

HRD

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*THE UPSIDE OF DISRUPTION
RUTHLESSLY CARING*

SUPPORTING BEREAVED EMPLOYEES

PRODUCTIVITY

TALENT MANAGEMENT

FUTURE OF RECRUITMENT

ENGAGE

“IT’S VITAL THAT YOU ENGAGE PEOPLE YOU ALREADY HAVE IN THE BUSINESS, AS MUCH AS YOU DO THE TALENT THAT YOU ARE TRYING TO ATTRACT”

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THE GREAT RESET OF WORK, DUBBED WORKFORCE 2.0, REQUIRES A COMPLETE REIMAGINING OF TALENT MANAGEMENT. THE KEY DRIVERS OF THIS RADICAL CHANGE ARE AI INTEGRATION, A TOUGH RECRUITMENT ENVIRONMENT - WITH UNRELIABLE SKILLS PIPELINES - AND EVOLVING EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS.



JASON SPILLER, EDITOR

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TM must evolve to a wider and yet more agile strategy to address widening skills gaps - implement ongoing reskilling and upskilling - and nurture talent in an increasingly remote and autonomous culture, through embracing flexible and remote work arrangements and tools. This requires nothing short of re-shaping TM, where geographical and sector borders are diminished and the talent search has to reach further to find the right skills, to enable businesses to adapt and thrive in continuous change and disruption. Line manager/employee relationships are being superseded by technology - it is proving a stark change - but these tools are capable of providing personalised learning paths, gamified assessments for every stage - from recruitment to ongoing learning and development and career progression - along with remote work optimisation.

How employers manage employees who are grieving is fundamental in the immediate painful event and integral during the mourning and recovery period, however long that may take. That employees have to return to work too quickly and be expected to just carry on as usual, is an additional and cruel burden to endure without the right support and understanding, when emotions are still so raw. That is why leaders, managers and colleagues who are empathetic and supportive is so important.

Back when HR compartmentalised, it struggled to demonstrate even the basic initiatives and spend on the likes of L&D or wellbeing impacted business outcomes. But data has become a superpower, a real-time chronicler of how every strategic decision

and initiative is contributing to the delivery of KPIs, productivity and the inevitable bottom line. Despite the continued integration of AI and automation, the success or failure of a business still depends largely on employee productivity, both individually, as teams and across the business. But the way KPIs and productivity are measured - employee output, within a specified input (cost) and a specified duration - has to change.

There are growing concerns relating to the dehumanisation in recruitment and signs are that automation is countering against DEI, with just one-in-three recruiters tracking DEI, when it is one of the top expectations expressed by candidates. The impacts on employer branding brings the potential indemnity into sharp relief. But the direction of travel of automation in recruitment is irreversible and although data in recruiting is hardly a new concept, the advances in the technology is leading to more precision in hiring, along with a move away from grades or experience, to a candidate's personality and latent/untapped potential and this is viewed as the most exciting area for the future, along with tactical metrics. With Gen Z becoming the dominant candidate demographic in the next few years, becoming virtual, digital and fast-paced is essential, as outdated recruitment methods will signal that a potential employer is behind the technology curve.

LEGAL UPDATES

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THE WORLD OF EMPLOYMENT LEGISLATION CONTINUES TO EVOLVE AND REACT TO THE FAST CHANGING WORLD OF WORK. HERE IS THE LATEST ROUND UP OF VERDICTS FROM THE COURT, PLUS NEW AND ADAPTED LEGISLATION.

COURT CASE REPORT

In the case of *Ms MJ v Vale Curtains and Blinds*, Ms MJ, a part-time administrator, was dealing with a customer complaint with a colleague when she hit the wrong button. Ms MJ wrote: "Hi Karl, can you change this ... he's a twat so it doesn't matter if you can't." But instead of clicking "forward" she had clicked "reply", so the email was sent to the customer instead. The customer's wife rang up and said: "Is there any reason why you called my husband a twat?" The manager apologised for Ms MJ's actions and said she would be reprimanded. The

customer threatened to go to the press. Ms MJ said she would offer to pay the customer £500 out of her own pocket as "a gesture of goodwill." The tribunal heard that an investigation took place and the company decided there also had to be a disciplinary hearing. But the tribunal heard that neither Ms MJ nor the customer was interviewed, no notes were produced by the manager and no written account of the decision was made. The customer had made further threats about publicising the incident and bosses decided to "get rid of" Ms MJ. A letter was later sent to the customer's

wife informing her that Ms MJ had been dismissed "following the disgraceful email". The employment judge, Akua Reindorf KC, said: "I conclude from the evidence before me that the principal reason for his decision was that the customer and his wife had made threats to publicise the claimant's email in the press, social media and/or Trustpilot. I am satisfied that if a fair procedure had been followed, there is no chance that the claimant would have been dismissed". The judge said: "The disciplinary process and the dismissal were a sham designed to placate the customer".

