

HRMA

PeopleTalk

**Mental Health
at Work:**
Rethinking
a Stigma

**Everyday
Innovation:**
Are You There Yet?

**Nine Ways
to Influence
Without Authority**

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**HRMA CONFERENCE
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Trust and Confidence are Key

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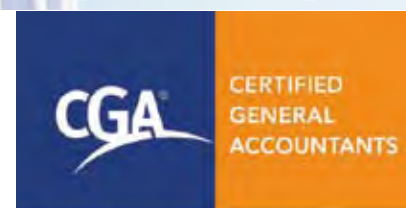


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...ge Contracts				
...waps	1,068	1,025	2,874	3,78
...nterest				
	25,873	24,175	18,600	22,81
...exchange				
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...lity under acceptances	12,532	7,336	-	-

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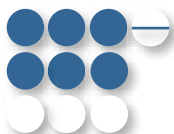
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By John Wright

61%

Don't trust their senior leaders



Canadian Management Centre partnered with Ipsos-Reid to develop the research study, *Build a Better Workplace: Employee Engagement Edition*—the first comprehensive view of both the Canadian workforce and HR professionals to identify the levers that truly drive employee engagement. Unsurprisingly, trust and confidence are key. Of greater concern is the discovery that lack of trust and confidence in leaders continues to erode and is impacting both the employee and the bottom line.

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**HRMA CONFERENCE
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Imagine the Difference

WELCOME TO OUR SPRING EDITION OF *PeopleTalk* AND THE sunnier months ahead. Winter has its own beauty and is a special time for families, but this time of year, especially here in B.C., is simply beautiful. With snow on the peaks and daffodils in the flower beds, it is easy to understand the rest of Canada's meteorological envy.

Spring is the season of renewal and fresh growth. In keeping with the nature of things, it also marks the arrival of our annual BC HRMA Conference and Tradeshow, where we gather for much the same reasons—to reconnect, rethink and grow our minds and practices in bold directions.

Last year, we celebrated 50 years of coming together in such a way, and this year on May 1-2, 2013 we return to the Vancouver Convention Centre. With the 51st Annual BC HRMA Conference, we move boldly beyond our bi-centennial achievement to "*Inspire, Influence, Innovate*".

Once again, the BC HRMA Conference Organizing Committee has floored me with their energies, professional passion and ability to craft a roster that shines in the breakouts as strongly as it does on the main stage. With a focus on organizational effectiveness, skill development, talent management and legal, Conference 2013 serves to both anchor the fundamentals, and redefine the scope of the HR profession. (It also provides one of the best two days of networking imaginable—never to be overlooked and always welcomed!)

"*Imagine the Difference*" is the tagline to this year's theme. Considering the line up of this year's plenary speakers, that should be easily accomplished over the course of our two days together. If you have not registered for this year's conference, I encourage you to "*Imagine the Difference*" those two days might make. Bring your challenges. Meet the solutions. The opportunity for personal and professional development is absolute.

Last, but not least, I would like to offer my sincere thanks to all of you for your support over these past two years. It has been my honour and privilege to serve as your Association president and at our next Annual General Meeting in June, it will be time to turn the 'reins' over to your new president, Shannon Joly, CHRP.

I will spend one more year on the Board, as past president, but I wanted to convey my thanks to you at this time! The experience has been very rewarding for me personally, and rest assured, you have a great Board willing to volunteer their time to serve the membership.

With many thanks,

Mike Cass, CHRP
President, BC HRMA
president@bchrma.org



Mike Cass, CHRP



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Building a Better Workplace: One Deep Breath at a Time

BUILDING A BETTER WORKPLACE IS WHAT HR PROFESSIONALS strive to do daily—with the BC HRMA providing a professional assist since 1942. According to internal membership surveys and support from mainstream media and executive teams alike, satisfaction is strong—HR's seat at the table is requisite. More pertinent are the means and motivators for HR to deliver measurable results.

As per Ian J. Cook's article this issue, "The Measure of Smart HR" (p. 34) is most readily demonstrated with key metrics aligned to the business. However, some of the most recent numbers on trust and confidence lie at the heart of our cover story (p.20) and "serve as a wake up call for HR".

While HR might be aligned or allied with senior leadership, employee trust and confidence in senior leadership is another matter entirely.

A first of its kind, the aptly titled *Build a Better Workplace* study was researched by the Canadian Management Center (CMC) in partnership with Ipos-Reid. Surveying 1,200 Canadians and separate sample of 484 HR professionals—a critical disconnect was discovered. The numbers are within—along with ample antidote to the erosion presented by CMC president John Wright.

Marking another first for the pages of *PeopleTalk*, the study's primary findings are illustrated as an info-graphic for easy takeaway. With compliments to what great partners bring to the table, here's hoping it inspires an upward trend of information sharing—and trust.

As per matters of confidence, the 51st BC HRMA Annual Conference and Tradeshow (p.23) could not be more timely—nor its range of presenters more perfectly aligned to help HR meet that challenge. For those seeking to "Inspire, Influence, Innovate", the invitation to "Imagine the Difference" is delivered upon May 1-2, 2013.

As per our back page interview with Clearly Contacts CEO Roger Hardy and Russel Horwitz's "Nine Ways to Influence Without Using Authority" (p.36), a lot of that comes back to taking accountability of both the diversity of the workplace—and our own actions.

That the smallest of actions can make a measurable difference is known. As Adam DiPaula explores, "Everyday Innovation" (p.28) is a goal for organizations of every size and type. However, creativity is intimately linked to achieving such goals and the impact of stress on creativity is well known.

In "Too Stressed to Innovate?" (p.38), Isabelle St-Jean provides us all a reason to take a few good deep breaths. After all, as per Pam Paquet's "Mental Health at Work" (p.41), Graeme McFarlane's "The Bully and Bill 14" (p.44) and Jock Finlayson's "Age-Related Barriers Toughest" (p.48) articles, HR's stresses are internal and external alike.

Fortunately, for BC HRMA members and the broader business community, there is one upcoming event that promises two days worth of answers to the myriad questions of the moment. I hope to see you there.

Jason McRobbie
editor, *PeopleTalk*
jasonmcr@telus.net



Jason McRobbie



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contributors

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 the contributors who “Inspire, Influence, Innovate” within the pages of Spring 2013.



John Wright
“Building a Better Workplace:
Trust and Confidence are Key” p. 16

John Wright is the president and managing director of Canadian Management Centre (CMC), based in Toronto. John’s goal is to build on the reputation and leadership position of CMC (cmcoutperform.com) through the development of new capabilities, partnerships and progressive learning solutions for clients both in Canada and globally. With more than 25 years of senior level experience in business-to-business and business-to-consumer professional services, John was the creator and manager of the AIR MILES® Reward Program for almost a decade. He holds a Bachelor of Commerce from University of Toronto, an MBA from York University—and a lifetime commitment to engaged learning.



Adam DiPaula
“Everyday Innovation:
Are You There Yet?” p. 28

Adam DiPaula is managing director at Sentis Market Research (sentisresearch.com). While overseeing daily operations, Adam remains a hands-on research practitioner and one of Canada’s leading research professionals. Applying quantitative and qualitative tools, Adam helps clients attract and retain customers and employees, and helps businesses identify growth opportunities and build their reputations. Regularly called upon to present to clients and at major industry conferences, he also serves as an expert witness in brand and trademark disputes. Born in New Jersey, Adam landed in Vancouver in 1991 and received his PhD of Psychology from UBC.



Russel Horowitz
“Nine Ways to Influence
Without Authority” p. 36

Russel is one of Kwela Leadership and Talent Management’s (kwelaleadership.com) two founders and his expertise includes leadership development, team development, executive coaching, and training on a wide variety of topics. He has worked extensively as a leadership consultant / trainer since 2004 across a wide variety of sectors, including government, publicly-held, private and non-profit. Russel’s experience also includes 14 years in the high technology/engineering sector, where he held management roles in product development, marketing, customer service and training. Russel holds a Masters degree in Engineering from the University of Cape Town, South Africa.

Isabelle St.-Jean
“Too Stressed to Innovate?
Take a Breath” p. 38

Professional speaker, author, life and business coach Isabelle St-Jean brings over 20 years of communication, leadership and personal effectiveness experience to her audiences, readers and clients. Founder of Inspired Momentum (inspiredmomentum.com), she integrates leading edge ideas and tools from the fields of psychology, philosophy, neuroscience and human potential development. She is the originator and co-author of the award-winning anthology entitled: *Einstein’s Business: Engaging Soul, Imagination and Excellence in the Workplace*, and her own book, *Living Forward, Giving Back: A Practical Guide to Fulfillment in Midlife and Beyond* received great endorsements.



Pam Paquet
“Mental Health at Work:
Rethinking a Stigma” p. 41

Certified with the Canadian Counselling Association, Pam Paquet ran a private practice for more than a decade before deciding to extend her psychological expertise from the therapy office to the business office. Through Pam Paquet and Associates Corporate Consulting (thepossibilities.ca), she helps companies identify staff and workplace problems and formulate training programs that generate long lasting results. With an MEd and BA in Psychology with a specialization in mediation, she is also is a master level facilitator who speaks internationally, and shares her expertise as an instructor with BCIT and as a committee member with CYBF and Douglas College for their self-employment programs.



**Stephen Antle, Charmane Sing, Brandon Hillis
and Michael Damiani**
“Risks of Social Media Background Checks” p. 46



The legal questions surrounding the use of social media in background checks united Borden Ladner Gervais LLP’s (BLG) partner Stephen Antle, associate Charmane Sing, Brandon Hillis and Michael Damiani in their contribution to an evolving topic. BLG (blg.com) is a leading, full-service, national law firm focusing on business law, commercial litigation and intellectual property solutions for our clients. With more than 750 lawyers, intellectual property agents and other professionals in six Canadian cities, clients turn to BLG for assistance with all their legal needs, from major litigation to financing and patent registration.



Connect the dots.

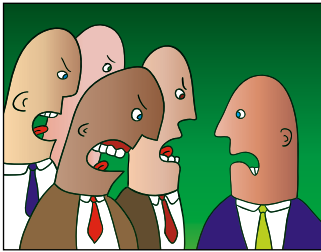
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Clear Communication Reduces Conflict: Listening?

By **Carol Sutton**



Clear communication is the key to conflict resolution. Not many people would disagree with that in principle, and yet when we open our mouths the words that emerge are often the antithesis of clarity. Why don't we just say what we mean and ask for what we want?

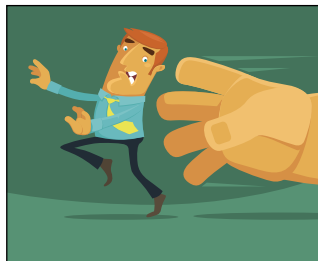
hrvoice.org/clear-communication-reduces-conflict-listening/

Building Better Employee Loyalty: Five Tips for Tackling Turnover

By **Cori Maedel**

The days of hiring an employee for life are long gone. As a result, employers need to make an extra effort to retain talent and foster employee loyalty. The right kind of extra effort can go a long way and have a significant impact on the costs of turnover—which can prove critical to a company's ongoing success.

hrvoice.org/building-better-employee-loyalty/



Super Sleuth Workplace Tips

By **Taryn Mackie** and **TJ Schmaltz**

You don't have to be on CSI to be a super sleuth in the workplace. Having the "know how" to conduct investigations effectively means you can reach an outcome that does not leave your company vulnerable to further loss and litigation.

hrvoice.org/super-sleuth-workplace-tips/



Hierarchy and Social Networks Both #FAIL. Now What?

By **Brad Palmer**

The advent of social platforms and communication tools is rapidly changing how information flows inside of organizations. This is challenging how decisions get made and how work gets done.

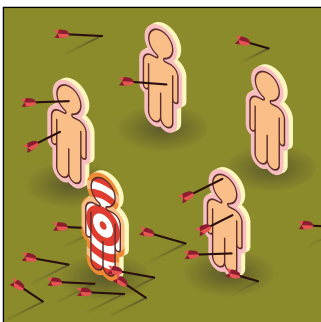
hrvoice.org/hierarchy-social-networks-both-fail-now-what/



Why Collaboration Fails (And How To Fix It)

By **Gervase Bushe**

Gervase Bushe, a professor with Beedie School of Business at SFU and a speaker at the HRMA Conference + Tradeshow 2013, details how his research has provided an understanding of effective collaboration. hrvoice.org/why-collaboration-fails-and-how-to-fix-it/



BC HRMA Mulls Mentoring on LinkedIn

Jennifer Schneider asks: We are thinking about implementing an employee mentorship program at our work. Wondering if anyone has any experience with this and willing to share some samples and/or insights or recommendations. We are a small company with 35 employees.

Renée Safrata responds: I am currently working with a client building an upside-down mentoring program for their fast growing company. By engaging the "protegé" to come forward first in the relationship, the dynamic of ownership and buy-in is increased. We are launching a series of lunch n' learns so that the employees are building their own skill-sets to deepen the protégé/ mentor relationship.

Larry Jung's responds: Researching and planning are crucial steps to successfully implement mentorship at work. One suggestion I have is to ensure that your mentors have sufficient understanding of their roles as mentors and that they are committed to it for the same reasons that drive you to support it. They should also be screened and trained to become mentors. Not everyone is meant to be a mentor.

Pam Paquet responds: Good on you for researching before implementing. So many make the assumption that teaching is the same as mentoring and think is all about getting people to share information. Mentorship is so much more than that.

Top BC HRMA Tweets

BC HRMA has partnered with ClearlyContacts.ca to create the BC HRMA Vision Plan. ht.ly/hilfb #freeglasses #BCHRMAMemberBenefits

Announcing a breakthrough in BC HRMA Benefits. ow.ly/gRVh0 #BCHRMAEmployeeBenefitsPlan #MemberBenefits

Our #hrma2013 closing speaker @SirKenRobinson is one of Top 10 TED Talks of all time via @VancouverSun: ht.ly/hrWrT

@coachgoldsmith is the opening speaker of the #hrma2013 conference + tradeshow. Check out one of his articles: ht.ly/gHs2t

RT @CareerBuilder: Prepping for your performance review at work: what to bring, what to say & more: bddy.me/Vr1D80

BC HRMA Brings Benefits North: Welcome to the Yukon Region

FROM ITS INCEPTION 70 YEARS AGO TO the present day, the BC Human Resources Management Association (BC HRMA) has long served the HR profession on the West Coast. As of January 1, 2013, that coastline now extends even further North with the addition of the Yukon as the eighth membership region of BC HRMA.

