

HRMA

PeopleTalk

Living, Learning, Leading:

HR Then and Now

Col. Chris Hadfield

Phones Home:

Good Morning Earth

Reinvent the Workplace

with Generation Connect

How to Get More

Committed People

BC HRMA CEO Simon Evans

Says Farewell

Employee Choice ≠ Flexible Benefits

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The economic environment appears to be improving which means that the battle for key talent will become more intense. At the same time, the workforce is showing broader diversity and these employees are looking for more choice and flexibility from their employer.

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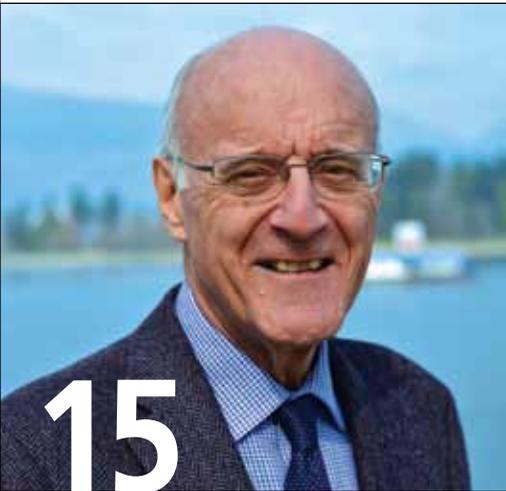


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PeopleTalk

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"The leadership instinct you are born with is the backbone. You develop the funny bone and the wishbone that go with it."

—Elaine Agather

"To handle yourself, use your head; to handle others, use your heart."

—Eleanor Roosevelt

"Leave all the afternoon for exercise and recreation, which are as necessary as reading. I will rather say more necessary because health is worth more than learning."

—Thomas Jefferson

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Living, Learning, Leading on all Fronts

WELCOME TO THE SPRING EDITION OF *PeopleTalk* and the warmer hours of light ahead. Here's to the bright ideas you find inside this issue planting a seed that serves you well.

While winter is usually a period punctuated by festivities and hallmarked by a slower pace, my own was busier than usual on a few fronts—at home with three children, back to work full-time from maternity leave, and most pertinently to these pages, as president of an association both leading, and in the midst of, great change.

Everybody told me the year ahead would be challenging. No one told me it would be this much fun. “Living, Learning, Leading” is not only the theme of this issue—it speaks to something far deeper at the core of the choices we make as HR professionals.

We live to learn and lead as a result. Whether that is within organizations, building programs and processes that keep people first in the minds of decision-makers, or as individual members of BC HRMA developing ourselves and profession alike: HR, at its best, serves to better organizational pictures big and small.

For over 70 years as an association, and for over 50 years gathering annually en masse as HR professionals and business leaders, BC HRMA has always put better people practices at the forefront of organizational potential. Fortunately, such thinking has grown increasingly popular, and is now pretty much mandatory.



Shannon Joly, CHRP

Smart HR is just smart business at heart, and for some that requires a change of thinking about how better business results are best achieved. As HR professionals, we benefit from several lifetimes of such ongoing learning.

From the early days of personnel and onwards, HR professionals have been grappling with the questions that speak to the human heart of the workplace. In turn, a big part of our achievement as a profession speaks to our passion for sharing the knowledge acquired.

Given the global economic shocks, demographic trends and technological changes since then, HR's perpetual learning has fruitful purpose: leadership across industry. That type of responsibility is what drives our ongoing commitment to

learning, as HR professionals, and as your BC HRMA.

It's also why we make learning as much fun as possible. With the 52nd Annual HRMA Conference + Tradeshow just around the corner April 15-16, 2014 at the Vancouver Convention Centre West, I look forward to the laughter as much as the learning—and hope to see you there.

By Shannon Joly, CHRP
President, BC HRMA
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A Lifetime Learning Journey

WHEN “LIVING, LEARNING, LEADING” APPEARED ON THE board during our editorial brainstorm for 2014, there was near unanimous agreement—as much as has always been the story of HR.

The differences—and similarities—between the ‘then’ and the ‘now’ of HR stem directly from an evolution of the appreciation of the intellectual capital component of the business equation. Without a doubt, and as discussed in our cover story (p.22) by Nancy Painter, while HR has come a long way from its ‘Cratchity’ origins, the expectations are greater than ever.

Fortunately, so is HR leadership.

As much as amply illustrated by this issue’s ‘double’ back page interview with Canada’s most famous, the world’s most musical, and every teacher on the planet’s favourite astronaut, Colonel Chris Hadfield (p.49). As the closing plenary speaker at the upcoming 52nd Annual HRMA Conference + Tradeshow (p.14), his very presence speaks to how far HR conferences have come as must-attend events. As per our interview, and the title of Col. Hadfield’s presentation, when it comes to the positive impact HR leadership can make—“The Sky is Not The Limit”. *An Astronaut’s Guide to Life on Earth* is just one of the titles selected by Jane Terepocki this issue that draws a clear line between “Readers and Leaders” (p.33).

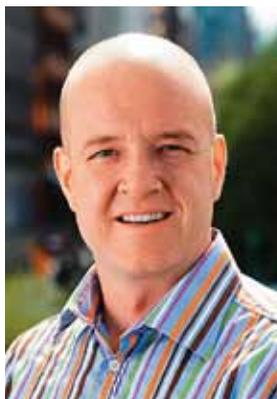
The realization of that potential depends a great deal upon the questions asked.

“How to Get More Committed People” (p.30) is one asked often enough that Sentis Research has given Maslow a makeover this issue. What constitutes ‘meaningful’ consultation in collective bargaining (p.46) is another that has captured provincial headlines lately as highlighted by Graeme McFarlane. Whether it is “Time to Change Your Culture” (p. 34), is the overarching question Natalie Michael addresses, along with five key questions every leader needs to ask. Is informal learning (p.32) as valuable, if not more so, than more traditional formats asks Jennifer Gerves-Keen. What ‘love’ has to do with it (p.18), Heather Hughes shares from the heart and from the lumber mill.

In many ways, these are the questions HR professionals have been asking for years, only now, the answers are being heard. Moreover, HR’s toolkit has expanded considerably. With key metrics a must, BC HRMA’s Christian Codrington, CHRP explores HR’s ability to apply the human touch to big data (p.44). Given the proliferation and impact of the technologies at play, Christine McLeod shares interesting insight into their potential to “Reinvent the Workplace with Generation Connect” (p.42).

On a paring note, Isabelle St-Jean delves into the importance of storytelling in “Boomers Bring the Experience of a Lifetime” (p.40), as well as how their leadership lessons might be shared before their journey continues into retirement.

That retirement is just another step in the “living, learning, leading” journey makes our parting interview with BC HRMA CEO Simon Evans, CHRP (p.15) no less bittersweet this issue.



Jason McRobbie

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Each issue of *PeopleTalk* draws upon the HR expertise of our Advisory Council and the editorial acumen of thought-leading professionals. It is our pleasure to introduce some of those living, learning and leading the way for HR this issue.



Nancy Painter **Living, Learning, Leading: HR Then and Now** p. 22

Nancy Painter, ABC, is an internationally accredited, award-winning writer and communications consultant. Her business, Paint A Story Communications, is based in Surrey BC. She has worked as a communicator in the real estate development industry, post-secondary education, health care, a crown corporation and other industries. She is currently the VP, Professional Standards, for the BC chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators.



Andrew Woods **What HR is Looking For in HR?** p. 20

Andrew Woods, MBA is a professional speaker, trainer and author of *BOOM! engaging and inspiring employees across cultures*. He has provided management development, cross-cultural communication, innovation and creativity workshops for over 400 companies in 18 countries. He is co-chair of the BC HRMA Fraser Valley roundtable on career advancement and is a learning and development consultant at Lexxon Training in Surrey, BC. For this edition of *PeopleTalk*, Woods surveyed his 'LinkedIn' network to find out what HR is seeking from within.



Kristin Zehnder, CHRP **Challenging Conversations Key to Core Culture** p. 29

Kristin Zehnder, BA, CHRP, is the director of human resources at the beautiful Harrison Hot Springs Resort and Spa. She has accrued over 15 years' experience as an HR generalist in a variety of industries including hospitality, education, engineering and manufacturing. In her current role, her main focus is employee and labour relations, change management, and occupational health and safety. She is most ardent about identifying opportunities where barriers exist to further organizational excellence. In her spare time she is an avid baseball mom and equestrian.

"I like to listen. I have learned a great deal from listening carefully. Most people never listen."—Ernest Hemingway

Heather Hughes

What's Love Got to Do With It? p. 18

Heather Hughes is a Certified Management Consultant (heatherhughesconsulting.com) with 30 years of local, national and international expertise to offer clients. She works equally well in corporate offices as well as on-site with logging, mining, shipping and other resource sector clients. In 2013, Hughes launched her new 'fast track' leadership development program, called Fit to Lead, which is customized to each person, making them truly 'fit to lead'.



Jennifer Gerves-Keen

Organizational Learning Thrives Informally p. 32

Jennifer Gerves-Keen, MA, ACC is focused on offering excellent organizational learning experiences. Drawing on years of training and coaching experience, mostly in the area of leadership, she is now using new research from the field of neuroscience to create innovative learning programs, and advise organizations on how to make their organizational learning experiences more effective. Currently studying with the NeuroLeadership Institute, she is also a certified coach through the International Coach Federation.



Amelia Chan, CHRP

Small Business Offers Big Insights on Best Workplace Practices p. 36

As principal of Higher Options (hr-options.com) Amelia Chan, CHRP is an HR consultant and immigration specialist who is passionate about employee engagement and operational excellence. Providing strategic and operational solutions to a wide range of industries, Amelia brings personality and practical application to meet the challenging dynamics of business. She is a strong believer in sustainable success grounded in stakeholder involvement, accountability and cultures of communication and education.



Christine McLeod

Reinvent the Workplace with Generation Connect p. 42

Christine McLeod has managed multi-million dollar retail business units, teams of close to 100, overseen the people operations of a luxury hospitality company and developed North American wide training programs for retail and resort managers. In 2009, she founded the consulting group Impact People Practices and two years later launched what has become Canada's most innovative social workplace summit, Impact99. As the recent recipient of the 2013 Women of Organization's "Leader of the Year" award, McLeod calls Squamish home with her husband and two girls.



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HR Trends Survey 2014: Key Results

After more than five years of BC HRMA's annual *HR Trends Survey* data, it is clear many of the 'trends' appear to be constants and the challenges that continue to face business leaders are being exacerbated by more complex working environments and ever-tightening budgets. <http://tinyurl.com/lf7m9jf>

Rachel Welch O'Connor asks: How to get good at delivering the tough feedback and delivering it well? (She also provides a good article for tips from Harvard Business Review titled "*Your Employees Want the Negative Feedback You Hate to Give*".)

Anne Bishop responds: I love the Insights Discovery D4 feedback model. This provides a framework to help people practice feedback that lands: Cool Blue (Introverted Thinking), Earth Green (Introverted Feeling), Sunshine Yellow (Extroverted Feeling) and Fiery Red (Extroverted Thinking). This helps people get beyond their natural style of giving feedback from just one or two quadrants.

Malay Kapoor responds: It is always a sensitive area to deal with and each situation will have its own challenges. I have been using the so called 'Sandwich Technique'. That is, start with the 'good news'—address the criticism constructively—and end with more good news.

Girish Ananthanarayana responds: From experience, I can say there are two challenges here: 1) People do not know how to give "negative feedback" (I would call it "critique" or "improvements" instead of "negative"); 2) People do not know how to receive "negative feedback" even though they say they would prefer that.

Even when given the "negative feedback", people have a tendency to justify why they did what they did, or why it was appropriate behavior etc. So, it is tricky. This is my opinion, and I myself prefer "constructive critique" so that I can improve :)

Top BC HRMA Tweets

What do @Cmdr_Hadfield @nilofer @shawnachor @DaveUlrich_ID all have in common? They'll be at #HRMA2014. Will you? ow.ly/twZq5

RT @eliz_bonner: Congratulations to all of our CHR Graduate - Class of 2013! CHR: The Evolution of HR: <http://t.co/HcZEsfc3ZL> via @YouTube @BCHRMA

@MayaDroeschler: Dave Ulrich: A Return on Value <http://t.co/5BIRFooriQ> by @BCHRMA #hr

Is the 'talent shortage' for real? ow.ly/tX1o3

Leadership, Motivation and the Brain

By **Trevor Maber**

What does the human brain have to do with leadership and motivation? It may surprise you to know that until recently, no one was entirely certain. With the advent of advanced medical tools, alongside an increase in interdisciplinary research, this mystery is at long last being unravelled and understood.

<http://tinyurl.com/lqf7mf2>



Accelerating Leadership Development: Identifying High-Potential Leaders

By **Jocelyn Bérard**

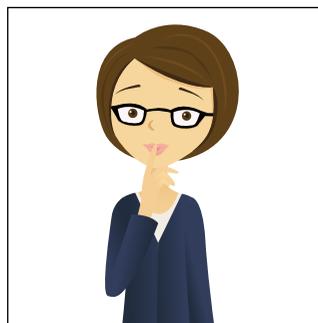


According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (January 2012), the number of people 65 and older will double between 2010 and 2050 in the US. By 2020, in less than seven years, 25 per cent of the labour force will be composed of older adults (55+), up from 13 per cent in 2000. This is the first article of a three-part series exploring the topic of leadership development from HRMA Conference + Tradeshow 2014 speaker Jocelyn Bérard. <http://tinyurl.com/mygunqm>

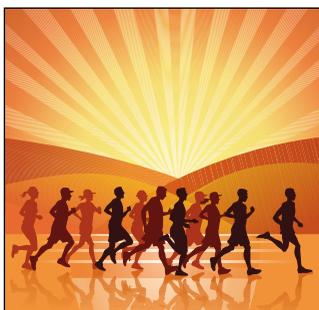
'Quiet' No More: The Profound Influence of Introverted Leaders

By **Craig Dowden**

If asked to describe the profile of an effective leader, what words would come to mind? Chances are, your answer would include words like charismatic, dominant, persuasive, action-oriented, driven, and passionate. We would likely be surprised if someone responded with reserved, humble, reflective, or quiet. <http://tinyurl.com/lz4msa5>



The Science of Training: Practice What Matters Most



Riding a longboard through the next tube in Maui, or reaching the finish line after pacing oneself for 26 miles across Boston doesn't happen overnight. These skills take practice. Lots and lots of practice. Training is also a skill that takes practice. And the better the transfer of training, the better your people will be at seamlessly integrating what they've learned with what they do. When practiced well, training and development programs work well. <http://tinyurl.com/k5urwh9>

“What life lesson or learning experience has most greatly influenced

Diane Taylor, CHRP



principal,
Glow Leadership

Diane Taylor, CHRP is a leadership coach, human resources consultant, speaker, facilitator, and blogger. As principal of Glow Leadership, she offers unique leadership development, organizational design and executive coaching opportunities that help leaders and organizations achieve their best results. Her passion lies in developing exceptional, authentic and engaged leaders who create balance and meaning in all areas of their lives.

My approach to HR leadership has not been influenced by a specific life lesson or single learning experience, but rather by a combination of many experiences, challenges, industries, opportunities and amazing people that I have had an opportunity to work with over my 20+ year career. Leadership, in my opinion, is about growth, continuous improvement and a better understanding of self. As I have learned more about myself, my unique strengths and my authentic style, I have grown into a stronger and more well-rounded leader. I have learned that unless there is blood running under the door, you can get through anything; that perfection or trying to emulate others only holds us back from our true greatness and that although we typically look outside ourselves for guidance and direction, all of our answers lie within. When we embrace our authentic leadership gifts, people trust and will follow us where we need to go.

