Embedding Racial Equity Into HR Practices
Financial and personal goals? Check.
Your employees have goals, beyond just retirement. Our fully-integrated financial wellness and retirement program can help bring them closer.
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Higher Ed HR Magazine Has Gone Digital-First

To conserve resources and get great content to you wherever you are, digital is now the default delivery method for CUPA-HR’s member magazine. To change your delivery preference, visit your profile at www.cupahr.org.
ANDY BRANTLEY, CUPA-HR PRESIDENT AND CEO

Higher Ed HR Pros Are Resilient, But We're Also Human

A few weeks ago, I was talking with our national board chair, Susan Norton, vice president for human resources at Augusta University, about the extraordinary demands placed on higher ed HR leaders during the last several months. Everyone who knows Susan knows that her glass is always “half full” and never “half empty.” In keeping with this perspective, she commented that the challenges are helping us learn to be more resilient. Susan is absolutely right!

Almost every day in the life of a higher ed HR professional is an opportunity to build resilience. However, none of us anticipated just how resilient we’d need to be to shift our operations to virtual, to manage layoffs, to work with our leaders and managers to develop multiple return-to-campus scenarios, to help our colleagues manage workloads while homeschooling their children, to try to accommodate those with serious health conditions, and even help colleagues cope with the loss of family, friends and coworkers who passed away following battles with COVID-19.

These tremendous challenges are building our resilience, but they’re also causing many of us to experience elements of burnout. Since March, many HR leaders have had to work extraordinary hours and transition from already hectic schedules to nearly 24/7 schedules with little, if any, space for adjusting and regrouping before the next crisis emerged. So many unknowns have also required us to make the best decisions with the information available on a particular day — knowing that our environment could change the next day and require a different course of action.

I readily admit that leading CUPA-HR since March has also required extraordinary resilience and that there have been times that I felt some of the elements of burnout. Here are a few things that I’ve done to renew and restore my mental health:

• **I have deleted a lot of people from my Facebook and Twitter feeds.** Life is too short to waste my time with toxic people who use their platforms to share their controversial opinions with no interest in dialog and learning from others. Sure, it’s their platform and their right to say what they want to say, but it’s also my right to release myself from their toxic personalities.

• **I am blocking time on my calendar every day for exercise.** Some days, this is scheduled very early in the morning and sometimes during the afternoon. Regardless, it’s an important “appointment” on my calendar I choose not to miss!

• **I am being more intentional about staying connected with my family and friends.** Even though our face-to-face interactions are more limited, I’m being more intentional regarding my ongoing outreach to them — and I’m also encouraging them to do so. My mother is even learning to navigate Zoom settings!

• **I am also being more intentional about expressing gratitude and appreciation for the incredible work of my colleagues.** It’s so important that I let my CUPA-HR colleagues know how much I appreciate their work and all they’re accomplishing in this less-than-ideal, ever-changing environment!

• **I took a vacation and got away from email.** I waited until August to take a week off, and I should have done so sooner. During my time away, I intentionally left my phone while I went for runs, walks and bike rides. I also tried to make sure my phone was out of arm’s reach to help me resist the urge to check email every day or multiple times per day.

Higher ed HR professionals are strong and resilient, but we’re also human. I encourage you to create a list of things you’re doing to support yourself, your family and your coworkers. I also hope you will take advantage of the incredible CUPA-HR community. Reach out to two or three of your CUPA-HR colleagues today to let them know how much you appreciate them and their friendship.
BRIEFS

Federal Judge Dismisses Faculty Union Lawsuit Claiming CUNY Violated CARES Act

Ira Shepard, CUPA-HR General Counsel, keeps CUPA-HR members current on labor and employment law cases and regulatory actions with implications for the higher ed workplace. The following is the latest case update from Ira.

On August 12, 2020, a U.S. federal district court judge dismissed a lawsuit from a faculty union claiming that the City University of New York (CUNY) violated the CARES Act in accepting over $250 million in CARES Act funding and then laying off 2,800 adjunct faculty and staff. The judge concluded that the CARES Act does not create an individual right to continued employment.

On August 7, 2020, the judge heard arguments from the union suing the university, asking that the judge reinstate the laid-off workers. The union argued that the CARES Act requires employers receiving money under the program to “pay employees to the greatest extent possible.” The union further argued that the $30 million cost to the university to reverse the layoffs is far less than the $250 million the university received from CARES Act funding. (Professional Staff Congress at CUNY v. City University of New York (Case no. 1:20-cv-05060)).

Navigating Higher Ed HR’s Most Pressing Employment Law Challenges — Fall 2020 Edition

Sponsored by PeopleAdmin

Join Ira on November 18, 2020, for the CUPA-HR virtual workshop, “Navigating Higher Ed HR’s Most Pressing Employment Law Challenges — Fall 2020 Edition.” Ira will provide an overview of the most pressing employment law issues for higher ed, including those suggested by participants; share takeaways to help avoid litigation related to these issues; and provide the opportunity for participants to work together to examine controversial employment law cases. Visit www.cupahr.org/events/virtual-workshops/.
Five Ways Higher Ed HR Can Help Support Working Parents Returning to Campus This Fall

Although some working parents will continue to work remotely, others are preparing to return to campus and scrambling to find solutions to their childcare needs. How can higher ed HR pros help support them in finding a work-life balance that fits their new normal? Here are several ideas recently shared in the CUPA-HR Connect General Discussion Group:

• **Remind employees of your institution’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** — They may have forgotten that this benefit is available to them and can offer assistance in dealing with work-life balance, childcare, family issues, finances and more.

• **Assemble or link to state resources on your HR website** — State resources often include frequently updated lists of childcare providers across the state as well as helpful information for parents regarding those providers, such as ratios of caregivers to children, accountability procedures, facility safety and disease management.

• **Be clear about employee leave options as they evolve** — Top of mind for employers and HR professionals should be the current leave entitlements under federal, state and local law. If a working parent has expressed concerns about coming back to work because of childcare responsibilities, HR can help by explaining the leave options available to them under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, such as emergency paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave.

• **Start or suggest a parent/caregiver social media support group** — Look into platforms where parents can exchange ideas, struggles, resources and best practices with each other. This could be as simple as creating a Facebook group for working parents at your institution. Some creative ideas other institutions shared in CUPA-HR Connect include the creation of a Caregiver Resource Team, an internal bulletin board to help families identify caregivers in the community, and library faculty and staff volunteering to create virtual story-hour sessions available to members of the campus community.