It is a move forward anticipated by many in the region for some time. Prior to having their own region, a number of Yukon-based HR practitioners had been partially participating in association activities as extra-provincial members of BC HRMA.

The new Yukon region hosted its inaugural gathering on February 20, 2013 at the Westmark Hotel in Whitehorse, drawing strong support from across the community with private, public and not-for-profit parties mingling with union representatives.

"The opportunity that this presents for those HR professionals of the Yukon is as great the one the Association represents



Meet the Yukon Advisory Council—(L to R) Judy Tomlin, Tracey Mayer, CHRP candidate, Lee Vincent, CHRP, Roxane Larouche, CHRP, Brian Bruckman, Brian Bonia; (on knee) Barrett Horne, Les Hudson, CHRP; (not pictured) Barbara Walker

for all our members. That said, it provides an even greater opportunity for all of us to expand our thinking," said Simon Evans, CEO, BC HRMA. "Geography aside, the challenges of HR are something best solved and served together—and our new Yukon region marks a great beginning."

For Yukon Advisory Council Chair Lee Vincent and her team of committed volunteer professionals, the announcement and the event itself mark major accomplishments; as always, the work remains ahead. With the benefits of BC HRMA membership, that work is made much lighter.

Lee Vincent: Organizations Are Run By People

Lee Vincent, CHRP, MBA, Chair of the Yukon BC HRMA Advisory Committee, is the AVP HR at Northwestel (a Bell company) and a certified executive coach (www.visionaryseeds.ca). She is also on the organizing committee for Impact99, an innovative conference focused on workplace reinvention (www.impact99.ca).

What was the driving force to become the eighth region of BC HRMA?

A group of us got together in early 2012 to discuss the concept of developing a formal Yukon-based HR Association. An informal network existed amongst many of the senior leaders in Whitehorse but there was so much more potential for collaboration for ourselves and our teams. We determined our priorities and then researched what the alternatives were to accomplish our goals. BC HRMA was a great fit and the team there has been incredibly supportive with respect to getting us up and running.

What does BC HRMA membership mean for HR Professionals in the Yukon?

There are 2 major immediate benefits for HR professionals across the Yukon. Firstly, there is cost effective, timely and relevant professional development delivered

at their doorstep. Secondly, there is the opportunity to develop broad professional networks across organizations and industries – people to learn from, mentoring opportunities and places to turn when you have a challenge and are sure you aren't the only one.

What defines the primary HR challenges for the Yukon region?

While our HR challenges are no different than those of our peers across the country (recruitment and retention, succession planning, workplace demographics, etc.) our geographical location heightens these challenges. We are in a high growth economic market, yet have low employment brand awareness nationally versus Alberta or Saskatchewan. We often have to build and develop our own skills internally without the full extent of resources required to do this effectively.



What inspires you most about the HR profession?

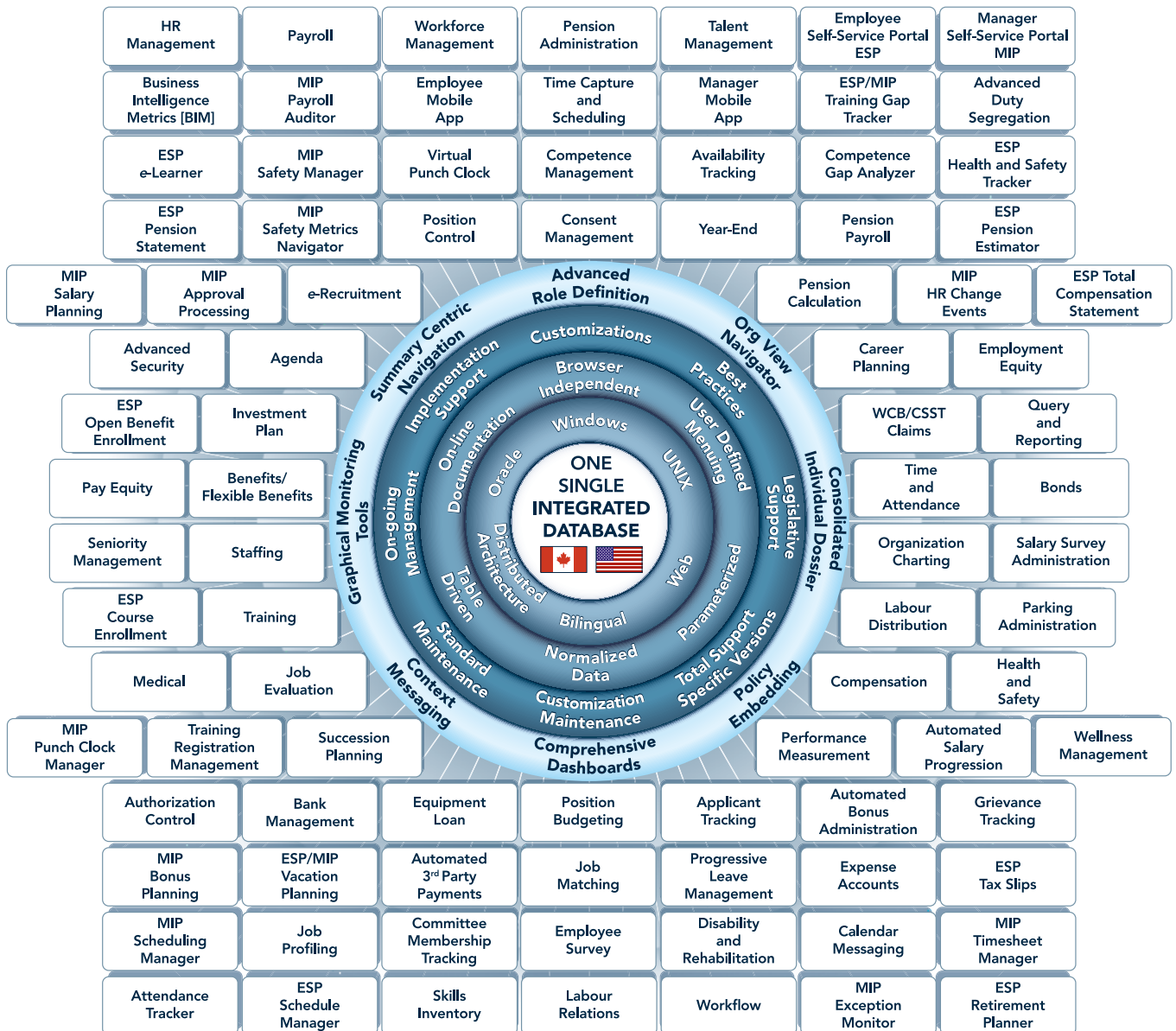
Organizations are run by people and people are the heart of differentiation between highly successful and less successful organizations across all industries. HR has the opportunity to lead the way for organizational success through innovative approaches and practices that increase employee engagement, increase trust in leadership and create cohesive organizational cultures that drive results. Through effective partnering, HR can truly make a significant difference in our world.

Happy employees = happy families = happy people. ☺



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How can HR help unlock an organization's

Christine McLeod, CHRP



chief possibilities officer
Impact99 HR Summit

Christine McLeod is passionate about driving change in global workplace engagement. She helps business leaders and their teams rise above day-to-day operations to see and synthesize the internal and external possibilities around them—shifting quickly from high-level aspiration to bottom line application—with the clear purpose of creating more impactful future workplaces. She is the founder of Canada's Impact99 HR Summit, now in its third year and taking place this October in Vancouver.

Before we can unlock it, we need to know what innovative potential looks like. “Relentless Innovation” is one of eight guiding principles I have identified as differentiators in truly engaged workplaces. What does it look like? Employees are empowered to improve operational excellence and customer loyalty. Results-focused ideation and experimentation is encouraged. Ideas and initiatives that do not yield impactful results are culled and seen as learning.

One “out of the box” way HR can start to unlock that potential is to identify 10 employees known for relentless innovation and team them with 10 of your most connected influencers and “enablers” in the organization who can clear the way. Present to that group a real, complex company “pain”. Don’t give them money—give them carte blanche access to leadership in every department, virtual and in person collaboration tools, data and 20 per cent of their work week for a fiscal quarter. Share the stories and outcomes.

Shane Mosley



manager, human resources
Sawchuk Developments Co. Ltd.

Shane is a member of BC HRMA's Southern Interior Advisory Committee, where he administers the mentoring program and acts as a mentor to other HR professionals. After a 30 year career in mining at Inco Limited's Manitoba Division, he moved to Kelowna and began his current role as an HR generalist. He is a graduate of Athabasca University's online Advanced Graduate Diploma in Management and MBA programs.

I believe that every worker wants to add value and feel valued. Start with the personal belief that every individual in the organization has something new to offer and turn that belief into a company ‘value’, so that the seeds for a culture of innovation and inspiration are planted and nurtured from the top of the organization and cascaded down throughout.

Next, look at yourself as an HR professional. Are you innovative in your thinking and behaviours? Do your recruitment processes tend to be stagnate, old-school techniques, or do they facilitate the uncovering of fresh new thinkers? Look at the systems and symbols in the workplace. Do they differentiate between employee groups, or is everyone treated equally for their contribution? What activities are in place to capture the ideas of existing, especially long term, employees? Do you have an idea network or suggestion plan? Do you use focus groups and cross-functional teams for problem solving?

And finally, ask yourself, “Do I inspire others?”

Diane Golchert, CHRP



HR consultant/benefits broker
Evolution HR & Benefits Consulting

As owner of Evolution HR & Benefits Consulting, Diane's broad background covers close to 20 years HR generalist experience, and she is currently completing her Masters in Leadership & Curriculum. Supplementing her Canadian experience, Diane has worked as an HR leader for various corporations in the US, Germany, and Malaysia—and has been leading an evolution in improving organizational outcomes through her consulting business since 2007.

Make space in the workplace for innovation to flourish by making it one of your core values—then incorporate that into the annual performance planning and review process.

People shape innovation, not computers or technology. When people are healthy, they bring an energy and enthusiasm to their work, allowing for strong teamwork with colleagues and strong engagement in their work. HR plays a leadership role in ensuring that the shape of the corporate culture is one that supports optimal employee health by fully respecting work/life balance—allowing employees to take their vacations every year, providing flexibility in work arrangements, and having strong employee benefits, including retirement support/planning and corporate ownership.

People engaged in their work know when the creative juices are flowing, and answers to perplexing puzzles appear. I hope people make time to unplug, do some reflecting, and make time to listen to that inner creative voice.

innovative potential?

Jacob Sol, CHRP



district principal, community education
New Westminster School District

Jacob Sol is the District Principal of Community Education for the New Westminster School District, a department of unique public schools that provides free education to British Columbian residents who hope to attain Grade 12 graduation or upgrade for employment and post-secondary admission. Prior to his current position, he was an elementary school principal and teacher. Jacob was a top-scorer in Canada in the October 2011 NPPA assessment.

In my work in the public education sector, acquiring, mobilizing, developing, and retaining talented and motivated employees is crucial; these are key elements contributing to the effectiveness of strategy and the encouragement of organizational innovation.

The need for a strategically-integrated HR and senior management team is critical to organizations of any size and there is exponential need for talented HR managers as organizations increase in complexity. We are experiencing, and should encourage, the re-framing of the HR role—and as the culture shifts, we find new opportunities and gain further attention from our partner groups.

Development in human resources has enhanced my practice immeasurably. It has led to more than the professional fork in the road moment that I anticipated by unlocking unexpected opportunities within my current role. For this reason, I encourage all leaders to consider professional development in the HR discipline as a way to facilitate and enhance the work that they already do.

Stefanie Young, CHRP



HR advisor
City of Prince George

Stefanie Young, CHRP, is an HR advisor with the City of Prince George. Since completing her Bachelor of Arts and Post Baccalaureate Diploma in Business/HR at Thompson Rivers University (TRU), she has gained experienced in both the private and public sectors. She also serves as a member of the BC HRMA Northern Advisory Council focusing on Communications and Professional Development. Stefanie is proud to live and work in the City of Prince George.

When I think of HR and innovation, the first thing that comes to mind is having a creative and diverse workforce. People are essential to innovation and I am a firm believer that everyone brings value to the table.

We all come with strengths, knowledge and imperfections which make each one of us unique and valuable; I see innovation as a synchronization of ideas from a variety of perspectives. We can learn so much from one another.

As HR professionals, we play a key role in fostering a creative and innovative workplace. Working with the operational and technical expertise of our organization's supervisors and employees, we add an HR perspective to help attract and retain a creative and diverse workforce. Together, over time, we create a culture of innovation.

I strongly believe diversity and innovation will not only form a desirable workplace, but will give an organization a competitive advantage.



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Building a Better Workplace: Trust and Confidence are Key

By **John Wright**

Enron, Lehman Brothers, SNC-Lavalin, XL Foods, UBS Libor—it seems that every other day brings another scandal. Is it any wonder that the public's trust in organizations is eroding? Add to that an environment of 'permanent white water' with downsizing and economic uncertainty and there is a 'perfect storm' in our workplace. So how does the level of trust and confidence in senior leadership affect employees, engagement – and ultimately an organization's performance?

Build a Better Workplace: Employee Engagement Edition

Research Highlights

Canadian Management Centre partnered with Ipsos Reid to develop this research study to create the first comprehensive view of both the Canadian workforce and HR Professionals and to identify the levers that truly drive employee engagement. A surprising discovery was that the lack of trust and confidence in leaders has continued to erode and has had an impact on employees. If employee engagement is a leading indicator of organizational performance and competitiveness, then Canadian organizations are currently in an unenviable position based on these findings.