Denise Lloyd, CHRP



CEO & founder,
Engaged HR

Denise Lloyd, MA, CHRP actively works with organizational leaders to build engaging workplaces. Denise has been in the HR field for over 20 years and is known for bringing new ideas and innovation to the way people work together. She is a sought after speaker and is committed to creating workplaces where employees have opportunity to gain meaning from their work and where leaders are proud of the kind of employer they are.

While doing my Masters of Arts in Leadership, one of the things that resonated the most with me throughout my studies was the question, “Is this the kind of leader you want to be?”

It made me stop, reflect, consider my actions and make a choice. Now, when faced with leadership moments throughout my day, I often ask myself this question and make a choice.

And sometimes, I change my mind. I might choose to take a different position or I might use different words to explain myself. The point is, sometimes, what I am about to do is not reflective of the kind of leader I want to be.

This is a great way to check my alignment with my leadership values and beliefs and to make quick course corrections or to validate that I am indeed, going in the right direction. It is powerful and effective.

Paulette Brager, CHRP



People Service Team,
First West Credit Union

Paulette Brager, CHRP, has been a member of the People Service Team at First West Credit Union for the past four years. With more than 15 years experience in the human resources industry, she is passionate about leading people and developing innovative programs that help her colleagues excel. Paulette has been a member of the BC HRMA Southern Interior Advisory Council for the past six years and will serve as chair for 2014/2105.

My approach to HR has been greatly influenced by the advice given to me by one of my mentors many years ago – always think like an owner.

Simply put, make business decisions as if it was your name hanging above the door. With this in mind, I focus on how I can best support my colleagues while achieving and exceeding our business goals.

My current role with First West allows me to continue to fulfill this ownership mindset as I am empowered to make decisions that benefit our teams as well as our company. One of First West’s priorities is to grow its leaders. By working on and leading many great projects, I am able to be a part of the strategic direction of the company while helping others realize and recognize their potential.

When you show people how the work they do really makes a difference you can build a truly engaged workforce.

“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.”

—John Quincy Adams

your approach to HR leadership?"

Krysty Wideen, CHRP



consultant,
The Refinery Leadership Partners Inc.

Krysty Wideen's strong interest in the challenge of creating, implementing and measuring learning experiences in innovative and impactful ways led her to a career in organizational and leadership development. In her work as a consultant, she strives to bring groups back to the basics, challenge assumptions and explore new, different, and inventive perspectives. Krysty has her Masters of Education in Adult Learning and Global Change from UBC, her Bachelor of Business Administration from SFU, and is a CHRP.

As a leader in HR, I am in service of the business and of people within that business. I think when I first got into HR I was much more focused on the people and thought it was someone else's job to worry about the business itself. This shift characterizes my approach to HR leadership.

I remember one moment: I was teaching a group of leaders and one of them politely raised his hand and asked, "How will being here help me do my job better?"

It's a pretty simple question and yet, my first response was panic. I did eventually give him an answer; honestly, I don't really remember the particular answer nor whether it satisfied him.

What I remember is a promise I made to myself and have strived to uphold since then: "From this day on, I will always have an authentic answer to that question."

Denise Norman



director, HR
Dept. of Economic Development,
Yukon Government

Denise L. Norman has lived and worked in the Yukon since 1976, first in Dawson City and then in Whitehorse. She has over 25 years of human resource and management experience including facilitation, staffing, classification, coaching, mediation, conflict resolution, labour relations and negotiation. Outside of work she is constantly pursuing new experience and knowledge—from a month long motorcycle adventure in Baja and climbing on Denali, to most recently writing a book about raw foods.

When I was 17 years old, I spent nine months participating in a Canada World Youth exchange program in locations across Canada and in Honduras, Central America.

It was an intense time for me. I gained the ability to communicate in both French and Spanish, experienced volunteering my time towards community projects and, most important of all, I learned how to live and work as a member of a team, with an eye on observing myself and how I interacted and contributed to that team.

I have to say that it wasn't always smooth sailing. We struggled with issues of personal weakness, leadership, and even cultural clashes between our anglophone and francophone Canadians, which was a surprise for many of us. What this time taught me was to be an observer of myself as well as the world around me and to embrace diversity as an asset as well as a challenge.



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Welcome From Conference Chair 2014

By **Nic Tsangarakis**

WHEN IT COMES TO THE 52ND Annual Conference + Tradeshow on April 15-16, 2014 at the Vancouver Convention Centre West—"Change Starts Here" is an open invitation and an honest truth.

We started our planning for this year's conference almost immediately with an open assessment of last year's event. As conference chair, I am using the royal 'we' to speak the efforts of a tremendous array of volunteers, professionals and BC HRMA staff.

We looked to the strengths that our attendees had noted on their surveys, and were most pleasantly surprised on a lot of fronts. The 2013 plenary sessions had the highest accumulative ranking ever, with all four speakers rated above 91 per cent. Attendees also noted there were many particularly good workshops with strong case studies that offered practical tools and take-aways—as well as some popular innovations such as Speed Networking, Cracker Barrel and HR Café.

Once we digested the accolades, we pinpointed our weaknesses and improvement opportunities, primarily around the timing and flow of key events, and a few too many breakout sessions that did not provide the levels of anticipated engagement.

Armed with these insights, we got to work. With a team as blessed with HR talent as the BC HRMA Conference Steering Committee, addressing these issues was a pleasure that we hope plays forward in your enjoyment of this year's conference.

When it came to the plenary speakers, we converged on speakers of maximum impact and scope. From the out-of-this-world, worldwide sensation of Chris Hadfield to the ever-anchoring and inspiring HR guru Dave Ulrich; to Shawn Achor whose TED talk



on happiness has over 4 million views, and Nilofer Merchant, the winner of the 2013 Thinkers 50 "Future Thinker Award"—we knew the main stage would be something special.

Next, we sourced workshop facilitators that would continue to build upon the knowledge and skills of attendees and reached for further innovations in content delivery and experience. One of these new features is a "shift and share" session where seven presenters will concurrently share concise and compelling stories about a shift in their workplace—from small behavioural shifts to broad changes in values—with the workshop participants moving from speaker to speaker.

This year's conference is the result of the combined efforts of our steering committee comprising Lisa Ryan, CHRP, Harry Gray, Kevin Jeffrey, FCHRP, Marino Sveinson, Tyler Cheyne, CHRP, Vincent Chow, Shauna Grinke, Sabrina Mowbray-Angus, CHRP, Stephan Hockley and Leanne Johnson, CHRP. Several of these individuals also led committees of dedicated members who selected breakout session speakers.

I would also like to thank the amazing BC HRMA team that provide the behind-the-scene support that made our work so much easier, in particular Erin Roddie, Quinne Davey, Kara Douglas and Christian Codrington, CHRP.

As mentioned atop, the theme for the 52nd Annual HRMA Conference + Tradeshow is "Change Starts Here"—and it our hope to see you there. Rest assured, we have set the scene to serve as a catalyst for change within your organizations. Come for the speakers, stay for the people and leave with the tools you need to take HR's impact even further in your workplace.

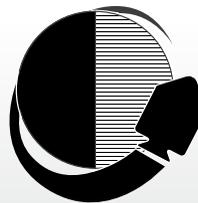
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BC HRMA CEO Simon Evans Says Farewell

By Jason McRobbie

FOR SIMON EVANS, CEO OF THE BRITISH Columbia Human Resources Management Association (BC HRMA), the past 10 years have been marked by milestones ranging from the financial to foundational. As a self-schooled graduate of the “university of life”, his impending retirement in June 2014 is not so much a mission cap as a fresh start.

A Lifetime in the Service (of Others)

Born and raised in England as the youngest of three sons in a naval family, his earliest career intentions had been towards medicine. Faced with a three year waiting list to further his education, Evans went to work—and found his calling at age 18 while pumping gas for the father of a friend from school. It was noticed early on that Evans pumped gas differently than most, always with a friendly word and service that never failed to leave the customers smiling.

From management to moving to Canada with his young family—to answer ever greater calls of responsibility ranging from operations to marketing, sales and, ultimately, HR—people and profitability have long been his twin passions.

“I vowed from the beginning of my journey that change is a good thing and I would not be afraid of change because if you are, growth can be difficult,” says Evans. “I think the reason I went into non-profit leadership is because my whole life, even going back to being a young lad, has been about serving others.”

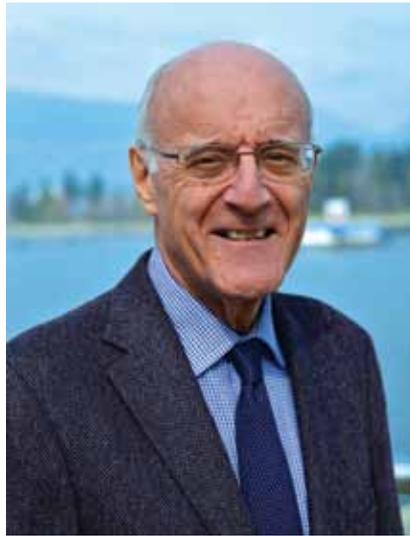
That community-mindedness has extended on broader industry levels as well, ranging from the development of culinary tourism in BC, to the establishment of go2, to his more present day championship of the Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) designation.

Corporate Wisdom in a Not-For-Profit World

“When I stepped away from the corporate world, I was looking to do good things in the not-for-profit world in areas I had some understanding of beginning with hospitality and the BC Restaurant and Foodservices Association,” says Evans. “Coming to BC HRMA was like a crown jewel to me because I was a CHRP—I had it when it first came along and I’ve always been involved in the management of people.

“When you first come into a non-profit after helping run a billion dollar company and the budget is now two million and you have six staff, there’s a huge adjustment from managing 7,500 people. I said, ‘I’m prepared to do that ‘apprenticeship’ as I called it then at the age of 55.”

That attitude, paired with a fiscal acuity honed by decades with Chevron and 7-11, found ample application with BC HRMA from day one. Faced with a deficit budget, membership dissatisfaction and a board hampered by its operational role, he created a five year strategic plan focused on financial outcomes and membership growth.



Voice, Value and Viability

Grounding his strategy in “Voice, Value and Viability”, he secured strong support from the board, membership and industry, most often in person, and went on to build a vibrant organizational culture that addressed critical areas while encouraging autonomy and innovation. Within three years, he had BC HRMA financially stabilized, an act expected to take a decade.

Having re-established the association’s financial equilibrium in short order, retained earnings grew from \$140,000 in 2004 to \$1,872,000 in 2013. Moreover, BC HRMA membership has grown by 100 per cent to 5,500+, as has the profile and demand for the CHRP designation; up

from 1,050 in 2004 to 3,180 in 2013. The only metric that speaks as loudly is member satisfaction which jumped from 55 per cent to 75 per cent over the same period.

Those types of figures, Evans readily attributes to the efforts of the BC HRMA board of directors, staff and volunteers—as well as the growing cognizance of HR’s strategic function as it relates to the profitability of all business.

That recognition has grown substantially since he first stepped aboard.

“I remember going to a career workshop at one of the universities within the first couple months, and there were doctors, dentists, lawyers and other professions busy answering questions,” says Evans. “I sat there for an hour and a half without one request to learn more about a career in HR. I thought, ‘Okay, you’ve got yourself a job.’”

He is most proud of how that perception of HR has changed, particularly with the younger generation. “Back then, we had less than 80 student members. Over the last few years, we’ve been hovering in the range of 800 to 900. That to me is huge because they are the next generation.”

A Swing in the Right Direction

As for his own next steps, family has always been foremost for Evans and he looks forward to redefining quality time with his wife Diana, their family and friends. A book lies within him too, but a few hours on the golf course are called for first. With undiminished drive and an Okanagan home set directly into the groomed landscapes of Predator Ridge, Evans is already developing a ‘new’ hobby—helping others.

“I would like to get involved with a program that involves kids learning the principles of life through the disciplines of golf in terms of integrity, honesty, technique and all the rest of it. That’s something I would like to get moving up in the Okanagan,” says Evans.

With as many passions in life as principles behind his leadership, Simon Evans’ work ultimately continues—one story, one swing and one blue sky moment on the green at a time.

CHRP Translates Into More Pay, Faster Promotions

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED WHAT YOUR CERTIFIED HUMAN Resources Professional (CHRP) designation is worth when it comes to your career and your paycheque?

Plenty, according to new research from the Toronto-based Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA) and PayScale. HRPA and PayScale conducted a national study to find out the value of the designation, and also looked at a similar designation south of the border.

The study, which pulled data from Payscale’s database, found that, for the most part, professionals with the CHRP designation outperformed professionals who didn’t have the CHRP.

“The demand for the CHRP designation from employers is clear and Payscale’s latest study only underscores how this translates into higher earnings and more promotions,” said Bill Greenhalgh, CEO of HRPA.

Let’s take a look at some of the key findings from the survey, *Fuel for HR Careers: The 2013 Market Value for CHRP Certification*.

Faster job progression

CHRP holders tend to get promoted faster, something that was especially true at the junior level. Nearly two-thirds (65 per cent) of HR assistants with a CHRP were promoted within five years compared to one-third (33 per cent) of those without the designation.

But at the top end of the scale, the CHRP wasn’t a differentiator. In fact, a higher percentage of HR directors without a CHRP received a promotion within five years (16 per cent) than those with the designation (14 per cent.)

Percentage receiving promotion within 5 years		
Title	With CHRP	No CHRP
HR assistant	65%	33%
HR administrator	55%	28%
HR generalist	51%	30%
HR manager	23%	11%
HR director	14%	16%

CHRP holders were also more likely to be promoted than their counterparts who hold the Professional in Human Resources (PHR) certification in the United States — 51 per cent of HR generalists with a CHRP received a promotion within five years, versus 41 per cent of PHR holders.

The almighty dollar

When it comes to paycheques, a CHRP generally means a more swollen wallet. But, as with progression, it’s not a big differentiator for the top positions. Interestingly, it’s also not much of a differentiator for junior positions either.

The difference is most pronounced for HR managers, where the premium for having the CHRP is 13 per cent — \$65,100 versus \$73,400.

Position	With CHRP	No CHRP	% difference
Vice-president, HR	\$168,000	\$164,000	2%
HR director	\$105,000	\$98,200	7%
HR manager	\$73,400	\$65,100	13%
HR generalist	\$53,500	\$50,100	7%
HR administrator	\$44,500	\$43,100	3%
HR assistant	\$37,900	\$39,200	-3%
All HR	\$65,600	\$50,500	30%

The wage difference holds true across the country. Here’s a look at the salaries for HR managers with the CHRP versus those without in selected cities across Canada.

City	With CHRP	No CHRP
Toronto	\$74,700	\$68,300
Vancouver	\$77,600	\$68,000
Calgary	\$85,300	\$72,400
Edmonton	\$70,500	\$68,900
Kitchener, Ont.	\$72,600	\$72,200
Ottawa/Gatineau	\$73,500	\$67,800
Hamilton	\$64,600	\$51,100
Halifax	\$65,400	\$60,900
Montreal	\$74,300	\$65,100
London, Ont.	\$70,800	\$60,500
Winnipeg	\$71,300	\$59,200

Who has the designation?

The top HR professionals at an organization are more likely to have the CHRP, according to HRPA and Payscale.

One-half (50 per cent) of vice-presidents of HR and HR directors (51 per cent) had the designation, versus only three per cent of HR assistants.

Employers asking for CHRP?