• **Understand that there’s no one-size-fits-all solution** — If an employee’s work has been accomplished effectively while working from home, could working remotely be a long-term solution for that position even if other employees are returning to work? If so, HR will need to consider adjusting the employee’s job description and possibly re-imagine employee benefits for the newly remote position.

Do you have a childcare resource to share with your higher ed HR peers that will help them support working parents on their campuses? Be sure to share it in the General Discussion Group in CUPA-HR Connect (a CUPA-HR members-only resource).
Discriminatory hiring practices, underrepresentation of Black employees among faculty and staff, and microaggressions against Black employees and students are just some of the ways systemic racism persists in higher education.

The deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and others have heightened the demands for immediate change in every sector, including higher education. However, as Isaac Dixon, associate vice president for human resources at Portland State University, pointed out in a CUPA-HR town hall discussion about social justice, “When the passion cools … everybody walks away from the table, and it’s hard to get people back.”

So how can higher ed HR professionals keep the passion alive and support meaningful change on their campuses? The first step is to educate ourselves about the realities of systemic racism and how it affects our campus workforce, and to do the uncomfortable yet necessary work of confronting our own biases. We need to observe the explicit and implicit racism around us and call it out, eliminating policies and practices that perpetuate racial inequities in higher ed.

CUPA-HR recently held a 21-Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge — sponsored by TIAA, Segal, Cornerstone OnDemand, Fidelity Investments and HigherEdJobs — to serve as a starting point for higher ed HR professionals.

The challenge recordings and resources are now available to all CUPA-HR members for self-paced learning or for leading small groups through the challenge.

Curated Resources Help HR Pros Understand the History and Prevalence of Systemic Racism

Each week of the 21-day challenge has a theme:

- Week 1 — History Through the Lens of Race
- Week 2 — Microaggressions, Whiteness and Implicit Bias
- Week 3 — The Media and Race
- Week 4 — Allyship and Action Steps

Topics include the history of redlining and how it continues to affect the higher ed application pool, microaggressions and how they change the way we interact with others, and implicit bias and how it negatively influences hiring decisions and creates pay disparities.

Participants start by exploring the list of curated resources that dig deeper into the weekly themes. Resources include articles, videos and podcasts to ponder before your group discussions.

Participants also have the option to watch recorded virtual Town Hall meetings facilitated by higher ed HR leaders from across the country.
Thought-Provoking Weekly Discussion Questions

Paired with the weekly resources, CUPA-HR has developed a series of discussion questions for challenge participants to consider before and during weekly group discussions. These are just a few of the questions you’ll dive deeper into over the 21 days:

• What programs exist at your institution to educate your college community about the history of race relations in the U.S.?

• What are some examples of how implicit bias may influence decision-making on your campus?

• What and whom do your students see when they view representatives of your institution’s administration, faculty, and staff in person and in media or promotional materials?

These questions not only bring light to areas that need improvement, but also prompt the group to look for actions they can take to eliminate racist practices embedded in institution policies, behaviors and programs.

How to Get Started

All CUPA-HR members are encouraged to participate in this free challenge; however, registration is required. All employees at member institutions are considered members of CUPA-HR. Those not already on your institution’s membership roster can add themselves by visiting the Manage Your Membership page on the CUPA-HR website.

To learn more, visit the 21-Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge on the CUPA-HR website at www.cupahr.org/21-day-challenge.
Who Is Higher Ed HR?
A look at the higher education workforce by the numbers

Higher ed HR professionals play an important role in shaping their institutions — from managing the day-to-day employee experience to developing workforce strategies that align with institutional goals and values. CUPA-HR recently took a deeper look at the data on higher ed HR to learn more about pay, representation, reporting structure and more.

The following graphic examines gender and racial/ethnic representation and pay in HR in general and across specific position areas. For a more in-depth look at this data and more, please see CUPA-HR’s report, The Higher Ed HR Workforce.

WOMEN MAKE UP A MAJORITY OF THE HIGHER ED HR WORKFORCE

82% Women 18% Men

Representation of HR Workforce by Gender

HR GENERALIST IS THE LARGEST POSITION AREA FOR WOMEN AND MEN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position Area</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chief HR/HRIS Officer</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classification and</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEO/Compliance</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Relations</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generalist</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Representation of HR Workforce by Gender and Position Area
WHITE WOMEN COMPRIS THE MAJORITY OF THE WORKFORCE, FOLLOWED BY BLACK WOMEN

Representation of HR Workforce by Gender and Race/Ethnicity

WITH SOME EXCEPTIONS, WHITE WOMEN AND BLACK/HISPANIC MEN AND WOMEN ARE PAID LESS THAN WHITE MEN

Pay Ratio of Women and Minorities to White Men Controlling for Position
Embedding Racial Equity Into HR Practices

By Wilmon A. Christian III and Brandi Junious

During the COVID-19 pandemic, race has been a recurring if not dominant theme in the national discourse. Instances of anti-Asian racism and the racially disproportionate COVID-19 deaths of Black, Native American and Latinx people have occupied news headlines. In similar fashion, media outlets have rushed to cover racial uprisings occurring throughout the country in reaction to the murders of Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and George Floyd. While organizations, businesses and institutions have been busy responding to a major health crisis, the nation once again has been confronted with a chronic case of racism. Within this context, postsecondary institutions are challenged with developing inventive ways to resume operations in the fall as they attempt to navigate a reality where social distancing and sustained demands for racial equity and justice have become increasingly normalized.
Indeed, this is a rare and opportune moment for America’s colleges and universities to take stock of their shortcomings in advancing racial equity on their campuses. Such appraisals can lead to campus entities being repositioned to play a more enhanced role in sustaining racial diversity. One way this can be achieved is to encourage campus HR departments to strategically infuse organizational practices with equity concepts, thus amplifying HR’s role in such endeavors. A framework that considers identifying and remediating institutional incongruence; developing tangible, achievable goals informed by on-campus racial realities; and employing bold, rigorous strategic thinking is a step in the right direction.