EMPLOYMENT LAW

EHRC PUBLISHES UPDATED WORKPLACE SEXUAL HARASSMENT GUIDANCE AHEAD OF CHANGE TO LAW.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), has today published updated technical guidance for employers on the steps they can take to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. Some of the actions recommended to employers in the guidance include: Developing and widely communicating a robust anti-harassment policy, which includes third party sexual harassment. Undertaking regular risk assessments to identify where sexual harassment may occur and the steps that will be taken to prevent it. Being proactively aware of what is happening in the workplace and any warning signs, by engaging with staff through 1-2-1s, surveys and exit interviews. Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of actions. The update

follows a change to the law made by the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act, which will have effect from 26 October 2024. The Act introduces a new legal duty on employers to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of their workers (the 'preventative duty'). Previously there was no proactive legal obligation on employers to take steps to prevent sexual harassment at work. The Act also includes the ability for compensation in sexual harassment claims to be increased. If an employment tribunal finds a worker has been sexually harassed, it must consider whether the preventative duty has been met. If not, the employer can be ordered to pay an additional 25 percent (maximum) compensation. The change in legislation also gives the EHRC power to take enforcement action where there is evidence of organisations failing to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment.

LEGAL DIARY

- *November 2024:* The Practice Direction on ET and EAT panel composition takes affect.
- *December 2024:* The new Central London Tribunal Centre is due to open.
- *January 2025:* The FRC's UK Corporate Governance Code will come into effect (except for Provision 29 which will come into effect on 1 January 2026).
- *April 2025:* Unfair Dismissal Protection from Day One - Bill to provide workers with protection from unfair dismissal from day one. This differs from the current laws as employees require two years of service as a minimum to be eligible for unfair dismissal protection. There are exceptions likely to be imposed, such as probationary periods.



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DEBRA GARDNER CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER LSL

INTERVIEW BY JASON SPILLER
& PHOTOGRAPHY BY STUART THOMAS

THE TENACITY OF HER PARENTS PROVIDED DEBRA GARDNER WITH THE DETERMINATION AND RESILIENCE TO SECURE A LEADING ROLE IN THE HR PROFESSION, FOR WHICH SHE HAD EARLY ASPIRATIONS TO JOIN. HERE, SHE RECALLS HER JOURNEY TO BECOME CPO AT LSL, ONE OF THE LARGEST PROVIDERS OF B2B SERVICES TO THE UK'S PROPERTY AND MORTGAGE MARKET AND WHY SHE BELIEVES, WITH THE RIGHT MINDSET, ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE.

"PEOPLE APPROACH CHANGE MANAGEMENT WITH A TARGET OPERATING MODEL AND QUESTION, 'WHAT SHOULD THE STRUCTURE LOOK LIKE'? BUT IT'S BEST TO FIRST ASK, 'WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS CHANGE AND WHY ARE WE DOING THIS'?"

DEBRA, TELL US ABOUT YOUR EARLY LIFE AND HOW YOU FOUND THE PATH TO A CAREER IN HR. I was born and raised in Newcastle as part of a working-class family, and I had that work ethic instilled in me from an early age. My parents went out to work straight after leaving school, so like most parents, they wanted me to be a better version of them and encouraged me to continue with further education. So, when I left school with my GCSEs, they were adamant that I would study at A-level and go on to university. I, on the other hand, just wanted to find a job and earn a living, but they were insistent and I acquiesced. I hated being a student with an absolute passion! The subjects English Language, Geography and Law seemed dull to me at that time and the lack of structure - like having a lecture one day and nothing the next - was a lack of routine I didn't like and