“I have had my CHRP from when it was in its embryonic phase, and how far it has come, and helped bring HR in the process, is something we can now quantify,” says Simon Evans, CEO of the British Columbia Human Resources Management Association. “That the CHRP is providing a competitive edge serves both the individuals and their organizations alike.”

According to HRPA, the number of job postings on Hire Authority — a job board it operates — that request the CHRP designation has been on the rise.

From 2007 to 2012, the percentage of postings that require an applicant to have, or be working towards, the CHRP jumped from 36 per cent to 68 per cent.

In the past year, that number has increased to 70 per cent, it said. **◆**

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BC Human Resources Management Association

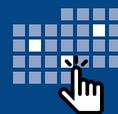
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What's Love Got to Do With It?

By **Heather Hughes**

WITHOUT A DOUBT, HR PROFESSIONALS CAN CREATE amazing changes by learning, living, and leading the vision of a better workplace—somewhere people can make their best contributions.

The 'L' theme is an intriguing one that brought a stream of other HR words to mind, but love stuck. Really? Yes, love is a powerful driver, though not a word which surfaces often enough in business.

Does 'love' belong in the workplace?

As Tina Turner asked, *"What's love got to do with it?"* Can 'love' ignite a passion for work? Are the two interchangeable? These are the questions more organizations are asking, and there are lessons to be learned from how passion has permeated the industrial workplace and gained international attention.

Ipsos, one of the world's leading survey-based marketing research firms describes an engaged employee "is fully involved in and enthusiastic about their work. Engaged employees are committed, passionate and inspired—and they inspire others by example. They care about the future of the company and are willing to invest the discretionary effort to see that the organization succeeds. They are willing to go 'above and beyond' as a standard practice."

Sounds like love, doesn't it?

Leaders, Love and Vision

Love makes people excited; they look ahead eagerly, anticipating a better, happier future, one in which they will reap great joy. They conjure up images of a future to be created and talk endlessly about it to anyone who will listen.

Leaders in successful organizations do the same.

These leaders hold tightly to their vision of what that bright, future will look like, and describe it to others in the hopes of stirring excitement and passion in them too.

Not Your Average Run of the Mill

I worked with just such a leader in a BC sawmill many years ago, and the warmth of his smile, his firm handshake and small yet comfortable office remain with me today. One day I popped into his office and he spoke quite breathlessly about a vision he had for his mill. "It's going to be the best darn mill on the island", he exclaimed. "Our people will be at the top of their game, raising the bar for everyone in the industry."

He was beaming. He was serious. He was passionate. I tentatively asked how he would know his mill was the best. Without missing a beat, he assured me he was going to be running 24/7, doubling his profits with superior quality and safety would be exemplary—all because his people 'loved' his plan.

While on a tour in Asia, he saw the opportunity to cut specialty lumber for temples. The precise demands of the Asian clients would challenge his staff, but when he had told them about this chance, they were all 'fired up' about the opportunity to notch up their skills to meet the demand.

Passion Builds a Temple

I spent the morning with that manager and saw how his passion spilled over to others. It was infectious. He told me, grinning like a love-struck teenager, that he'd called his senior team together and asked them if they would help him re-inject a passion for sawmill excellence into their workforce—a team of some 130 mature and well entrenched unionized employees. He told me they'd looked stunned, but he said he would take the lead if they would just follow along, and to that they happily agreed.

He planned to talk with a few more people that day, so he set off into the operation taking a team leader and me along. One-on-one and in small groups, he talked to everyone we met; he sat in the lunchroom, met people in the parking lot and hung out at the dock where ships were being loaded.

This is what I heard him say. "We have been given a unique opportunity to help build beautiful temples with BC wood cut in our mill; the clients trust us to give them the very best timbers, cut and packaged to meet very demanding specification. Will you help us do that?"

All day long he talked excitedly, passionately about his vision, conveying this love of the idea and his belief in his people to pull it off. Soon I noticed his team leader joining in, selling the idea of being the flagship mill for their international parent company.

Clearly the mill manager was 'in love' with this idea and his passion and enthusiasm oozed from every pore and with every conversation.

Love Always Takes Work

Regardless, it wasn't straightforward. It required hard work and a diligence on everyone's part to meet the client's exacting standards. Some improvements were quick and easy, others much more challenging. It was a path fraught with challenges to be overcome.

Quality became important to everyone, but production output originally suffered. In time, the client's exacting standards became their own exacting standards; more than production picked up.

Pride took hold, and the language of the workplace changed. 'We're helping to build temples' proved a more inspiring mantra than 'we cut lumber'. That same leader asked the union executive to 'trust us' when their own members insisted that setting up

**"He was beaming.
He was serious.
He was passionate."**

cameras was the only way to learn about another team's amazing production results.

The mill manager's passion and vision rippled through the entire operation. "I love working here", a front line supervisor told me one day. "It's great to have a challenge and to know my job is important."

High Engagement Requires Clear Path

When I talked with the HR department I heard about their contributions to the mill, and how they too had evolved. Initially their role was to listen, learn, then lead the changes needed to free people up to innovate. The changes were made to policies and practices deemed to be a hindrance, so they were modified or scrapped.

The HR team then latched on to the passion for excellence and examined their own role. They determined they could take the lead on building the knowledge and skills of the employees. Budgets were adjusted, notice boards were installed and daily results were posted at the mill entrance. People were recognized for any contribution they made that got the mill closer to its vision. HR staff saw a role for themselves and strode ahead, 'bushwhacking' their way through red tape, and found little difficulty in

selling the improvements to team leaders, union reps and front line employees.

Bringing the Love Home to Work

HR departments have a lot of power over engagement. As you look at your role, question everything. Ask. Probe. Challenge. Test the validity of the status quo.

'We're helping to build temples' proved a more inspiring mantra than 'we cut lumber'

- Why do we still do it this way?
- Is this helping or hindering our people?
- Do these policies support our vision?
- Isn't it time to review and re-write old practices?

HR professionals can, and must, be proactive, energized leaders because HR can, and does, make a huge difference in the lives of all employees, helping to strengthen the bottom line. So live, learn and lead—take a leap of faith and you will find once again all the reason you need to love your job.

Then you can tell Tina—*love has everything to do with it!* 

Heather Hughes (heatherhughesconsulting.com) is a Certified Management Consultant with 30 years of local, national and international expertise to offer clients.



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What Does HR Look For in HR?

By **Andrew Woods**

WHEN INTERVIEWING potential new hires, HR professionals assess candidates against a list of key skills and personal characteristics needed for the job to be done efficiently. However, what skills should we look for in our HR leaders?

In the new globalized economy, what skill sets are attributed to an innovative, efficient, productive HR team?

That was the question I put to a network of 300 HR managers and directors spread across the province, country and globe. Learning through LinkedIn has rarely proven so fulfilling, as a near 30 per cent response rate told me everything we really need to know—HR cares deeply about the future.

Learning Daily, Leaping Forward

“In the past a lot of HR departments were a back office administrative support function—hence the name personnel manager. It was about making sure the paperwork was right, that people were paid on time and the legislative obligations were met by the organization,” says Zakeera Vidler, director of ConnectedHR, a global HR consulting firm in Dubai.

“Today’s global economy requires HR to be flexible, demonstrate agility in managing talent and bring forward a lot of out of the box thinking in talent retention and development. HR professionals now need to understand what makes the business ‘tick’. They also need to be commercially and culturally savvy,” Vidler adds.

“Most importantly, they need to be able to support the execution of an organization’s strategy with sound performance management at all levels. When business focused and people minded, HR can show great leadership in driving the ‘culture and values’ across the organization.”

So what skill sets do HR professionals and business leaders around the globe value most highly in HR?

As per the LinkedIn survey, here are the skill sets perceived most commonly considered to be requisite for any HR manager to ensure sustainable competitive advantage in the modern economy:

Understanding Culture

HR managers need to understand the different cultures of the teams they work with. A global mindset needs to be adopted, as even a local firm will have interactions with colleagues and clients from around the world. HR needs to be versatile and understand the subtleties of a diverse workplace. By understanding different cultures, work teams gain multiple perspectives when facing common challenges, thus giving them a competitive edge.

Priority Management

On a typical day, HR can deal with an employee’s personal issues, an immediate request from senior management, and a recruiting strategy—and that doesn’t include daily challenges such as social media, remuneration, employee engagement issues, retention, and a variety of other issues, each one being a high priority to someone within the organization.

Business needs move and change quickly, and a manager who needs someone hired isn’t concerned that you’re already helping another manager who needs someone dismissed. HR professionals need to be able to handle it all and give priority to the operational needs of the business.

Negotiation

Diplomacy is a key attribute in an HR professional. HR professionals need to be highly skilled negotiators. There are often two or more opposing viewpoints within an organization, and a successful HR professional creates the middle ground that engages all parties. A solid understanding of negotiation strategies is needed to defuse conflict and ensure harmony within an organization.

Communication

HR professionals have to communicate across all levels within an organization, and through all mediums including in writing, online and in presentation. Above all, HR professionals need to be effective listeners.

“Listening is crucial. Now more than ever, HR manager’s need to understand the inevitable different points of view (aka conflicts) that occur in a globalized economy, by listening,” says Jay Canchola, HR business partner at Raytheon Company, a technology and innovation leader. “HR managers who are able to proactively listen are better positioned to help resolve conflict. The quicker the conflict can be resolved, the sooner people can get back to work to achieve their professional and personal goals.

Business knowledge

HR professionals are an important strategic force within an organization—when aligned with the fundamental business. A solid business foundation is required and expected within the department. In his book, *Human Resources Champions* (1997), Dave Ulrich explains:

“Human resources professionals must understand how their business or agency operates. This includes the organization’s strategy, how the organization makes money or achieves its primary purpose, its technological processes and organizational capabilities. Therefore, HR professionals should develop their knowledge of such areas as finance, marketing, operations, and general management. Expertise in these areas helps human resources professionals create value by enabling them to link their actions more effectively to the organization’s strategy.”

People AND Policy Advocate

Employees expect human resources professionals to advocate for their concerns, yet HR must also work with management’s policies. The HR professional who can pull off this crucial balancing act wins trust from the entire organization.

There are times you will need to make decisions to protect an individual and other times when you will need to protect the organization and its values. These decisions may be misunderstood by some, but the effective HR practitioner can remain impartial while active as an ally to all levels of an organization.

Innovation and Empowerment

Innovation within HR is widely viewed as crucial to continued success in the globalized economy. As related by Mary Barra, CEO of General Motors and former head of HR at GM, in a recent issue of *Fortune* Magazine: "The key is to continually reduce complexity within the organization to empower teams to be innovative. We have great innovation in pockets. But I want to make sure we are being innovative across the board. To empower employees leads to a motivated group with a sense of loyalty to a company."

Updating the HR knowledge base is key, according to Maureen Molsberry, HR manager at Ballard Power Systems. "In the last five years we have focused on helping our leaders understand what it means to lead change and innovation. Successful HR managers today are keeping up with the latest information about neuroscience and how the brain works when it comes to change management and motivation," says Molsberry.

Change Management

Most companies today are in a constant state of transition. Products come and go and new ideas are implemented rapidly. HR has to help everyone cope with the constant changes and ultimately step beyond them. The culture needs to be one in which change is embraced and celebrated to ensure success.

Lynn Cook, learning and development manager at Lexxon Training in Vancouver says, "We are seeing a huge increase in HR managers wanting to participate in change management workshops. From small organizations to larger firms the need to embrace change and work through it is seen as a positive step forward for progressive HR managers."

A Higher Standard

In our rapidly evolving times, it is clear that HR professionals are being understood in a very different light by more traditional leaders of industry. That HR holds the key to unlocking the potential of the human capital equation may well be attributed to the standards set by its practitioners and accolades of its champions. 

Andrew Woods, MBA is a professional speaker, trainer and author of BOOM! engaging and inspiring employees across cultures.



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Living, Learning, Leading: HR Then and Now

By **Nancy Painter**

ONCE THERE WERE CLERKS WHO FIGURED OUT HOW MUCH EACH employee got paid, and made sure they got their money. Picture poor Bob Cratchit with his quill pen pressed hard to work for Ebenezer Scrooge, recording every shilling paid to his workers.

Now, picture today's human resources professionals, advising leadership teams and sitting at the executive table.

Though far apart, the two scenarios are separated only by time—and a whole lot of living, learning and leading on the part of HR.

A Brief History of People Practices

Between them are the 1913 establishment of the world's first HR organization, Britain's Welfare Workers' Association (now the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development); the growth of labour relations as trade unions appeared in the workplace; establishment of accepted guidelines for HR practitioners; and research into organizational behaviour resulting in specialized education in the field now known as human resources management.

Roger Wheeler, MBA, CHRP, is a professor at Okanagan School of Business, Okanagan College in Kelowna. "Back in the '70s and '80s, the only really well-researched areas of HR were organizational psychology and labour relations," he explains. "In the late 1980s and early '90s, specific research began as other aspects of HR emerged. Once the research was done, textbooks became available and educational programs reflected the information available."

There was a recognition that work was changing as the business world emerged from the 1990s, he adds. The knowledge economy



Roger Wheeler, CHRP

recognized that “people were more than a pair of arms and legs, and could contribute intellect, innovation, engagement and creativity.”

From Transactional to Transformational



Brian Bonia, CHRP

HR has developed from its original transactional focus to value-added transformational activity, according to Brian Bonia, director of HR at Yukon College in Whitehorse. While the value of the transactions can't be underestimated—correctly paid payroll, date monitoring for appraisals, reviews and probationary periods, recruitment, issuing T-4 slips, monitoring acting and developmental assignments are all necessary to the functioning of an organization—human resources

professionals now provide data and advice for informed decision-making throughout the organization.

“It's hard to say which came first, the need for HR to provide more guidance or HR providing guidance that proved valuable,” Bonia says. “HR has kept pace with the need for data for informed decision-making throughout organizations, whether it's sales cycles, qualifying prospects, closings, etc.”

A More Systems-Based Approach to HR

“The more that managers came to understand the significance of individual processes, the more they saw that the processes could be monitored for change and improvement.” That's resulted in a much more analytical, systems-based approach to what HR does, Bonia adds.

“For example, in recruitment, we understand the need for properly identified job descriptions and a full understanding of what the requirements are, what media are most effective in reaching candidates, the retention rates of particular types of persons, the success rate of specific competencies,” explains Bonia. “It's an in-depth dive into what produced the best results in the past and could do so again in the future.”

The advent of the information age has had an impact on recruitment. “There is a much broader base of talent now,” says Bonia, “and two and a half or three degrees of separation. We still validate our perceptions through the recruitment process but we can also reach out to someone for a solid character reference. The information age has made the process national, if not international. Look at the growth of LinkedIn as a recruitment tool.”

Business Focus First is Essential

Eileen Stewart, BA, MBA and BC HRMA's 2012 HR Professional of the Year, has been working in the field for 40 years. Now a consultant, she was also the HR program head at the BC Institute of Technology for 10 years, and is the author of the popular textbook, *Essentials of Managing Human Resources*.

“When I was a baby HR person, we told line managers what to do and controlled their decisions,” Stewart recalls. “Now we understand that we're there to help line managers, not control them. We're facilitative, filling a supportive advisory role to help managers working at the operational level.”

Stewart knows how she believes HR should be changing, but isn't convinced that significant change has occurred, in spite of greater

understanding. “Generally speaking, you'll find HR as part of the executive group, but whether or not others there believe HR brings value to the organization, I'm not sure,” she says. “I've known lots of CEOs who refused to have HR at the table because it was so transactionally focused that it couldn't see the forest for the trees. Or they don't see HR as adding value, as addressing business needs.”