**Institutional Incongruence**

Institutional incongruence is when postsecondary institutions or departments promote diversity and inclusion values or statements that are not substantiated by evidence of their implementation on campus. Borrowed from Harper and Hurtado’s (2007) campus climate research, this phenomenon can inhibit racial equity strategy development by encouraging passivity. This occurs when there is a reluctance to go beyond institutionally derived diversity pronouncements to ensure equity within the organization. This is a problem because such statements, often lacking clear-cut outcomes, data and action steps, can be easy to hide behind, thus allowing inequities to persist. Since incongruence can negatively affect the campus climate for equity and diversity, which in turn can engender inequities in the campus workforce (Greene, Stockard, Lewis, & Richmond, 2010; Maranto & Griffin, 2010; Vaccaro, 2010), HR professionals need to identify where such gaps and disconnects are evident in order to develop targeted strategies. Data on the racial makeup of administrators, staff, faculty and other employees on your campus is a helpful place to begin. HR pros should consider these questions:

- Does my institution or department frequently communicate its commitment to diversity and equity, yet employ disproportionately fewer people of color in significant staff, administrator or faculty roles?
- If asked, would I be able to identify long-term, rigorously executed efforts to recruit, hire and retain such employees?
- Are there obvious inconsistencies between institutional or departmental rhetoric and on-campus racial realities?

**How to Identify Institutional Incongruence**

- Does my institution or department frequently communicate its commitment to diversity and equity, yet employ disproportionately fewer people of color in significant staff, administrator or faculty roles?
- If asked, would I be able to identify long-term, rigorously executed efforts to recruit, hire and retain such employees?
- Are there obvious inconsistencies between institutional or departmental rhetoric and on-campus racial realities?

Answering these questions is helpful in identifying where incongruence may be occurring, but they are only starting points. The next step is to use this kind of thinking to develop practices that result in more equity within your campus workforce.

**Recruitment, Hiring and Retention**

As an HR professional, one way to close equity gaps on campus is by developing recruitment, hiring and retention strategies that support racially diverse talent in your campus workforce. These approaches should be multidimensional, providing more equitable opportunities while working to undo damage caused by structural racism and bias in the talent acquisition pipeline. In evaluating current strategies, consider who is being prioritized, what qualifications are deemed ideal, and how ideologies around talent could perpetuate prejudices, disadvantaging prospective and current employees of color.
One example of how such biases manifest in the recruitment process is favoring a degree from an elite institution over the same degree from a lesser-known school, regardless of the candidate’s performance in their academic program. The preference given to the person with the “elite” education discounts the opportunity gap that students of color face in the college admissions process (Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009) and upholds the type of structural racism that is embedded in elitism as a criterion for employment.

Evaluating the language in your job postings and removing these types of requirements is one strategy to ensure applicants are not being marginalized or discounted. Using tools like PRISM, the racial equity hiring platform developed by the University of Southern California’s Race and Equity Center, can also help your institution better identify highly qualified candidates of color and diversify your applicant pool. Merging these strategies with implicit-bias training for your search committees and hiring managers can help eliminate disparities in the hiring process, which reinforce damaging perceptions about people of color that often lead to them being discounted as qualified applicants.

**The Invisible Workload**

This equity-minded approach must also go beyond diversity recruitment and become infused into the way your institution values racially diverse employees. As you are making hiring or promotional decisions, compensation discussions should account for the invisible workload with which many employees of color are tasked as a result of being one of the only persons of their identity in the workplace. For example, consider a Black professor who is the only person of color in their department. They may be asked more frequently to sit on multiple committees as departments seek to convene increasingly diverse groups. They may also mentor more students of color, thereby carrying a greater service load than some of their counterparts (Griffin, 2012). A full appraisal of their workload should inform their salary and serve to guard against pay equity gaps that result from the all-too-common undervaluing of employees of color.

Retention strategies should also be developed through an equity lens and include evaluating feelings of mattering among your employees, creating identity-based groups that allow underrepresented employees to feel supported, and collecting data — disaggregated by race — on pay and career advancement. All of these strategies should be formally implemented at an institutional level and monitored to ensure they are effectively supporting a diverse workforce. Furthermore, as you execute these strategies, establishing ways to assess your results will help ensure your intentions are supported with effort.

**Define How Success Is Measured — The SMART Way**

One accountability measure that can be used to ensure your plans are adequately implemented and to monitor progress toward change is to set concrete goals around each strategy. Setting equity-minded SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) goals will ensure you are making real progress and that institutional rhetoric around diversity is being propelled by action. Incorporating each of these elements puts mechanisms in place to identify when success has been achieved and when more resources or support are needed. For instance, a goal to simply hire more faculty of color may not yield the desired...
As you are making hiring or promotional decisions, compensation discussions should account for the invisible workload with which many employees of color are tasked as a result of being one of the only persons of their identity in the workplace.

outcome because it does not define how success is measured. For this particular undertaking, it would be most helpful to:

1. make explicit the specific program in which these faculty should be hired (STEM, for example);
2. include a measurable percentage or number by which STEM faculty of color should be increased;
3. indicate actions the hiring committee will take to find and recruit them;
4. articulate the relevance of increasing STEM faculty of color and how you expect this to impact students in a positive way; and
5. denote how much time it should take to achieve this outcome.

Establishing goals in this manner creates a quantifiable set of benchmarks that provide accountability to your commitments.

Modeled in these examples are approaches that can be used by HR departments to advance campus diversity goals. Comprehensive racial-equity strategies such as these will help HR professionals, leaders and departments move beyond basic required diversity training, empowering them to implement pragmatic plans yielding more equitable campuses. Such practices can position campus HR departments to play stronger roles in sustaining a positive campus racial climate, an advantage for institutions looking to attract and retain racially diverse talent.

About the authors: Wilmon A. Christian III is director of PRISM and the National Equity Network, and Brandi Junious is finance and operations manager, at the University of Southern California.

CUPA-HR Resources for Racial Equity

21-Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge
Suited for individuals or small groups, the challenge helps HR pros develop effective social justice habits.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Maturity Index
The index measures your institution’s progress on five areas of workforce DEI efforts: Communication and Education, Assessment, Culture, Investment and Infrastructure, and Compensation, Recruitment and Retention.

Black and White Higher Education Workforce Interactive Graphic
The interactive graphic explores the representation and pay of Black employees across the higher education workforce.
In tough times, it’s even more important to have the right talent.