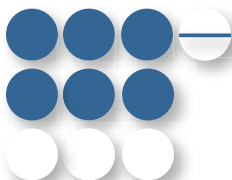
About the study

- Initiated August 2012
- Survey of 1,200 Canadians
- Representative of the Canadian population (employees in organizations with 100+ employees)
- Data reported by gender, generation, size of organization and sector
- Parallel study conducted of 484 HR Professionals to compare and contrast perceptions
- Data has been benchmarked against the Ipsos Representative Employee Database (RED)

► Key Findings

61%

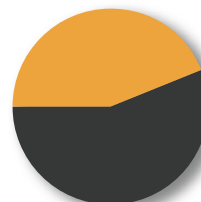
Don't trust their senior leaders



44%

Have confidence in their senior leaders

Saskatchewan & Manitoba (highest): **48%**
BC & Atlantic Canada (lowest): **43%**



4 in 10

Canadian employees feel that their leader is doing a good job communicating what's happening in the workplace.

Alberta (highest): **41%**
Saskatchewan & Manitoba (lowest): **35%**
Quebec: **39%**
British Columbia/Ontario: **38%**
Atlantic: **36%**

► Level of Confidence in Senior Leadership



► By Generation

50%

Traditionalists
(67+)

49%

Gen Y
(18-31)

44%

Baby Boomers
(48-66)

38%

Gen X
(32-47)



► By Industry

(highest and lowest out of 25)

55%

High Tech/IT (highest)

32%

Transportation (lowest)

35%

Government

39%

Retail

► HR Perspective

"I trust what seniors leaders say"

Half of HR professionals agree vs 39 per cent of employees

"I have confidence in the senior leadership of my workplace"

More than half of HR professionals agree (55 per cent) vs 44 percent of employees.

For more information, contact us at
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CMC Expect to Outperform.
Canadian Management Centre



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AS A COMPANY WHOSE MISSION IS 'TO develop the next generation of leaders to thrive in tomorrow's marketplace', Canadian Management Centre (CMC) set out to uncover the true state of employee engagement by providing the first comprehensive view of both the Canadian workforce and HR professionals—and to identify the levers that factually drive employee engagement. We partnered with Ipsos-Reid, one of the world's leading survey-based marketing research firms to undertake a national study appropriately titled, *"Build a Better Workplace: Employee Engagement Edition."*

The catalyst for this research initiative was to change the dynamics of the discussion from theory to facts, and from observation to action. We wanted to confirm the drivers of engagement that matter most to Canadian employees and to identify a proven set of activities that organizations could focus their limited resources on to improve their engagement scores with certainty.

Defining Engagement's Impact

The research proffered a definition of engagement beyond mere satisfaction with one's job. Our definition of employee

"Sixty-one per cent of Canadian employees don't trust their senior leaders"

engagement is "an emotional and intellectual connection with your company and with your customers." At the core of this research is an empirical model that helps organizations understand where to focus in order to create a culture where employees thrive and business prospers. We know that when employees are truly engaged, they:

- Volunteer their hearts and minds to the organization;
- Understand how their contributions fit into the organization's vision;
- Are committed, passionate, and inspired about their work;
- Care about the future of the organization and are willing to invest time and effort to ensure their team and the organization succeeds;
- Remain loyal to the organization—even in difficult times; and
- Are willing to go above and beyond as a standard practice—or as we like to say, "they outperform".

Key Study Findings

The *Build a Better Workplace* study was conducted in August 2012 and included 1,200 working Canadians from more than 500 companies (with more than 100 employees), across 25 diverse sectors. We also ran a parallel study of almost 500 HR professionals—a first time in Canada. The research looked at the level of engagement among employees and HR professionals, by industry sector, across generations, and by region. Alarming results were discovered regarding **confidence** in senior leadership, and perhaps most importantly, **trust** in senior leadership.

Among the key findings:

- Sixty-one per cent of Canadian employees **don't trust their senior leaders**.
- Fewer than four in 10 Canadian employees feel their leader does a good job communicating what's happening in their workplace. Across Canada, Albertans are the most satisfied (41 per cent) followed by Quebec (39 per cent), BC and Ontario (38 per cent). Employees in Manitoba and Saskatchewan report the lowest figures at 35 per cent.
- Less than half (44 per cent) of Canadian employees have **confidence** in the senior leadership of their organization. The highest confidence ratings for senior leaders were reported in Manitoba and Saskatchewan at 48 per cent and lowest in BC and Atlantic Canada at 43 per cent.
- Only 27 per cent of employees are highly engaged and one in

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five are not engaged at all. BC and Alberta lead our country with the highest proportion of **highly engaged** employees at 33 per cent.

Industry Responses Vary

When we compared feedback across industries, the results varied considerably:

- The highest level of confidence in senior leadership was reported by employees in high tech/IT at 55 per cent. By comparison, those in transportation (32 per cent), government (35 per cent) and retail industries (39 per cent) reported the lowest levels of confidence in their senior leadership.
- Only 46 per cent of Canadian employees are satisfied with internal communications; HR experts share this view at 49 per cent. By industry, transportation reported the lowest scores at 26 per cent, whereas financial services (53 per cent) and education (52 per cent) reported the most satisfaction with internal communications.

"This should be a wake-up call to senior leaders and HR professionals"

Generational Differences

The results also showed a generational divide in the workplace regarding confidence in senior leadership:

- Gen Y (18-31) and Traditionalists (67+) reported a respective 49 per cent and 50 per cent approval rating.
- Baby Boomers (48-66) were third at 44 per cent.
- Gen X (32-47) reported the lowest confidence for senior leadership at 38 per cent.

On the issue of engagement only 24 per cent of Gen Y and 22 per cent of

Gen X employees say they are highly engaged, compared to 29 per cent of Baby Boomers and 49 per cent of Traditionalists. This gap in scores demonstrates that improving engagement in the workplace is challenging and a 'one size fits all' solution is not enough. Special attention must be given to understanding the needs of our diverse workforce.

How HR Views Things Differently

The research also provided unique insights into the views of HR professionals compared to employees. The perspective of this group was generally more favourable than employees. When presented with the statement, "I trust what senior leaders say," 50 per cent of HR professionals agreed versus only 39 per cent of employees. Similarly, more than half (55 per cent) of HR professionals agreed with the statement, "I have confidence in the senior leadership of my workplace" versus 44 per cent of employees. On the issue of organizational alignment, 80 per cent of HR professionals say they '... understand the relationship with their organization and the objectives of the organization', compared to 66 per cent of employees.

As strategic partners to senior leaders, having access to more corporate information contributes to HR's more favourable view; at the same time underscores the power of effective communication.

Managing a Downward Trend

We knew going into the research that trust and confidence with leaders was a concern in Canada, but the findings surprised even the researchers because they showed a disturbing downward trend. This should be a wake-up call to senior leaders and HR professionals that their past efforts to improve perceptions of leaders have not been effective.

However, the good news is that it is never too late to address employee engagement. Managers as leaders have the broadest reach in organizations and can play a powerful role in creating a positive culture of engagement. They can be enabled through training to build trusting relationships with employees—to empower them to achieve higher levels of performance that will directly drive organizational results.



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CMC/IPSO Employee Engagement Model

“Less than half of Canadian employees have confidence in senior leadership”

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Fixing the Bigger Picture

Based on the results of this research, what can be done to address these findings in the workplace? Specifically related to senior leadership, there are three areas where organizations can best focus time and attention with the greatest impact: **Integration, Transparency and Connection.**

I. INTEGRATION

Awareness and understanding of the big picture

Employees feel they don't have visibility to business priorities and want to know if they are working on the right things. Here are three easy-to-implement solutions:

- Business plans don't need to be overly complicated and most should be shared with employees.
- Performance management needs to be tied to organizational priorities and should flex and re-calibrate as priorities change through the year.
- Leaders must help employees understand how they fit in and how their contributions make a difference.

II. TRANSPARENCY

Improving the flow and frequency of communications

Employees often feel they are out of the loop and they are not involved in decisions that impact them. The following tips address this challenge, and how to avoid communication bottlenecks:

- Business status updates should connect back to the business plan to ensure information is integrated into day-to-day activities.
- Senior leaders should enlist the support of front-line leaders and HR professionals to improve the “up and down” flow of communication.
- Be transparent—especially during times of change—and increase frequency of communication!
- Don't just push information—you also need to pull. Ask for input from employees and provide context to key messages such as why ideas and suggestions are adopted or not.
- Connect with employees more frequently and informally. Our research showed that employees across all age groups want personal interactions and that social media tools are not as ideal or popular as their attention in the media might suggest.

III. CONNECTION

Closing the gap on perceived distance

Employees feel disconnected from senior leaders and they may also feel that leaders are out of touch with them and their customers. Part of the problem is that employees may only see their senior leaders once a year as part of a business update. So what can organizations do to address this gap?

- Humanize senior leaders by enabling informal access. This will vary in different organizations, depending on the culture; there should be fun and informal ways to get to know senior leaders as people—and not just titles.

- Senior leaders need to get into the “trenches” from time to time. Leaders need to take time to develop authentic relationships with employees by connecting to their daily reality.
- Consider a “Manager Once Removed” approach where your employees have the opportunity to meet with their manager’s boss once or twice a year.

Building a Model Workplace

The results of the *Build a Better Workplace* research have enabled us to create a predictive model (see graphic) that simulates the impact of specific actions on employee engagement, helping organizations understand the combination of forces that drive engagement. The engagement model combined with the *Build a Better Workplace* research is an effective toolkit that guides organizations on how to harness each aspect of engagement (involvement, alignment, satisfaction and loyalty) and how to channel change through senior leaders, managers and communications.


For the first time, organizations can plan with certainty how to measure, manage and anticipate expected shifts in their employee engagement levels. This allows you to focus on the ‘right things’ that will truly influence engagement in your organization and ultimately give your organization the edge in the market place with products and service.

Here’s what we know for sure about employees and engagement:

- **Employees have to trust.** A lack of trust in business leaders impacts employees’ ability to connect with their hearts and minds in the workplace.
- **Employees need alignment to business priorities.** They need to know they are working on the right things.
- **Employees need to know they are making a difference.** They derive satisfaction from knowing their contributions are valued.
- **Employees want to be involved.** They want to be asked for their input especially on matters that impact them.

It is well documented that successful organizations that outperform in their marketplace have highly engaged workforces. These employees outperform because they are aligned to the strategic priorities of the organization. They outperform because they are enabled by the leaders in their organization. They outperform because they are set up to make a meaningful contribution. A work environment that inspires trust and confidence in

senior leaders will set the foundation for a culture of elevated engagement that will propel your employees to outperform.

For more information on the report or to see a demonstration of this engagement model please contact us at engagement@cmcoutperform.com. 

John Wright is the president and managing director of Canadian Management Centre (cmcoutperform.com) based in Toronto.

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We are pleased to announce that BC HRMA and Dale Carnegie Training® of BC have partnered to offer you this world renowned 12 Week Dale Carnegie Course — Skills for Success.

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Certified Compensation Professional (CCP): Strategic Communication in Total Rewards (T4/GR9) **NEW**

We are pleased to announce that BC HRMA has partnered with WorldatWork to bring CCP certification preparation courses onsite, beginning with the Strategic Communication in Total Rewards course.

This 2-day instructor-led course is strategic in nature and is designed for participants who need to focus primarily on the design and direction of communication. Best for those experienced in the employee compensation and benefits fields, and for those looking to broaden their total rewards perspective.

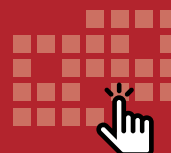
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BC HRMA 51st Annual BC HRMA Conference and Tradeshow: All About the People and New Ideas

By **Nic Tsangarakis**, BC HRMA Conference Chair

// IMAGINE THE DIFFERENCE.”
We took those words to heart.
Dr. Marshall Goldsmith

was recently recognized as the #1 leadership thinker in the world at the bi-annual “Thinkers50” ceremony sponsored by *Harvard Business Review*. Videos of Sir Ken Robinson’s famous 2006 and 2010 talks at the prestigious TED Conference have been seen by an estimated 200 million people in over 150 countries.

These are just two of the speakers at this year’s 51st Annual BC HRMA Conference and Tradeshow at the Vancouver Convention Centre May 1-2, 2013. Needless to say, I’m excited about the quality of our plenary and breakout session speakers.

More than that, I am excited about seeing a year’s preparations come together in a event that speaks directly to where we are today as HR professionals—and moves us forward.

In planning the conference, we took note of what BC HRMA members said in last year’s survey about the big challenge of increasing leadership capacity and capability in your organizations. We also reflected on what worked at last year’s conference, and noted that presenters with plenty of practical “how-to” tips ranked high.

Naturally, we looked at the latest hot conference trends too. When we discovered that increasingly they include sessions where audiences share their inherent knowledge, experience and skills with the expert/facilitator—we decided we to do the same.



The net result is an exciting menu of speakers and opportunities for knowledge exchange. That knowledge does not flow from the stage alone. The BC HRMA Tradeshow showcases the true breadth of our profession, and provides the ideal forum to both go to source and reconnect. In addition, for the first time we’ve introduced new features like a Speed Networking session, Cracker Barrel workshop, HR Café activity and more.

Ultimately, we recognize it is all about the people and new ideas you meet. There are some great people bringing this year’s theme of **“Inspire, Influence, Innovate”** to the stage—and we look forward to sharing the experience with you come May 1-2, 2013.

This year’s conference is the result of the combined efforts of a tireless Steering Committee including Lisa Ryan, Harry Gray, Kevin Jeffrey, Susan Karda, Tyler Cheyne, Vincent Chow, Shauna Grinke, Leanne Johnson and Marino Sveinson. Several of these individuals also led committees of dedicated members who selected breakout session speakers. Suffice to say, a lot of good people did some great work to make this happen.

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 Engstrom, Quinne Davey and Christian Codrington.

I look forward to seeing you at the 51st Annual BC HRMA Conference and Tradeshow.

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Inspire, Influence,

By Jason McRobbie

BOTH A SCIENCE AND AN ART, HR HAS grown increasingly complex in its defined role since the BC Human Resources Management Association's (BC HRMA) inception over seven decades ago. For over 50 years, the annual BC HRMA Conference has made such business development a pleasure.