I couldn't wait for it to end. I had a Christmas job at Marks and Spencer, which I absolutely loved and, at the end of the week, opening my pay in a brown envelope represented freedom and independence, cash in hand, the world was my oyster. I let my parents believe that I was still studying when I was actually working as many hours as my manager could give me. Even worse, I had actually stopped going to college and I had no intention of returning. Eventually, I had to tell my parents, but managed to soften the blow as I was really progressing my career with M&S, as I had been accepted onto the management development programme and gained a supervisory position. It was during the manager development programme that we had the choice of focusing on more specific areas, such as finance, sales or HR and I really felt drawn to HR. I had the

opportunity to shadow an HR manager in the Newcastle store and that sealed the deal, this was where I wanted to focus my career. However, there was one problem, I would have to finish my A-levels and then go to university before M&S would take me on as a graduate. Despite offering alternatives, like working in the payroll team for extra shifts for free, there was no way around this and my HR career was almost ended before it had even begun. So, I left M&S for a job with HMRC for a couple of years and, even though I was still very young, I was hurtling towards a crossroads at which all signs pointed to "career crisis" and I felt really lost. I left the HMRC and joined a small estate agency, performing office management duties, just as the bottom dropped out of the property market, around 2007. I couldn't believe it and I have to confess that it was at this point things looked a bit

bleak for my career. I sensed that the estate agency was going to close - my pay was being delayed further every month - so I left and went to work at Northumbria Police, which provided me with structure - albeit somewhat hierarchical - and my first, positive HR experience. I was given the opportunity to be involved in project and business management, which took me a little closer to my desired profession. But it was the sort of culture where you couldn't just walk into a senior colleague's office to talk to them and explain your ambitions. However, I decided to jump about five levels and sent an email to the then HR Director, in which I explained that I really wanted to move into HR and asked for advice on qualifications. It was a little more eloquent than that, but as soon as the email left, I had this sinking feeling I was going to be in a lot of trouble. So you can imagine my surprise when the response was, "we'd be delighted to talk to you." Copied in on the email was one of the senior HR leaders called Helen, who became my first mentor and she set things up and talked with me about studying for my CIPD. At the same time, I applied for an HR advisor role, which would finally give me my first exposure to the career I had originally set my heart on years before. I applied for it and landed the job and that was my first taste of HR. I still needed a degree and thankfully, the police force agreed to provide educational funding. I tried online learning, but that didn't work out, so I talked to a colleague who had just finished a master's degree in HR. I filled out applications forms and sent them off to loads of universities and to absolutely no surprise to anyone, I was summarily rejected by all of them - I didn't have A levels, never mind a degree - and I was applying to do a Masters - it was obvious that my lack of qualifications rendered me unfit for the course. I managed to find an "in" at Sunderland University as they had just finished teaching one of my colleagues and I really felt like this was the last throw of the dice and so I went to meet with the dean of the faculty at Sunderland University. I didn't have a meeting set and I remember his PA being very bristly with me, but undeterred, I just sat outside his

office. Hours went by and near the end of the day, he walked out of his office and I caught him, introduced myself and convinced him to talk to me. I'm not sure if I came across as desperate or determined, but he sat in silence and listened. Then, to my shock and disbelief, he said: "I'd be taking a big risk with you, but yes I will accept you onto a course." Northumbria Police supported me and I passed my Master's, with enough points to continue on with a PhD, but I thought I'd leave that for another time. During my studies I realised that I enjoyed learning

"I RELY ON PAST EXPERIENCES AND, WHILE NOT SO MUCH APPLYING A COOKIE CUTTER, CERTAINLY UTILISE BEST PRACTICE - WITH A HEALTHY PINCH OF FLEXIBLE INTERPRETATION - NEVER GOES OUT OF FASHION"

very much indeed - so much so that I've since gone on to study for another level seven qualification in executive coaching and mentoring. I think there's lots of pressure on young people to decide what they want to do in their careers and it certainly took me time to find my way in the world of work and now, helping and guiding people is a real passion for me. Nothing good comes easy, but if you're determined, you can make it.