The solution, Stewart adds, is for HR practitioners to be business people.

“You have to be a businessperson first and foremost before you can be an HR person. What is it that the organization needs to be successful in its business? What is the context? You need to understand the business, revenue streams, be able to read a balance sheet or financial report, and understand the drivers of profit and loss,” says Stewart. “I'm not sure our contribution is as highly regarded as people would like it to be. HR hasn't convinced the senior

teams of its value, or that organizations need to get the most out of their people for business success.”

HR Careers Drive Change From Within

Others do see progress in HR “being at the table,” and credit it to the same business savvy Stewart cites. Cindy Dopson, MBA, CHRP, is currently director of HR at the BC Cancer Foundation, but BC HRMA's 2013 HR Professional of the Year has also worked in big business including Telus.

“In the organizations I've worked in, the value of HR has changed,” she says. “Who is being recruited for senior HR roles is also changing, from being based on years in HR to a combination of business and HR background. There's more diversity in



Eileen Stewart

**“You have
to be a
businessperson
first and
foremost”**



Cindy Dopson, CHRP

HR careers, and more back-and-forth between business units, bringing two or more perspectives to HR roles.”

Textbooks are also reflecting those links, Wheeler says. “They may be about specialized areas within HR, but they always make the linkages to other parts of HR and their impact on business generally.” The industry is also gaining a body of knowledge specific to Canadian situations as more research is done, enabling educational institutions to offer more

specialty courses within HR.

“As career paths are changing, we’re continuing to become more strategic at senior levels,” Dopson continues. “We’re more directly involved in the business now. Rather than being brought in to manage employees after decisions are made, we’re now part of the strategy in making decisions and discussing the impacts of potential decisions on employees, culture and how they affect the overall success of the organization. We’re not just reactive.”

Engaging Employees and Leaders Alike

While businesses have been saying for a long time that people are assets, Dopson adds, “It’s taken time to establish how we make that meaningful. The original ‘treat employees well and they will stay’ is still true, but it’s highly superficial. Now we look at how to make sure that all our systems are effective in giving employees the tools and information they need. We understand that there’s a bigger link than just being happy to being effective and productive.”

“There’s a mystique that only HR people can do things,” Stewart says. “Ideally good managers can do them. You’re providing guidance and advice to managers to help them be the best people managers for their business. Unfortunately, organizations still look at technical skills when choosing managers and don’t look at foundational concepts, the training and development that a person needs to be successful as a manager.”

So while HR continues to develop and excel in areas such as training and development, its challenge lies in helping other leaders understand the strategic value those areas add to business success, framing their contributions as business solutions, and considering business needs when developing their solutions.

HR Has Its Own Voice

Greg Conner, CHRP is the VP, Employee and Corporate Services, at League Financial Partners in Victoria and an HR instructor in the MBA program at the University of Victoria’s Gustavson School of Business.

“HR has moved from being a sort of bizarre subset of finance to being seen as a key player in the boardroom,” Conner says. “It stands on its own with its own voice. HR has become more strategic and forward-focused, looking at what the future needs of the workforce are.”

A tipping point in his career, Conner says, was learning to create policies and programs that recognize individuality in order to maintain and enhance productivity for the organization.



Greg Conner, CHRP

A People-Centric Business Focus

“I learned early on that having a people-centric focus, treating employees as clients within the organization, had a strategic benefit. I recognized that each market has different needs, from employees just starting out, to mothers with young children, to those with elder care issues. I was one of the first to talk about elder care issues and how employees could deal with them and still be productive in the workplace.”

Conner notes an increased emphasis on change management in the last decade for HR. “It’s really increased in focus and in our ability to impact the success of any change initiative. Change management is people management—managing knowledge and expectations. It’s become so important because poor change management is the heart of failure.”

“It’s about bringing people on board and involving them,” Conner says. As in the growth of the HR discipline itself, good

change management is “about letting go of absolute control and recognizing the value of the knowledge in your employee base.”

“We don’t need to know everything. We need to let people who work with us spread their wings and support them in it. Our job is to remove obstacles and create an environment people like to be in.”

Growing Leadership Potential

Like Stewart, Conner sees one of HR’s major impacts in hiring good leaders who will provide their employees with opportunities to learn, grow and stretch, thereby contributing to organizational success at a much higher level than merely by producing widgets.

In practical terms, the face of HR practitioners has changed in recent years, too. Okanagan College’s Wheeler notes that the discipline used to be divided along gender lines. “Labour relations, or health and safety, used to be seen as having more conflict, and were very male-dominated. On the other side, the more administrative personnel management and payroll had a

“HR needs to be in business discussions from the beginning”

larger proportion of female practitioners. And classically, it was men who sat on senior management teams in organizations. As the work world and industry have progressed, we've seen much more diversity in both education and organizations."

Wheeler points to the development of national certification standards as a step in HR's progression, and notes that generally accepted HR principles are now being developed by the Canadian Council of Human Resources Associations (CCHRA) and the Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) designation. "The declaration of these may change the learning outcomes of HR training."

Global Trends Drive HR Initiatives

Globalization will continue to affect how HR operates, Wheeler adds. "There's an increasing emphasis on the need to understand diversity and culture. Whenever there are several different types of people in an organization, you need to collaborate and work collectively. HR must learn to leverage diversity to the organization's advantage, especially as more organizations work across borders."

Part of the trend to international operations involves workforces in which groups of employees have never met each other. "We need to understand how important it is to build and maintain a strong corporate culture, to build high performing teams, even when individual team members are in different locations."

**"There's more
diversity in
HR careers"**

Global sourcing of talent is another growing area. Conner points out that it was once unheard of for Canadian organizations to recruit overseas, but now it is common for HR to be familiar with Immigration Canada requirements. "It's part of the lexicon in the corporate world."

He cites succession planning, along with training and development, as future priorities. "Training and productivity go hand in hand. Canada used to be a world leader but we've dropped significantly in per capita spending on training and development. That's short-sighted. A small amount of money invested can have a huge positive impact."

Metrics will continue to be a big part of the HR of the future, according to Conner. "Canada lags well behind many other countries in productivity. We need to ensure metrics for performance and productivity for every position in an organization. What gets measured gets done."

And while there has been a trend in recent years to outsource many of the basic transactional work in HR, Conner sees that moving back inside Canada in the future.

Tomorrow's HR a Study in Education Today

Education in HR continues to develop stronger links with business education. "A big piece of HR education is for students to understand HR as a way to involve people to get the most out of

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them to achieve business objectives,” Wheeler says. “They need an integrated understanding of the role of HR in an organization, and must understand the money side of the business. HR can’t operate in a silo.”

All parties agree, the need to understand business will only grow.

“HR cannot assist its clients effectively without understanding the issues facing the client,” Bonia says. “It might be a production issue, or quality or quantity issue, but HR must understand the issues of the client in order to assist in addressing them. That understanding is going to come from relationships, and relationships come from asking questions and encouraging dialogue between parties. It starts before HR is seated at the executive table. The relationship needs to be in pace with the financial executive, the line operator, marketing and sales. Relationships and issues should already be known before you sit at that table.”

HR practitioners need to build their own relationships and nurture champions among other executives, Stewart confirms. “We need to build alliances, and we need to find a way to be the confidante of the CEO as well.”

Complexity Reveals True Opportunity

Multiple generations in the workforce, increased diversity of employees and more widespread geography all add complexity

to the HR function, Stewart admits, “but it’s all manageable.” Beyond managing traditional HR functions, the discipline “needs

to be in business discussions from the beginning, identify key barriers and issues that HR needs to focus on.”

“I would hope that others see HR as a partner on the people side of the business, one who allows them to effectively meet the business goals,” Bonia says. “It’s got to be a partnership.”

“We have to move away from being policy makers and policy police,” Dopson says. While there is a need for policy, it can be taken to an extreme and stifle innovation. “The more time we spend on policies that take away the ability of managers to make good decisions, the less time we have

for teaching those managers how to be better leaders. We need to be truly creative around the things that hold us back.

“There are some great innovators out there taking risks because that’s what’s best for the company where they work, but many are staying safe. It’s going to take some real innovators and courageous human resources people to lead the way to where we’re contributing all we can to the success of our organizations.” P

Nancy Painter is a freelance business writer with a passion for good words and even better people.

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move away
from being
policy makers
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Challenging Conversations Key to Core Culture

By **Kristin Zehnder**, CHRP

Jane is a junior manager at a local manufacturing company. She recently witnessed a sensitive and contentious situation involving one of her employees, Sally. This is not the first time this situation has occurred, and previous attempts of addressing and correcting Sally's behavior have been nothing short of disastrous.

Jane's challenge has been that when she tries to address the issue with Sally, she blames others—even to the point of accusing Jane and other managers of discriminating and picking on her.

Jane knows that she should address this new situation, but avoids the conversation instead, and hopes that the situation will resolve itself.

What You Permit, You Promote

What Jane and many managers may not realize is that she is essentially permitting the undesirable behaviour to continue by not addressing or attempting to correct it. While this works in the short term, ultimately, what you permit, you promote.

The new *Workplace Bullying and Harassment* legislation of 2013 has created a heightened awareness of professional conduct (and misconduct) for managers and employers. Crucial to the success of any manager implementing this legislation—and in large part being an effective manager—is to engage in challenging conversations.

Tackling tough conversations with confidence, compassion and sound comprehension is essential to effective management, conflict resolution and well run organizations. Setting up front line managers for successfully addressing challenging conversations is a key.

One provision of the *Workplace Bullying and Harassment* policy acknowledges the reasonable, residual rights of managers. That said, navigating the potential minefield of a sensitive conversation can be difficult at the best of times—and especially so for those not experienced in conducting investigations.

Build a More Communicative Toolkit

There are numerous resources available which build effective communication skills. Drawing from a variety of techniques and sources can help managers personalize their approach and give a fresh

perspective to challenging situations. Two of my favorites are *101 Tough Conversations to Have with Employees* by Paul Falcone and *Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most* by Stone, Paton and Heen.

Here are a few tips to help you engage in difficult conversations.

Begin with the end in mind is Steven Covey's second habit in *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. Know your audience and prepare by establishing clear, concise objectives to steer the conversation; include questions to be asked and the message to be heard. Be mindful of reacting negatively to emotional triggers (raised voices, personal attacks, blame) and choose to respond in a calm, neutral and focused manner. This process helps keep the conversation on track while establishing a sense of fairness and consistency in applied technique.

Feedforward. Marshall Goldsmith, author of *What Got You Here Won't Get You There*, and plenary speaker at the 2013 BC HRMA conference, spoke about the concept of ensuring your message is constructive and constructed in a positive and helpful way. This approach moves conversations forward and puts the emphasis on future positive behaviour versus the past inappropriate behaviour. It promotes an engaged, transparent and attentive culture.

Seek first to understand, then to be understood. Steven Covey's fifth habit in *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* teaches empathy, humility, curiosity and consideration prior to making judgments or taking action. No two conversations are exactly the same, and while they may appear similar at face value, a carefully crafted conversation may draw out extenuating factors for consideration. Be flexible to a different outcome than anticipated. When in doubt—be curious.

Believe in yourself. New and uncomfortable situations often raise feelings of self-doubt. Self-doubt leads to an overly cautious approach. Clear, concise, candid and consistent messages are better received and far easier to substantiate. People

engage in challenging conversations regularly in their personal and professional lives. Believe in your own ability, strengths and experience, and push beyond your comfort zone to further hone this skill.

Talk to Sally Sooner Than Later

As her manager, Jane faced certain risk of discomfort and friction with Sally in approaching a difficult conversation. Perhaps she feared her own reactions and ability to conduct herself in a professional manner. Most certainly, had she been equipped with a better skill set of effective communication strategies, her approach to the situation would be both more confident and effective.

Moreover, as HR knows well enough, the risk of not addressing and/or correcting the situation becomes far greater as it grows to be an acceptable norm with a direct negative impact on the culture and environment of the workplace. Left unaddressed, this avoidance of conflict can prove to be long lasting and difficult to change.

Embrace Conflict and Conversation

As our laws, policies and practices evolve, so do our places of work. So too must the calibre of our critical conversations. HR plays a key role—to ensure this holds true throughout an organization. Provide supervisors and front-line managers with the tools, techniques and skills they need to address challenging situations in a proactive and professional way from the onset.

Make it part of your management training program and hire a conflict resolution coach or trainer when you need external support. Foster a culture of intolerance towards negative behaviours and, in turn, watch a culture of transparency, respect, and engagement flourish.

Finally, embrace conflict and challenging conversations with an open mind, a sense of compassion and the belief in your own ability to affect positive change. May you have a day filled with successful challenging conversations. 

Kristin Zehnder, BA, CHRP is director of human resources for Harrison Hot Springs Resort and Spa.

How to Get More Committed People

By Adam DiPaula, Mary Bacica and Julie Winram

“Good leaders must first become good servants.”

—Robert Greenleaf, *The Servant as Leader*

IN THE WINTER 2013 EDITION OF *PeopleTalk*, WE TALKED ABOUT THE value of segmenting employees to better understand and manage your workplace. We identified four distinct segments, based on their level of engagement and intentions to stay with the organization over the long term—the Detached, Disgruntled, Strivers and Committed. The latter are our focus this issue.

Naturally, organizations are looking for more Committed employees, and here is where we turn our focus for this companion article. Specifically, we explore the defining characteristics of this key segment and the conditions that need to be present in order to foster long term commitment. We also test the hypothesis that Committed employees are company leaders; that is, they are your senior executive, managers and team leaders. Our analysis is based on Sentis’ Employee Engagement Benchmark survey which we conduct annually in BC among the province’s workforce.

Defining Characteristics of the Committed

The Committed segment carries your business through good times and bad. They are generally unwavering in their support for the organization and are your true brand champions. They live your brand, support it and, when necessary, even defend it.

There are four defining characteristics of Committed employees:

- strongly supportive of the direction the organization is taking;
- highly likely to recommend the organization as a good place to work;
- highly motivated to do more than is required for their job; and
- intend to work for the organization indefinitely or until retirement.

Who is Committed on Your Team?

We began with a hypothesis—Committed employees are much more likely to occupy managerial or leadership positions than other employees. Wouldn’t those who hold more responsibility and who in some respects have more at stake with the organization be more committed to its success? It turns out this is not necessarily true.

One of the first things we observed about the Committed segment is that they exist at all levels of the organization and across job functions. They are just as likely to be front line workers as they are to be managers.

The Committed Practice ‘Servant Leadership’

Digging a bit deeper, we realized that while Committed employees may not always have official titles, they hold an unofficial leadership role because they have influence over their fellow employees. They have the characteristics of those individuals that Robert Greenleaf described as ‘servant leaders’ in his seminal 1970 essay ‘The Servant as Leader’.

The Committed are your servant leaders. They lead through dedicated service and by example. They are focused outward on the growth and well-being of the organization, as well as the others that they work with.

While there is really no question as to whether having a greater percentage of Committed employees is of interest to organizations, two key questions emerge:

Can individuals be developed into Committed employees? How do you go about doing that?

Neither are unfamiliar questions for HR professionals. We too, have rooted our thinking in the positive potential to which such questions point. Indeed, you can create or develop Committed employees and it starts with creating the right conditions.

Developing Commitment: Understanding the Hierarchy

1970 was a great year for HR thought leadership. Greenleaf published his work on servant leadership and Abraham Maslow published the second edition of *Motivation and Personality*, in which he further expanded on his Hierarchy of Needs theory. Maslow’s work has had a big impact on our understanding of human motivation and personal development.

