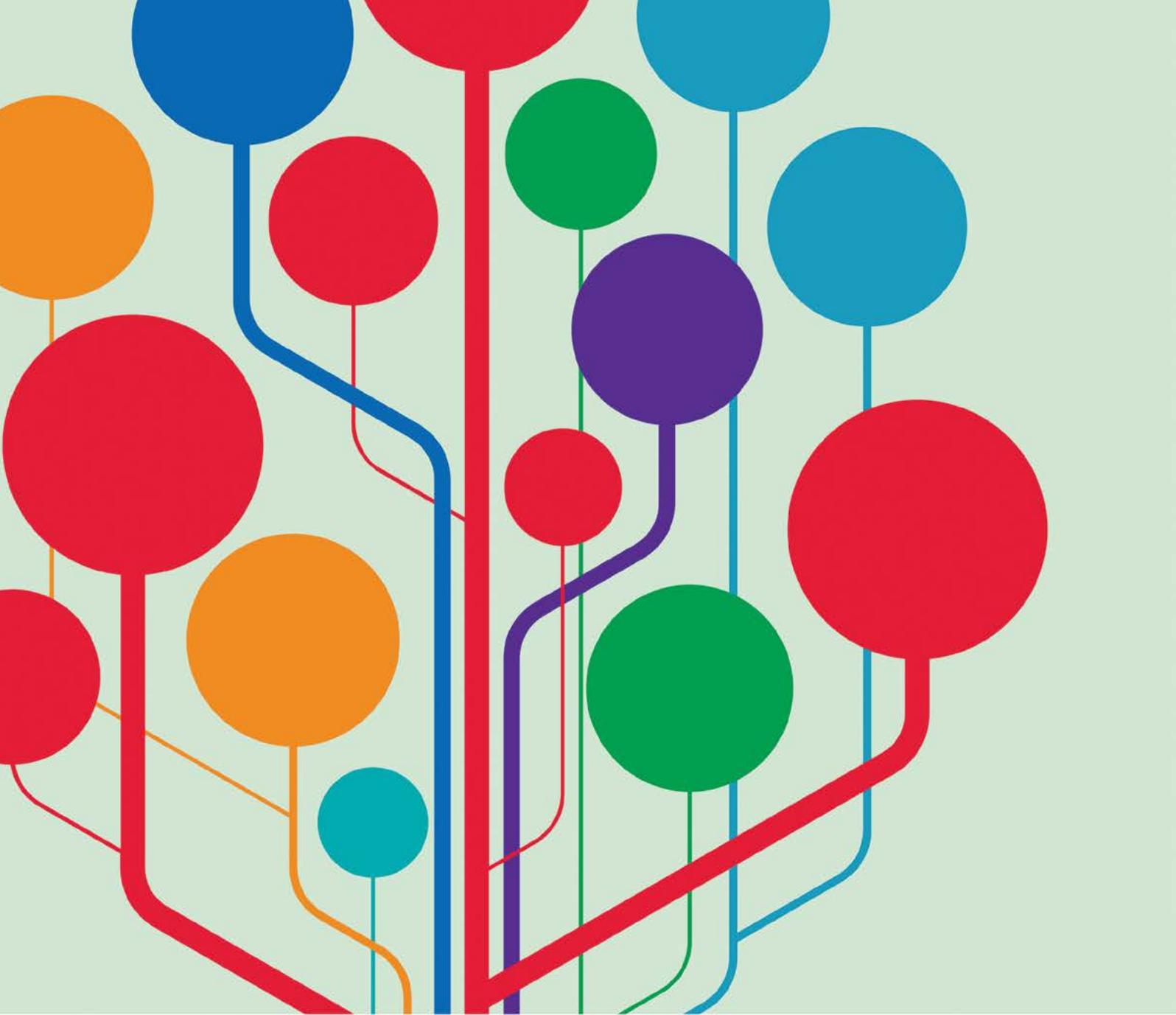
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Growing Staff in the Forest

By John J. Champlin

Of the numerous factors that impact employees' likelihood to leave their current place of employment, a lack of opportunities for advancement or internal promotion often ranks highly. In fact, in a recent survey of 7,350 LinkedIn members, the top reason employees sought employment elsewhere was the want for greater opportunities for advancement. Individuals are frequently looking toward the future and where their careers might lead them. This forward-thinking is not necessarily driven by dissatisfaction with a current role, but can be fostered by a sense of motivation — a drive to do more. Organizationally, the onus often falls on human resources to develop a culture that recognizes and appreciates the value of internal growth.

Of the many factors that impact employees' likelihood to leave their current place of employment, a lack of opportunities for advancement often ranks highly.

Facing low staffing levels and a looming outsourcing effort (and with resources scarce to address either), Wake Forest University human resources embraced the challenge of shifting staff perceptions about and instilling a new culture around growing internal talent. By employing a cross-functional team of organizational development specialists and a recruiter, HR was able to demonstrate the value of hiring internal talent, provide support for staff applying for internal positions, and showcase HR's role as a campus resource and strategic partner.

Challenges to Growth

In the summer of 2012, the fallout from the economic recession was still evident, as unemployment rates remained high and jobs remained scarce. When job openings became available at Wake Forest, current employees were routinely among the first to apply. The HR team knew the value that current employees, with their institutional knowledge and acumen, could bring to new positions. Unfortunately, hiring managers were less aware of these benefits, and internal applicants often failed to reach the interview process. Naturally, this left many employees discouraged and questioning the university's process of and policies for reviewing internal applicants. Perplexed as to why internal candidates were routinely being overlooked for open positions, the university's recruiters reached out to several hiring managers and were

surprised by what they found. The resumes and cover letters from internal applicants, many unchanged since their arrival at Wake Forest, simply could not compete with the polished documents presented by external applicants.