YOU THEN MOVED FROM THE PUBLIC TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR, WHAT DID YOU EXPERIENCE IN WHAT MUST HAVE BEEN A VERY DIFFERENT WORKPLACE CULTURE? My next role was at Sage - the FTSE 100 global payroll and account software company - and this was a pivotal moment in my career, after six years at Northumbria Police. The big difference was the speed of change and it was and still is, a huge organisation. It was my first

experience of a global business and, at that time, was at a stage of rapid growth, through acquisition and organic development. With growth came the necessity to dispose of businesses, as well as projects which transformed existing products and services. It was a steep learning curve and exposed me to so many technical and strategic areas of business and HR operations, as I worked on global HR business partnering programmes, bringing centres of excellence onboard and introducing those as a concept to our business. I was reporting directly with the executive leadership team and gaining some amazing experience, from working with Deloitte - on the business transformation model and change management - to travelling abroad and learning about workplace culture in other countries. I've been involved in many large-scale projects, including M&As since and I invariably say to the team: "well this is how we did this at Sage". It was at this time I started to develop a passion for organisational design and change, which has been essential learning and experience ever since. I find people approach change management by starting with a target operating model and question "what should the structure look like"? but it's best to first ask, "what is the purpose of this change and why are we doing this"? Also, "how is this going to alter the customer journey and affect the workforce"? So, back at Sage, our objective was cohesion, a united and efficient HR model that had the flexibility and agility to adapt to market change and that could be specific to the different territories. This was the most complex and scaled strategic project that I had been involved with at that time and, as I watched it evolve, I realised the importance of setting the right culture and communication. As I said, this became a blueprint for me and it was a significant experience that opened me up to proper HR strategy. I stayed at Sage for about six years and there was never a moment where I experienced stagnation. I changed roles every 12-to-18 months, each new post aligned with a chance to work on a different project. There were great opportunities for career progression

and working abroad was really exciting for me. I really grew as a leader and HR professional and made so many friends there. My experiences fuelled my next ambition, to become a HR Director. However, I knew that I needed to leave the world of big corporates to fulfill this and an opportunity came along with a private, equity-backed technology business based in Manchester. M247 was a hosting and connectivity business and a dynamic startup firm, which had already attracted some ex-Sage colleagues. Working there gave me great experience and insight into PE backed businesses and an opportunity to work with entrepreneurs and founding owners. We did so much in the short time that I was there. We set up the HR team, acquired a business and developed a successful graduate scheme. Yet I needed to relocate back to the Northeast which meant my tenure there was shorter than I wanted.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR MOVE BACK TO THE NORTHEAST AND THE NEXT STAGE OF YOUR JOURNEY. I joined a company called Tombola - which is now owned by Flutter Group - again, a technology business, but this time in the gambling space. I was with them for a couple of years, based in the headquarters in the Northeast, but with more global travel to offices in; Denmark, Italy, Spain, Gibraltar and Malta. So, I was again working on a global level and frequently abroad, with my main focus to set up the HR team covering all the territories. I left Tombola to have my baby, just as the COVID pandemic was announced and so I had the opportunity to take a break from working and take stock of my career. As obtuse, disruptive and tragic as COVID was, it also marked a massive change in the world of work and lots of HR opportunities opened up - from permanent positions to contracting assignments - and I think companies at this time realised the importance of HR and how integral it is to business success. For a while, I considered contract work, but deep down, I knew I really loved corporate businesses and so when an opportunity came up to join LSL, I was really keen to go for it. I met with one

of the Executive Directors and was immediately drawn to her, as she was passionate about people and I knew I could learn a lot from her.

EXPLAIN WHAT LSL IS AS A BUSINESS AND WHAT YOUR HR REMIT WAS? LSL is a plc, FTSE-listed business and a leading provider of financial services, surveying and valuation and estate agency franchising services. You may know some of the consumer facing brands that we run such as; Your Move, Reeds Rains estate agents and e.surv chartered surveyors.

"IT'S VITAL THAT YOU ENGAGE THE PEOPLE YOU ALREADY HAVE IN THE BUSINESS, AS MUCH AS YOU DO THE TALENT THAT YOU ARE TRYING TO ATTRACT"