Rethinking the "I" in Team

Written in full, "Inspire, Influence, Innovate: Imagine the Difference" are words that drive home an interesting point. While there might not be an "I" in team, there are plenty in the thematic branding of the 51st Annual BC HRMA Conference and Tradeshow at the Vancouver Convention Centre on May 1-2, 2013.

That's because, these days, "I" is matter. Enduring economic uncertainty, demographic disparities and evolving technologies have placed greater emphasis upon the individual in the workplace and onus upon HR to bring forth the return on investment (ROI)—in which there is most definitely an "I".

For HR professionals seeking the metrics and means of making it happen, BC HRMA Conference 2013 inspires with a roster of presenters reflecting the true scope of the profession—and the obvious attentions of a passionate organizing committee that knows its business.

A Forum For Further Discussion

That attention to detail extends to the finer points of the BC HRMA Tradeshow which runs throughout conference and features over 100 exhibitors which run the gamut of business and HR alike: media, promotion suppliers, health and wellness, recruitment and talent development,

education, compensation, pension and benefits, and HR management. HR hosts a full house and welcomes good company.

In short, the Tradeshow is geared for those solutions which speak to the core strength of every business and provides the ideal forum for gathering between sessions—with additional time added this year for networking, exploring some new features and simply taking in the view.

And while the vista offered by the venue's main ballroom, extending over Vancouver's Inner Harbour, is geared to inspire, this year's BC HRMA Conference and Tradeshow offers a trio of fresh opportunities to engage the expertise on hand: a Speed Networking session, a Cracker Barrel workshop and HR Café.

What Got You Here Won't Get You There

Perhaps no greater proof is to be found than in the opening speaker, Marshall Goldsmith—a world authority in helping successful leaders get even better. *Forbes Magazine* has listed him as one of the top five executive coaches and proclaimed him the "rock star" in the field; *The Wall Street Journal* put him in "Top 10" consultants in the executive education field.

Goldsmith kickstarts two days of committed learning with a model for

leadership development validated by award-winning research involving over 86,000 participants from eight major corporations.

For those seeking a proven coaching process to put to work, Goldsmith's presentation alone merits attendance. His 2007 release, *What Got You Here Won't Get You There*, provides the ideal primer and is guaranteed to get leaders on every level thinking differently.

Predictably Irrational: Perfectly Expectable

For those seeking answers to why people do or don't do what they do, Dan Ariely provides the ideal behavioural bookend to day one of the conference. According to Ariely, any behavioural expectation based on the presumption of rationality is in error.

Author of the New York Times best-seller *Predictably Irrational: The Hidden Forces That Shape Our Decisions and The Upside of Irrationality*, Ariely is currently the James B. Duke Professor of Behavioural Economics at Duke University and a visiting professor at MIT's Program in Media Arts and Sciences. His interests are both multiple and as interesting as his subject matter—us. Ariely studies how people actually act in the marketplace.

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Innovate:

Imagine the Difference



Marshall Goldsmith



Amanda Lang



Dan Ariely



Sir Ken Robinson

With winning wit and wisdoms to share, his experiments are consistently interesting, amusing and informative. Moreover, Ariely confirms what HR professionals know. People can be—complex.

Questions Are the Answer: ***The Power of Why***

Fortunately, Amanda Lang, Gemini-award winning business journalist and author of *The Power of Why: Simple Questions That Lead to Success*, addresses that truth directly to kickstart day two of the

conference. As CBC's senior business correspondent and co-host of The Lang & O'Leary Exchange, Lang is a familiar face to many in business. With both her book and plenary presentation, she brings the questions and answers that matter most to HR, business leaders and governments alike.

Sharing candidly, Lang draws upon a mix of entertaining insights from the business world, innovation gurus, little known research and the experiences of business leaders to deliver a message guaranteed to

raise a few questions. Persuasively spelling out the connection between innovation and productivity, Lang argues that instead of working "smarter", we need to focus on the instinctive urge to question that is so natural in childhood.


As per *The Power of Why*, that instinct can be reignited at any age and become simultaneously more innovative, productive and fulfilled.

HR in its Element: Finding Our Passion

The final plenary speaker of BC HRMA Conference 2013, Sir Ken Robinson, PhD, is a wry proponent of such 'child's play' at work. As an internationally recognized leader in the development of education, creativity and innovation, he is also one of the world's most Googled speakers. Since participating in the prestigious TED Conference in 2006 and 2010, videos of Robinson's presentations have garnered him another 200 million fans worldwide.

Drawing upon his acclaimed book, *The Element: How Finding Your Passion Changes Everything*, Robinson's goal is simple with complex results—to enhance creativity and innovation in personal and professional settings alike. He speaks to what can happen when passion and talent meet and people truly feel they are in their element.

As per the context and content of the preceding two days, Robinson's inspiring message will leave those attending feeling very much in their element.

To register or for more details on the 51st Annual BC HRMA Conference and Tradeshow, visit www.bchrma.org/conference and stay tuned for updates on HRVoice.org and within the Summer edition of *PeopleTalk*. 



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CONFERENCE PLENARY SPEAKERS



Marshall Goldsmith

Renowned HR consultant, author and leadership expert. Marshall is widely recognized as a foremost authority in helping leaders achieve measurable change in behaviour—for themselves, their people, and their teams.



Amanda Lang

Senior Business Correspondent for CBC's *The National* and co-host of *The Lang and O'Leary Exchange*. Amanda's engaging style complement her ability to assess current business news and trends vis-a-vis the North American political scene.



Dan Ariely

Behavioural economist and author of the *New York Times* bestseller, *Predictably Irrational*. Dan explores how and why people act as they do—buying patterns, procrastination, pain management and everything in between, assessing the effect of these behaviours on business innovation, marketing and strategy.



Sir Ken Robinson

Global leader in the development of new education, creativity and innovation strategies. Videos of his famous talks at the prestigious TED Conference have been viewed by an estimated 200 million people worldwide. He is the author of *The Element: How Finding Your Passion Changes Everything*.

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AWARD OF EXCELLENCE: HR PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR

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Land Title & Survey Authority of BC,
New Westminster



Cindy Dopson, CHRP

Director, Human Resources,
BC Cancer Foundation,
Vancouver



Deborah Maynard, CHRP

Vice President, Human Resources
and Training, Cascade Aerospace,
Abbotsford



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE: INNOVATION

Kal Tire's BEST Careers Program and Learning Culture, Vernon

Marlene Higgins, CHRP Director, Human Resources, Kal Tire

Natalie Michael, CHRP Partner, The Karmichael Group



RISING STAR AWARD

Nilesh Bhagat, CHRP

Rewards Analyst,
Best Buy Canada,
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Everyday Innovation: Are You There Yet?

By Adam DiPaula

INNOVATION NEED NOT BE A QUEST FOR groundbreaking ideas. Companies gain advantages when they inspire ‘everyday innovation’ among employees. What are the conditions that foster everyday innovation and how can companies measure their progress toward creating these conditions?

Meet Linda: Everyday Innovator

Linda works in a government office as a service agent assisting customers with a variety of forms and applications. The office is structured similar to a bank—customers wait in line until the next agent is available. A traditional pain point for customers is the length of the wait time for service; during peak times, the line stretches back as far as the front door. Sighing, eye-rolling, and head-shaking were common customer reactions. Despite this, Linda observed that many customers came to the window still not having completed all the materials necessary to finish their transaction.

In fact, Linda noticed that much of an agent’s time was actually spent helping customers fill out the forms at the service counter. One day Linda came to the office with a set of ‘customer checklist’ cards. As customers entered the office they were handed the appropriate checklist and asked to first check they had each of the necessary materials completed before standing in line. The implementation of this simple process reduced wait times significantly, as fewer and fewer

customers presented the agents with incomplete materials. Shortly thereafter, Linda’s simple checklist procedure was implemented across numerous government offices.

You could use a variety of ways to describe Linda. She wanted customers to be satisfied, she understood what was impacting the customer experience, and she went above and beyond the normal call of duty. Innovative? Absolutely.

“...creates a unique and distinctive customer benefit”

The Holy Grail: Innovation

It’s hard to think of a quality more sought after today by companies than innovation. In fact, many companies are structured with resources invested in driving innovation. It is not uncommon to see job titles like ‘chief innovation officer,’ or ‘VP, strategic innovation.’ In addition, many companies outwardly promote their status as industry innovators. Company taglines, websites and vision statements make heavy use of the term. It used to be that you could have a great reputation if you were efficient, helpful and insightful. Today your corporate image, and financials, depend a lot on your capacity and reputation for innovation.

All of this stems from the reality that innovation brings with it significant competitive advantages. Companies known for innovation can more easily engage customers with their brand and attract the most talented employees who want to work on the leading edge.

The Power of Thinking Small

Innovation is not the exclusive realm of companies seeking the next groundbreaking idea or disruptive technology. In fact, a number of business writers and researchers have emphasized the importance of encouraging small innovations. In writing for the *Harvard Business Review*, John Baldoni¹ noted how taking pressure off employees to find the next big idea actually encourages the creativity that gives rise to smaller, incremental innovations.

As illustrated by Linda’s scenario, innovation need not change everything, only improve the customer experience—whether it is developing or modifying, a product, service or process. This effort creates a unique and distinctive customer benefit that allies the customer to the company. Office workers, customer services representatives, frontline managers and supervisors can all be innovative and create the financial benefits that spring from it.

In their comprehensive research on innovative working, Fiona Patterson

and her associates² illustrated the importance of establishing conditions that lead to everyday innovation. How can companies inspire innovation among employees, whether they are in customer service roles, marketing or product and service development? They must foster the conditions that inspire employees to create unique customer benefits. They also must measure their progress toward creating the conditions so that they can identify ways to reach these conditions effectively.

Create the Conditions to Innovate

1. Adopt an Attitude of Latitude

A recent report by Mercer Consulting³ reinforces the importance of giving employees autonomy in the workplace. The report's findings suggest that a key component to keeping employees engaged is to give them the flexibility to provide high quality products and services and sufficient autonomy to be effective. The report also noted, that compared to past survey results, employees' feelings that they can act autonomously are on the decline in Canada.

Autonomy is critical to innovation. Why? When employees are given the freedom to act autonomously they take ownership of the work they do and take responsibility for finding ways to make things better for customers. If workplace actions are tightly controlled, employees don't own their efforts. With no pride of ownership there is no motivation to create unique customer benefits.

A workplace culture that promotes autonomy also has a particularly powerful impact on customers. Research conducted by Sentis shows that autonomy gives rise to employee actions that signal to customers that the company has a genuine interest in creating a unique customer experience. These encounters create unique, indelible imprints that glue customer to company.

We found that when employees were given latitude in handling customer problems, they were more likely to continue to work on the customer's behalf until a solution was found—as opposed to passing the customer off to another department. Moreover, customers could recall these service encounters with extraordinary detail even though many of these occurred years before.



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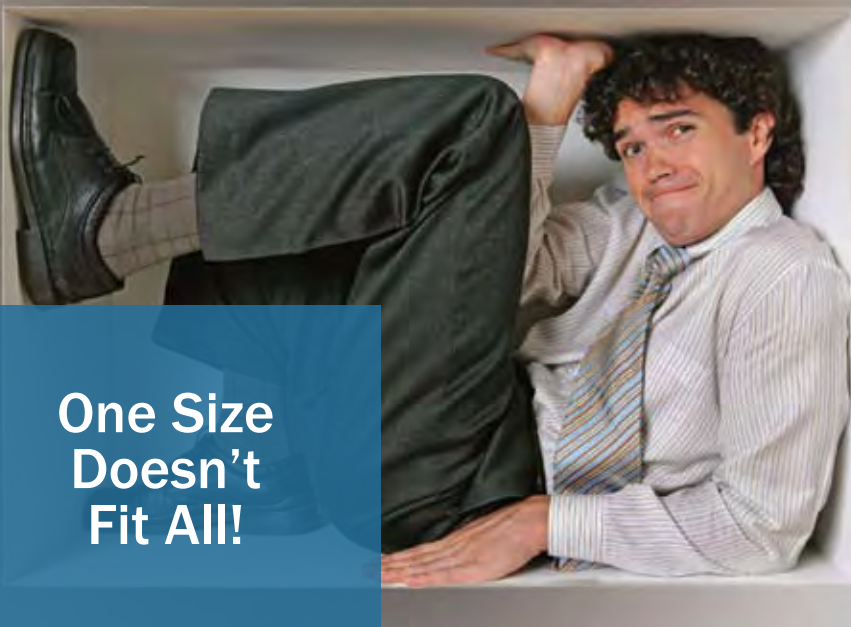
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2. Foster a “Try It” Culture

“Make sure you generate a reasonable number of mistakes.”

- Fletcher Byrom's
Ninth Commandment

Mistakes are essential to growth in business and life. Some of the most influential management books ever written emphasize the central role that mistake-making has at companies that endure. Mistake-making is a sign that a company, and its people, are striving to push beyond their current boundaries.

In fact, how else can growth occur—both professionally or personally—if we do not stretch and try doing something differently? In their landmark book, *In Search of Excellence*⁴, Tom Peters and Robert Waterman demonstrated how a ‘bias for action’ and risk-taking were key differentiators of excellent companies versus also-rans. In describing this distinctive orientation among excellent companies, Peters and Waterman noted, “They don’t try to hold everyone on so short a rein that they can’t be creative.

They encourage practical risk taking and support good tries”.

Despite this advice from business leaders and successful entrepreneurs—and the fact that many of us would agree with it—our daily work lives tend to be focused on striving to avoid making mistakes. This is due in part to what psychologists have labeled loss aversion. Initially identified by Tvesky and Kahneman⁵, loss aversion is the tendency for people to strongly prefer avoiding losses to acquiring gains. We feel much more strongly about the prospect of losing \$100 than do about the prospect of gaining \$100 that we do not yet have. This biases decision-making in a manner that, first and foremost, avoids losses; it also prevents “try-it” cultures from yielding their innovative potential.

3. Bring Customers Closer to Employees

A number of recent studies have demonstrated the motivational benefits of bringing the customer experience directly to the employee—rather than have internal managers report on how customers use

the company’s products or services.