Also in the summer of 2012, the decision was made to transfer the services for Wake Forest's university stores function to an off-campus vendor. This outsourcing effort impacted approximately 15 current university employees in retail and merchandise warehouse positions. While efforts were being made to guarantee employment for up to a year with the new vendor, Wake Forest's chief HR officer stressed to the HR team that every attempt should be made to assist these employees with their transitions. This included preparing them to interview with the new vendor, assume other roles within the university or pursue employment elsewhere.

To address these challenges, it would take a combined effort from recruitment and organizational development. But the team faced challenges of its own, primarily that it was newly formed and immediately faced with confronting issues that could greatly impact the campus's view of human resources. Additionally, staffing changes had reduced the three-person recruitment team to a single individual. All parties recognized the campus's needs, but wondered how and where to best utilize the resources, talents and strengths of the group.

Planting the Seeds

It quickly became evident to the team that the best way to facilitate the growth of internal talent in the short-term was to help internal applicants better prepare for the application and interviewing process. To that end, the team worked to develop two classes — one on writing resumes and one on interviewing. Each team member brought specific knowledge and skills to the table.

Strengths of the recruitment specialist included:

- Knowledge of the application process
- Expertise with technical systems
- Expansive campus relationships
- Broad understanding of university operations

Strengths of the organizational development team included:

- Curriculum-building expertise
- Presentation experience
- Marketing
- Ability to measure and assess

All of these strengths and skill sets were critical to creating a value-added product.

After individual strengths were identified, the duties of both parties were specifically outlined to ensure clarity. From class development to post-class evaluation, the organizational development team and the recruiter knew their specific roles. The OD team was charged with developing class curriculum; marketing the classes campus-wide; conducting the classes; and administering post-class surveys. The recruiter worked with the OD team to identify learning outcomes and inform class content; marketed the class to key stakeholders (internal job applicants); sat in on classes to answer questions and add insight; and offered follow-up assistance to individual class participants. The OD team and the recruiter worked together to review and evaluate participant feedback and make revisions to the classes where necessary.

This kind of role definition ensured that resources were utilized in the most efficient way and that efforts weren't duplicated. Additionally, individual team members were able to work in the realms in which they excelled, which increased engagement in the project and ultimately produced a better product. Shared ownership ensured that there was no lack of commitment from either party.

Fruits of the Labor

In September 2012, the first of the career planning classes — “Developing an Effective Resume” — was launched, and campus response was positive. Due to the strong relationships that had been established during the planning phase, the recruiter was able to personally invite to the class individuals who frequently applied for internal positions. Individuals affected by the university stores transition were also in attendance, as were other curious staff. The one-hour class explored basic resume formatting,

common mistakes and best practices. In a post-class survey, one attendee wrote, “I haven't updated my resume in years and received some good ideas and insights. It was especially helpful having people from human resources there too.” This feedback reflected that the marketing efforts had succeeded in attracting the type of people who would benefit most from this class.

The next class, “The Art of Interviewing,” covered behavioral-based interview questions, various interview formats, illegal questions and advice for handling interview anxiety. This class drew on the experiences of those in the room to support and educate one another. Again, survey responses reflected the positive value of having an organizational development team member as class facilitator, but also the added value of having a recruiter present to answer questions and supply “inside” information.

These classes left staff members wanting more. In particular, there were requests for a class on writing cover letters and a class for hiring managers to walk through the hiring process from their perspective. The third class developed was “Concise, Convincing and Captivating Cover Letters” followed by “Navigating Recruiting and Hiring,” in which hiring managers received insight into the hiring process and tips for screening applications, reviewing cover letters and conducting meaningful interviews.

One class attendee wrote in the post-class survey that he “appreciated the information about how managers can work in conjunction with human resources in order to successfully fill a position with a qualified applicant.” Through these classes, it came to light that knowledge gaps existed in many of the processes and procedures assumed to have been well-known by campus hiring managers.

Continued interest from the campus community led to the addition of a workshop called “Managing Your Career.” This class is meant to challenge individuals to think critically about what they want to accomplish in their careers and offers different approaches to help make these desires become a reality. In effect, this class operated as a catalyst for staff members to attend other classes in the career planning series by encouraging them to embrace



The onus often falls on human resources to develop a culture that recognizes and appreciates the value of internal growth.

the control that they held over their future. Also offered was a career coaching small group. The cohort met for one hour each week for six weeks. The group was formed in order to give people a confidential space to envision their careers, listen to and learn from each other, create next steps, and receive support and accountability — an individual development plan of sorts. This opportunity was so appreciated by Wake Forest staff members that it will be offered again this spring.

Outcomes and Lessons Learned

Three years after initial conversations began around better supporting internal staff, the expected (and unexpected) outcomes are evident:

- Five classes focused on career planning, all facilitated by internal trainers, are available for staff and faculty and have been attended by over 250 people.
- The recruitment and OD team operates coherently and with a strong understanding of each function's work and strengths and where the team members can collaborate.
- HR was able to respond quickly to staff members' needs (spoken and unspoken) and proactively provide services during a transitional period.
- The recruiter was able to build strong relationships with staff members interested in internal opportunities and assist them in presenting their best selves through the application process.