The core idea is that humans have certain basic needs that need to be met—e.g., food, shelter, safety—before other higher-order psychological needs, like belonging and self-esteem, can be met. At the top of the pyramid are self-fulfillment needs including self-actualization—achieving one’s full potential in one’s personal and work life.

Maslow for the Masses

A less talked about aspect of this theory is Maslow’s belief that only very few people can actually achieve self-actualization because the conditions and factors necessary to create it are so difficult to establish.

We agree with Maslow that a hierarchical model can be effective at understanding and creating the conditions for motivating people to achieve their full potential (i.e. become a Committed employee). However, unlike Maslow, we don’t believe that this can only happen for a handful of employees. The Sentis hierarchical model of employee commitment is based on the premise that if the right conditions are in place, a far greater percentage of the employee body can become Committed and leaders in their own way.

Our hierarchy is based on some fundamental differences in the perceptions between Committed employees and the other three segments. Committed employees clearly carry some very strongly held beliefs that not only differentiate them from their fellow employees, but help explain why they are leaders.

Create a More Committed Opportunity

Where the opportunity to grow the segment of Committed employees exists is in creating the environment that meets the hierarchy of needs outlined below.

Dignity, Respect, Fair Treatment. The foundation of commitment is the workplace environment. Employees have to

feel that they are treated with dignity and respect. In our employee engagement survey, the extent to which this foundation is present is measured by survey items like the following – ‘I am not subject to harassment’, ‘People at my workplace are treated with dignity and respect’, ‘I am treated fairly’.

Work-Life Balance. If the workplace environment can effectively meet the employee’s basic need for dignity, respect and fair treatment, then the questions evolve. Do conditions exist to create a healthy work-life balance for the employee? Can the employee do productive and meaningful work without being overwhelmed or consumed by it? Success at this level in the hierarchy is measured by the extent to which the employees feel they are ‘able to maintain a healthy balance between work and personal life’ and ‘there are usually enough employees in my department to handle the workload.’

Communication and Trust. The next level in the hierarchy is all about open and honest communication and creating the conditions in which employees trust the organization. When the organization does an excellent job of ‘keeping employees informed’, ‘encouraging face-to-face communication’ and instilling feelings of ‘trust in senior management’, it opens the door for employees to feel secure enough to stretch to their full potential.

Learning and Growing. Stretching to one’s full potential is the essence of this level in the hierarchy. Employees feel that they are in a place where they can learn and grow. They feel it is safe to try new things, make mistakes and challenge themselves. In our survey success, this level is defined by employees who feel strongly

that they are ‘given the opportunity to learn or train to improve my skills’, ‘given flexibility in my job to provide good service, and ‘encouraged to come up with new ways of doing things.’



When the organization consistently creates an environment which fosters employees’ intrinsic motivation to grow and develop, employees respond by becoming intrinsically motivated to help the organization succeed. They go ‘above and beyond’ because it’s now about much more than compensation. **▶**

Adam DiPaula, MBA, PhD, VP Mary Bacica, CMRP and managing partner Julie Winram, CMRP merge their passion for employee research at Sentis Research (www.sentisresearch.com).

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Organizational Learning Thrives Informally

By Jennifer Gerves-Keen

IN A RECENT ARTICLE ABOUT CAREERS published in *The Globe & Mail*, Marina Glogovac discussed the relatively new importance of continuous learning as it pertains to ongoing success in today's marketplace.

According to Glogovac, learning to learn is the most competitively relevant skill for today's world.

Learning is a Key Driver

Without a drive to learn—and a culture that supports it—an organization will go stagnant. Over longer periods of time, this has a serious impact on the ability of the leadership to motivate employees, make high-quality hires and increase and improve business offerings.

Organizational learning is also undergoing change. At the NeuroLeadership Summit in November 2013, Tony Bingham, president & CEO of the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD), recognized that we are moving away from the “sage on the stage” model wherein we need an expert to ‘teach’ us; what we are moving towards is a more democratic model where everyone within an organization has a responsibility to develop everyone else.

A More Democratic Leadership Model

Bingham's thinking mirrors what is currently happening within many organizations. More and more, the daily leadership of individuals—who are not necessarily in leadership roles—is finally being considered as important as the recognized leadership roles when it comes to results.

By its nature, such thinking opens up informal learning possibilities across businesses as ‘social learning’ becomes the new norm. Social learning is defined “as the process in which individuals observe the behaviour of others and its consequences, and modify their own behaviour to interact in an environment that fosters learning”.

The Full Measure of Social Learning

With no metrics and no real recognition, social learning is invisible within most organizations, despite the fact that it actually encompasses 90 per cent of all

organizational learning, as determined by the ASTD.

With only 10 per cent of our development hours in the workplace engaged in what would be defined as formal learning, such as workshops, courses and webinars, it is interesting that most training and development staff continue to focus their energies and investment in this area when the real day-to-day impact is coming from social learning.

Developing metrics around social learning should be a priority for any organization seeking to embed learning into their organizational culture.

A Neuroleadership Assist

As neuroleader and author Dr. David Rock states in his “Learning throughout the AGES” article, “Adult learning is highly complex. How do we ensure people are interested in learning what is presented, and how then do we present the information to ensure that the knowledge is sustainable, accessible, and easily applied in adaptive and contextual ways?”

As we understand more about how the brain works, and how we learn, more and more knowledge has become available that companies need to factor.

For example, a key part to a successful organizational culture is autonomy. How can this key be best configured to maximize informal learning opportunities in the workplace? In revisiting standard modes of training, a more motivational learning avenue is always open; consider allowing your staff to explore areas of interest and share them with the group. This is likely to engage more greatly than signing them up for mandatory training wherein they are unlikely to retain as much information since they were not invested in the learning experience from the start.

Bring Choice to Traditional Learning

There will always be a call for traditional training in regards to certain skills or developments, such as a new software implementation, but bringing a touch of autonomy to the mix deepens the learning experience. Giving people some choice whenever possible about the how of learning can make a difference in how

participants will approach the experience—and carry that learning forward.

If we start looking at the organizational learning process as being less of an investment in ‘set’ pieces—and more of an actual change management process which needs to involve buy-in, employee input, emotional connection and as much autonomy as possible—our corporate learning experiences would invariably be more successful.

Informally Integrating Learning Sustains Value

Dr. Lila Davachi, a neuroscientist with the University of New York has done some fascinating research on the conditions necessary for our brains to successfully retrieve learned information. With the knowledge that we only retain approximately 10 per cent of any formal learning experience, organizations are obviously not getting a large return on investment by using corporate learning events such as workshops and webinars alone.

The more we can integrate learning to become an on-the-job experience, the more we can directly and immediately apply what we learn. Moreover, the greater spacing we give people between theoretical learning events, the more information people will be able to retain and use over longer periods of time.

The direct and personal application of learning through such avenues as mentoring, coaching and peer-to-peer learning experiences, as well as allowing for time to reflect about what we're learning—all are effective ways to promote a learning culture within your organization.

While organizational learning has always been an exciting field, it is now so more than ever. We have only started to touch on the importance of social learning and, if we can start to measure its impact, there will no doubt be new data to help guide us forward on our journey towards effective and applicable life-long learning experiences. **■**

Jennifer Gerves-Keen (jgkonline.com) is a certified coach and learning consultant who, in partnership with Jenny Lewis, is using neuroscience to create more effective ways to learn within organizations.

Readers and Leaders: Seven Books to Share the Learning

By Jane Terepocki, CHRP

THAT LEADERS ARE READERS IS A common hallmark of many business biographies. Moreover, while what leaders read varies widely, the why of it, and the results, shine through in the companies—and company—they keep.

For HR professionals, reading and leading go hand-in-hand, and more often than not, the book in hand for HR is a business book. We read to get useful ideas, insights, and solutions that keep us informed and competitive in today's fast-paced, ever-changing world. In the process, we thrive and become better business leaders as we commit to lifetime learning.

Here are seven books from my own shelf that have changed minds and organizations alike.

Outliers by Malcolm Gladwell

Gladwell transforms the way we understand success by arguing that the true story of success is very different than commonly perceived. He argues that if we want to really understand why some people thrive, we should look more deeply into the finer details of their past—even their birth date. Gladwell presents a fascinating and provocative blueprint for making the most of human potential.

Lean In: Women, Work and the Will to Lead by Cheryl Sandberg

Sandberg's famous 2010 TED talk, 'Why We Have Too Few Women Leaders', was the catalyst that sparked *Lean In* groups, events, educational and corporate partnership—and this book. In *Lean In*, Sandberg shares her personal stories, uses research to illuminate gender differences, and offers practical advice to help women achieve their goals. *Lean In* challenges us to change the conversation from what women can't do to what we can do, and serves as a rallying cry to create a more equal world.

The Happiness Advantage

By Sean Achor

Most people believe that once they are more successful, get the promotion, pay off their mortgage or get the corner office, then they'll be happy. *The Happiness Advantage* is a must-read for everyone trying to excel in a world of increasing workloads, stress, and negativity. *The Happiness Advantage* isn't only about how to become happier at work it is also about how to reap the benefits of a happier and more positive mind-set to achieve the extraordinary in our ordinary lives.

11 Rules for Creating Value in the @socialera By Nilofer Merchant

This book offers new rules for value creations, leading and innovation in our rapidly evolving world. Innovative ideas such as forsaking hierarchy and control for collaboration; getting the most out of all talent; allowing our customers to become co-creators in our organization; inspiring employees through purpose in a world where money alone no longer exerts that power; and soliciting community investment in an idea so that it can take hold and grow and allow companies to be nimble and adjust instead of stagnating and dying are at the core of this book. Merchant asserts that the strategies of the industrial era—or even the information age—will not be enough for the social era.

Human Resources Champions

By Dave Ulrich

The roles of human resource professionals must be redefined to meet the competitive challenges organizations face now and in the future. Ulrich provides a framework that identifies four distinct roles of human resource professionals: strategic player, administrative expert, employee champion, and change agent. A shift of these professionals' mentality from "what I do" to "what I deliver" must be made so the human resources specialist is relevant in today's business world. Specifically, Ulrich makes recommendations on how individuals in human resources can successfully partner with line managers to make organizations more competitive.

An Astronaut's Guide to Life on Earth By Chris Hadfield

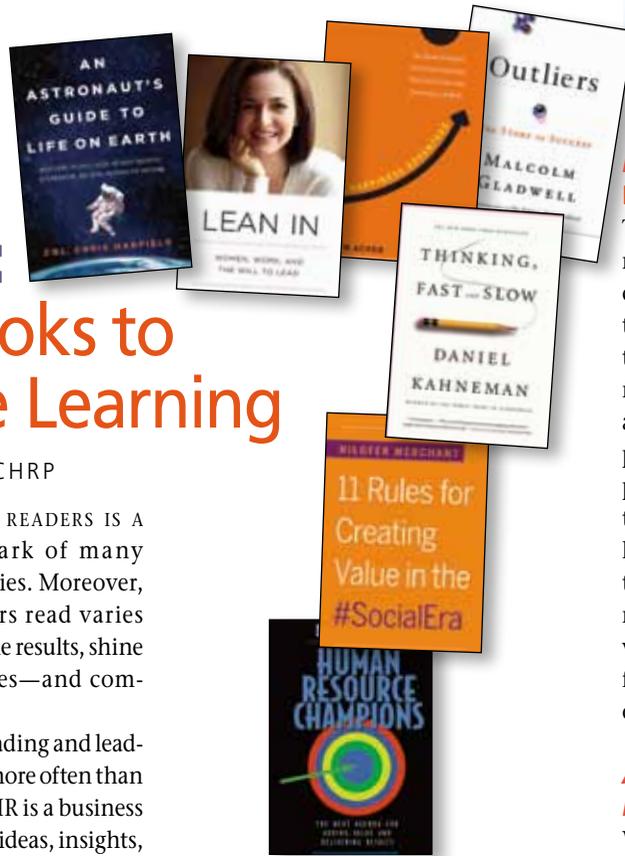
When Chris Hadfield was nine years old and there were no Canadian astronauts, he decided to become one after watching the Apollo 11 moon landing with his family on Stag Island, Ontario. This book is the culmination of lessons learned in his journey to become an astronaut. He teaches us to turn commonly held advice on its proverbial head—don't visualize success, do care what others think, and always sweat the small stuff. While you may not desire to become an astronaut, Hadfield's vivid and refreshing insights will teach you how to think like one, and will leave you reaching for the stars.

Thinking Fast and Slow

By Daniel Kahneman

Thinking Fast and Slow has the power to transform the way we think about thinking. Engaging the reader in lively conversation about how we think, Kahneman reveals where we can and cannot trust our intuitions and how we can tap into the benefits of slow thinking. The Economics Nobel Memorial prize winner provides practical and enlightening insights into how choices are made in both our business and our personal lives. Kahneman also shares different techniques to guard against the mental hiccups that often get us into trouble.

Jane Terepocki, CHRP is a recruiter and trainer in the HR department at Mountain Equipment Co-op (mec.ca).





Time To Change Your Culture?

(Five Key Questions Every Leader Needs to Ask)

By **Natalie Michael**, CHRP

AS AN EXECUTIVE COACH, I HAVE NOTICED A RECURRING THEME in my recent coaching sessions—CEO’s want to change their corporate culture.

In a recent coaching session, the CEO of a \$40 million BC company said to me, “I believe our culture is too country club.” In another, the CEO of a \$120 million manufacturing firm commented—“I believe our culture is too fun. We are missing the business agenda.”

While the personal perspectives are varied, consensus is found in the culture focus.

It is refreshing to see CEO’s tending to their culture, but not surprising. There is a reason that this is a primary topic, as well as a hot button for all HR professionals. In a world where it is touted as a primary source of competitive advantage, and a true asset for attracting and retaining key talent, to ignore culture is costly.

Culture can be difficult to define, and without definition, even harder to change. If you believe your culture is off, here are five questions to help you determine where your efforts might be best spent.

1. To what extent does your culture drive the business agenda?

A company’s culture is a complex ecosystem of behaviours, feelings, thoughts and beliefs that determine and define “the way we do things around here.” At its best, an organization’s culture provides impetus and competitive advantage, attracting and energizing people to get the right things done. Innovation is a byproduct and success fosters further commitment. Alternatively, a culture can have the opposite effect; it can actually reduce productivity, emotional commitment and undermine success. As with yogurt, it is remarkably easy to determine when your corporate culture is off.

Overall, few companies are at either extreme, but in between and with plenty of opportunity for better alignment.

On the whole it is important to ask yourself if the culture is in sync with the strategy and whether it leads to consistent and attractive growth and profitability. By making the link between culture and the business strategy, executives are able to answer the questions: “What is this all for? Why is the cultural conversation so important?” The correlation is direct. If your culture is on track, the business results will be there.

2. Is the CEO effective at reinforcing the desired culture?

The CEO is the prominent leader in the company and, ultimately, the chief cultural executive—serving as catalyst and role model. There is a difference between understanding the importance of culture and being effective at leading a cultural vision. As mentioned, the first step in leading a cultural vision involves understanding how a healthy and productive culture drives the business strategy. Regardless, to lead a cultural vision, the CEO needs to be engaged with key change management principles, such as stages of and resistance to change, as well as know how to leverage multiple communication channels to skillfully deliver and reinforce messages.

3. Does your culture honour diversity?

Diversity is a must for any organization seeking to unleash the potential of culture, make better decisions and drive innovation. Differences of opinion, nationality and gender are equivalent to strategic power, yet can also be challenging to uphold—especially when differences in style lead to temporary frustration or communication “noise” between teams and individuals. Nonetheless, the reality is that there is ample research which shows that cultures which value the strength of their differences possess an advantage.