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It’s a Marathon, Not a Sprint

One HR Professional’s Reflections on COVID-19 Burnout, Financial Anxiety, and the Need for a Really Long Nap

By Maureen DeArmond

You may have heard the rhetorical questions, "Who counsels the counselor?" or "Who audits the auditor?"

Lately, I have come to find myself asking, "Who 'HRs' the HR professional?"
Yes, I know “HR” is not a verb, but it ought to be. It might appropriately be defined, at a minimum, as something like this:

*The daily actions of dedicated professionals who solve — sometimes impossible — problems; exude endless quantities of empathy — even for people who do not always deserve it; possess and regularly apply highly technical reading, writing, public-speaking and conflict-resolution skills; provide coaching, counseling and a listening ear; drive themselves to exhaustion helping others, protecting the institution and searching for improvements on a shoestring budget; and regularly twist themselves like pretzels to meet unreasonable deadlines with no expectation of gratitude or credit.*

This definition was likely the reality for many of us even during non-pandemic times. In addition to the anticipated chaos that is daily life for HR professionals, we have also planned for and lived through workplace violence, deaths on campus, hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, fires, lawsuits, audits, budgetary hardships, and an endless list of challenges that can push us to our limits — even on a good day.

Yet, the COVID-19 pandemic, at least for me, feels different. The stress flowing from the constantly changing landscape, endless uncertainty and crushing workload is inescapable. Not only is work hard right now, but everything is hard. It feels like nearly every aspect of life — professional and personal — is coated with COVID-19, fiscal concerns and an unknown path forward.

Human resources professionals do not get to retreat, slip into denial or stick our heads in the sand. We have been alert and contributing our time and expertise since the beginning of the pandemic, and the work is far from done. First, we had to move mountains to assure our employees did not get sick; then we had to magically find ways to keep everyone productive and engaged while working under very new conditions; and now, we are tasked with helping our institutions find a way to move onward, despite the continued threat of the disease, formidable budgetary restraints, and employees who would prefer working from home indefinitely.

COVID-19 burnout is now a widely used term and a concept many of us can attest to as being a very real phenomenon. Some of us may feel exhausted. Some may long for a shoulder to cry on or a voice to tell us everything is going to be okay. Some may be desperate for someone else to take over just for a little bit. And some may even be considering quitting our jobs. I, for one, could use a really long nap.

This brings me back to my original question, who is there to ‘HR’ the HR professionals? Many of us are drawn to the profession because we are doers and problem-solvers. Whether by nature or experience, we are a sturdy bunch — resilient, creative and caring. But even we have limits. Maybe now you feel that you have hit your stride, but you have likely had your fair share of moments feeling down mentally and emotionally. You may have noticed the beginning stages of COVID-19 burnout among your colleagues. As for me, my resolve seems to fluctuate by the day, sometimes by the hour.

Ruth Appleton, an employee and labor relations consultant at Iowa State University and CUPA-HR Midwest Region board member, observes, “HR professionals are looked to for guidance during this time, and we sure do our best to give that guidance, even if we ourselves are struggling.”

So, “Where do we go from here?” and “What does the future hold?” may not be the right questions to ask. Perhaps the better questions are, “How do we keep going?” “How do we find the strength to push onward as we continue doing the work that simply must get done?” and “How can we do this while maintaining our own mental and physical health?”

Although I do not have clear answers to these questions, I can share what has worked for me at my institution and offer some words of encouragement.

**Give Employees Space to Be Human**

By now the phrases “unprecedented times” and “uncharted waters” are getting a bit tired, but they are not inaccurate. It is no surprise that our employees are weary, frustrated and scared, like us. I have to remind myself that they are not in the same meetings that I attend. Even though we have a COVID-19 website and disseminate all kinds of information, employees will not read and absorb everything. It seems some employees have hit information overload and change fatigue. Can we really blame them?
This is where our instincts can serve us well. My former leader, Jodi Gentry, associate vice president for human resources at the University of Florida, observes, “Employees need coaching, counseling and guidance, sure, but they also need space to be human. Every employee deserves that.” Giving employees space to be human during these times means being extra flexible and generous with both our time and our patience.

Having a heightened awareness that people respond to stress differently is helpful too. I know one professional who is incredibly intelligent, talented and dedicated, but has been displaying their stress as agitation. I know another employee who needs to have a good cry once every few weeks to work through the tough spots. If these are the coping mechanisms these individuals need to keep moving forward, grant them their harmless outburst now and then and a moment to collect themselves. As HR leaders, we must understand that these responses are not personal.

While I have shared Employee Assistance Program resources often over the past few months, I have found it equally important, if not more so, to give employees space to vent, cry or lament our current reality. In fact, I have noticed that it is becoming easier to accept these moments of vulnerability because I, too, have had a few bad days that I am not particularly proud of. During this time, I have found it comforting to help others work through their moments of weakness and frustration. The fact that we are all experiencing similar emotions makes it easier to tap into empathy.

A more senior HR professional once told me that it would serve me well to approach HR “with the patience of a grandparent.” This mindset has always been helpful, but never regularly applied until now. When I am communicating with employees, I try to lead with empathy — especially when I am feeling particularly rushed, overwhelmed or frustrated. A deep breath and a self-reminder that they are feeling frustrated like me is all it takes to accomplish a quick mental reset. It may be the tenth time I have heard a question in a day, but it is the first time they have asked it.

Appleton suggests that “allowing our voices to be ones that come from a place of love can make all the difference.” She continues, “Which does not mean we just give people what they want. It means we genuinely care about them, and that is made clear in the way we speak with honesty and respect.”

Throughout my years in higher education, I can think of a faculty member or two who would likely not give me an inch, but most employees I regularly interact with appreciate that extra dose of empathy. While this does not have a 100 percent success rate, I have observed that as I give others more space to be human, they reciprocate, and when I give them the extra time they need to work through a moment of weakness, they are grateful.

Balance HR’s Duty to Employees and to Institution Leaders

The sentiment that one should never let a good crisis go to waste has never appealed to me. It feels too opportunistic. However, hidden in these words lies truth. This is a time for HR departments to show strategic and operational value, ingenuity and creativity, and dedication to the institution, the mission and employees.