The lessons learned from this experience reflect consistent truths in many work environments and are often helpful to reflect upon:

- During high-stress times, when “busy” is a constant state, it is important to remember to ask for help. Collaboration and assistance can frequently be close by, lying in wait. Similarly, the best colleagues are those that can recognize when help is needed and will offer it willingly and freely. The efforts at Wake Forest would never have worked without the recognition that collaboration was necessary.
- Interactions between HR and the rest of the campus community outside of typical HR inquiries benefit all parties. The perception of HR as an isolated entity is diminished as informal interactions increase. Each of these casual moments can serve as a hyper-local climate survey which can generate ideas for future projects to

help the institution in meeting its strategic goals. It was through these conversations that Wake Forest's HR team learned of the perceived lack of opportunities for internal promotion.

- Opportunities for HR peers to interact and collaborate also carry much value. Just as campuses often operate in silos, so too can large departments. Look for opportunities to bring together individuals from different functional areas of human resources for structured projects and/or impromptu gatherings. The Wake Forest HR office uses teams like these for process improvement, creation of new programs and event planning.
- Work to anticipate the needs of staff and faculty members. By doing so, HR can shed the mantle of personnel emergency responder and gain the status of trusted partner. The staff members affected by the university stores transition greatly appreciated the outreach and support of the HR team.
- It is critical to prepare for the difficult conversations that can accompany job change discussions. Staff members who completed the career planning series and were not selected for the internal position for which they applied were oftentimes quite disappointed. However, because of the connection and trust formed through the classes, the opportunity often arises for HR to speak with those staff members and learn more about the positions they are attracted to and what positions might be a better fit. These conversations, while difficult, can create powerful relationships and are important for staff members' continued growth.

Helping Employees Help Themselves

Wake Forest's recruitment and organizational development team has worked to provide strong support for staff members interested in movement and advancement within the university. Through the class offerings and small group coaching sessions, as well as personal interactions, the team helps staff understand that they have an essential, active role in defining the direction of their careers. These opportunities help members of the campus community understand their role as advocate for themselves and reiterate the importance of being the creator of the opportunities they are seeking. 

John Champlin is manager of recruitment and organizational development at Wake Forest University. He can be reached at chamjj@wfu.edu.



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We Are Not the Enemy

Positioning HR as a Trusted Ally

By Helena A. Rodrigues and Allison M. Vaillancourt

After an extensive national search, Noah was hired as the chief human resources officer for a community college system. He was given an ambitious mandate: position the system to recapture the enrollment market share that had eroded during the last decade by elevating the quality of institutional talent and creating a more nimble organizational culture.

Elsewhere, Sophia looked forward to making a name for herself through the newly created director of HR administrative operations role she had just accepted at a research university. Her charge was also daunting: centralize all human resources activities to increase consistency and drive down costs.





Within eight months of joining the community college system, Noah was already exploring other opportunities. Despite being told that he had absolute support to revamp hiring efforts, compensation strategies, performance management approaches and anything else he decided was not working, he found that there was more pushback than he ever anticipated. In fact, he was challenged at every turn. Although Noah was told “profound change is essential,” he discovered that campus leaders did not actually want change as much as they thought they did.

Regrettably, Sophia was not faring much better. While she took great care to explain that the centralization initiative was a mandate from senior leadership, she was unable to gain traction on the concept, and long-time employees across campus used both subtle and overt strategies to undermine her credibility. Feeling defeated, she no longer considered this role as her springboard to a more senior role in higher education administration.

Noah and Sophia, composites of colleagues with whom we have worked, were each hired by senior leaders whose boards argued passionately about the need to “disrupt higher education” in order to increase access, quality and affordability. To deliver on that promise, Noah was hired to increase revenue and Sophia was hired to drive down costs. Both were perceived to be “dynamic change agents” who would save the day. And within a very short time, each had created significant disruption, just not the kind of change that had been intended. While each was committed to being successful, neither was able to perform in their new environment.

What could have helped Noah and Sophia deliver on the charges for which they were hired? Here, we reflect on how HR professionals tasked with leading organizational change can use trust as a foundational principle for moving ideas forward. By building trust across campus, HR leaders position themselves as valued partners capable of building the coalitions and alliances necessary to advance high-stakes agendas.

Defining Trust

What is trust, and why is it critical when seeking to advance organizational change? Political scientist Kenneth Newton in his article “Trust, Social Capital, Civil Society and Democracy,” defined trust as an individual’s “belief that at worst, others will not knowingly or willingly do him harm, and at best, that they will act in his interests.”

When we lack trust, we take efforts to protect ourselves, and in many cases, that means blocking change that others attempt to promote.

Trust facilitates organizational effectiveness and institutional change in several ways. It creates a sense of community and cohesiveness (“we’re all in this together”) and the comfort of certainty and predictability (“you’ve been open to my concerns in the past, so I can count on you to understand my concerns in the future”). Perhaps most important of all, trust makes it easier for people to work together. When there is trust, people feel comfortable advancing innovative and risky ideas without fear of criticism and are more likely to admit to shortcomings and ask for assistance when it’s needed.

Trust is essential for HR professionals because we can only be effective when we are viewed as organizational rather than tools of administration. To be successful in our roles, we must be perceived as driving the organization’s mission and supporting client contributions to organizational goals. Importantly, HR professionals must be considered as partners and insiders because, as George Cvetkovich asserts in his book *Social Trust and the Management of Risk*, individuals tend to trust those who are part of networks and not outside them.