I was fortunate that, when I joined, there was a well-established and skillful HR team, as well as a business strategy and model already in place. My remit was to drive these through from a people perspective, to ensure we enhanced the colleague experience and make LSL a better place to work. Reflecting on my early experiences, what struck me most was the warmth and friendliness of people here. I felt an immediate sense of purpose and belonging to the business, with colleagues who were eager to share their experiences and knowledge with me and I felt so supported. One of the key things I noticed early on was that this was a genuinely people-centric business, in which colleagues were engaged and felt that their voice mattered. It was clearly a very strong foundation on which to build further. In terms of being in HR, it certainly has been an interesting time since the end of the pandemic. We all grew accustomed to remote working, but in the time since, there is no doubt that having people in the office is incredibly

important for relationship building and creative collaboration. Even though you can see and hear one another on screen, there's something about virtual working that lacks that human element of interaction. I have encouraged my team to collaborate in person where they can and we always feel better from having worked on a project together. It reiterates the value of teamwork and how everyone can play a part in our success. This includes younger colleagues and we support their involvement and, while we gain valuable insight from them, equally they experience being part of a team, collaborating and playing a part in a project. This builds their confidence and helps them develop strong people skills and nurture good internal relationships that are vital within our profession. There's no doubt that hybrid working is part of a social norm now and it can provide greater flexibility and control for people juggling a career and family. It also builds self-responsibility and mutual trust amongst teams and colleagues. For example, we operate a business partnering model in HR so, for most of the time, my more senior colleagues and I are travelling to other sites to meet with teams and leaders and immerse ourselves in human interaction. We then use hybrid - when we don't need to be present in person - to follow up on work and any actions from our in-person meetings.

IT SEEMS THAT HR IS NEEDING TO INCREASINGLY WIDEN ITS REMIT BEYOND PEOPLE MANAGEMENT ISSUES. HOW ARE YOU ADAPTING TO MEET THE NEEDS OF CONSTANT CHANGE? There is that cliché that nobody can operate in a silo and certainly HR is no exception to that. While it's impossible for any leaders of any division to be experts on everything, there are ways and means of gaining a good understanding, beyond HR. Personally, I really needed to understand our business operations from a number of different perspectives. So, in addition to my role and responsibilities as Chief People Officer - in which I lead ESG and am the Executive sponsor of our Inclusion and Diversity initiatives - I'm also delighted to be the Chair of our Data

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Protection and InfoSec Committee. It's completely different to HR and respectively keeps me close to the cultural and technical part of the business and helps me to understand more about our business challenges. In terms of managing change, for me it's a combination of creative, forward-thinking - trying to best understand future needs - but also recalling from the past and adapting. I rely on past experiences and, while not so much applying a cookie cutter, certainly utilise best practice. A healthy pinch of flexible interpretation - never goes out of fashion". One of the ways we adapt to change is to have a business partnering mindset - we have the typical Ulrich HR model like many businesses - but we work deeper in the model, spending time with and understanding all of our stakeholders. We're also commercial and good at understanding how our business operates. On that commercial acumen note, my team and I know our share price on a daily basis, we can read financial statements, absorb and process relevant media articles and we have copies of our Annual Report and Accounts on our desks and actually read and refer to them. We regularly share and discuss topics of interest - that could have future implications on our business or department, such as identifying risk and understanding who our competitors are. I haven't come across many HR teams that operate in this way and it certainly lends a competitive edge.

IN GENERAL, WHY DO YOU THINK IT IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO ATTRACT TALENT? I think people are choosier now than ever about who they work for and where they spend their time. I know from speaking to peers across sectors, that our talent objectives are similar and that is to build greater diversity of background, demographic and thought. In fact, talent and succession planning are two key aspects that always come up in conversations at HR networking events and there is, undeniably, still a war for talent, no matter what industry you are working in. For many sectors too, Brexit - with the cessation of free movement of labour -

is definitely restrictive. But going back to people becoming very selective, candidates are now much more interested in all things ESG and they are more aware of the environment - and the impacts, such as climate change - and they want to know more about corporate governance and ED&I. Without question, this is fundamental, not only to attraction, but also to engagement and attrition. It seems obvious, but it's vital that you engage the people you already have in the business, as much as you do the talent that you are trying to attract. On the subject of ESG, we publish our *Living Responsibly* report annually - both internally and externally - as part of our annual report accounts,

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because that helps colleagues understand our journey and gives insight into the culture. The report really brings together all of the work and effort that colleagues have put into ESG, from across the business. It might sound clichéd, but this is not a tick box exercise and to ensure that there is momentum, we have set up a number of forums across our business so colleagues can hold leadership to account and drive initiatives that mean the most to them. I'm proud to be the Executive Sponsor for the Inclusion & Diversity Forum, which we set up a few years ago, which is run by volunteers across the business, with an elected Chair and Vice-chair, who lead the forum. The work, dedication and delivery are second-to-none and this is fueled by their unwavering passion to do the right thing and make our business a better place to work for everyone, no matter what their personal background, preferences or

circumstances may be. My responsibilities are to provide mentoring, sponsorship and to cheerlead - and of course provide the money for initiatives. Also, whilst the CEO meets with the Forum Chair on a regular basis, I provide the link between the Executive and the forum, championing their thinking or initiatives and providing more information to the Executive and feeding back their views or support to the forum. I feel privileged the forum invites me to their meetings and are keen for me to be involved. It means a lot to me personally.