It is important for an organization to check whether there is both conscious and subconscious commitment to inclusion and how the diversity mindset shapes the culture. Another key is identifying where biases, processes, and interactions are putting the brakes on diversity aspirations. In my coaching sessions,

executives often comment how frustrating it is to work with people who are “cut from a different cloth” because it is so much faster to deal with people who think and act like them. Fortunately, most recognize that what may feel like speed today could lead to failure tomorrow.

4. Is there healthy tension between sub cultures?

Although the organization’s values provide a common fabric across the business, the reality is that every team and department has its subcultures. Depending on who is leading it, the type of work that they do and the dynamics involved, these subcultures can involve diverse participants and generate fruitful friction. One of

“Differences of opinion, nationality and gender are equivalent to strategic power”

the biggest challenges with any organizational culture is having a sense of unity across teams, while also having productive tension.

Is your organization skillfully aware of competing tensions in the business, and are these viewed as normal and healthy? Is there any value or belief that trumps tensions as an absolute standard? For example, “the customer is always right” or “we must be profitable as a base line standard”?

Are these macro-cultural forces productive or are they outdated beliefs that do not take into account the full complexity of a situation and the competing tensions that often arise? Or worse, are they simply individuals exercising power and dominance in a way that is not grounded in the higher principles of how the organization wants to function?

5. Is there a counterculture rising?

A counterculture is different from a subculture in that it is considered to be deviant in contrast to at least one aspect of the dominant culture. When a counterculture arises, it usually stems from a desire for change, and is often interpreted by the establishment as “misbehaviour.” However, as is often case, a few years down the road, the same behaviours may be re-framed as bold, transformative, or innovative. (i.e. the ‘hippies’ who protested the war in Vietnam, the formation of a union, recent uprisings of Chinese

workers in manufacturing plants protesting work conditions or the organic food movement contrasted to conventional farming.)

If a counterculture is rising in your organization it is important to be mindful of the tendency to label it as deviant and to ignore the protests and key messages. Rather than dismiss the messages, examine the counterculture through the lens of progress and innovation.

What could be gained from this contrarian perspective down the road? If we incorporated this viewpoint into our culture today, how might it expand our competitive differentiation? How might

we need to shift our practices to include this counterculture, and is it worth it? What business results will it lead to? What resources will we require?

“examine the counter culture through the lens of progress and innovation.”

Closing Words on ROI

Diagnosing and changing culture can be challenging—it is also one of the most rewarding parts of being a leader. Having a culture that supports people to work positively together and that creates a winning feeling on the team is ultimately what leads to fulfilment at work, and extraordinary business results. 

Natalie Michael, CHRP is a succession management consultant and executive coach with The Karmichael Group in Vancouver.



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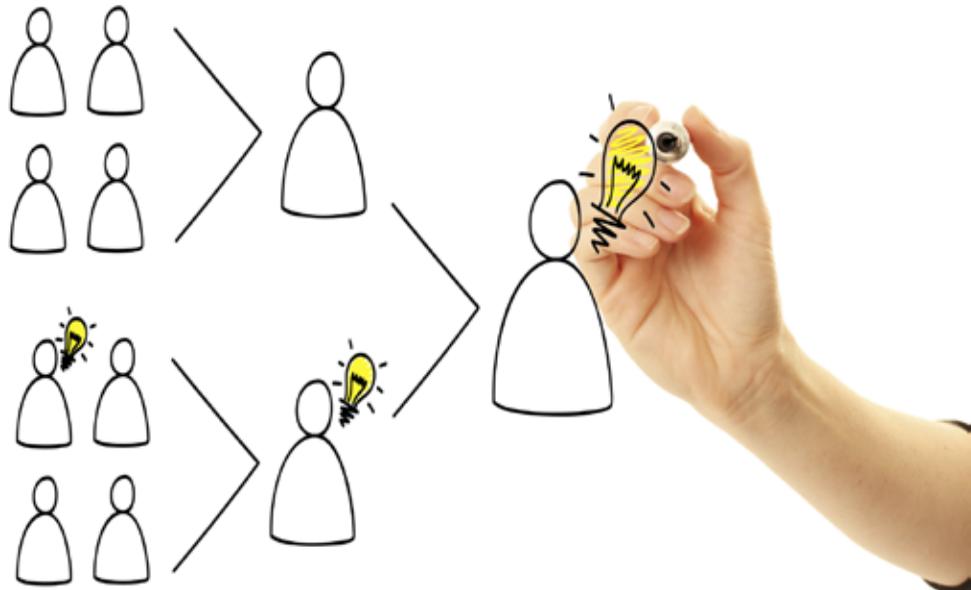
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Small Business Offers Big Insights On Best Workplace Practices



By **Amelia Chan**, CHRP

WHILE THE VAST MAJORITY OF British Columbians are employed by small businesses, there has always been an inverse relationship regarding the amount of media coverage they receive. As a result, rarely do we hear of their triumphs or regard them in light of the valuable lessons for HR professionals within organizations of any size.

In fact, with approximately 385,000 small businesses accounted for in 2012, by Small Business BC, small business represents 98 per cent of all businesses in the province. Similarly, the estimated 1,032,700 people employed by small business in BC accounted for 55 per cent of private-sector employment. Moreover, small business does big business and accounted for 26 per cent of the province's gross domestic product in 2012.

Best Workplace Finalists Inspire

Without a doubt, small business matters in large amounts—as always, it's good people that make it all happen.

This February, I had the opportunity to explore five of the best small businesses in BC—and reflect upon what made their workplaces such positive places to be. Even though Small Business BC had obviously narrowed the field, helping them select the winner of the *2014 Best Workplace Award* was no easy task.

So, while i-Worx of North Vancouver ultimately took the title, the people

practices at play within Homeroom Small Business Solutions, CNN Bikes, The Oracle, and Cucumber Marketing similarly inspired this article.

Each of the five finalists represent both the lifeblood of BC as small business operators; they also provide an open and illuminating window into innovative and effective people practices. The very essence of such employers' success stories speaks to the heart of human resources—even though the majority lack any formal HR function.

The Humility to Succeed

What drives these small business champions is very similar to big business champions—a desire to succeed. What distinguishes the champions of small business, as represented by the Small Business BC *Best Workplace* finalists, is the humility with which they triumph—and the ability to have their wisdoms taken to heart by any HR professional.

Their understated confidence and lack of overriding ego is a hallmark in such operations. Traditional organizational politics don't have the same sway within these smaller entities. Such modesty isn't just charming, it's necessary because within their business models, every human is counted upon as an integral resource.

While each finalist was required to speak to their companies virtues, what spoke most loudly was the simple fact that

they had been brought forward as nominees by their proud employees in the first place.

Here are some good takeaways that small business can certainly teach or remind their bigger counterparts.

Intrinsic Innovation

When you don't have large budgets, creativity can help you go really far. The best thing about applying creativity in the workplace is that it naturally leads to innovation.¹ While other organizations may be treating innovation itself as a separate issue to address, the necessity of doing more with less through teamwork becomes a built-in secret weapon for small businesses. For example, i-Worx has monthly town hall style meetings over dinner with plenty of opportunity to share a 'blue sky' moment to think completely outside the box.

Ask Why Before What

Making each effort count in small business requires a firm commitment to asking "why" before embarking on the "what". Tailored problem solving that fits and puts the "why" up front is key. CCN Bikes in North Vancouver makes a practice of being proactive and tailors its work spaces to meet individuals' wellness and, ultimately, productivity needs. At Homeroom Small Business Solutions in Vancouver, they worked together to create a company vision statement which incorporated their

individual goals. This level of pro-activity and buy-in is a very grassroots approach and enmeshed in the 'corporate' culture of many small businesses from the start.

Dare to Care with Natural Leadership

Small business thrives on the basis of intuitive, charismatic leadership guided by strong business instincts. "Just making things work" often boils down to developing unconventional business models aligned to the finer details of employees' lives and client needs. Over time, savvy instincts may evolve into successful formulas, but the core leadership approach remains guided by a heightened degree of emotional intelligence and flexibility. Kelly Oswald of The Oracle Emporium in Whistler, and now North Vancouver, has grounded her success in diversity, both on the shelf and in her team, from day one. The Oracle does not have staff, they have talent that thrives in the face of online competition, economic turbulence and the whims of the weather in a seasonal tourism destination alike.

Empathy and Compassion

Quite often, small business owners are previously frustrated former employees who take it upon themselves to improve their own situation and this gives them far better insight into their own employees. It's like a 'rewind and do-over' for past scenarios, a phoenix rising from the ashes of past employment failures and regrets. Their experience fuels a passion to provide better leadership and opportunities for those in their employ. Cucumber Marketing Inc. in Vancouver volunteers the fruits of their experience within the local business community by presenting free workshops. In fact, all the *Best Workplace* finalists actively give of their time and expertise and consider it part of their organizational culture.

Small Issues Make a Big Difference

Perhaps it is unsurprising that their community mindset comes from a healthy core culture. Each of the finalists had evolved various great ideas for their company wellness initiatives too, and a firm understanding of the link between health, happiness and productivity. That these small businesses set mental and physical health as a priority in their planning, and with truly limited resources, already

distinguishes their mindset. Each has found a fundamental ROI in the form of healthy workplace engagement.

Successful small business owners are natural problem solvers with no lack of flexibility or grit. The businesses they create and run are fuelled by a clear purpose which often begins as a pet project and evolves via creativity, ingenuity and demand. As a result, the workplaces they create offer big insights into best practices for business of all sizes. **P**

As founder and principal consultant of Higher Options Consulting Services (hr-options.com), Amelia Chan, CHRP, RCIC provides a wide range of human resources and immigration services to small to mid-sized businesses.

1 According to Dr. Cris Wildermuth's research on innovative leadership, "Creativity and innovation are not synonymous. Innovation is...the result of individual creativity and social processes that allow the creative products or processes to be implemented and disseminated. We can talk about individual creativity - but not individual innovation."

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Go Beyond Anti-Bullying: Shift Up to Referent Power

By **Michael Bortolotto**

“A good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination.”

—**Nelson Mandela**

BULLYING BEGINS WELL BEFORE THE workplace.

Over the past 25 years, I have visited hundreds of school and spoken to thousands of students throughout western Canada about bullying. During my presentations, students of all ages ask me different kinds of questions as they relate to its impact in their lives.

There is one question, which is asked more than any of the others. “Why didn’t I ever fight back against the kids who were bullying me when I was younger?”

My answer is simple, I tell them I’m fighting back right now, albeit in a more productive and positive way than with my hands or feet. I tell them I am tapping into my referent power—and let them know that it comes in large part directly from them.

Playing Positivity Forward

Referent power is unique amongst the *Five Bases of Social Power* defined by social psychologists Bertram Raven and John French in 1959 as it is the one power bestowed by others on the basis of trust, admiration and loyalty. While it is also more elusive than

legitimate, expert, reward and coercive power—and unstable on its own—referent power brings with it the power to play itself forward.

How does that work? My goal as a person, leader and speaker has always been to earn that referent power and put it to good use helping others overcome their challenges. For me, that has involved taking a principled stand against bullying and coercive power in general—and what goes for the classroom applies to the boardroom.

“Referent power can be earned by every leader at every step”

That there is now anti-bullying legislation in place in BC is as welcome a use of legitimate power as imaginable, especially for those seeking to build positive cultures and productive workplaces. However, even with new ‘rules’ to ensure a mentally healthier workplace, we are talking about a way of being that has existed, and in many cases been rewarded, for a long time.

Learn to Earn by Listening

What is needed to step beyond ‘anti-bullying’ is for all of us as leaders to accept that the most effective power in this new world needs to be learned and, most importantly, earned.

By using referent power to walk the talk, we learn to listen without judgement. With this accomplished, any teacher or HR manager can lead and persuade other people to not use abusive force, acts of violence, and bullying tactics to solve their problems.

“Education is the most powerful weapon which can use to change the world”.

—**Nelson Mandela**

A Study in Genuine Change

Approximately five years ago, I was reminded how powerful referent power can be when I received a phone call from a police officer calling from a small community in central BC.

He had heard me speak at a school two weeks earlier and wanted to know how I’d done it—in this case, ‘fix’ a 15-year-old boy who had been bullying other students throughout the community. The officer himself had spent the past six years trying to put an end to the

bullying, but since I had been to speak, the boy had not had a single altercation.

The officer was thrilled, but confused; in a sense, that made two of us, so I called ahead and went over to the boy's house to have a conversation with his mother. As eye openers go, it made me blink. Not only had the boy not showed up for dinner following the presentation, but he had still been missing when his father went out to look for him at about 7:30 pm. Even though both knew he was 'a bit of a troublemaker', this had felt unusual.

Returning home without finding a trace of his son in the community, the father heard a whimpering coming from behind the family boat in the back of the garage. Their son was curled into the corner of the garage—crying.

Kneeling down next to him, the parents had asked what was wrong and the son was clearly trembling, but clear. "I don't want to abuse other students any more by using various violent acts of bullying and force. The guest speaker at our school told us some stories about how painful it was to be bullied and why violent acts of bullying and force will never give you what you want."

Serving a Higher Purpose

The next day after school, the boy went over to the local fire department and signed up to become a junior fire fighter. The fire chief knew his parents and the son as well, and was rightly curious as to why he would be interested.

On that the boy remained clear; he wanted to earn and use his referent power to assist others, rather than using violent acts of bullying and force to hurt them.

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."

- Mahatma Gandhi

As I told the police officer that day five years ago, when we act using referent power, our intellect and integrity actually cause other people to feel more confident, competent, and committed following our lead and actions.

On the other hand, every time we choose acts of violence and force, we create mistrust, push people away, and find ourselves dealing with needless consequences and punishments.

Stepping Beyond HR Alone

These are not lessons lost on HR professionals, but it is not the responsibility of HR alone to take that step beyond 'anti-bullying' and into true culture building. Referent power can be earned by every leader at every step of their journey—and needs to flow throughout an organization.

When Nelson Mandela passed away in 2013, a torch was passed to all of us seeking to change the world in a positive and

enduring way. That there have always been bullies in the broadest scope of the word imaginable, is a fact of world history with which we are all unfortunately acquainted.

That said, the past is not something designed to be escaped or covered over, but brought to the light and reflected upon for the lessons of better futures yet. **▶**

Michael Bortolotto, (www.positiverebel.ca) is a professional speaker who inspires confidence in classrooms—and boardrooms too.

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Boomers Bring the Experience of a Lifetime

By Isabelle St-Jean

"Will you still need me? Will you still feed me? When I'm 64?"

— Paul McCartney, The Beatles

"A common belief—that people become disengaged as they age—is flat-out wrong."

— Christina Matz-Costa, Ph.D

Boomer Bust Demographics

Countrywide for the next 17 years, Canadian Baby Boomers will turn 65 at a rate of roughly 1,000 per day. The dread surrounding their retirement "en masse", and the resulting leadership gap, is matched only by the Boomers own uncertainties regarding the future—in this at least, all generations are united.

Where the Baby Boomers differ is in their ability to share the experience of a lifetime—their own—and leave a legacy of lasting leadership via lessons learned longer ago than most have been in the workforce. At our core, as human beings, we learn most readily from one another; the stories we share have offered crucial information since before the written word—to say nothing of social media.

As HR, managers and employees alike cast ever wider and more innovative organizational nets in search of solutions to our labour and skills shortages, might we begin by looking to our leaders within?

The Ergonomics of Innovation

That the Boomer generation has begun its swing towards retirement is undeniable, as are the organizational changes in its wake. How then to best draw upon this pool of talent now and draw lasting benefits from their wealth of wisdom and knowledge?