A lack of trust slows organizations down, and carrying out our responsibilities is more difficult when others fear us. When HR professionals are not trusted, recommendations are challenged, evidence is demanded and motivations are scrutinized. When trust is scarce, the flavor of interactions is transactional in nature — clients come forward because they have to, not because they want to. Instead of calling when problems are small and manageable, clients tend to come forward only when there are no other alternatives. And by then, situations are often much more complex and even intractable.

Consider the difference between being asked to offer advice about whether a candidate for a department director seems to be a good fit, rather than being asked how to manage the organizational fallout after she has shattered the confidence of everyone who works for her. Or, reflect upon the difference in complexity between advising on a disability accommodation as opposed to responding to a charge of discrimination for failing to engage in the interactive accommodation process.

While our knowledge and expertise are undoubtedly important to our clients, whether or not they trust us will determine how successfully we can and will work together.

Subject-Matter Expert vs. Trusted Advisor

Beyond making our work easier, trust-based relationships make our work more interesting. HR professionals who are trusted get asked more challenging questions and are invited to participate in more stimulating projects. They are far less likely to be stuck in their “HR box” and instead are invited to engage more fully in the life of their organizations.

As explored in the book *The Trusted Advisor*, there are distinct differences between those known only for their subject-matter expertise and those also known to possess a solid understanding of the broader organization and to have deep relationships with those with whom they work. Subject-matter experts are asked to apply their specific expertise to provide answers, but trusted advisors are called upon to frame the questions. Trusted advisors often advise on matters outside their recognized areas of expertise. They have solid relationships with major stakeholders. They are considered strategic and are seen as key confidants and authorities in times of crisis.

Success in advancing an initiative or promoting change in our organizations will ultimately depend upon whether or not our major stakeholders and senior leadership have confidence in our ability to apply more than just our HR expertise.

What Do Trusted People Do?

Trust tends to build after parties have multiple opportunities to interact, a process that can take considerable time. Given that trust is often a prerequisite to move novel ideas forward, those who are new to an organization and charged with a change agenda often find themselves without the foundational support necessary to carry out their charges successfully. However, we believe it is possible to jumpstart the trust process by modeling certain behaviors and characteristics from the outset.

Forge connections and be relatable. Create a sense of relatability by finding multiple points of similarities and connections with others across your organization. Share information, demonstrate respect and positive regard for others, practice empathy, admit mistakes, share credit and praise others publicly.

By building trust across campus, HR leaders position themselves as valued partners capable of building the coalitions and alliances needed to advance high-stakes agendas.

Communicate effectively. Listen intently, express curiosity and communicate complex concepts in concise and accessible ways. Customize your communication to the audience and use stories to convey ideas in a more personal way.

Possess organizational acumen. Understand the organization’s financial picture, know where the real power resides and provide context for decisions based on organizational needs and plans.

Practice optimism. Express enthusiasm about what’s next and demonstrate a positive attitude.

We consider organizational acumen and relatability to be especially critical skills for HR professionals. When we can speak about funding, political threats, enrollment trends and other matters that affect our organizations,

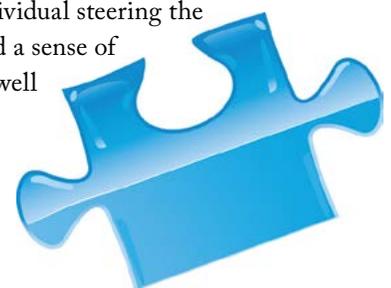
we demonstrate our ability to act in our organizations’ best interests. Being “relatable” or “like me” is important as well. We achieve this status with our clients when we find common experiences,

demonstrate vulnerability and communicate in ways that resonate with our intended audiences.

Those new to an organization are challenged to eschew their outsider status in order to generate critical trust. Being intentional about honoring people and traditions will prove valuable to forging the partnerships necessary to move ideas forward.

Trust and Organizational Change

While trust certainly facilitates routine, day-to-day work, it more importantly accelerates change. The SCARF model demonstrates the value of trust in situations when one is asked to lead change. SCARF, an acronym for status, certainty, autonomy, relatedness and fairness, provides a framework for helping members of an organization work through change. When the individual steering the change initiative has established a sense of predictability and certainty, as well as a commitment to fairness, those affected by the change effort can move forward with a stronger sense of confidence. When things go wrong in an





organizational change effort, those who are trusted are generally provided greater leeway than those who are not.

As we reflect on the experiences of Noah and Sophia described in the beginning of this article, let's consider how each of them missed opportunities to use the power of trust to move their respective agendas forward. Both jumped into their roles by creating a detailed project plan, rather than launching a listening tour. Each announced they had been hired to change cultures and systems, rather than spending the first few months helping their organizational members realize that the status quo was not in the institution's long-term best interests. Noah and Sophia were both well intentioned and highly competent, but they both would have benefited from building a guiding coalition (as John Kotter describes in his book *Leading Change*) and a community-based mandate rather than going it alone.

They also would have benefited from a "perspective taking" approach as they pursued their ambitious change agendas. With this approach, one considers what it is like to be in someone else's situation. How might my actions affect this person? Why might certain issues hold emotional significance?

The following are some examples of strategies that leaders can employ to build trust when leading change:

Change strategy: Make the need for change obvious.

Related trust-building strategy: In Noah's case, gather the data — e.g., review 10 years of enrollment data and help others see the trends. In Sophia's case, present a cost analysis of decentralized vs. centralized HR activities.

Change strategy: Create demand for change.

Related trust-building strategy: Ask people what is working and what they would like to be different. Form a committee of key constituency group members and document the desire and consensus for change.