DO YOU THINK THE WORLD OF WORK PRESENTS A MORE LEVEL PLAYING FIELD FOR WOMEN AND THEIR CAREERS NOW? In recent years there has been significant progress in creating a more level playing field for women in the workplace - gender pay gap reporting being one example. But we still have a long way to go. In general, I think many companies are making positive, deliberate efforts to improve gender equity, by addressing gaps in leadership representation and providing flexible working arrangements - both of which are crucial for supporting women's careers. Whilst conversations around diversity and inclusion have become more prominent, systematic bias can still persist in certain industries. Speaking to friends in other sectors, I know this to be true. From studies we know that women of colour continue to face barriers that affect advancement and we need to be very conscious of this and put support in place to overcome. But while there is still a good deal of inequality, improvements are being made and I am optimistic for the future. Gender disparities are discussed with candour and intent, not only in businesses across sectors, but in politics and law. As a CPO of a plc. and with a family, I'm really proud to be a female on the Executive Committee and appreciate that I have been able to be a Mum and have a great career and that is something I want to support and promote, so that more people can achieve that in the future. I come from a working-class background and I'm proof that, with determination and hard work, it is possible to be successful in business as a

women. When I first started in my career in the 1990s most of the senior executives were male and it was very hard to visualise yourself in one of those roles. But now I see more women in top jobs and that is incredibly inspiring for me and, I hope, all women who will be entering the workplace in the future with hopes, ambitions and the talent can thrive.

ARE YOU CONFIDENT THAT IN FUTURE, ED&I WILL BE ORGANIC AND NOT EVEN AN ISSUE FOR DEBATE? I'm more hopeful than confident. Society is a very complex matrix and although employers can make an awful lot of positive progress, there are many obstacles to overcome. Someone once said, "be the change you want to see", so I support a variety of women-in-business groups and I'm one of the CIPD's Steps Ahead mentors, a programme aimed at supporting women back into the workplace, after they have had a family. Breaking down generations of stereotyping is very hard and needs to start at the earliest stages of life as possible. From my research and learning, I've seen that we can learn a lot from the Nordic countries when it comes to gender equality. For years now, Iceland has continually topped the charts for the most gender equal country in the world and has closed the gender gaps in key areas such as education and healthcare and have really integrated women into leadership positions in society. Not only that, in Iceland they have one of the best parental leave policies in the world, supporting both men and women in the workplace, with parental care responsibilities.

WHAT ARE YOUR PERSONAL PLANS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE FUTURE? I'm on a mission to make LSL a better place to work for our colleagues. I'm committed to creating a workplace where everyone feels valued, has opportunities for growth and development and has their voice heard. I'm proud to say that our People Strategy forms our commitment to nurture, empower and invest in our people. We are achieving this through fostering a culture of inclusion, providing opportunities for growth and development, engaging through recognition and supporting

colleague wellbeing. It may be the big HR cliché, but people really are our biggest asset and when we prioritise them, we not only drive success, but cultivate a culture of innovation and growth. We are seeing technology set the pace of change and AI encroaching on areas of the workplace that we could not envisage before. That is not to say that technology will not revolutionise the world of work, or that it won't bring positivity to people's lives and the way businesses operate, it undoubtedly will. But in our business, it will always be people that make us successful. That is why I'm so very glad that I chose HR as a career and I will continue to champion

"I'M A BIG ADVOCATE FOR GIVING PEOPLE OPPORTUNITY BASED ON THEIR POTENTIAL, NOT JUST THEIR QUALIFICATIONS. THAT FORMS AN ESSENTIAL FOUNDATION ON WHICH TO BUILD DIVERSITY"

people for the remainder of my career. That said, being the Chair of our Data Protection and InfoSec Committee, typifies where the profession must go to be relevant and impactful. In terms of data, it is HR's superpower and companies have never had so much data at our disposal. But with great power comes great responsibility and having so much data can be hugely counterproductive and so you must first treat all data with reverence and collect, curate and act upon the right data to make the right decisions.