In higher education, HR professionals regularly fight to be seen as institutional leaders. Now is the time to demonstrate leadership. This is the time for HR professionals to add significant value, and, no, it is not going to be easy. But we coach and train about leadership all the time. We know what good leadership looks like, and now is
In some ways, we have not only an opportunity, but an obligation to demonstrate calm in the face of uncertainty, to insist on being a transparent partner during a time of tremendous change, and to offer encouragement to all levels of the organization during this particularly dark hour.

the time to model it. In some ways, we have not only an opportunity, but an obligation to demonstrate calm in the face of uncertainty, to insist on being a transparent partner during a time of tremendous change, and to offer encouragement to all levels of the organization during this particularly dark hour.

In our roles, we have a duty to the institution, but we also have a duty to our employees, some of which includes assuring employees are treated fairly and exploring all options when making tough decisions — not just jumping to the easy or obvious course of action; being accessible and responsive during a time when our employees need a response — even if the news is not always good; and striving to be as honest and forthcoming as possible.

When it comes to meeting with institutional leaders, I believe my HR role is to offer alternative options, provide reminders about policies and past practices, and insist on transparency and open communication with employees. Over the past few months at my institution, we have actually improved HR's relationship with professional administrative council and staff union leaders. And trust me, these conversations have not covered positive topics. These groups have expressed appreciation for the time spent with and access to HR, our honesty and our openness.

Many of us do not know what the start of the fall term will look like, but we do know that tough decisions are on the horizon. Let us commit to doing what needs to be done to help our institutions through this season but be prepared to advocate for our employees as well. Let us also demonstrate leadership and add value. You decide whether this prospect will overwhelm your or empower you. I am choosing empowerment, and I encourage you to do the same.

Find Comfort in Community

It can be an oddly lonely time to be in HR despite all the meetings, phone calls, emails and long hours. I think we can all agree that it is draining to be focused on health and safety for such an extended period of time, that it is nothing short of depressing to have to dig into possible workforce reductions, and it is more than a bit disheartening to recognize that all of the positive and innovate projects that need to be done will be ignored for an unknown length of time. Put simply, we have a lot of work on our plates and not much of it is fun.

When this part of reality gets me down, I find myself longing for a greater sense of community. Soldiers long for comrades, the broken-hearted hunger for an empathetic ear and encouragers also need encouragement.

Back in May, Amy Minick, director of human resources and international affairs office at Toyota Technological Institute at Chicago, posted in the CUPA-HR Connect General Discussion Group. She asked, “Is anyone else feeling a bit lost in the shuffle right now? I’m getting pressure from everywhere to support faculty, staff and students, but who’s working to support me?”

I followed up with Minick, and she noted that the responses she received from the CUPA-HR community were nothing short of great. Many members of the CUPA-HR community, unsurprisingly, publicly responded to her post. According to Minick, even more responded to her privately. The community offered encouragement, helpful tips and assured her that she was not alone in her feelings.

Higher ed professionals are fortunate to have a large, knowledgeable and caring community who are living similar experiences. We will all take turns having ups and downs, and while it is unfortunate that we cannot meet in person right now, take comfort in knowing that connecting to your HR peers is just one post away.
A Message of Encouragement From Oregon Tech

How many of you are runners? Think about your first race — it does not matter the distance (non-runners, just stick with me here). Likely far before the finish line, you started to feel tired. Maybe you forgot why you decided to run in the first place. At some point, you probably slowed down. You likely had to talk yourself out of walking over and over again. Maybe the self-pep talk worked, maybe it did not. First races are hard. Perhaps because of insufficient conditioning, cheap shoes or the dread that often accompanies the unknown. Or maybe some of the exhaustion is really in your head.

If anyone has ever had the great fortune of being part of a race where there is an active crowd — people with funny signs, someone ringing a cowbell, kids giving out high fives, maybe a band playing — a raucous crowd is always a welcome sight, especially after a few miles of being left alone with your thoughts, fatigue and self-doubt. As you approach the crowd and start hearing their cheers, you inevitably start to feel a new energy. These strangers, who maybe only know one person out of hundreds participating in the race, cheer for you when you pass by. They do not care if you are walking or running.

“You are doing great,” they insist. “You are almost there,” they say to encourage you, even if that is not necessarily the case. “You got this!” they yell.

You nod in thanks and smile in response. And then something strange, something almost unnoticeable, starts to happen. If you are walking, you start to run. If you are running, you start running faster.

You fuel up on the energy and encouragement of these strangers. You drink in the positivity that is floating in the air. You feel this alongside the other runners flanking you. You exchange knowing looks, sometimes a grin. And you realize you are not really competing against these fellow participants, but you are running with them. And you start running faster.

Strength to Keep Going

The path ahead remains uncertain, both in difficulty and length. Although we all started out sprinting, we need to pace ourselves. Take time to care for yourself, value every word of gratitude, celebrate every win, know that your institutions need you, even if that need goes unspoken.

I would like to offer a few words of encouragement. Below is a message I shared with my campus at the beginning of the pandemic, and I had many employees reach out to me saying it spoke to them.

By now, we all recognize that this pandemic is not going to be a sprint, but a marathon. We may not be conditioned, we may not have the right shoes, and the adrenaline wore off months ago. The course is taking unknown turns, and we have lost track of the last mile marker. But we are too far along, and turning around is not an option. We have to keep going. By now, maybe you have gotten your second wind, and you are going strong. Or perhaps you are feeling fatigued and have dropped down to a walk. Whatever your current pace, I hope you can sense the positive energy, feel the sincerity of goodwill, maybe even hear the clattering of a cowbell being directed toward you, and that you can find the strength to keep going.

About the author: Maureen DeArmond is associate vice president for human resources at Oregon Institute of Technology.
How Boise State HR Strengthened Employee Engagement by Transforming the Employee Experience

By Kaysi Parke

Think about your best job experience. What made it great? Was it the people that made your work fun or the challenge of the subject matter you were tackling? Work takes up a vast majority of our time, and the experiences we have as employees follow us everywhere. They cling to us as we head home for the day, and they affect how we treat our families and friends. Workdays where we feel authentic and effective take us into our personal lives with energy and passion. Conversely, hard workdays make the negativity hard to shake, and an unbroken pattern of hard days is just a bad job.