As obvious as it seems, we could begin by asking.

Moreover, as is required to for any sustained innovation in the workplace, organizations need to embrace the values of learning and reverence—along with fresh attitudes and practices conducive to making the most of the Boomers' invaluable know-how, while stretching their remaining years at work.

"Old truths may yet bear the freshest fruits"

That Boomers gained much of their knowledge and experience in a world without so much of the technology taken widely for granted today, has also equipped them with a different set of knowledge tools. Their generation learned early of the efforts required to acquire knowledge and to master valuable skills. More critically, in a world of immediate online gratification of information or otherwise, that focus remains undiminished.

Indeed, people in their 50s and 60s typically demonstrate social and communicative intelligences that have deep roots in decades of proficiency—the rich soil from which their stories of life and work have formed over time.

Experience Amidst Ongoing Change

Moreover, in the midst of ongoing demand for change management, the role of the Boomer remains one of seasoned

leadership. Admittedly, as with many GenXers, numerous Boomers are stressed by juggling the multiple demands of personal life needs and responsibilities. Given the GenY unemployment figures around the globe, it is fair to say everyone in, or out, of the workplace, is feeling the effects of the converging demographic challenges.

However, by virtue of being deeply experienced, Boomers often demonstrate remarkable abilities to focus and find opportunity where others see only challenges.

Author and leadership consultant David Whyte draws upon the metaphor of an older, but tremendously effective Irish sheep dog. While the younger dogs would run up the hills to herd the sheep, this old dog had learned to economize his energy and take the precise position whereby the sheep moved with ease and flow.

Indeed, the depth and breadth of experience that is engrained among seasoned employees often enables them to be efficient, productive and engaged—in ways beyond the strategic imagination of younger generations.

Combined with their discipline, work ethic and determination, Boomers possess core leadership attributes that smart employers and HR professionals readily recognize and are eager to employ.

Attitudinal Shift Needed

In spite of this, and even though mandatory retirement has been eliminated across Canada, the notion that turning 65 years of age is akin to reaching an expiry date has not yet itself fully expired.

Not only does this stand in sorry contrast with the reverence of elders in traditional world cultures, it reminds us that

while anti-bullying legislation presides over the BC workplace, ageism lingers.

Christina Matz-Costa, senior research associate at the Sloan Center on Aging and Work, recently published an article which revealed that the vast majority of Baby Boomers were actively involved with work and life alike. A full 92 per cent of people aged 55 to 64 were involved with paid work, volunteering, caregiving or educational activities—as were 76 per cent of those 65 and older. Nor was their involvement casual, but meaningful; they were enthusiastically dedicated and absorbed in their activities. In short, they were engaged in a way that moved them with a deeper purpose and ongoing challenge.

Disengagement NOT a Fact of Life

Matz-Costa notes that though many cling to the notion that older adults become disengaged, this study demonstrates the exact opposite to be true. Furthermore, her research also found that adults over 50, on average, are more engaged in paid work, volunteering and education than their peers under 50.

“might we begin by looking to our leaders within?”

Consider the results of a job-related training study of older workers conducted by Statistics Canada; it shows that the participation rate in employer-supported training among workers aged 55-64 more than doubled between 1991 and 2008. The study also found that older workers were less likely to identify barriers to training.

Neuroscience has also done its share to support new attitudes about the brain's capacities among elders. Having discovered the brain's plasticity, we now know that learning and growing new neural pathways is a common daily occurrence across the entirety of our lifespans.

In the world of people leadership, we all know someone who has helped to shift our attitudes and dispel lingering myths of age. Jan Furst, a former marine engineer with a deep appreciation for nature who told wondrous stories, helped open my eyes to the potential we all possess.

He fenced to keep himself fit all the way into his mid-90s and taught himself to use computers in his late 80s when he was inspired to write his second book. Most importantly, he never stopped sharing his learnings.

Learning Mindset and Reciprocal Mentoring

When people embrace a learning mindset, explain Margaret Greenberg and Senia Maymin in *Profit from the Positive*, they tend to focus more on sustaining effort towards gaining competence. In contrast, those with the performance mindset tend to focus more on the thrill of demonstrating abilities.

According to research, those “performer” types are more likely to give up or quit when faced with a challenging assignment that presents a learning opportunity. This is where a seasoned employee mentoring and championing the efforts of a younger one can support, draw out the best and encourage throughout the learning process. In turn, a tech-savvy 20-something might help his senior mentor to learn a new software program, keep abreast of fresh ideas or become better aware of ways to monetize social media.

Leadership, Stories Shared and Reverence

Considering the timeless power of storytelling to help inspire resilience and transfer work-related wisdom in a casual but captivating way, organizations would benefit from generating such opportunities.

Through the stories told, each person gets to share the legacy—and present problems often benefit from a new perspective. By hearing, integrating and honouring the profound experience among the human pillars of an organization, a deeper conversation and sense of meaning is generated which in turns enriches the work culture.

What's more, a culture enhanced by a steady infusion of reverence can serve to counter the risk of cynical attitudes and re-invigorate the heart of any business. Old truths may yet bear the freshest fruits for organizations and individuals of all ages. 📌

Professional speaker, author, life and business coach, Isabelle St-Jean, RSW, ACC brings over 20 years of communication, leadership and personal effectiveness to her audiences, readers and clients (inspiredmomentum.com).



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Reinvent the Workplace with Generation Connect

By **Christine McLeod**

TURNED 40 LAST YEAR AND A WISE FRIEND IN HER 60S SHARED THIS with me on the big day.

“When I was in my 20s, I spent a lot of time thinking about what others thought about me. In my 40s, I realized I didn’t really care what they thought about me. In my 60s, I realized they weren’t even thinking about me in the first place.”

If those observations are accurate, then I should now be entering a phase of my life where I am confidently able to act on the belief at the very core of my being—*there is a good way and a wasteful way to manage the people side of business. It’s time to reinvent the wasteful.*

I no longer feel the need to convince others of this belief because what I have found over the past 20 years is leaders either get it, or they don’t. What inspires me most these days are the leaders having business conversations about how to reinvent every aspect of consumer and employee journeys to thrive and win.

Connecting with the Future Now

I have three beliefs about the future of work and how we can reinvent the workplace:

1. Those who understand the connected *employee* will thrive.
2. Those who understand the connected *consumer* will thrive.
3. Those who have a clear *business strategy* integrating the two will win.

Reinventing the workplace is about holding ourselves to a standard of business excellence higher than our customers and employees would ever expect.

I have experienced firsthand the thrill of repeatable high performance results when employee and consumer experience were inextricably linked to business strategy. I have also experienced firsthand the collateral damage of leaders entirely wasting the valuable *people potential* side of their business.

What is different now and forever more is that we no longer have a choice not to be great. On the web, exceptional travels fast, terrible travels even faster and average, well, that doesn’t travel at all.

Our reputation is what our employees and customers say it is and if we don’t integrate that truth into every aspect of people and business strategy we are doomed to irrelevance.

Addressing the Disconnect

Reinventing the workplace can prove lucrative for the bottom line, the ability to attract and retain all-stars, and brand reputation alike. However, we are still thinking too small if we believe those are the main fruits born of this change effort.

The biggest opportunity is both local and global: to create deeper connection in all aspects of our lives to that we don’t just survive, we thrive—economically, politically, spiritually and environmentally.

As connected as we all are digitally, we are becoming more and more disconnected in relationships that matter, including our relationship with our workplaces. We may have iPads, intranets, social feeds and webcams at our disposal, yet we still are not moving the dial on reversing the dismal rate of workplace engagement. We are still not doing our best work at work.

Very few of us feel fulfilled, grounded, excited about the contributions we are making and the impact we are having during the work week. The levels of disengagement amongst Canadian workers is just shy of 70 per cent. This tells me I am not alone in my belief that we are not even coming close to the potential of true high performance in our current Canadian workplaces.

Welcome to Generation Connect

Consider the following statistics that reflect the difference between 2005 and 2012 on the usage of social networking sites: ages 18-29 went from nine per cent to 83 per cent; 30 to 49 year olds from seven per cent to 77 per cent for 30 to 49 year olds and 50-64 year olds from six per cent to 32 per cent.

The connected employee is not necessarily Gen X or Y or any letter of the alphabet; these labels are divisive. For the first time in history, we are united as one generation—Generation ‘Connect’. We have at our fingertips the knowledge and networks that make this world go around. The proliferation of digital and social platforms have ignited a global conversation and shift in consciousness.

Generation Connect is yearning for purpose-driven, human, *connected* experiences. This shift permeates all relationships including the ones we have with our workplaces.

Engagement and connection can deepen from there—introducing social, digital and mobile to facilitate new ways of communicating, collaborating and innovating.

Meaning, Not More, is the Answer

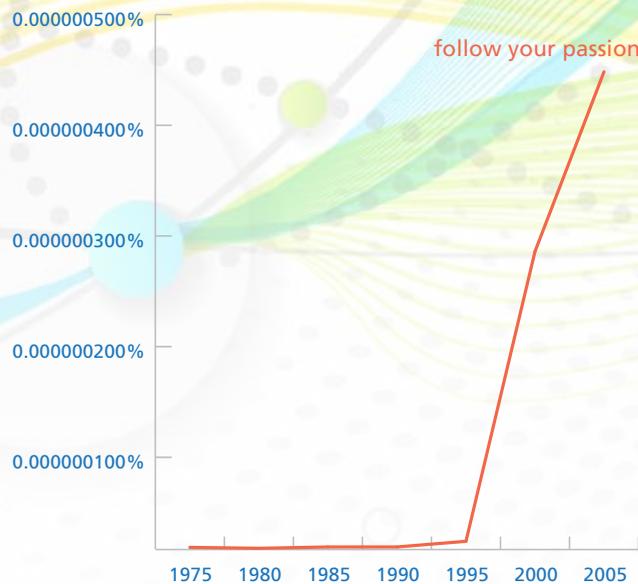
However, on the flip side, we are also experiencing unprecedented noise. People are fried, stressed and exhausted with the constant bombardment of information being thrown their way.

Employees don’t get excited about accessing MORE relationships and MORE information; they are yearning to feel *part* of something bigger than the work itself. The noise lessens when tribes, teams and workplace communities align and become crystal clear on who they are, what their purpose is and who they serve.

Following Your Passion: More Than Trending

To illustrate how our workplace aspirations have changed, I dove into Google's Ngram viewer which measures the iterations of a word or group of words in a database of over 500 million books scanned in from libraries all over the world. I typed the words 'follow your passion' and here is the visual.

Look at what the graph does from 1990 onwards. The words follow your passion have shifted our collective consciousness and forced us as students, professionals, business executives to re-think what we want "work" to mean to us.



Put Passion to Profit

As business leaders we should be asking our potential and future employees powerful questions related to this:

1. What do you care deeply about?
2. What are you passionate about changing?
3. How can I better serve you?
4. How do you want to better serve your customer?
5. What is the work that needs to be done?
6. How can we put some of your passions to work?
7. How can this team support you? Even if it's outside of work?
8. How can we help you make meaningful contribution?
9. How can technology enable new possibilities of connection, collaboration and communication?

The Zero Moment of Truth

Using the social media tools at our disposal is one thing—factoring how others are using them can and do use them to impact their businesses is the key. Google coined a new term that captures the changed reality for businesses worldwide; the Zero Moment of Truth (ZMOT) refers to the social exploration phase that now occurs even before a prospective employee or client does business with a product or brand.

The truth of the ZMOT is that as much as 60 per cent of the connected consumers' decision process is established before they even set foot in your business—or do not. Moreover, a majority are tweeting about their experiences with your business, often while they are still on site, and this delight in sharing, both the good

and bad, adds further information to the mix for those embarking on their own ZMOTs.

Smart Leaders See the Connected Within

At the start of the piece, I mentioned leaders who "get it". That's you. The HR, IT, OD, operations, communications and executive leaders who recognize the connected consumer as not only your potential advocate or critic, but as the employees inside your organization.

The smart leader is relentless in the desire to make that connection a valuable and positive one. You are the ones lying awake at night thinking about your employees as brand ambassadors, and bounding out of bed in the morning with an idea to engage differently with your employees. You are clear about why you do what you do.

How do we organize ourselves behind the firewall to be that company? It starts with integrating the connected consumer and employee into a business strategy—and living up to a few bold statements:

- We are trusted advisors to our savvy customers;
- We are open and transparent internally and externally;
- We are responsive to each other and our customers;
- We are attentive to changing market conditions and agile in changing course when required;
- Our greatest ambassadors are both our customers AND employees;
- We embrace feedback and course correct;
- We make it easy to do business with us and work with us; and
- Our employees and customers are on this journey with us.

These are the conversations that we should be having in our boardrooms, our lunchrooms, in association meetings and roundtables. This is not just about the future of work, it's about the future of business—and it's all connected. 🌐

Christine McLeod (ChristineMcLeod.ca) is a trusted advisor to high performance leaders and teams.

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Evidence-Based Decision-Making: Big Data and the Human Touch

By **Christian Codrington**, CHRP

TO BE A 'FLY ON THE WALL' LISTENING to an argument between two individuals can be an insightful peek into the human psyche. When individuals want to make or defend a point, often the arguments supporting their request or conclusion can be overtly emotional while ignoring or overemphasizing relevant information and key data.

Big data is a term increasingly being used to capture the emerging industry practice of analyzing multiple databases to help business leaders make decisions and become better future forecasters.

Not a Ready-Made Solution

The challenge for the HR leader is to wade through the noise to find the signal—and big data has been touted as the solution for two basic reasons: 1) big data can help business leaders make decisions

and predictions; and 2) HR is sitting on mounds of big data.

As a result, many conclude that HR need only make use of what is already at its disposal and be more data driven. The problem is that the conclusion is derived from faulty premises. There are times when HR doesn't necessarily have the relevant data. Even with strong supporting data, HR's efforts can be nullified within organizations where the culture of intuition alone is still driving the decision-making process.

Better Business Builds Upon Intuition

The onus is on both the organization and HR to find a working solution that applies big data and the human touch alike.

HR and business leaders in general can take a lesson from the evidence-based decision-making experiences in health care. For centuries, medical practice was based

primarily on the experience and judgment of its practitioners. However, with the growth of biomedical science, the development of evaluative clinical sciences and advances in both communications and IT, evidence-based decision-making has grown to meet a number of health care challenges.

There is an evident parallel with greater numbers of HR professionals augmenting their intuition with the use of cognitive abilities tests in selection decisions, rigour and structure in compensation systems and the use of HRIS and applicant tracking systems. In light of faster and more interconnected communication networks all operating within a complex legislative web of human rights, employment/labour law and occupational health and safety regulations—HR is already using data.

As more sources are developed, HR needs to ensure that data is being used

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effectively, efficiently and wisely. Evidence-based decision-making and big data can build a case for a preferred solution, inform or identify an unanticipated solution, or be ignored altogether.

In the *MIT Sloan Management Review* online¹, Peter Tingling and Michael Brydon suggest a convenient framework for conceptualizing the role data and evidence can play—to make, inform or support a decision.

'Make' a Decision

On one end of the spectrum is purely evidence-based decision-making. Qualitative and non-quantifiable data do not have a place at this end of the decision-making continuum. These decisions, such as a new facility location or vendor selection, 'can' be reduced to algorithmic exercises where facts and evidence alone are considered. The largest risk in making decisions based solely on hard evidence is that the evidence may be incomplete or misleading. The challenge for leaders is to get enough relevant information within reasonable time frames to move the organization forward.