Adam Grant has referred to this practice as ‘outsourcing inspiration’ and his recent *Harvard Business Review* article⁶ illustrates how and why it works. Companies can inspire employees to create unique customer benefits by showing them how customers use and have been impacted by the company’s products. This can be done in a variety of ways including having customers come to the company’s offices to talk about their experiences. It can also be done by showing videos of customers describing their experiences or through written customer narrative.

The key is for the employee to experience the customer’s perspective in the customer’s own words, unfiltered by internal managers. Employees will often hold a degree of skepticism towards management’s perspective on the customer. Bringing the unfiltered experience of the customer up close is the employee’s most credible source of information. In this light, it can also become the source of an employee’s desire to innovate.

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4. Measure, Diagnose, Improve

If you type 'employee survey' into your search engine you have quick access to hundreds of links to employee survey questionnaires. Many of these surveys attempt to measure the extent to which employees feel their organization supports innovation.


However, these surveys tend to use measures framed at a very broad level. For example, one survey seeks a scale measure of the following: "I am encouraged to be innovative or to take initiative in my work." Another example: "I feel challenged in my current position". The latter question suffers not only from being too broad but by being open to multiple interpretations. Finding a framework that speaks to your organization's innovative potential requires greater specificity.

Our approach at Sentis is to develop customized measures that allow an organization to evaluate how it fares on those attributes of the workplace that promote an employee's motivation to innovate. Our measures tap the employee's perception of the organization's support for autonomy, its encouragement of risk-taking, and the extent to which it connects the experience of the customer directly with the employee. This more targeted approach gives managers the tools to implement specific policies and practices that will sustain employees' motivation to continually seek ways to create unique customer benefits.

The Everyday Opportunity

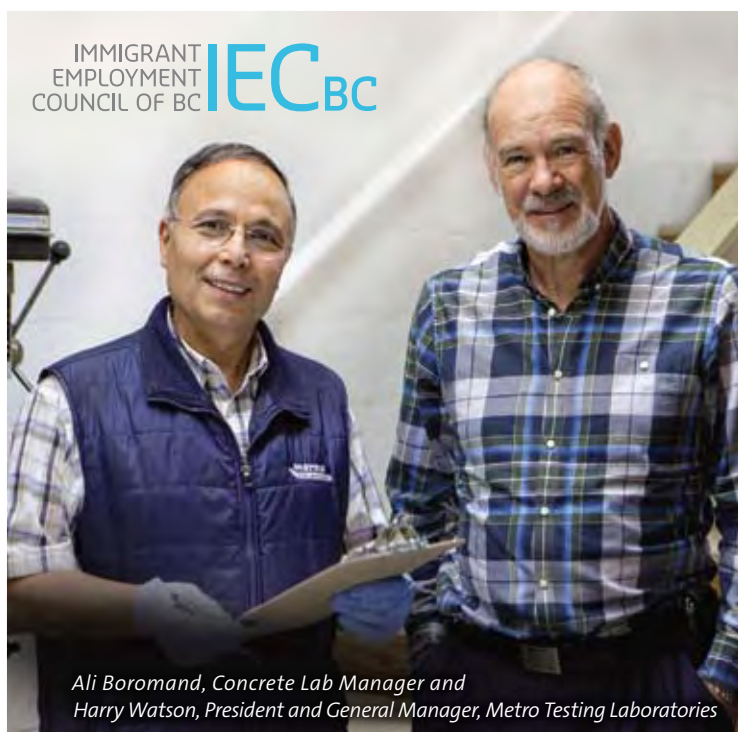
We are now (hopefully) emerging from difficult economic conditions in which

the message from management has been: "We have to do more with less." One of the consequences of such conditions is that employees are thrust into circumstances in which they have to find creative, innovative solutions to make customers happy at a time when there are fewer employees to serve them. This presents a timely opportunity for organizations to harness the initiative of employees that has carried them through tough times—and to implement management practices geared to innovate.

As the saying goes, "out of crisis, there is opportunity." 

Adam DiPaula, PhD (ad@sentisresearch.com) is one of Canada's leading research professionals and serves as managing director at Sentis Market Research Inc. (sentisresearch.com).

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Ali Boromand, Concrete Lab Manager and
Harry Watson, President and General Manager, Metro Testing Laboratories

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The Measure of Smart HR: Key Metrics Aligned to Business



By Ian J. Cook, CHRP

OUR BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT HAS been in constant flux since late in 2008. Much as we have become used to this new normal, the environment for HR people requires a new set of skills and new sets of information with which to make decisions and track outcomes.

New Normal is Ongoing Change

When business goals and strategies are in such flux, the timescales over which results are delivered and monitored become much shorter. Hence, there is also a tendency to stay away from long term, big investments in favour of more short term activities; these require less upfront spend and produce measurable results more quickly. Hence there is an increased need to be able to see clearly where the people challenges and opportunities lie—and to be able to deliver programs, with short time frames, which deliver a tangible difference to the organization.

For example, in the past, the typical engagement survey would include the whole organization. More and more, we are hearing of “pulse” surveys which either include only a sample of the organization or take the pulse of a particular part of the organization where knowing how people are feeling about work is key. Along a similar vein, instead of developing leadership programs which cover all staff at a certain level, organizations are now focusing on which people will be heading up crucial areas for the business and investing heavily in their particular development.

“The requests and initiatives need to be supported with a strong evidence base and robust analysis”

Instinct and Intuition Not Enough

To deliver results in this dynamic scenario, with its more focused format and shorter timescales, HR practitioners need to be able to see, analyze and interpret what is going on with the people inside and outside of their organization. Moreover, they need to do this work based on facts and evidence, as opposed to instinct and intuition.

When the rest of the business is presenting investment requests based on pages of data and analysis, it is not credible to put in a request because it feels right or because the competition are doing it. The requests and initiatives need to be supported with a strong evidence base and robust analysis. It is for this reason that the area of HR investment that is increasing most quickly is workforce analytics¹.

The HR Metrics Service (www.hrmetricservice.org) was launched four years ago with the express purpose of putting the right type of data into the hands of HR leaders to enable them to generate and present their strategic initiatives based on credible insight. Now, let's explore some key points from the high level data and trends generated.

Productivity Shows Positive Trend

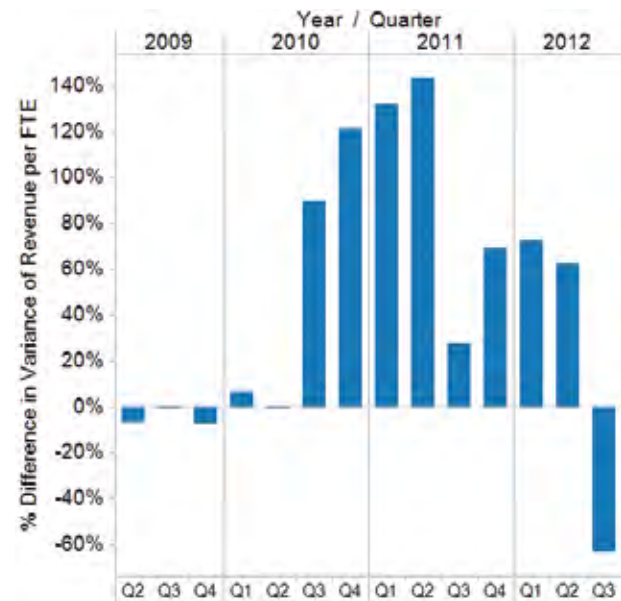
The primary function of any organization is to produce value for as little input as possible. When it comes to HR, the thread

¹ Cedar Crestone 2012

that runs through all hiring, development and promotion decisions is, ‘Will this help make the organization more productive?’ As there are many factors which impact overall organizational productivity, this makes it hard to look at the HR impacts in isolation. What is important is to monitor how productivity is changing over time and then analyze whether or not HR can play a role in helping to generate improvements or correct poor results.

Chart One below shows how revenue per FTE has varied relative to Q1 of 2009. By showing percentage change to a fixed point we can determine if, overall, organizations were getting more or less productive over the time period to Q3 2012.

Chart One: Percentage Variation in Revenue per FTE - relative to Q1 2009



What this chart shows is some improvement in revenue per FTE through 2010, 2011 and early 2012. The significant drop in Q3 2012 correlates to the period where there was uncertainty over the US presidential election and whether the Eurozone would collapse. Both of these issues are now settled and the indicators are that revenue per FTE is back on the rise. In 2013, many organizations are looking to grow revenue through growing new markets or acquiring companies.

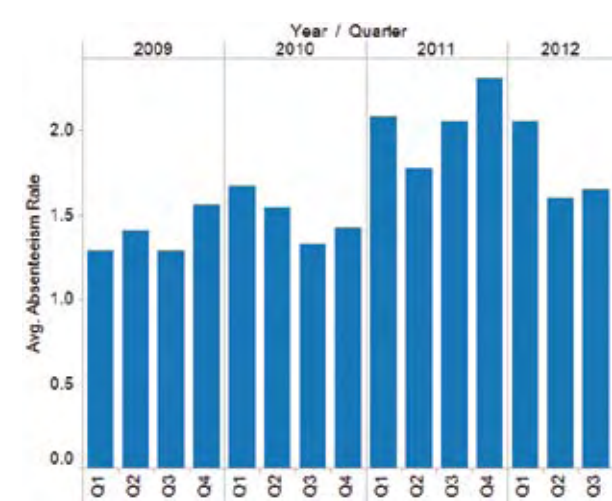
The challenge for HR will be to work out how to maintain the productivity gains of the last couple years while needing to add more people to support the growth of the business.

Absence Another Key Area

Another key area that impacts productivity is absence. Absence is a normal part of organizational life; however, there are wide ranges of absence that occur in organizations and it is one area that if effectively monitored and managed, can demonstrate HR's tangible contribution to the organization.

Back in 2010, the HR Metrics Service flagged that absence rates were rising rapidly and that organizations should pay attention to this area. The chart below shows how average absence rates have changed over the last four years.

Chart Two: Average Absence Rates – expressed as days per FTE



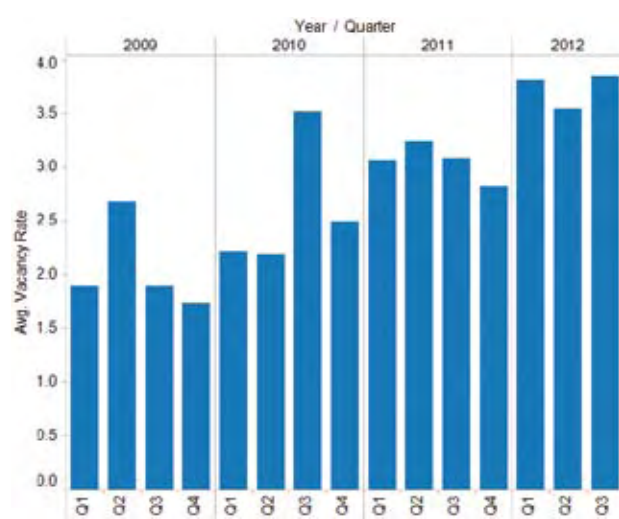
As Chart Two above shows, absence rates continued to rise through 2011. However, in 2012 they have stopped their upward trend and look to be holding at close to the same level as 2011.

Here is where HR can demonstrate a tangible returns to their organization because the average day absent costs an employer a minimum of \$300 dollars. There are many reasons for people to be absent and many of them are legitimate. HR groups looking to support a strategy of increased productivity or growth need to be certain they are managing the absences which are in the grey zone of legitimacy or where employees are taking advantage of the system.

Talent Supply and Vacancy

The next area that is important to understand and develop a proactive approach to solving is the process of talent supply—sourcing/selecting and retention alike. Most of us have seen the long term projections for talent gaps and the press stories about a skills shortage. Chart Three below shows just how quickly the number of positions vacant has increased across Canada even though the unemployment rate has been slow to reduce.

Chart Three: Average Vacancy Rate

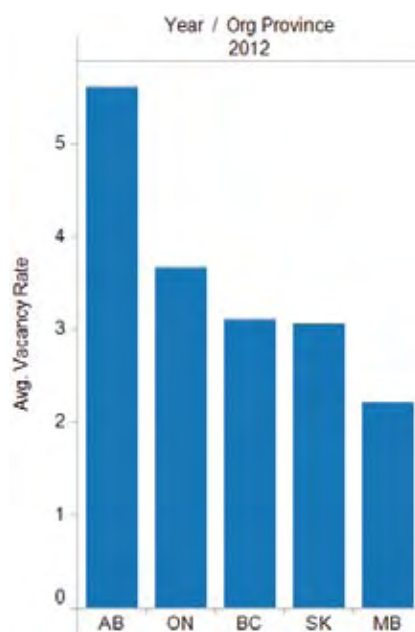


Vacancy can be a very difficult challenge for organizations. Not having the right people in place has immediate impacts on productivity. According to a Pricewaterhouse Coopers study, one in four CEO's has held back on a project because of not having enough of the right people. As a result, while organizations are looking to grow, the increased pace of the vacancy rate prior to 2012 suggests challenge; the process of finding and keeping good people is only going to get harder.

Local Labour Market Impacts

Vacancy is also very dependent on the local labour market context. Chart Four shows the average vacancy rate by province for 2012. You can see how much larger the vacancy rate is in Alberta compared with the other provinces. Given how mobile people are these days, it is important to understand not just your local labour market conditions, but those of the geographies around you to which your employees might be willing to move.

Chart Four: Average Vacancy by Province 2012



Resignation on the Rise

Vacancy rates should not be viewed in isolation. There is a reason why the unemployment figures do not follow the vacancy figures and that is because most hiring moves actually come from employment to employment. For this reason it is important to review and understand what is happening to resignations at the same time that vacancies are increasing. Chart Five shows how the average resignation rate has varied relative to Q1 of 2009. You can see that in 2011 and 2012 the average resignation rate is 150 to 200 per cent higher than it was in Q1 of 2009.

Resignations are costly to an organization. The average cost to replace a salaried employee is 1.5 times their annual salary. Moreover, the hidden costs that organizations are incurring through roles being vacant (key knowledge and relationships leaving the organization, impacts to work teams and others) is increasing.

At the same time, executive leaders in organizations are now becoming more aware of the impacts that a lack of people—or the wrong people—have, and are looking for solutions.