Change strategy: Build a guiding coalition.

Related trust-building strategy: Secure the endorsement of influential stakeholders to demonstrate broad support for the initiative. Ask this coalition to talk about the initiative with their networks and to share concerns that may emerge.

Change strategy: Honor the past.

Related trust-building strategy: Hold focus groups to identify approaches and values that should be preserved. Speak well of those who made contributions in the past and describe how the proposed changes build upon their earlier contributions.

When trust is achieved in an HR environment, the benefits are significant. Recommendations are more likely to be embraced. Decisions are perceived as appropriate and fair. Vital information is shared willingly. Bold ideas are supported. And best of all, clients recommend us to others. Noah and Sophia's experiences tell us that even when a mandate is clear and change is needed, how we interact with others (and how we go about proving our trustworthiness) will ultimately determine whether or not we can advance the change with which we are charged. 

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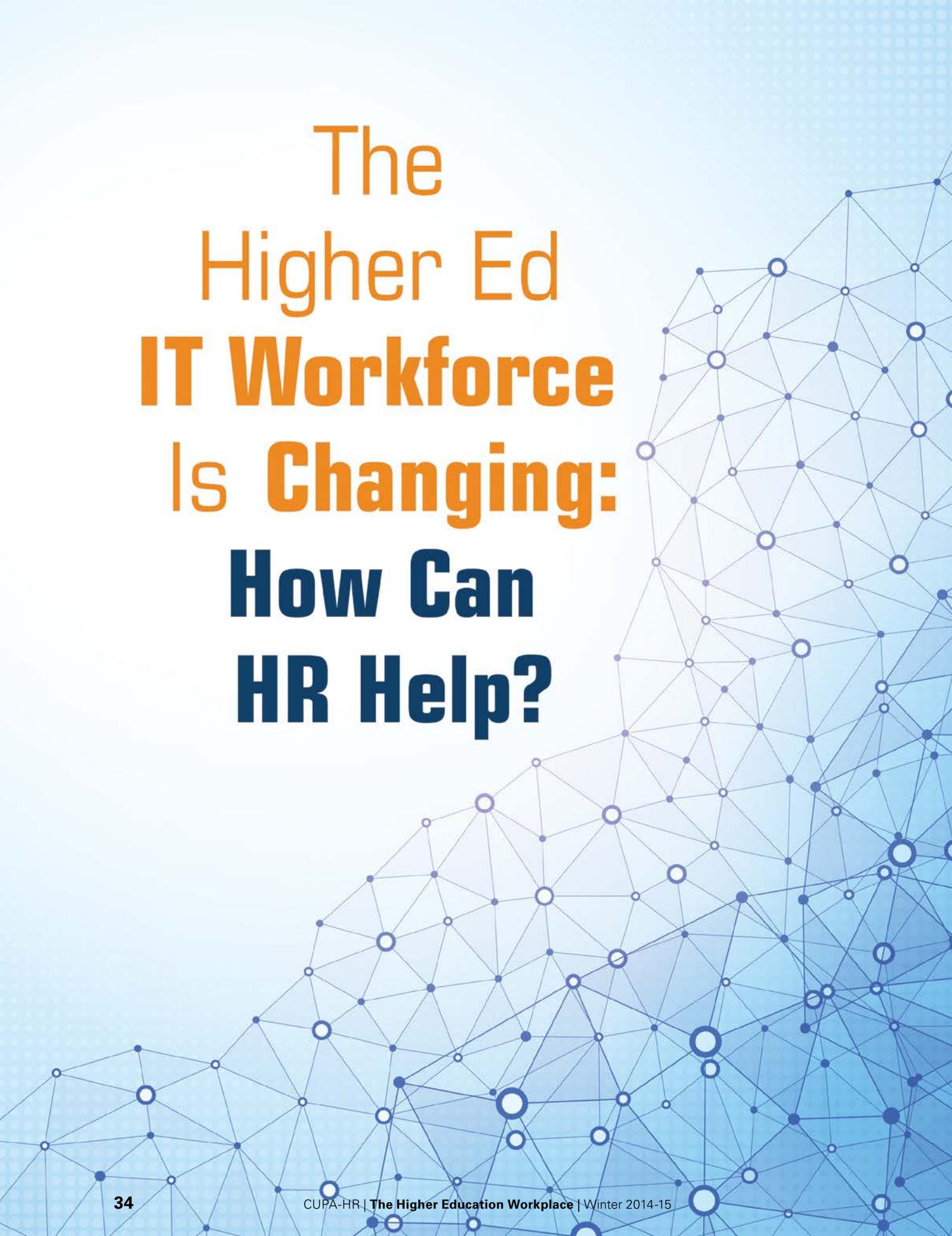
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The Higher Ed IT Workforce Is Changing: How Can HR Help?

Editor's note: This is the second of a three-part series exploring partnerships between human resources and other offices on campus. Through ongoing collaboration with different units across campus, HR can secure its standing as trusted advisor and strategic partner. You can read the first article, "The Shared Business of People: Partnership Opportunities Abound for HR and the Business Office," at www.cupabr.org/hew/featured.aspx.

In 2013, EDUCAUSE, the association for information technology professionals in higher education, surveyed more than 2,200 IT staff, managers and chief information officers from 1,054 institutions. The association was interested in creating a snapshot of what it's like to work in IT in higher ed — What does today's higher ed IT workforce look like? What are the challenges these professionals face? What does the future hold for the profession? Topics covered in the survey included workforce demographics, the leadership pipeline, recruitment and hiring practices, skills needed and skills in supply, retention efforts and issues, factors affecting salary, and support needed from human resources in all these areas.