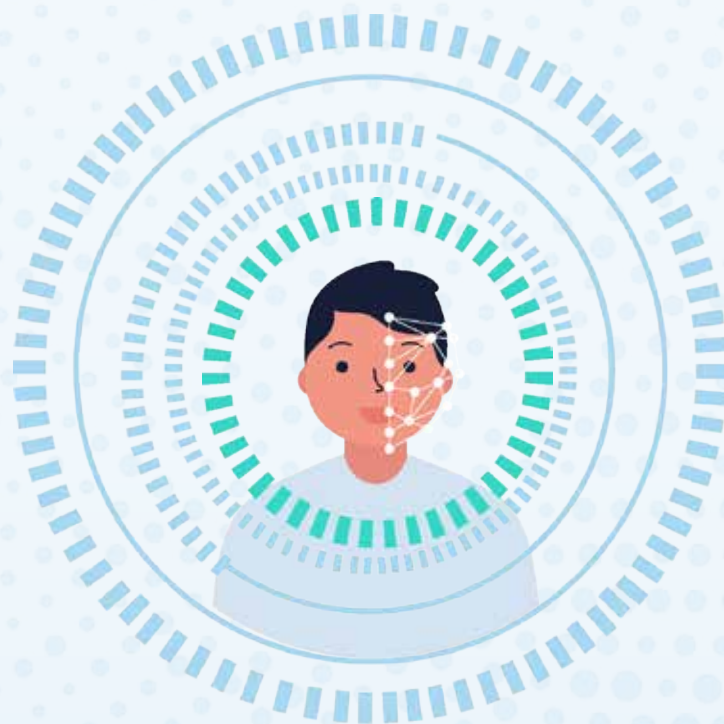
WE BEGAN YOUR STORY WITH YOU TRYING TO PERSUADE THE DEAN OF SUNDERLAND UNIVERSITY INTO ACCEPTING YOU WITHOUT THE REQUISITE QUALIFICATION. HOW HAS THAT, AND YOUR CAREER JOURNEY, SHAPED THE PERSON AND PRACTITIONER YOU ARE TODAY? Well, I'm a big advocate for giving people opportunity based on

their potential, not just their qualifications. That forms an essential foundation on which to build diversity of thought and background, which in my book drives innovation. A case in point, my own HR team is made up of half who came through the conventional and purist academic route. The other half of my team, including me, came through a variety of experiences, which have brought a host of different perspective to the table, which along with their more academic colleagues, makes for a dynamic force of innovation and knowhow. As for my recollections personally, I look back and I see a really proud and confident young woman, who definitely could have made her life easier, but whose determination and resilience overcame her naivety. I have my parents to thank for that tenacity. But along life's journey, there are inevitable up and downs. I mentor a lot of people - often mid-career people who are having a bit of a crossroads moment - and I usually say to them that they have so much experience to impart on others. Through mentoring, there is an opportunity to not only help others, but to also bring their own challenges and indecisions out in the light - and maybe even find new perspective in reverse-mentoring. The other important element is never to be embarrassed about where you come from. Ten years ago, I wouldn't have told you my story, let alone confess it in an interview for a magazine. But now I feel really proud of where I am and what I have achieved and I think I'm testament to the fact that with determination and a positive mindset, anything is possible.

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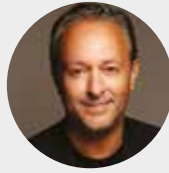


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THE UPSIDE OF DISRUPTION

From a geopolitical risk supercycle and talent scarcity to AI everywhere, CHROs are navigating their organisations through turbulent times, but is enough being done to scale agile, resilient, and bold futures? With headwinds to navigate, arguably, we always overestimate the risk of doing something new and underestimate the risk of standing still and that, when volatility is high, not taking a risk is a risk.