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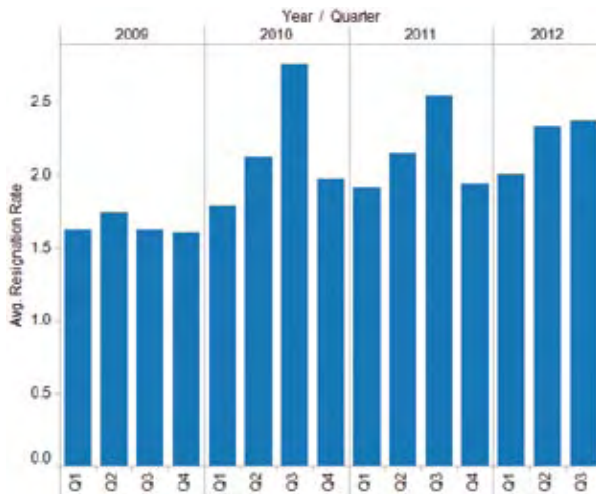
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**Chart Five: Percentage Variation in
Resignation Rate - relative to Q1 2009**




Supporting Productivity Through Talent Supply

When the goal of HR is to align their activities to the strategic priorities of the business, it becomes clear that managing impacts to productivity, such as absence...resignation rates, is critical. The reason these challenges exist is also what makes them very complex to overcome.

How do you fill vacancies when your talent pool has moved elsewhere? How do you retain your key staff when so many other organizations are ready to poach the best ones?

Many of the answers lie within the data inside your organization. For example, if you have a model to predict resignations you can invest your limited HR time focusing retention efforts where they will have most impact. Again, if you have a workforce plan which shows who may leave from where and when you can run your recruitment strategies to meet projected demand—rather than simply hiring after the fact.

The next stage is to gather good quality data on the capabilities and progression of your employees. Using this data, you will be better placed to spot the great talent within your organization and build the people that can fill critical positions—rather than constantly seeking them outside of your organization.

The high level data shows clearly how organization's strategies and goals are being impacted by people. Creating effective, timely and focused responses will require organizations to gather and analyze their own workforce data. Only by factoring both the external context and internal dynamics is HR able to further its position as a strategic contributor to the business. 

Ian J. Cook, CHRP, MBA is recognized for his leadership and insight in the area of workforce analytics and planning. He recently joined Visier (visier.com), to build out the depth of insight available within this leading edge application.

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Nine Ways to Influence Without Authority

By Russel Horwitz

A KEY SKILL RELEVANT TO LEADERS AT ALL LEVELS IS THE ABILITY to positively influence people in such a way that others follow and act willingly—as opposed to complying because of the authority factor. Then there are those roles where leaders must “manage” more indirectly. In many cases, as with HR, finance and marketing where direct report structures differ, this might even be the primary way things get done.

After all, whether or not you are in sales directly, you are selling ideas, opinions and insights daily.

Both an art and a key business asset, influence is essential in all aspects of life, and constantly at play in the workplace. Let's look at some of the most important things you can do to anchor this core skill set to your business advantage.

1. Understand resistance to change

Everyone has a different tolerance for change. That said, when people resist ideas, the reason is typically made apparent by asking the following three questions:

- Is the problem that you are trying to solve clear to the other party—along with the full implications of inaction?
- Have you been clear about what you want and the specific benefits of doing things the way you are suggesting?
- How much sacrifice or risk taking are you expecting from the other party and what can you do to minimize it or alleviate their concerns?

When attempting to influence, consider what you might do in each of these three areas.

2. Adapt to social styles

Everyone has a different way of going about the things they do. It is easy to forget that the other party might be hearing something completely different than you think you have communicated. The reason for this again stems from what are essentially four primary social styles:

- **Driver:** Direct, results-orientated
- **Expressive:** Outgoing, creative, social
- **Amiable:** Dependable, easygoing, sensitive
- **Analytical:** Systematic, accurate, structured, logical

Bearing these four social archetypes in mind, how might we better understand our differences in order to find more common ground.

Step 1 is to understand your own biases and to learn how to moderate them.

For example, Drivers often have to focus on their listening skills. Expressives may need to focus on providing rationale and embracing the thinking of more logical people, particularly when they see holes in an argument. Amiables may need to speak up and let their thoughts be known and Analyticals may need to focus on the personal touch when seeking to grow their ability to influence.

Step 2 is to understand and adapt to the dominant style of the person you are attempting to influence.

- **Drivers** become quickly frustrated with long-windedness or poorly constructed arguments and are best influenced

through direct, brief, results-orientated discussions.

- **Expressives** place a high value on social contact and status. They are best influenced by including them in decision-making while dealing with feelings and showing respect for their own ideas and past actions.
- **Amiables** place a high value on harmony and avoiding personal risk. When influencing an Amiable, don't go for the quick “yes”. Show patience, ask for their feelings and show how you plan to manage impacts on people.
- **Analyticals** become frustrated with ideas that are not thought through properly. When attempting to influence Analyticals, provide hard evidence, do not overstate the benefits and invite their critique – it may just save you!

3. Develop your personal power

There are two types of power in business—positional and personal. While the use of positional power is sometimes necessary, an overuse of it will quickly erode one's personal power, leading to a dictatorial style of leadership.

Personal power can be developed by focusing in two areas:

- **Relationships:** People tend to have an easier time adopting ideas of people they like. So look for ways to build relationships at every turn. Attend to the little things, apologize to people, don't forget what you have promised and recognize others for what they do and who they are.
- **Expertise:** Before people will adopt your ideas, they need to believe that you are credible. So do your homework, get the facts, talk to the experts and do whatever you can to learn about all parts of the organization, not just your own.

4. Pass the microphone

We are born with one mouth and two ears – a good salesperson uses them proportionately. If you do all the talking, do not be surprised if people do not adopt your ideas. So what to do?

- **Use active listening skills.** Don't assume that you know where people are coming from. Make it your job to find out and show them explicitly that you understand them (even if you do not agree), which leads to the next point...
- **Speak to what you hear.** Persuasion typically requires a number of “kicks at the can”, and each kick needs to be better aimed than the one preceding. You do this by adapting your pitch according to what you hear. For example, if they are worried about the investment required, then show how it will lead to a greater return, or find a way that costs less.

5. Appeal to emotion

Logical types often forget that influencing requires more than just a good argument. You need to appeal to a person's emotions when attempting to influence them. This is not to endorse a strictly emotional appeal, but to encourage a balanced approach that brings genuine connectivity to the table.

- **Be authentic:** Speak from your heart (don't read from a script) and don't hide your agenda (they will “smell” this).

- **Use effective body language:** Effective eye contact, appropriate facial expressions, posture and even dress can convey more than you think.
- **Share stories:** Facts and figures aside, stories are what people remember most and create a closer connection in any conversation—especially those in which you are seeking to build support. Avoid relying on generalizations such as “customers are complaining” or “employees are unhappy” and tell a real story with real characters to build real support.

6. Stress benefits over features

Go beyond explaining the ‘what’ of your wants and focus on the ‘why’—and the benefits. The language you use is key to your results.

- Don’t re-iterate the features and expect people to change their opinion. Instead, keep speaking to “why is that important?” and the core benefits revealed will prove more persuasive.
- Be sure to convey benefits that are meaningful to the other party and how your idea will create more value than it costs.
- If your idea links to a key organizational strategy (for example, improving customer service) then make the link explicit—don’t assume others will make the link.

7. Synthesize, synthesize, synthesize

While it is a greater challenge to present a complex idea in a simple fashion it is always worth the effort. Taking the time to synthesize your bigger picture is what it takes to get others to listen. We have all sat down to a meeting where a senior executive began with something along the lines of, “I have one hour and 60 slides so let’s get started.” Two hours later...had your attention waned? Remember to:

- Consider your audience. For example, your staff will probably appreciate details, but your executive team may not.
- Use graphs and pictures wherever possible to illustrate your key messages.
- Avoid wordy slides as this is a recipe for too much talking and poor presentations.

8. Structure your points appropriately


It is important to create a good flow when pitching ideas to others in order to set the scene for maximum receptivity. Points to consider for structuring your pitch:

- Start with something that catches their attention—something you saw or heard.
- Before stating what you want, explain the problem.
- Only after explaining the problem, tell them what you are suggesting. (This order is important because once people begin to argue your chances of persuading them diminish rapidly. Moreover, they are more likely to argue if they do not understand the problem you are trying to solve).
- Be sure to explain the benefits of what you are proposing.
- Be proactive about communicating the possible downsides of what you are proposing and what you think can be done to mitigate them. If you don’t do this, don’t be surprised if the other side starts to pick apart your idea.
- If you want people do something differently, be explicit and don’t assume that people will magically know what you expected of them.

9. Persist

Persuasion is not a one-shot effort. Be prepared to pitch the same idea on multiple occasions using a variety of means, settings, media and with multiple improvements based on what you hear each time.

And remember...

You may not think of yourself as a salesperson. However, if your role is to influence others in a significant way, you need to employ many of the same skills. It is not complicated, but takes mindfulness and careful thought, particularly when under stress and pressure. This approach can greatly increase the odds of getting your good ideas adopted. 

Russel Horwitz is a principal with Kwela Leadership and Talent Management (leadership-vancouver.ca). His focus areas include leadership development, training and professional coaching.

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Too Stressed to Innovate? Take a Breath

By Isabelle St-Jean

GIVEN THE NUMBER OF E-MAILS, TEXTS, meetings and “to do’s” that fill a typical day, is it really surprising to find so much research pointing to the rise of stress in the workplace?

In a world that is constantly connected, there is the perception that we too are expected to be ‘on’ 24/7. Moreover, five years on from the cautionary tale of 2008 the mantra of ‘do more with less’ remains, adding further tension for organizations and individuals alike.

A recent study completed by the BC Mental Health Association confirms what has been suspected—mental health in the workplace is being eroded at an alarming rate. This study suggests that chronic stress often results in periods of depression when the levels of stress become debilitating.

The multiplicity of demands alone can trigger states of chronic stress that carry significant costs for any organization. On the most obvious level, the cost involves a loss of productivity and drop in staff morale.

Less visible, but no less concerning, is the stasis such stress creates and the loss of innovative possibilities it brings. Innovation might be born of necessity in some instances, but it can not thrive where chronic stress has a hold. Without innovation though, we just don’t move forward, either as teams or in our own development.

With this in mind, how can we cultivate conditions that counter the risks of chronic stress, foster a healthier workplace and regenerate mindsets conducive to innovation? From the micro (individual) to the macro (workplace culture), a few insights, questions and solutions are discussed herein.

Putting the Science of Stress to Work

Turning to neuroscience, we can better understand how stress impacts our professional lives and the bottom line. In *Power Up Your Brain*, authors D. Perlmutter and A. Villoldo clarify what renders us less creative or apt to innovate. They explain that chronic stress is associated with the production of the hormone cortisol and its

impact, minus the scientific terminology, is simple—learning and creativity become almost impossible.

What occurs as a result is that we revert to a survival mode wherein we tend to operate on auto-pilot and/or hover in the status quo. We get stuck in the routine and ruts of old patterns. When this happens, our innovative contributions to the workplace are simply not available. More troublingly, the wider workplace suffers from the atmosphere of stagnancy that chronic stress can bring to bear on any one individual.

Be Mindful of the Moment

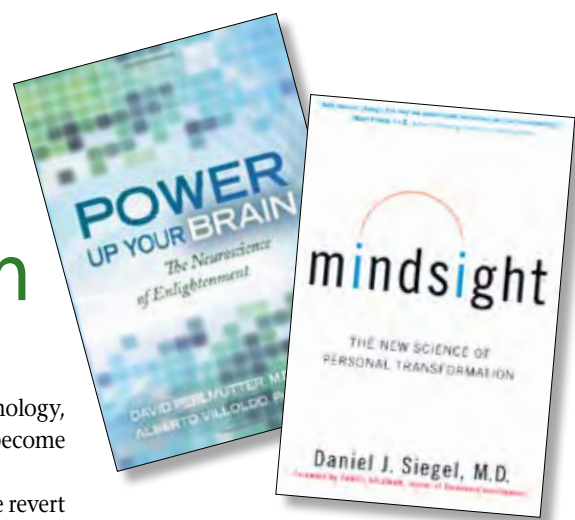
Without doubt, organizations have faced bigger picture challenges of their own, particularly in recent years. When an organization becomes temporally out of balance and overly focused on striving to control outcomes, it generates an added tension that further exacerbates stress.

In this kind of workplace, people are implicitly encouraged to bypass the present in pursuit of the future. This focuses people away from their immediate point of power and action: the now.

Our most inspired thoughts and efficient actions occur in the moment. If we train our minds to be more attuned to the present, stress levels diminish and innovative potential is unlocked once more.

Jon Kabat-Zinn who founded the renowned Stress Reduction Clinic at the University of Massachusetts Medical School defines mindfulness as the confluence of intention, attention and present time experience. Alongside an ever-growing body of research, the practice of mindfulness is currently being integrated, as an effective antidote to stress, in all areas of mainstream life and work.

Essentially, it is the art of becoming a non-judgmental observer of our thoughts, feelings, and behaviours. Over time, this practice can significantly counteract the racing habits of the mind, rearrange the neural networks in the brain and help to regulate our emotions and energy expenditure.



A Few Deep Breaths

In the field of mindfulness, we are reminded that breathing is the key to opening our awareness. The simple act of taking a few deep breaths periodically throughout the work day can change the chemistry in our brains. Breathing is something we do so reflexively that we do it unconsciously, and often poorly.

Taking a moment to focus on the most basic of acts—a few good deep breaths—brings immediate benefits. It brings us access to the reflective faculties of the pre-frontal cortex, calms our nervous system and makes us more aware, observant and apt to think creatively.

In *Mindsight*, Dr. Daniel Siegel explains that through practicing skills of awareness, intentions and attention, we can better integrate life’s experiences from a more useful perspective. This allows us to develop what Siegel dubs FACES in acronym, those resourceful states of mind that serve ourselves and organizations best: flexible, adaptive, coherent, energized, and stable. Siegel asserts that these resourceful states help to counteract stress where it originates—in our brains and in our minds.