The survey findings shed light on many facets of the higher ed IT workforce and workplace, but the bottom line is this: The profession is changing, new and different skills are needed from today's IT professionals working in higher ed, recruitment and retention of these workers presents unique challenges, and IT leaders are looking to human resources to help navigate these challenges.

Here, we highlight some of the data around recruiting/hiring, retention and change management, and the implications for human resources. (The full survey report, *Today's Higher Education IT Workforce*, is available on EDUCAUSE's website at www.educause.edu.)

Recruitment and Hiring

The survey found that there is a strong pipeline leading to the chief information officer position, as the majority of

CIOs surveyed came up through the traditional IT ranks (staff to manager to CIO). Nearly three in four had not been CIOs in their previous position. Only 10 percent of the CIOs and IT managers surveyed came from outside IT.

Mobility is more common for IT executives than for IT staff and managers. The median number of years CIOs have been in higher ed is 18, while the median number of years they've been at their current institution is eight. Data also indicate that IT departments are staying static or growing more often than they are shrinking. Thirty-seven percent of the institutions surveyed added IT staff the previous year, as opposed to 24 percent reducing staff. Most of those reductions were through attrition rather than through layoffs (only 16 percent laid off staff). However, one in three managers and CIOs surveyed predicted they would lose positions in the next three years due to outsourcing and cloud technology.

Although the most needed IT roles in higher ed today are technical (technician, programmer, database administrator, analyst, etc.), today's IT workers at every level are expected to possess business acumen and certain soft skills. In response to the question, "What skills does the IT workforce most need, over and above the baseline technical skills required to work in the field?," all three groups of survey respondents — CIOs, IT managers and IT staff

For IT employees in higher ed, it's not so much about the paycheck, but more about the benefits, the lifestyle, the people and the opportunity to learn and grow professionally.

— ranked "ability to communicate effectively" as number one and "strategic thinking and planning" as number two. CIOs and IT managers ranked "ability to influence others" as number three, while among IT staff "ability to manage complex projects" and "ability to manage other relationships in my institution" tied for number three.

As far as compensation goes, according to the survey report, IT salaries are related to a number of factors, including institution type, years at institution, years

in higher ed, job family, managerial status and more. Many IT professionals believe they can command a much higher salary in the private sector, but that seems to not necessarily be the case. The EDUCAUSE survey shows that the median salary for higher ed IT workers is \$84,000, whereas the median salary of industry IT professionals is \$77,500 (according to Global Knowledge's *2013 IT Skills and Salary Report*).

Data around diversity show that one in four CIOs in higher ed is female, compared to the industry average of roughly one in 12. However, the number of women in both managerial and staff roles in higher ed IT has decreased over the past four years. Although the number of non-white CIOs in higher ed has risen from 4 percent in 2010 to 13 percent currently (with the number of non-white managers and staff also on the rise), nearly 90 percent of the higher ed IT workforce is white.

So does IT see human resources as a valued partner in recruitment and hiring? Not especially, according to the data. Less than half of the CIOs and IT managers surveyed perceived HR as supportive in hiring efforts, and only 16 percent considered HR a resource for finding new talent.

So what does this all mean for human resources?

"We need to provide more attention and resources to help bring IT talent on board at our institutions," says Chris Byrd, head of human resources at University of South Carolina and a presenter on a recent CUPA-HR/EDUCAUSE webinar detailing the results of the survey and how HR can support institutional IT organizations. "We need to be looking at what tools we can use to compete with other employers, what pay flexibility is needed to attract and retain IT staff, and if our classification structures and job titles and descriptions are current enough to reflect the changing market. Salaries in IT tend to move faster and be more dynamic than in other areas, so we need to recognize and plan for this as well."

Adds Carl Sorensen, webinar co-presenter and chief HR officer at University of Richmond, "We need to have specific strategies in place for finding quality candidates. Our usual methods of recruiting may not serve us well in this hyper-competitive and rapidly changing market." Sorensen suggests tactics like more actively sourcing candidates through social media; building referral networks and providing referral bonuses for current employees; and pursuing not only active candidates, but also passive candidates.

"Colleges and universities are often in a position to offer the potential for a long-term career with the institution, whereas in some other industries, IT turnover is incredibly high," he says. "IT is known for 'churn' simply because of how competitive the field is, so stability can be a big draw for talent."

The HR organization at the University of South Carolina has taken a unique approach to providing support for the institution's IT workforce. By locating one of its HR team members 75 percent of the time in the IT organization (HR and IT split the funding for the position), HR has been able to dedicate focused time and energy to the recruitment and selection process for IT jobs. "By having an HR staff person physically present in the IT department, we're able to provide more support around recruiting, selecting, hiring and retention, especially around strategic hires," says Byrd.

Retention

According to the survey report, two findings have direct implications for the retention of higher ed IT staff. First, as compared to three years ago, more IT staff at all levels report an increased likelihood of leaving their current jobs. Second, CIOs reported higher levels of voluntary turnover than they did three years ago.

Survey results showed that 1 in 8 CIOs, 1 in 6 IT managers and 1 in 5 IT staff are at high risk of leaving their institutions. CIOs' top reasons for considering leaving were that their personal career goals are unattainable at their current institution; they do not feel they are recognized for their value (aside from compensation); and they had no opportunities to learn and grow in the past year. Managers' top reasons for considering leaving were that they are not recognized for their value; the institutional mission does not make them feel that their job is important; and they are not compensated fairly. The top reasons for staff were that their personal career goals are unattainable; the institutional mission does not make them feel that their job is important; and they are not compensated fairly.