Maybe you have been lucky enough to never have had a bad job, but the majority of us have had at least one or two of them. So, what is the difference between a good job and a bad job? Some would say the pay, others would say the work. At Boise State, we have turned our attention to what we think the real difference-maker is: the employee experience.
Here at Boise State HR, we set out to improve the employee experience by identifying our employees’ positive and negative experiences. Sounds simple, right? That does not make it easy. The hardest parts are recognizing the root causes of experiences, forming strategies to make improvements, maintaining or enhancing things that work well, and finally, executing a deliberate work plan.

Here are two workforce trends that motivated Boise State HR to action:

- **The labor shortage.** A second wave of Baby Boomers will begin to retire at the pace of 280,000 per month, which is 1 out of 5 employees. The average time that those who are 25-34 years of age remain in the workplace is approximately 2.8 years. This is down by 10 years from the previous generation. More ominous is that the generation coming into the workplace, Generation Z, is not trickling into the workforce like past generations. Some surveys reveal that as many as 40 percent report they want to become entrepreneurs rather than work for a company.

- **Employee turnover.** Employees do not leave organizations, they leave supervisors. A bad supervisor can take actively engaged employees, turn them off to the mission of the organization and disengage them from their work. And this does not include only difficult supervisors. In a study conducted by Gallup, employees whose supervisors ignored them had higher disengagement rates, even than those whose supervisors gave them negative feedback and attention.

At Boise State, we are not immune to these trends. We are seeing that attitudes at work are greatly changing. Employees want to be seen, heard and valued for who they are and what they bring to the table. They also want to be able to bring their whole selves to work. Employees certainly want reasonable pay and benefits, but they also want to be part of something bigger than themselves, be recognized and see a future within the organization.

Seeing these trends play out in real time at our university, we developed a robust strategy for employee engagement driven by our vision and values, and we call it Boise State’s People Approach. Each component is simple to explain and meaningful in impact when put into practice. We have faced a lot of challenges; change in a large organization is hard to accomplish. However, we are greatly heartened to see that what we thought might be impossible — building an environment where all individuals are valued and where one’s daily work is meaningful — is happening by putting the five-part People Approach into action.

**Boise State HR’s Five-Part Strategy for Employee Engagement**

- **Vision** — We started with a strong vision that everyone in human resources understands and believes in: to build a culture that focuses on employee engagement, bolstered by our team mantra, “We are here for you.” Because we embody this vision, we are aligned in providing the best service for our campus and colleagues.

- **People Strategy** — Our people strategy looks at nine pillars against which we benchmark, measure and hold ourselves accountable. These nine pillars are: diversity and inclusion, development, pay and benefits, communication, participation, recognition, accountability, workplace wellness and safety, and efficient operations. These areas of focus operationalize employee engagement.

- **Data-Informed Decisions** — We have dedicated a position in our department to gathering, evaluating and communicating employee engagement analytics. This data informs nine pillars and helps us identify where we are on and off the mark. It is also an early warning system when something may be trending in the wrong direction. By paying close attention to the people analytics, we are better positioned to positively influence our people strategy and create meaningful employee experiences.

Furthermore, we actively listen to our employees. In March 2019, we hosted our first People Strategy Listening Tour, which deployed a 36-question survey that was geared toward discovering Boise State’s level of engagement. In conjunction with the survey, we hosted
live focus groups aimed at discovering the elements that drive employee engagement in our workplace. The survey was sent to 2,628 employees across campus, with a 51 percent response rate. In addition, more than 200 employees joined in live listening sessions. As part of the survey, employees were given an opportunity to provide comments with respect to the areas in which they believe Boise State does well, as well as the areas that need improvement. We plan to repeat the survey to map our progress and find where we can continue to improve.

**Employee Experience** – We quickly learned that trying to deliver the above services based on a traditional organizational chart would not be successful. We began reorganizing our department around the experiences that all employees have in the workplace — a welcome experience, growth experience and a farewell experience. For example, rather than have traditional front-desk operations and a talent-acquisition team, we created a team that is solely responsible for the welcome experience that runs from recruitment to new hire integration. As one cohesive group, the welcome team ensures that new employees have a seamless experience and truly feel welcomed to the organization. With the success of this team, we are currently tackling the reorganization of the growth and farewell experiences of Boise State employees as well.

**People Projects** – We have a work plan that we use to focus all of our efforts in driving employee engagement. In order to increase our opportunity for success, we have embedded project managers on each of the experience teams. These individuals meet around a Kanban board, which is also captured on a virtual work plan, to set goals and tasks each week. This group checks in daily to report progress and setbacks and to celebrate wins. We are also working to establish a more agile process for planning meetings that drive our work forward at a speed that inspires continued innovation and energy around our goals. This constant self-reflection keeps us moving forward and making progress.

### How We Focused on Creating Employee Experiences

#### Welcome: The Art of Attracting and Retaining Top Talent

Think back to your first day of work. Were you greeted with a smile and introduced to your team warmly before being shown your new space and allowed time to settle in? Was your favorite morning beverage provided to you by your new boss or CEO as a “welcome to the organization” gesture? Did you spend the day being greeted by your new colleagues and introduced to how your role interacts with theirs? At the end of the day, did you leave knowing that you made the right decision and looking forward to the challenge of the coming days, weeks, months?

#### The Problem and How We Are Tackling It

At Boise State, we discovered that our past strategy to welcome new employees was both disjointed and, at times, unwelcoming. We found that we needed robust and intentional recruiting and onboarding to help ground new colleagues in their roles, help them buy into the mission and values of the organization, and motivate them to seek their growth within the organization, rather than to explore other job postings. Inspired by the compelling notion that we could provide better customer service and improve employee engagement, we started up a steep path of restructuring, beginning with the creation of the welcome team.

In our live listening tours, we heard horror stories of employees who had shown up to work on their first day, not knowing where to park, where their office was or even who they should call to find out. Needless to say, we found that our institution had turnover for new employees. Our first step to making improvements was to put the welcome experience under a microscope to discover all those moments we needed to address.