As a life and business coach for the past ten years, I have repeatedly witnessed clients clearly impacted as much by the story they tell themselves as the impact of any one particular event. A lack of awareness typically combines with a narrow perspective from which the interpretation or meaning is made about an event, which generates a stress response in turn.

While such recognitions are often gained in hindsight, it is in the moment that the greatest gains stand to be made. By learning to anchor ourselves in mindful states, we strengthen our resilience, expand our interpretive perspectives and better tap the higher functions of our brain – those that foster creative solutions and innovation. **11**

What Drives the Innovative Workplace?

By Isabelle St-Jean, RSW, ACC

In *The Charge: Activating the 10 Human Drives That Make You Feel Alive*, author Brandon Buchard has a healthy respect for our five most basic drives—control, competence, congruence, caring and connection. Grounding, these drives help us meet our basic needs.

However, the five ‘forward’ drives—change, challenge, creative expression, contribution and consciousness—are the precursors to living with game-changing enthusiasm which in turn fosters innovation.

Burchard affirms that “creative expression is the grand driver and amplifier of satisfaction in life”. Knowing this, can we counteract the tendency of some of our workplaces to inadvertently crowd out creativity by increasing standardization and conformity?

Indeed numerous workplace surveys indicate that employees often cry out for more channels through which they can contribute their unique insights and ideas. What if award programs were to be developed among teams for innovative ideas of practical value?


Located in Vancouver, SAP Labs Canada is a good example of this kind of workplace. Managing director Kirsten Sutton explains that as a global company in a competitive marketplace, SAP Labs Canada has initiated numerous programs to stimulate and reward innovation among employees.

One such example is the quarterly Passion Award—presented to a manager who goes beyond in demonstrating

one of the company’s six core passions: success, accountability, professionalism, integrity, teamwork and trust. SAP also has a fellowship program that enables high-performers to take on a six month assignment in another discipline or department. This generates new levels of enthusiasm, a stimulating sense of re-engagement, and a great deal of out-of-the-box thinking.

What’s more, SAP does its best to help employees counter stress while fostering the conditions conducive to innovation. Yoga classes, on-site wellness, fitness programs, “Lunch on Us” and flexible hours are among popular initiatives. It may seem like a daunting challenge for some companies to emulate SAP’s forward-thinking workplace culture. It might seem beyond the scope of the workplace to others. Results say otherwise. Such programs and thinking are increasingly available, and fundamentally effective in reducing workplace stressors.

However, our greatest ability to reduce stress in the workplace stems from within. The challenges that mindfulness presents are as real as the moment itself, but ultimately exponential in their rewards.

As Burchard would say, challenge is the most powerful drive for advancing our lives and for keeping ourselves inspired—in life as at work. 

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

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Green Shield Canada's Prism health and dental plans now deliver even more protection to those individuals who are losing or not eligible for group health benefits

With costs escalating, provincial health insurance plans limiting, reducing or eliminating coverage for many health-related services, and many organizations capping, cutting or eliminating healthcare benefits, the need for individual supplemental health insurance is more essential than ever before. This is especially true for those who are losing or not eligible for group benefits through their employer, including:

- Retirees • Staff facing job loss
- Part-time and contract workers
- Students and overage dependents
- Divorcees and surviving spouses

Thankfully, by taking advantage of the economical, yet comprehensive healthcare coverage offered by Green Shield Canada's Prism health and dental programs, these individuals can gain the security they deserve, knowing they have protection against both unexpected and routine healthcare expenses they'd typically have to pay for out of their own pocket, including prescription drugs, dental care, visits to registered therapists and specialists such as chiropractors, and much more.

Understanding that everyone's healthcare needs and finances are unique, Prism offers individuals three programs to choose from – Prism Spectra, Prism Precision and Prism Continuum. Within each of these programs are four different plans, each offering varying levels of coverage.

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Mental Health at Work: Rethinking a Stigma

By Pam Paquet

EVERY BUSINESS HAS A HUMAN ASPECT AND IS SUBJECT TO THE resulting issues of imperfection. In most cases, the fallout from our shortcomings is manageable, but business success can be compromised when employees aren't at their best for lengthy periods of time.

Infrequent and non-damaging personnel issues don't require attention from managers and HR. They are viewed as anomalies which will resolve themselves. But what happens when human imperfection and normal issues take on a more concerning posture? What if the "everyday stresses" evolve into mental health issues?

In light of Bill 14's potential workplace impact, it serves to ask, what is the current state of mental health in the workplace?

Mental Health Math

The sad reality is that mental health issues are far more prevalent in the workplace than widely considered. Heretohelp.bc.ca states, "One in five of us will experience a mental disorder or substance use problem at some point in our lifetime. It only makes sense that something that affects our everyday life can affect our work life, too. In fact, some estimate that half of the sick days in Canada are due to mental health problems."

The Federal government concurs and adds the financial aspect, "In any given year, one in five people in Canada experiences a mental health problem or illness, with a cost to the economy estimated to be in excess of \$50 billion annually."

These numbers are shocking. In a workplace of 100 employees 20 people will be suffering with a mental illness.

There are no measures to dictate when financial difficulties, workload challenges and personality differences graduate to depression or trigger addictive coping behaviours. In the same vein, there is no way to determine who is at risk. From the mail room to the executive suite, the janitorial closet to the production floor, everyone is on equal footing.

Perspective and Management

When mental health issues are a possibility, a shift in managing—along with a shift in perception and acceptance—is required.

A position of compassion for normal people juggling normal life situations should replace judgements towards people with mental health challenges. It's time for employers, with their HR

professionals, to lead the charge in debunking the myths and stigmas about mental health concerns in the workplace and beyond.

Unfortunately, mental health issues currently carry a stigma that makes the condition unacceptable and unwelcome in the workplace. Judgement is passed on both the person and condition. Avoidance becomes a normal reaction from co-workers leading to further isolation. If there is no additional support, shunning and excuses are the norm. No wonder many who are dealing with mental health issues make light of the situation and try to cover it up.


The question this begs is, whose responsibility is it to address and manage an employee's mental health problems? Unquestionably, employers and HR professionals in particular, can expect to have a greater role to play.

Empathy and Productivity

According to heretohelp.ca: "Employers want people to stay at work and be productive, and there are a lot of reasons for them to pay attention to their employees' mental health. The average company loses up to 12 per cent of its payroll to employee disability through loss of productivity and sick leave, and mental disorders are expected to make up over half of all disability claims in the next five years. So it only makes sense that workplaces help employees when they need it."

A renewed perspective of empathy in the workplace can go a long way to removing the negative stereotypes of mental health. More common than anyone would like, mental health and its effects can be invisible to the naked eye. In fact, some

will be shocked to learn their coworkers have a mental health condition yet accomplish assigned tasks like "everyone else".

Workplaces and their employees need awareness and sensitivity for coworkers whose struggles may be beyond "everyday". Leave judgement outside the workplace. Encourage humanity with openness to discussion and empathy. Be the workplace where mental healthiness and well being can be in progress, challenged and improving. 

Pam Paquet, MEd is a master level facilitator and principal of Pam Paquet and Associates (www.thepossibilities.ca). Speaking internationally, she is an instructor with BCIT and certified with the Canadian Counselling Association.

**"a shift in
managing
—along with a shift
in perception
and acceptance
—is required."**

PPA Anchors CCHRA Strategic Plan

By **Maureen Campbell**

TOM COLLINS SAID IT BEST: "EXCELLENCE MUST BE ACHIEVED through the eyes of those who judge us; once achieved it can only be maintained with constant innovation."

Through a variety of surveys and research, it's been proven that senior management teams are seeing the value in HR. Moreover, they are seeing the value in the Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) designation. Now is the time for Collins' constant innovation—to add to the value of HR and the CHRP designation.

Innovation means different things to different people. At its core though, it is linked to performance and growth through improvements in efficiency, productivity, quality, competitive position and market share—and typically adds value by changing old organizational forms and practices. Stated simply, innovation is about bringing ideas to life.

CHRP Looks Forward

In the spirit of innovation, in 2012 the Canadian Council of Human Resources Associations (CCHRA) embarked on a new strategic plan to carry through until 2015. This strategic plan will help to assure that CCHRA remains relevant and responsive to the needs of the provincial member associations and will contribute to organizational stability and growth. Providing a basis for monitoring progress, and for assessing results and impact, it will facilitate new program development.

It's like the quote says, "If you don't know where you're going, you'll probably end up somewhere else." CCHRA's strategic plan has provided an invaluable opportunity for dialogue and consensus among staff, Board, and volunteers. This plan provides a clear definition of CCHRA's future direction and desired outcome, says Sharon Lee, CCHRA's executive director.

Having identified key priority areas, results of this strategic plan will involve strengthening the credibility of the profession and the CHRP designation and providing a forum for facilitating agreement and collaboration amongst provincial member associations. Clear communication among members associations ensure that powerful messages on the value of the CHRP and the profession are thereby delivered to potential members, employers and policy makers.

Most importantly, the new strategic plan will work to establish Generally Accepted Human Resources Principles (GAHRP) as the recognized standard for professional human resources management in Canada by 2018.



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Professional Practice Analysis Leads Action Plan

As with every goal, a strong, tangible action plan is required. In the case of CCHRA's latest strategic plan, the first step of the action plan is the Professional Practice Analysis (PPA). This analysis will identify and validate CCHRA domains, tasks and knowledge and skill statements. This is a crucial step in building a solid foundation for GAHRP and ensures that CCHRA's credentialing exams are current, challenging and relative to today's environment.

The PPA is the cornerstone of the new strategic plan. Currently underway, the PPA will allow CCHRA's mandate of updating the body of knowledge through regular reviews now, and into the future, to ensure ongoing currency and foundation in practice. Most importantly, the results of the PPA will dictate the continuing action plan moving forward.

Key Stakeholder Collaboration Ongoing


Given the comprehensive framework that will develop in the PPA, CCHRA will collaborate with key stakeholders to use survey data to define the particular knowledge and skills that are appropriate for credentialing purposes. Using a collaborative process whereby people in many fields contribute to implementing new ideas, the PPA will see input from participating HR professionals, academics

and business leaders. Focused on reengineering and processes present and future, the PPA involves people who will challenge the status quo to ensure a robust and reliable result.

In facilitating discussions related to the practice analysis, CCHRA and its stakeholders will inform participants that current or potential credentials in human resources are not being evaluated in the study per se. However, it is anticipated that current, and if identified, potentially new credentials and/or designations, will have a logical linkage to CCHRA's Required Professional Capabilities (RPCs®) identified through the PPA.

It is also desired that the PPA will support curriculum development for a variety of educational offerings. In essence, the

PPA will ensure maximum linkage between the body of knowledge and the current and anticipated future professional practice of human resources in Canada.

Computer scientist Alan Kay said, "The best way to predict the future is to invent it." It's fortuitous then that the CCHRA Board have the creativity, foresight and gumption to engage its stakeholders to do just that—embrace the future and grow the value of the HR profession and the CHRP designation. 

Maureen Campbell is communications manager for the Canadian Council of Human Resources Associations (cchra.ca).

"the PPA involves people who will challenge the status quo"



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The Bully and Bill 14: Questions and Costs

By Graeme McFarlane

THERE IS AN INCREASING AWARENESS OF BULLYING THROUGHOUT society. Much of the media coverage focuses on bullying that occurs in schools or is directed against young people. However, this is only a small part of the problem. Bullying and harassment can occur at work. This type of conduct can seriously affect the health of the target employee.

Historically, workers' compensation legislation in Canada has only addressed employee claims for mental disorders that are somehow connected to a physical injury that occurs at work or develops in response to a traumatic workplace event. However, many provincial regimes have been modified to provide workers with benefits for mental disorders that are not necessarily connected solely to a workplace injury. British Columbia has additionally broadened occupational health and safety obligations through its policies so as to prevent or limit psychological harm to workers.

Claim for Compensation Expands

On July 2, 2012, Bill 14 came into effect which amended section 5.1 of the Workers Compensation Act. This legislation greatly increased the areas on which a worker could make a claim for

compensation. It entitles a worker to compensation for a mental disorder that is "predominantly caused by a significant work-related stressor, including bullying and harassment, or a cumulative series of significant work-related stressors, arising out of and in the course of the worker's employment."

'Predominant Cause' Raises Questions

This provision creates a new "predominant cause" test for determining whether a mental disorder is linked to the workplace.

However, decision-makers are faced with a difficult and complex task because mental disorders are frequently caused by a multitude of factors. These factors can include personal stressors or characteristics, non-workplace-related injuries, as well as workplace events. As more cases are decided we will learn how WorkSafeBC will apply the "predominant cause" test.

In addition, because of the sensitive nature of mental illness, there will likely be significant issues with any intersection

between the adjudication of these claims and the privacy protection afforded by other statutes.

This expansion in worker entitlements with respect to mental

**"decision-makers
are faced with
a difficult and
complex task"**

disorders may increase the costs to employers. B.C.'s occupational safety and health regime requires employers to provide a safe workplace. This necessarily means that employers must take positive steps to reduce or eliminate any risk of a workplace injury. As a mental disorder is now a potentially compensable workplace injury, it should follow that employers now have the obligation to reduce or eliminate workplace harassment and/or bullying.

However, notwithstanding this relatively straightforward conclusion, the legislature chose not to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations to deal with bullying and harassment even though those terms are specifically included in the amended Act. WorkSafeBC has attempted to address this deficiency with its prevention policies, and it will be interesting to see how those policies are addressed in the litigation that will ultimately test this regime.

A Paradox of Protections

Another interesting point is that these expanded worker entitlements may paradoxically insulate employers from significant liability. The workers compensation system is a type of no fault insurance scheme. This means that workers do not have to prove that the employer was somehow at fault for their injuries to receive benefits. In return, the employee cannot sue their employer for damages related to a workplace injury or disease.

In late December 2012, the British Columbia Court of Appeal considered this concept with respect to a claimed mental disability. The court held that for injuries that arise out of

the employment relationship the bar against lawsuits remains. It said:

"...[T]he trade-off for employers is a complete immunization from workplace injury claims. In my view it would undermine the core policy of the scheme to have employers exposed to lawsuits based on the scope of compensable claims afforded to workers under the legislation. This would result in uncertainty and a patchwork system of compensation. It would result in a proliferation of litigation to determine what is and what is not covered by the scheme in the context of the protection afforded to employers."