So what factors come into play when talking about how to keep IT workers? When asked to rate a number of factors according to their importance in maintaining an IT workforce adequate to meet institutional needs in the next five years, CIOs and managers ranked competitive compensation as most important (followed by opportunities for professional development and advancement and additional budgetary resources for things

like professional development, getting people to market rates and internal promotions).

However, when asked “What keeps you personally at your institution?,” the top three answers for CIOs were their staff, quality of life and opportunity to build leadership skills; the top three answers for IT managers were benefits, quality of life and opportunity to build leadership skills; and the top three answers for staff were benefits, quality of life and work hours. Monetary compensation ranked last with CIOs and was toward the bottom of the list for managers and staff.

According to Susan Grajek, vice president for data, research and analytics at EDUCAUSE, these somewhat surprising findings show that, for IT employees in higher ed, it’s not so much about the paycheck, but more about the benefits, the lifestyle, the people and the opportunity to learn and grow professionally. “And this is where we look to human resources for support and guidance,” she says.

“The survey data tell us that opportunities for career advancement and professional development are highly valued by IT staff working in higher ed, and may well be a deciding factor in whether a prospective employee either joins your institution or doesn’t, or whether a current employee stays or leaves,” says Byrd.

But Sorensen admits that career advancement can be a “tough nut to crack” in some instances, especially at smaller institutions which tend to have flatter organizational charts. However, he says, even if natural hierarchies don’t present themselves, there are ways to allow for movement. “We need to create as much mobility as possible within the compensation structure and job structure, be that through job families or career pathing or even providing project leadership assignments so that our IT staff can start to build on some of the business and soft skills the EDUCAUSE data suggest they want and need. We should also have strategies in place for retraining or repurposing IT staff, so that if an individual wants to grow within the institution but has hit the ceiling in the IT organization, there are opportunities for them to move elsewhere in the institution.”

Adds Byrd: “The perceived lack of advancement opportunities can be a real threat to retaining IT workers.

IT leaders are looking to human resources to help navigate challenges around recruiting and hiring, retention and change management.

If employees think they have nowhere to go in your organization or no room to grow, that can really force them to have to look elsewhere.” In order to combat that, Byrd says HR should be equipping IT managers to be able to have those “career” conversations with employees. “As the data show, unattainable career goals was one of the factors that placed IT employees in the ‘high risk of leaving’ category,” Byrd continues. “But if we don’t know what those goals are, how can we help them reach them?”

In addition to finding creative options for career mobility for IT workers and helping managers be more proactive around their employees’ career goals, human resources can also help IT leaders develop and promote meaningful professional development opportunities for IT staff. The survey data show that non-managerial staff are not engaging in, nor are they being encouraged to engage in, activities they deem important for their professional growth and development.

“By providing opportunities for IT staff to grow not only their technology skills but also their leadership and business skills, and by helping managers understand why this is important, we’ll be making a strategic contribution to both the IT organization and the institution,” says Byrd.

Change Management

Information technology is an ever-evolving field, and change is often the only constant. The EDUCAUSE survey found that 36 percent of managers, 34 percent of staff and 23 percent of CIOs had been hired into jobs that were newly created. About half of the respondents stated that their IT organizations went through some kind of reorganization in the past year, most of which were minor in scope but nearly all of which involved changes in staffing.

“Many institutions are looking to centralize IT, and many are placing more emphasis on analytics and cloud computing, as well as the expansion of online learning,” says Grajek. “IT and HR should be working together to

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create staffing strategies for current and future campus technology needs.”

According to the data, very few IT leaders (about 1 in 5) currently view HR as a resource for creating staffing strategies, and fewer still see HR as a resource for change management. “As HR professionals, it’s important for us to understand the nature of the change our IT organizations are facing, and how we can help facilitate that change to have a positive impact for both IT and the institution,” says Byrd. “Not many organizations on campus are under so much pressure to redefine themselves on a near-constant basis. As technology changes, the expectations for those who manage the technologies are going to change with it. Helping our IT organizations and employees adapt when this change occurs is a great opportunity for HR.”

Recommendations for Collaboration

Based on the findings from the survey, EDUCAUSE has made several recommendations on how human resources and information technology leaders can best work together to attract and retain talented IT staff and to manage change in the IT organization.

- 1) **CIOs and IT managers should develop and nurture relationships with human resources, and vice versa.** As the data show, HR support is a primary factor in IT workforce recruitment, support and retention.

- 2) **CIOs, IT managers and HR should work together to improve and update IT position titles and descriptions.** If these are mandated or inflexible (as is the case for many public or state-run institutions), HR can help strategize in maximizing the flexibility available and advocating for change where appropriate.
- 3) **CIOs, managers and HR should enhance and promote the quality of life for IT employees at their institution.** Data show that quality of life is a primary retention factor for IT staff.
- 4) **HR should help IT with organizational development and change management efforts.** HR can help repurpose staff during IT reorganizations, help develop staff for new roles and help CIOs design and implement the IT organization of the future.

By working together, information technology and human resources can help bring top-notch IT talent to the institution and, once they’re there, ensure that they are nimble, agile, engaged and content. 