The welcome experience starts with a candidate’s first interaction with the job posting. These candidates must find the job interesting, exciting, motivating and one they want to invest their time and energy into. If HR can get that right, the
candidate applies and moves on to the application and interview process. These interactions with the hiring committee are key. You want candidates to be able to see themselves working alongside these colleagues. To achieve this, we focused on three areas of the hiring process:

1. Behavioral Interview Questions – We found behavioral interview questions helped us to accurately get our mission and vision across to see if candidates would naturally align and become a cultural contributor — someone who would elevate us and push us to be better.

2. Offer Letters – We examined how our organization extends offers to our prospective employees. Our offer letters were overhauled to express excitement and remind the candidate why they applied to join us in the first place.

3. Onboarding – While all other aspects of the welcome experience could make or break it for a talented candidate, nothing will lose top talent like a bad onboarding experience. The welcome team created tools and resources for our campus to have a cohesive onboarding regardless of the department. We believe how you bring new employees into the organization sets them up for their longest experience with an organization: their growth experience.

Tips for Creating a Cohesive and Welcoming Onboarding

- Take the extra time to set up the new employees’ areas before they arrive.
- Send an email from the team sharing your excitement about them joining you.
- Have a plan/itinerary for their first week.
- Have a welcome committee or someone dedicated to welcoming them.
- Schedule them to meet and talk to their new colleagues.
- Schedule downtime for settling in and absorbing information.
- Create goals for 30 days, three months, six months and one year.

Growth: The Grass Is Greenest Where You Water It

Learning and growing are an inherent part of being human. This does not stop in the workplace. When you are a part of an organization, you want to know what your next steps are, how you will be able to learn new skills to elevate yourself professionally, and who can help motivate you to do your best work. As employees grow within a company, they want to know that they are making an impact and are part of something bigger. They want to know they will be taken care of if they need to take a step back to care for themselves or their family. These are just some of the factors we found employees crave in order to be fully invested in their work. At Boise State, we found that even small adjustments make a big difference.

The Problem and How We Are Tackling It

The growth experience is by far the most nebulous and varied experience an employee can have. Unlike the welcome experience, wherein the timeline is more or less universal, not all employees will have the same growth trajectory or duration in an organization. Furthermore, we identified important motivating and demotivating factors within the growth experience that enhance or detract retaining talented employees. Factors such as support from supervisors, clearly defined roles and responsibilities, growth opportunities, seeing a path for mobility and access to support from the organization create a sense of belonging for employees. When employees feel that they belong within an organization, they are committed, innovative and work harder for the cause. Therefore, providing a roadmap for growth in an organization is important.

People wander away from organizations during the growth experience for many reasons: they are not being challenged, they struggle with their supervisor, or they see no way to advance in the organization, to name a few.

In our live listening tours, we tackled two important questions with simple exercises. We asked employees to describe the best job and boss they ever had. This was a simple way to acquire a list of what our employees want and need from both the organization and their
immediate leaders. The list included high trust, compassion, work/life balance, learning, autonomy and fun. This list put us on the right path for reimagining how we train our supervisors, how we create goals from employees, and how, as an organization, we can contribute to a fulfilling work life. We are still in the process of putting the many pieces of this puzzle together and will continue to learn from our colleagues and strive to implement change that will be most meaningful to them.

**Tips for How to Get Employees the Growth They Need**

- Support and train managers to coach and encourage their employees.
- Create professional development opportunities and tracks.
- Encourage employees to pursue passion projects.
- Create SMART goals for employees.
- Create a path for employees within the organization.

**Farewell: How We Say Goodbye to Colleagues Makes a Big Difference**

Regardless of why an employee is leaving an organization, whether it’s because they found a new path to traverse, a change was necessary for the team, or they are moving out of the workforce after years of service, employees deserve dignity and respect for their contributions to the organization. This experience is possibly the most overlooked and has the greatest potential for retaining employees. Employees who see their colleagues leaving an organization with a celebration for their next move are more likely to feel a sense of appreciation and respect for all employees. When the organization clearly shows that it cares for its employees, regardless of how they leave, the result is often greater retention.

**The Problem and How We Are Tackling It**

If you leave an organization with a bitter taste in your mouth, you are more likely to share that experience with others, on social media or on recruiting websites. No one wants to contribute years of service only to be told goodbye with a sheet cake and no one to help pack up their
desk. Organizations quietly lose talent every day, and as employees slip away, so does the opportunity for them to return because their farewell made them feel devalued.

In Boise State HR, we partnered with our campus career center to develop ways to help our employees transition smoothly. We want our employees to feel invested in, especially when layoffs and reductions are necessary. These moments are uncomfortable; however with the right resources, care and consideration for our employees, we can help them land on their feet. For employees who are retiring or have left us for new opportunities, we try to encourage departments and teams to celebrate them.

Everyone deserves to have their time and accomplishments appreciated, no matter the reason for their transition. Furthermore, keeping those connections alive helps keep a spirit of community and innovation alive, as those friendships can lead to collaboration, idea sharing and future talent referrals.

Creating the Farewell Employees Deserve

- Conduct an exit interview – Ask what they are excited about in their new adventure, how they were treated, how you could have retained them and what would bring them back.
- Have a party and celebrate their contributions to the team/organization.
- Thank them for their time with a note/card.
- Wish them well in their next adventure.

In HR, our calling is to deliberately focus on an inclusive work culture where everyone is valued and where one’s daily work has meaning and fulfillment. The path we are on is rocky and steep, with so many unforeseen trees fallen across the path. Yet we forge on as we envision reaching the peak of the mountain: a work life that is fulfilling regardless of role or rank. While we look forward to achieving this ambitious goal, we have learned to enjoy not only the challenges and beauty of this trek, but also the amazing people who are making this climb with us. Because at the end of the day, they are why we do the work.

About the author: Kaysi Parke is communications and employee engagement specialist at Boise State University.
Navigating Together: Supporting Associate Well-Being in Uncertain Times

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An Effective Higher Ed Governance Structure: A Former CHRO's Take on Reporting Directly to the President

By Ken Hutchinson
Many years ago, I served on a small committee appointed by the University of Missouri president, C. Peter Magrath, to assess the governance structure of the University of Missouri System. The university is comprised of four research universities, with four chancellors reporting to the president. The five-member committee was chaired by Charles F. Knight, chair and CEO of Emerson Electric. We were assisted by one of the most able consultants I have known, R. Michael Murray Jr., then managing director of McKinsey & Company, and now the company’s director emeritus. We provided the president and the university’s governing board a comprehensive set of recommendations, and I stayed in touch with Murray.