'Inform' a Decision

When objective data and evidence informs a decision, it is combined with intuition and experiences. Negotiating a collective agreement, a selection decision combining test scores, performance during an interview and previous job performance are examples of this dynamic. One of the challenges in this balancing act emerges when different stakeholders exercise power in ways that gives their subjective impressions inappropriate weight. Organizations need leaders that have the courage to identify and call out such dynamics.

'Support' a Decision

Evidence and data is often gathered "for the sole purpose of lending legitimacy to a decision that has already been made²." At first glance, using this sort of data collection to justify a decision may not sit well; however, it too serves function.

Consider the motivation to build an attendance management program and pursuant data collection related to absences, frequency and costs and habitual abusers. In such a case, programs, policies and benefit programs are often developed or altered

after the data confirms the original position.

However, transparency remains key in building organizational support. Without communication, gathering data to support a decision can devalue the roles internal and external providers whose support is requisite.

Data, Diligence and HR

As per the HR Metrics Service, data is simply becoming more available to decision-makers. Leaders in any area of an organization are tasked with the effective use of judgment and discretion to accomplish goals and maintain the commitment of their staff. Using all of the tools in their kit, big data included, HR professionals ensure evidence-based decision-making remains guided by the human touch. 

Christian Codrington, CHRP is senior manager, professional practice for the British Columbia Human Resources Management Association.

¹ Tingling, Peter M., Brydon, Michael J., *Is Decision-Based Evidence Making Necessarily Bad?* MIT Sloan Management Review, Summer 2010 Vol 51 No. 4
² Ibid

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Meaningful Consultation Key to Collective Bargaining

By Graeme McFarlane

THE IMPORTANCE OF TRUE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING HAS been once again highlighted in British Columbia. The British Columbia Government has been ordered to pay the British Columbia Teachers' Federation \$2 million in damages for breaching teachers' constitutional rights.

Pertaining to Class Acts

The case before the court has had a long and storied past. In 2002, the government proclaimed the *Public Education Flexibility and Choice Act* otherwise known as Bill 28. That statute removed from collective bargaining certain items like class size and class composition. Any terms in the then collective agreement relating to those items were declared void. In conjunction with this step, the provincial government also amended the School Act to increase class sizes.

In 2011, following a Supreme Court of Canada in an associated case relating to Bill 29 (a case that involved interfering with collective agreements in the health sector), British Columbia Supreme Court Justice Susan Griffin, decided that Bill 28 was unconstitutional, and she struck it down. The portions of the Bill that interfered with teachers' collective bargaining rights were declared void. However, the government was given 12 months to fix the problems described in the decision.

The government did not appeal that decision, and in the 12 month period engaged in a process of consultation with the Union. It offered to spend \$165 million over three years to address class composition issues. However, the government did not take action to revive any of the rights struck out by Bill 29.

Net Zero Mandate No Negotiation Assist

Just as the 12 month grace period was about to expire, the government passed Bill 22, the *Education Improvement Act*. The government also enacted two regulations that provided some additional funding for class size increases and class composition. However, this Act essentially repealed Bill 29 and then re-enacted very similar provisions. This statute also appointed a mediator who was to assist the parties to settle the terms of a new collective agreement, but any such settlement was limited by the government's net zero mandate. This provision meant that the employer could not agree to any term that would have the effect of raising the cost to government.

The parties were able to reach an agreement under these constraints. However, after the agreement was ratified, the Union filed a lawsuit claiming that the government had failed to bargain

in good faith and had "re-breached" the teacher's charter rights in various ways including by re-enacting illegal terms.

Bargaining Below the Belt

In a scathing decision, the judge agreed with the Union and allowed the vast majority of its claims. She held that the *Education Improvement Act* was legally indistinguishable from Bill 28. It too, substantially interfered with teachers' Charter rights. The statutes were declared void and the terms deleted from the teachers' collective agreements were restored. The Union was also awarded \$2 million in damages.

The judge also went on to discuss the "consultation" that occurred between the parties. She held that the process was no meaningful consultation. In discussing this aspect she said that "[a] party cannot say it is consulting if it starts from the position that its mind is made up no matter what the other side presents by way of evidence or concerns." This position was described as being "manifestly unreasonable."

**"The judge
further criticized
the government
for playing
politics"**

Provoking Stoppages, Incurring Ire

The judge further criticized the government for playing politics. She found that notwithstanding that no strike had occurred, the government had acted in a way so as to provoke a work stoppage. In her view, such a strike would allow the government to enact legislation against the teachers that the public might support where otherwise it would not. As a result of this failure to consult, the legislative interference was viewed as being more serious.

The government has appealed this decision. It applied for and received a stay of the decision pending that appeal. If the stay had not been granted, the government would have been forced to hire a large number of additional teachers to bring the class sizes down to the 2002 levels.

Duty to Consult Driven Home

This case is important to employers because it provides guidance on the duty to consult in the governmental context. Some commentators had suggested the notion that only a surface consultation with the union in name will suffice. That proposition cannot stand, and if this case is upheld, governments will be required to allow for meaningful consultation before enacting legislation that has the potential effect of infringing on constitutional rights.

The end of this saga has not yet been written. Stay tuned. 📞

Graeme McFarlane is a partner at Roper Greyell LLP which is a firm focused on partnering with companies to find solutions to workplace legal issues.

Big Hikes Impact More Than Minimum Wage

By **Jock Finlayson**

PROPOSALS TO INCREASE THE MINIMUM WAGE HAVE BEEN GAINING political traction on both sides of the Canada-U.S. border. In January 2014, President Obama called for lifting the U.S. federal minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour. Since 2011 a number of American states and cities have increased the minimum wages applicable in their jurisdictions.

In Canada, the Ontario government recently raised the minimum wage in that province to \$11 an hour, and announced a plan to index it to the *Consumer Price Index* going forward. Quebec intends to nudge its minimum wage higher later this year.

Are higher statutory minimum wages an effective way to improve the economic well-being of low to moderate income workers? Do they reduce the incidence of poverty? Will some businesses respond to an escalating government-imposed minimum wage by shedding jobs? These questions have been extensively studied by academic economists in the past decade. Overall, the research yields mixed results.

Obvious Pros and Cons

Clearly, a rise in the minimum wage is positive for the lowest paid workers who experience no change in their hours, benefits, or working conditions after the fact. Other workers, whose wages are slightly above the current minimum, are also likely to see a bump in pay if the government legislates a higher level.

However, basic economic logic and intuition suggest that any increase in labour compensation costs, in the absence of compensating advances in productivity, will cause some employers to lay off workers, reduce hours, and/or find other ways to economize on the use of labour (for example, by outsourcing or investing in labour-saving technology).

It follows that some businesses affected by a higher minimum wage can be expected to trim their payrolls and adjust their hiring practices. Many will also seek to pass on any increase in costs to their customers by charging higher prices for the goods or services they sell.

Big Hikes Court Big Risk

Most economists who have studied the topic agree that small, periodic adjustments to the minimum wage are unlikely to have a significant impact on the demand for labour. However, big minimum wage hikes are another matter.

According to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), which is the research arm for the U.S. Congress, President Obama's proposal to push the minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$10.10 an hour could cost up to 500,000 jobs. Many low-wage U.S. workers would enjoy higher earnings under the President's policy. However, the

CBO estimates that only one-fifth of these beneficiaries live in households with the lowest overall incomes.

This tells us that the minimum wage isn't necessarily a well-targeted instrument to tackle poverty, since many low-wage workers aren't members of very low-income families. Still, a higher minimum wage is one tool to raise incomes for workers who are paid at or near the statutory minimum. For that reason alone, it remains an attractive option in the eyes of some politicians, economists and policy analysts.

A Catalyst for Job Cuts

There is little reason to believe that the effects of a higher minimum wage on the pattern of labour demand will be uniform across jurisdictions or time periods—much depends on the context. If the minimum wage has been frozen for many years, then imposing a modestly higher one probably wouldn't result in large-scale job losses. If the minimum wage is already set at a relatively high level—say at 60 per cent of the average industrial wage—then increasing it further may create strong incentives for many employers to alter their business practices to economize on the use of labour.

In British Columbia, the current \$10.25 minimum wage amounts to 42 per cent of the average industrial wage. Pushing the minimum to half of the average wage would take it to roughly \$12 an hour. Based on the available research, it's difficult to say how many jobs would be eliminated by such a policy, although surely there would be some job losses in sectors like accommodations, restaurants, retail and personal services. On the other hand, low paid employees in these industries who are able to hold on to their jobs (and hours) would benefit from a higher minimum wage.

Small Steps Set Smart Pace

Regardless of where policymakers choose to set the statutory minimum wage, there is an argument for adjusting it in small steps on a regular basis, perhaps in line with changes in the cost of living, rather than keeping it frozen for many years, as British Columbia did between 2001 to 2010.

Experience shows that when the minimum wage is fixed for long stretches of time, political pressure eventually builds to legislate big increases—and it is these that produce the most serious adjustment problems for businesses that employ lots of relatively low-paid workers. **P**

Jock Finlayson is the executive vice-president of the Business Council of BC.

“...minimum wage isn't necessarily a well-targeted instrument to tackle poverty...”

an exclusive *PeopleTalk* interview

Col. Chris Hadfield Phones Home: "Good Morning Earth"

Photo by NASA

By **Jason McRobbie**

With those three words, Colonel Chris Hadfield began his Twitter feed and woke the world daily for over five months as the first Canadian commander of the International Space Station (ISS) in 2013. By the time he strummed the opening chords to his zero-g performance of David Bowie's 'Space Oddity' he had anchored another first—becoming the world's first viral astronaut.

Raised on a corn farm in southern Ontario, his career aspirations were set at age nine when Neil Armstrong first set foot on the moon. Unlike millions, Hadfield trained himself to think like an astronaut, and never lost sight of his goals.

Since returning to Earth in 2013 and penning *An Astronaut's Guide to Life on Earth*, Hadfield has remained as accessible on planet as off and remains affably on mission—sharing with others the lessons learned throughout a remarkable career in the fields of leadership, teamwork, collaboration, science and technology. As closing speaker for the 52nd Annual HRMA Conference + Tradeshow, Hadfield remains guided by a simple guiding ethos: "Be ready. Work. Hard. Enjoy it."

Recently retired, you have become one of the busiest people on the planet. How then does an astronaut approach retirement?

People focus on my retirement right now and it's probably very much germane to your area. Retirement is almost a negative word. 'Oh, now you're retired, so now you're useless'—as if retirement and unproductive were the same word. For me, I think I've retired five times already and what people need to remember is that since the last time I retired after 25 years in the Air Force, I've commanded a space ship.

So I think career leaps are important. Whether you are 18 or 65 you are always going on to the next thing and the important part is to continue to gather the skills, be interested in what you are doing and have objectives in mind—and constantly be willing to learn new things.

I think that quintessential drive of interest and staying involved and being unafraid of new information, that's what makes life interesting.

Of the life lessons you have accrued in your training and space missions, what is the one that speaks most directly to the value of top notch teams?

There are a couple of major ones, but one that might be most useful is to visualize failure and face the basic issue of human fear. How does fear of something dictate your actions consciously or subconsciously? A fear of failure, a fear of embarrassment or some unique fundamental fear—how does that keep you from doing something or doing it well?

The way to get around it is by visualizing failure. If you say, 'I am afraid of starting this new project' or 'I'm afraid of hiring a new employee or firing an employee.' 'I'm afraid of...' is where a lot of people stop, right there. Instead, if you say 'Okay, why am I afraid of that? Why am I afraid of public speaking?' It's not really public speaking I'm afraid of, it's forgetting the words so the audience laughs at me. It's being embarrassed.

Then you can visualize the failure that is the root of your fear, and see if there is a way to guarantee that failure will never

happen. Or, if it still has a probability of happening, let's figure out 10 ways to react to that.

And then, the most important part, practice it in as realistic an environment as possible over and over and over again, so that you become used to the idea of dealing with that thing that was giving you fear. If you can internalize those results, make them your new normal, you change fundamental behaviours into something that enables you to do something better or different.

It's the only way you could ever fly a rocket ship or do a space walk.



As commander of the International Space Station, how does such diversity impact the 'work culture'?

The diversity affecting work culture is everything. If you had clones of yourself, perfect multiple clones, then you would need very little communication to know what needed doing next or how people were going to respond if things went well or badly. The more diverse your team, the more important communication becomes and the hardest part of communication, absolutely, is listening, or actually hearing what people have to say.

The more diverse your group, the wider the responses are going to be. So, as the commander, the real key to all that is, number one, to recognize that it is an honour and respect it, and number two, to realize that diversity is better. If it's just a bunch of clones of yourself, you can't get any better than your own imagination and each of us is limited. If it's a bunch of people, then they are going to know different stuff and have different ideas that would never occur to you. One day, you're trying to draw a fish and you notice the fellow sitting next to you can draw a way better fish, and you realize, 'Holy crap, I have Michelangelo on my team.'

You still have to make sure things are headed in the right direction, but you need to allow people the freedom to draw their own fish, while following the direction you need to take the team. For me that's the critical part—recognize the strength of your diversity, give people the common sense of purpose and vision so they can start thinking about decisions, and then constantly check back, at as familiar and low a level as you can, so you can understand how it is taking you all in the direction you need to go.

How might HR leaders benefit from your experiences to increase engagement, innovation and productivity alike?

The real key to HR, or any leadership, is to take the people you have—whether that is on a spaceship, inside your home or that you're in the elevator with—and figure out how to make that group of people accomplish a specific objective or a set of objectives as efficiently and completely as possible. That is the key part I focused on through my years as a leader in the space industry.

Take an interest, but don't direct. Go around see what people are up to and chat with them while they're doing what they do, so that they know you are taking an interest, but also that they have the autonomy of decision-making at the lowest level possible.

On the other side, celebrate success whenever possible. If you have set the expectations wrong for what constitutes success, you have set your team up for failure by definition. You should celebrate every small success at the end of every day. Whether or not you raise the \$50,000 in your fundraising campaign, those two months leading up to the total—that was your life.

On the Space Station, if someone's daughter had a birthday or someone's son lost his first tooth or if somebody on the crew did their first space walk or captured a photo of their home town in Russia, we celebrated. Why wouldn't you? Recognizing the small successes is a necessity.

If building culture counts in large amounts in small spaces, what is the importance of culture in the workplace setting?

What's interesting is that I speak at a lot of places now and have heard about corporate culture my whole life. To me it sounded like a lot of buzz talk—after all, it's just a bunch of people working.

Let me tell you though, and you probably see it in HR more than anybody, but speaking to all sorts of industries across Canada, I have seen how corporate culture is wildly different from organization to organization. It's a surprise to me just how palpable it is, and just how much it affects the behaviour of the people and often the success of that particular business.

It's been reinforced to me the impact of good leadership, of good management, of a well understood common vision and the devolution of responsibility, the giving of trust and decision-making authorities to the lowest level. That culture, I've seen it beautifully done and horrifically, over and over.

To me, the essence of corporate culture is very important and is worth addressing internally. HR clearly has a huge role in that, in getting the people to all respect each other, to communicate more clearly, to set up the structures within that allow that clear communication, and to get the right people into the right jobs. It's not purely HR of course, but HR is pivotal in that role of helping to build the structure and the mechanisms by which you can improve your corporate culture.

One of the first steps in solving problems is recognizing that you have one, and a lot of organizations don't. Someone has to affect that change and it's probably not going to come from the very lowest level—apart from revolution—nor is it going to be coming down from the very top because they've already been rewarded for their culture. It got them there. It's going to have to come from within an organization that has a multi-layered authority, which in a lot of cases, will be HR.

For our full interview, visit: hrvoice.org/chris-hadfield. 

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