Therefore, employers will be insulated from lawsuits by employees for workplace activities that could be described as harassing or bullying. They will be able to defend such claims within the compensation system by using the causation language and can face any court claim by invoking the section 10 statute bar.

Bill 14 has greatly expanded the scope of worker entitlements under the compensation regime with respect to mental disorders linked to the workplace. This may increase costs to employers associated with such claims. However, this expansion significantly limits exposure to damages related to employees who may otherwise have sued the company in court. **P**

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

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Risks of Social Media Background Checks

By **Stephen Antle, Charmane Sing, Brandon Hillis** and **Michael Damiani**

SOCIAL MEDIA SITES CAN BE A USEFUL tool for employers to screen prospective job candidates. With over one billion active Facebook profiles and 500 million Twitter users, employers are just a few clicks away from copious amounts of readily accessible personal information. Nevertheless, employers must be aware that these “social media background checks” are subject to privacy laws which place restrictions on the collection, use and disclosure of personal information. They should also be aware of the risks of using this information.

Social media sites, an ever-growing online presence, can take the form of blogs, social networking sites, file and photo sharing sites, or wikis. Social media background checks can range from simply browsing a job candidate’s Facebook or Twitter profile to demanding social media passwords (a growing issue in the United States) to hiring a company to gather all available online information on a person, sometimes under the pretext of having a social relationship with them.

Today, as soon as an employer receives a job candidate’s name, it is ‘Googled’ and, within a few seconds, an employer can review the candidate’s online profiles. Privacy issues may arise if, during the screening process, information is flagged which may affect the candidate’s hiring prospects. These issues are often difficult to recognize. The candidate may not know these checks are occurring. The prospective employer may feel they are just casual, and free from the constraints of more formal background checks. However, just because someone posts messages or displays information about themselves online does not mean an employer has any right to access or use that information.

PIPA and Disclosure

The B.C. *Personal Information Protection Act* (“PIPA”) governs the collection, use and disclosure of personal information by organizations in the private sector. Personal information is broadly defined as information that can identify a person (for example name, home address, home phone number, SIN number) or about identifiable individual attributes (educational qualifications, job experience).

Generally speaking, *PIPA* requires private sector organizations to obtain a person’s consent before collecting, using or disclosing their personal information. However, consistent with its stated purpose of balancing people’s right to protect their personal information against the needs of organizations to collect, use or disclose personal information in appropriate circumstances, *PIPA* sets out a variety of exceptions to that requirement.

‘Reasonable’ Exceptions in Employment Context

One such exception is in the employment context, where *PIPA* permits organizations to collect, use or disclose personal information without a person’s consent—provided that is reasonably required for the establishment, management or termination of an employment relationship, and as long as notice is given to the person. In the context of a social media background check, the key requirement – and challenge – is that the information must be collected, used or disclosed for “purposes that a reasonable person would consider appropriate in the circumstances,” the circumstances being the establishment of the employment relationship.

While what is reasonable depends on a case-by-case assessment of the facts, in most situations it is unlikely that personal information obtained from a person’s social media website would be reasonably required for establishing an employment relationship. It is difficult to see how Facebook pictures from a birthday party or trip to Mexico, or tweets about the Vancouver Canucks’ goaltending controversy, could be relevant to hiring decisions.

While there are few cases where the B.C. Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner has taken issue with social media background checks, the current commissioner is alive to the issue. In 2010, when Elizabeth Denham was assistant privacy commissioner under the federal privacy legislation she noted that:

While we haven’t yet investigated a complaint involving surreptitious social networking background checks, my feeling is that [the legislation] would prevent this kind of collection of personal information.

Since Denham became the B.C. Commissioner, her office has released *Guidelines for Social Media Background Checks*.

Politics of Social Media Emerge

In 2011 the Commissioner launched a high-profile investigation into the B.C. NDP’s privacy and social media practices after it came to light that the party had been requiring potential leadership candidates to provide their social media account passwords. The investigation was completed in 2011, with the Commissioner finding that:

The BC NDP collected a large amount of personal information, including information that may be outdated, irrelevant or inaccurate [as well as] personal information from third



parties that it did not have consent to collect. There were... reasonable alternatives that could have been used to meet the purposes of vetting candidates. These factors all weighed against the collecting being considered to be what a reasonable person would consider appropriate in the circumstances.

Recruiter Be Wary

There are other risks associated with social media background checks, several of which were the subject of the Commissioner's investigation into the B.C. NDP and all of which should be at the forefront of an employer's mind before conducting any online searches on prospective employees:

- **Accuracy of Information**

- Ease of labelling and linking online information leads to inaccuracies.
- Common names may result in the employer viewing an unintended profile.
- Out-of-date information - social media sites tend to keep information accessible indefinitely.

- **Collecting Irrelevant/Excess Information**

- Background checks may catch more information than intended, including irrelevant personal information.

- **Over-reliance on Consent**

- Even when people have consented to background searches, privacy laws usually allow them to withdraw their consent at any time

It is important for employers to recognize that all personal information collected during a background search is subject to privacy laws, whether or not it is available online. Employers should also understand that they are collecting personal information as soon as it is viewed on their computer screens, regardless of whether it is later saved. Once collected, the information may be difficult to disregard and, if a job candidate suspects their personal information was improperly collected, they may complain to the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner.

...Or Pay the PIPA

In terms of enforcement, improperly accessing, using or disclosing such information constitutes an offence under PIPA and can result in fines of up to \$10,000 for individuals and \$100,000 for organizations. Furthermore, if the Commissioner makes an order against an organization, or it has been convicted of an offence under PIPA, a person can sue the organization for damages for any actual harm they have suffered as a result of the organization's

breach of PIPA. In addition the Commissioner has the power to initiate audits and investigations where there are reasonable grounds to believe an organization is not complying with PIPA. **IP**

Stephen Antle, Charmane Sing, Brandon Hillis and Michael Damiani work with Borden Ladner Gervais LLP (BLG)—a full-service, national law firm focusing on business law, commercial litigation and intellectual property.



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Age-Related Barriers Toughest on Youth: Impact Widespread

By Jock Finlayson



As Canada and other industrialized countries struggle to return to a sustainable economic growth trajectory following the steep downturn of 2008-09, the difficulties being felt in the job market are proving particularly painful for young adults.

Youth Unemployment, Global Concern

Youth unemployment rates have risen sharply in many countries since 2008—and reached truly frightening levels in parts of Europe. Across the 17 countries that comprise the common currency Eurozone, unemployment among those aged 15 to 24 stands at 25 per cent. In Greece and Spain, the figure exceeds 50 per cent, while Italy and Portugal are grappling with youth unemployment rates in the vicinity of 35 per cent.

Canada and the United States have also seen unemployment jump, but the rates of joblessness among young adults are significantly lower than in the most distressed parts of Europe: 14 per cent here and 16 per cent in the US, as of late 2012. Still, young job seekers in North America are certainly not having an easy time of it.

An Age-Old Challenge

It's important to recognize that, regardless of the state of the economy, young people tend to encounter age-related barriers to accessing and advancing in the job market. To begin with, lacking prior relevant work experience, they are often at a disadvantage when competing for vacant positions. Second, they have a greater chance of losing their job when the economy

turns down ("last in, first out"). Finally, if they do become unemployed early in their careers, young adults may be at increased risk of suffering subsequent spells of unemployment, and/or of becoming stuck in low wage jobs—a phenomenon known as "scarring" in the academic literature.

Present Economic Stressors

In a weak economy, the labour market challenges confronting young people are magnified. As the pool of unemployed/underemployed workers expands, employers looking for new staff become choosier and may be even less inclined to hire candidates with little or no experience.

**"labour market
challenges
confronting young
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magnified..."**

Then too, in the aftermath of a recession—particularly one accompanied by substantial declines in pension-related wealth and household net worth—some older employees will postpone retirement,

thus reducing job openings and slowing labour market turnover. We have seen this play out in Canada since 2006-07; labour force participation rates for people aged 55 and over have been edging higher.

Labour Shortages Show Opportunity

In today's world, these problems are compounded by a skills/education mismatch that is making it harder for some young adults to find suitable (or any) employment. According to a recent study by CIBC economists, 30 per cent of Canadian businesses report facing labour shortages, despite a sluggish job market and large numbers of underemployed young people.¹ The CIBC researchers identified 25 occupations that showed signs of "labour shortage." These include many skilled trades and technical occupations, some science and engineering fields, and a host of occupations in the health care sector. Shortages are also evident in accounting, auditing, and mining-related occupations.


There is evidence that too few people in Canada are being educated to work in occupations for which labour market demand is relatively strong. At the same time, record numbers of young adults are emerging with general-purpose undergraduate college/university credentials

that don't necessarily provide well-defined pathways to rewarding careers. To the extent that skills mismatches exist, they help to explain why it appears to be taking longer for so many young adults to successfully transition from school to the job market.

Youths' Loss Extends to Big Picture

For individuals, a significant unemployment spell can have long-lasting consequences. One US study found that a young person entering the job market during a time of high unemployment could expect to endure a relative "wage loss" extending up to 17 years after graduation.² Moreover, prolonged underutilization of young people in the labour force can compound existing social inequalities and reinforce patterns of intergenerational poverty and low income.

The economic losses caused by high youth unemployment extend beyond the impact on those directly concerned. For the economy as a whole, these losses also include "...the foregone value added that would have been generated by production of goods and services by those who are not at work, as well as the multiplier effect stemming from that original production."³ High youth unemployment also exacts a toll on governments' fiscal positions, by driving up income support payments and lowering tax receipts.

Economic research indicates that pro-growth macro-economic and framework policies and targeted government programs can help to stimulate the hiring of young entry-level workers. Educational upgrading (with a focus on in-demand fields), market-driven training programs, and labour mobility may lessen the "scarring" effects of joblessness, and should also be part of the policy tool-kit used to address the risks posed by long-term unemployment among young adults. 

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

¹ Benjamin Tal, "The Haves and Have-Nots of Canada's Labour Market," CIBC Economics, December 3, 2012. Available at <http://research.cibcwm.com/res/Eco/EcoResearch.html>

² Lisa Kahn, "The Long-Term Labor Market Consequences of Graduating From College in A Bad Economy," Labour Economics, April 2010.

³ TD Economics, "Assessing the Long-Term Cost of Youth Unemployment," January 29, 2013, p. 4. Available at www.td.com/economics



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Sharing a Vision with Clearly Contacts CEO Roger Hardy

Roger Hardy is the Founder and CEO of ClearlyContacts.ca, the world's largest online retailer of contact lenses and eyeglasses. Hardy's "never-say-die" attitude and uncanny problem solving skills have helped him become a proven developer of successful business strategies and have helped ClearlyContacts.ca become the largest Canadian online retailer today. Hardy has been honoured with many awards over his years as Clearly Contacts' leader, including *Business in Vancouver's* Top Forty Under Forty in 2002, and The Pacific Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award (Business-to-Consumer) in 2006.

What inspired the original vision for Clearly Contacts and what was the key to creating the success it has become?

The original vision was really to serve customers better than they were being served. Going to an eye doctor or an eye clinic for contact lenses and eyeglasses is an expensive and cumbersome process. My idea was that there "had to be a better way" and that's what inspired me to build the original web site and start selling contact lenses, online. I think our original idea was a customer focused one, and anytime you start with 'what does our customer want and need' it leads to lasting success. Today we continue to focus on what customers want and try to give it to them faster, with a better experience and greater value than anyone else can. We're constantly finding better ways to listen whether through direct customer calls, email feedback or social media. Listening and then working hard to deliver has really been our key to success.

You have taken culture to heart from the beginning with Clearly Contacts. What lies at the core of your culture and how does teambuilding differ today from when you began in 2002?

We really did take culture to heart early. I think of it as having been our competitive advantage for a long time, and hope that it still is. At the core of our corporate culture are really our purpose and core values, and we use these as the foundation for all our hiring, and team building efforts. As a larger group today we try to ensure that our core values are still resonating with our team and also that the values

are driving people to be engaged with our company on many different levels.

As Clearly Contacts continues to grow, what drives the success of your recruitment and onboarding practices?

Our success in recruitment is driven by constantly reminding ourselves of the basics—a focus on ensuring people who are joining our team share our values and can get excited about our purpose and mission statements. Recruitment and onboarding continue to be an evolving work in progress and as we grow we need to continue to learn and optimize the process to achieve better and better results. But for us getting the basics right is so important.

What do you define as the area of greatest opportunity for HR professionals looking to make an impact on the bottom line?

There has never been a more critical time for HR professionals to be having an impact on organizations. Companies are moving faster and faster and time is critical. As we all know its people that build companies, and attracting and retaining the best people is also critical to our success. HR professionals are being asked to play a bigger and bigger roles in smart companies; they now have a seat at the table making key decisions with CEOs and Boards of businesses.


The best HR professionals are thinking strategically about where the company is going and what its going to need 6–twelve months out and they are working hard to fill those gaps internally and externally before the company hits them.

The HR professionals that best understand the objectives of the CEO and Board can make contributions like never before. By having candidates and succession plans "pre-loaded", by the time the CEO is asking to fill a void – they already have a solution, which may have taken 6-9 months to provide. This keeps the organization from missing a beat – which can mean life and death in the fast-paced world of quarterly expectations today.

Any final words of advice for HR professionals seeking to "Inspire, Influence, Innovate" in 2013?

HR today is THE critical role inside companies and organizations which can make the difference in today's fast-growing companies and determine the success of tomorrow's companies. Smart boards and CEOs absolutely understand this and it is a very exciting time to be an HR professional.

The difference between good and great professionals will be the ability to predict and add value to our collective future. The people who get ahead of where the company is today and see where its going are the ones who are going to be adding the most value driving the organization forward.

It's a time where I would be looking for a seat at "the table" to take on more responsibility and participating in shaping the team. I would be working hard to align the team with the corporate strategy and ensure that as the company grows I will "own" any gaps in recruiting or succession and become the GO TO source for providing forward looking solutions. 

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