About a decade later, I asked him to provide his perspective on management in higher education. Toward this end, Murray met with the president, chancellors and vice presidents. McKinsey had just completed a thought-provoking study on the most significant attributes of its 10 top-performing clients. While there are dimensional differences in corporate for-profit organizations versus higher education, there are also lessons for higher education. My hope was to capture those commonalities.

### Top 10 Attributes of Top 10 Organizations

One of the most intriguing findings of the “top 10 attributes of the top 10 high-performing organizations” in the McKinsey portfolio of clients, was that the CEO is the chief personnel officer. This is to say that the traditional chief human resource officer (CHRO) portfolio of responsibilities is critical to the CEO’s personal success and the success of the organization.

To unpack this broad statement a little more, it meant that the CEO took personal interest in hiring and retaining top talent, compensation structures, the management processes that drove an informed view at least three levels into the organization, and importantly, performance programs that had meaning, relevance and consequences. In all cases, the CHRO reported to the CEO, which stayed with me throughout my career in higher ed.

### Characteristics of a World-Class CHRO

What are the characteristics of a full-functioning CHRO? The Board of the National Academy of Human Resources recently reviewed a white paper prepared by the CHRO Global Leadership Board, under the direction of Kevin Cox, who is now the CHRO of General Electric. The white paper is called "Becoming a World-Class CHRO," and its objective is to identify a standard of excellence for the CHRO.

I highly recommend reading this notable and thorough examination of the CHRO’s responsibility. I mention this to help define and communicate the breadth and scope of responsibilities of the CHRO. It is my hope that this will be useful to current higher education HR executives and, in many cases, the presidents of our institutions.

### Outdated Governance Structures

I acknowledge that governance structures can and should differ somewhat based on the size of the university or college. Higher education governance, to some extent, is based on line-of-sight considerations. If you are the president of a small institution, you can deal first-hand with issues of effective governance, performance, executive compensation, critical staffing and other aspects of governance.

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**Percentage of CHROs Reporting to Key Administrative Positions**

CUPA-HR’s 2019 Administrators, Professionals, and Staff in Higher Education Surveys found that overall, only 29 percent of CHROs report directly to the CEO/President/Chancellor. The surveys also found:

- 9 percent of CHROs report to the Chief Business Officer
- 29 percent of CHROs report to the Chief Financial Officer
- 19 percent of CHROs report to the Executive VP/Vice Chancellor
- 14 percent of CHROs report to another position
For example, the chief of police for a small town in New York has the same portfolio of responsibilities as the chief of police for New York City, but their positions are dimensionally different. The same is true in higher education.

The crux of this governance structure suggests that the “business officer” governance model is outdated and has never been a very effective model, with regard to the human resource function. Colleges and universities are labor intensive, with human-capital budgets usually comprising 70-80 percent of operations. For HR to be lumped in with accounting, financial reporting, investments, endowment management, purchasing, IT and budget preparation, to me, does not make a lot of management or governance sense. Why place a business officer between the CHRO and president or the CHRO and board? A humorous answer is that perhaps some presidents do not want the responsibility of being president and some business officers believe they are presidents.

One great personality retired from the University of Missouri, when introduced to our new incoming vice president for administration, said, “It’s an honor to meet you! Three presidents served under your predecessor.”

This is not to say that there are not effective business officers performing in the HR space. I was fortunate to have wonderful and highly competent business officers. During my 30-year tenure as CHRO for the University of Missouri, my reporting relationship changed roughly two-thirds into my service as corporate CHRO. The first two-thirds, I reported to executive vice presidents, and the last third, I reported to the president. Dr. Manuel Pacheco and the board decided this change was necessary and appropriate. I served many of those early years on the president’s cabinet, but it was not the same as being a direct report.

Even with highly capable business officer executives, I can state without equivocation that, I was a much more effective HR executive when reporting directly to the president. This included staffing directly the Compensation and HR Committee of our governing board. In fact, prior to the direct reporting relationship to the president, there was not a Compensation and HR Committee of our governing board. Now, this committee is one of the most influential committees of the university’s board. The CHRO is an ex-officio member of this committee.

**Are CHROs Ready?**

Postulating that higher education would be better served with the CHRO having a direct relationship with the president begs a serious question: Are we as HR executives prepared to take on a direct relationship with the president? When this occurs, you are in effect becoming a general officer of your university. The president and your governing board will be using you not only for HR policy and advice, but also seeking your judgement on other aspects of governance and operations.

We then must understand, as general officers, the entire academic and business higher education enterprise. We must understand the dynamics at play with budgets, fund raising, IT and the academic enterprise. We must envision our responsibilities at a higher level. We must understand work and what constitutes the success of our colleagues and the institution itself.
The CHRO is a vital advisor to the board and president on executive recruitment and selection, including presidents and chancellors. In other words, we must add value as a general officer.

Colleagueship takes on a different look and feel. One of my most significant general officer colleagues was the vice president for academic affairs. Together we established, with the strong backing of the president, one of the most effective academic leadership programs in the country, providing strong developmental opportunities for over 450 department chairs and associate deans. With such a change, HR is in full partnership with colleagues in academic affairs, development, governmental relations, business operations, finance and investments.

An Intensely Human Enterprise

Most major corporations now have the CHRO reporting directly to the CEO. It has been my privilege to know many of these executives and appreciate the contributions they make to their company and the field of human resources. I am confident higher education ultimately will understand the strength such a reporting relationship brings to an organization. I know higher education is different, but not that different. I can even make a case that the need for HR presence at the top is as critical in higher education as the need in other sectors.

One of the committee members for the University if Missouri I mentioned earlier was Dr. Harold Enarson, former president of The Ohio State University. He stated that, “…. universities are more like a church than a factory, more like a research lab than the highway department. The university is an intensely human enterprise, and it is not so much managed as it is led.”

I agree with Dr. Enarson’s observation. Properly deployed, HR holds many of the levers for higher education leadership and success.

About the author: Ken Hutchinson is a past president of the CUPA-HR board of directors, vice president emeritus of the University of Missouri System, president emeritus of the American Research Universities-Human Resource Institute (ARU-HRI), and fellow in the National Academy of Human Resources.
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