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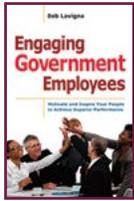
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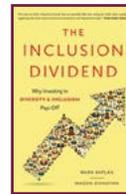
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***Engaging Government Employees: Motivate and Inspire Your People to Achieve Superior Performance* (by Robert J. Lavigna)**



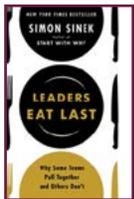
Drawing on a wealth of empirical evidence, this book rejects the typical, one-size-fits-all approach to motivation and shows how America’s largest employer can apply the science of engagement to dramatically improve performance. With over three decades of experience in public-sector HR, author Bob Lavigna explains how to get team members passionate about the agency’s mission, and committed to its success. A great read for managers in public (and private) higher education.

***The Inclusion Dividend: Why Investing in Diversity and Inclusion Pays Off* (by Mark Kaplan and Mason Donovan)**



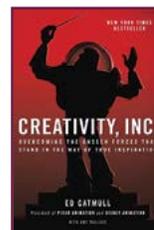
The Inclusion Dividend provides a framework to tap the bottom-line impact that results from an inclusive workplace culture. Most leaders have the intent to be inclusive, but translating that into a truly inclusive outcome with employees, customers and other stakeholders requires a focused change effort. The authors provide straightforward advice on how to achieve the kind of meritocracy that will result in a tangible dividend and move organizations ahead of the competition.

***Leaders Eat Last: Why Some Teams Pull Together and Others Don't* (by Simon Sinek)**



Imagine a world where almost everyone wakes up inspired to go to work, feels trusted and valued during the day, then returns home feeling fulfilled. In his latest book, Simon Sinek, author of best-seller *Start With Why*, argues that this is not a crazy, idealized notion and shares examples of how great leaders are creating environments in which people naturally work together to do remarkable things.

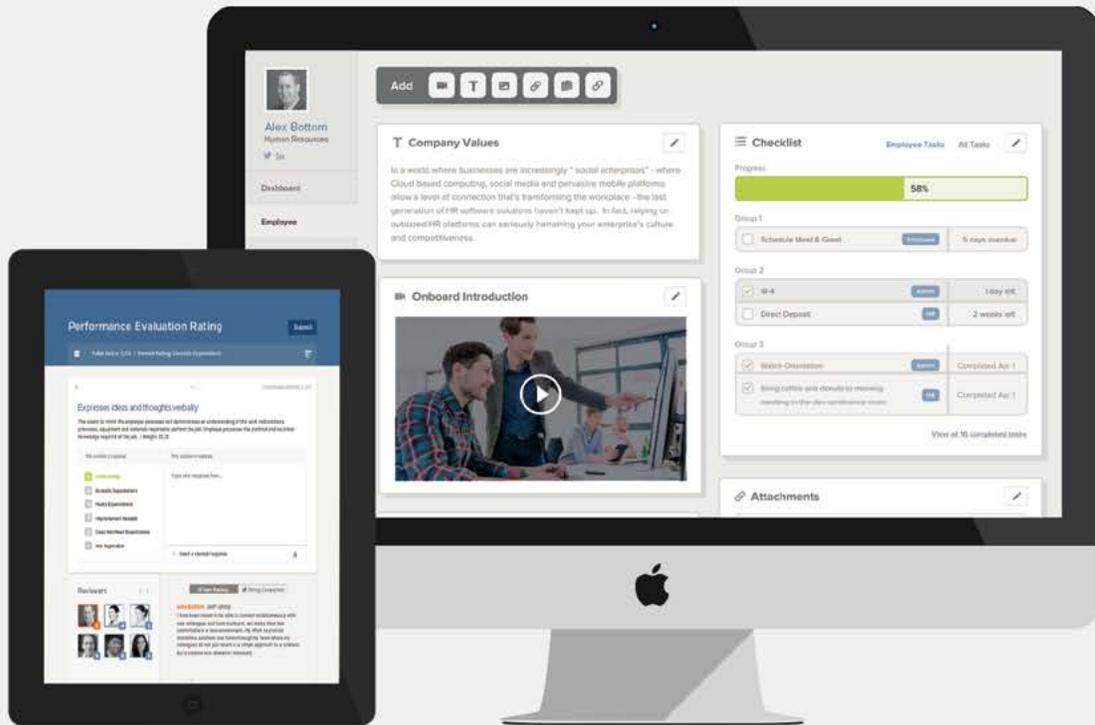
***Creativity, Inc.: Overcoming the Unseen Forces That Stand in the Way of True Inspiration* (by Ed Catmull)**



Creativity, Inc. is a book for managers who want to lead their employees to new heights, a manual for anyone who strives for originality, and the first-ever, all-access trip into the nerve center of Pixar Animation. Some of the philosophies that drive Pixar just might work at your organization, too: give a good idea to a mediocre team, and they will screw it up, but give a mediocre idea to a great team, and they will either fix it or come up with something better; if you don’t strive to uncover what is unseen and understand its nature, you will be ill prepared to lead; it’s not the manager’s job to prevent risks – it’s the manager’s job to make it safe for others to take them; an organization’s communication structure should not mirror its organizational structure – everybody should be able to talk to anybody.

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- 26-28** Midwest Region Conference – Detroit, Michigan
- 28-30** Arkansas Chapter Meeting – Bismarck, Arkansas

We're constantly adding to our calendar of events – chapter meetings, region conferences, just-in-time webinars and more. Visit www.cupahr.org/events/calendar.aspx for a full listing.



Save the Date

September 27-29, 2015

CUPA-HR Annual Conference and Expo

Hilton Orlando Bonnet Creek
Orlando, Florida

Registration will open in May.



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