The Consumer Electronics Show (CES) celebrates all that tech offers and sets the technology narrative for the year ahead. Every year, over one hundred thousand people arrive at the Las Vegas Convention Center to discover the latest innovation trends across the future of consumer tech - AI, robotics, mobile, gaming and many other tech themes - that will reshape how we live, work and play. I saw an all-electric flying car prototype and a new personal assistant to perform your tasks during my visit. The Rabbit R1 AI device swaps out apps for an operating system that can learn how to use apps on your behalf and shows how an AI co-pilot could work if you've dreamed of a personal assistant. As I experimented with the device, a man beside me smiled and said, "cool product. I'm interested in this kind of innovation for my industry." Curious to understand more, I replied, "it's a useful device. Which industry are you working in?" He

smiled, "I work in the funeral industry. I'm an HR Director. Our clients want us to be more innovative. If we don't embrace the future, we become history." After my surprise, we spoke for thirty minutes about how the \$20 billion a year US funeral industry is evolving, from live streaming and space burials to eco-friendly and digital memorials. As we said our goodbyes, I felt nothing but respect for the HR Director. No industry or function is immune from disruption... not even death. One of the most significant risks to the long-term vitality of most organisations isn't tech or talent disruption, it's a lack of courage to evolve. Hack Future Lab's research shows that a 'lack of boldness' is the number one barrier to long-term impact for CHROs and, employees agree, ranking lack of courage as a top three internal challenge alongside bureaucracy and talent scarcity. Future-fit HR leaders must embrace 'the courage advantage'

to thrive in a new era of perpetual organisational upheaval and shocks upon shocks. In the opening lines of *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens, he writes: "It was the best of times. It was the worst of times. It was the age of wisdom. It was the age of foolishness." Dickens' words seem remarkably prescient for today's operating environment of enormous risk, but they also reward those who know how to find the upside in disruption. Change can be challenging, but times of volatility also give us a unique opportunity to rethink and emerge stronger together. For example, the budget supermarket chain Lidl is moving into cloud computing, while Ikea is moving into a peer-to-peer digital marketplace.

Courage is crucial to speed and agility too. Compared with peers in slow-moving firms, research shows that courageous CHROs in fast-moving

organisations report 2.4 times higher operational resilience, 2.2 times higher growth and 3.7 times higher innovation. Being bold is not about being reckless or rash, but about taking intelligent risks and making tough decisions amidst volatility. It's proactive resilience, faster decisions are often better ones, too. Bold doesn't always mean big either, bold can start small. Maya Angelou said: "I realised one isn't born with courage. One develops it by doing small courageous things." Bold leadership begins from within and derives from the Latin word core, which is the heart to speak one's mind by telling one's heart. So, courage is your heart. It takes courage to build a new business or abandon an old one. It takes courage to say goodbye to the status quo. Today, courage is more likely to be effective if it is flexible, nuanced and contextual. Psychological capital matters, too. With economic headwinds and AI disruption an everyday reality, the answer to disruption is to sharpen the courage advantage, moving from 'wait and see' to 'learn and evolve.' Bold CHROs don't just scale back during tough times. Instead, they prioritise, they choose and they act. The courage advantage means executing for today and adapting for tomorrow and is one of the most underutilised mindsets and skillsets today. Behavioural scientist and author Rory Sutherland said: "The next revolution is not technological, it's psychological." People want to thrive in agility-led cultures offering work that combines opportunity, growth and skills over a lifetime and sustain what makes them more human - radiate meaning, belonging and deep work - which gives us dignity and pride. Data at the Mayo Clinic suggests that if less than 20 percent of our work consists of things we love to do, we are less likely to suffer from burnout (cognitive and emotional burnout) or 'bore out.' e.g., emotional and cognitive underload. I'd argue that leaders must aim higher than 20 percent and strive to build workplaces where most people love what they do. It's time to question ways of leading that diminish what makes us human. A failure to reimagine how we work and

grow is a failure of leadership. Instead, avoid empty slogans and emphasise how humans and machines can co-exist in a way that garners the best from our talent, starting with future thinking from the start.

*"THERE IS A NATURAL
DARWINIAN LOGIC TO WHAT
THE AUSTRIAN ECONOMIST
JOSEPH SCHUMPETER
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CREATIVE DESTRUCTION"*

So, how can CHROs seize the future boldly? It starts with courage leaps - replacing fear with action and doubt - with conviction. If you think courage is risky, try a weak strategy or no leadership. Like an action movie, the future demands boldness in who we are, how we lead and how we grow, especially under pressure. It took 13 days for the British Government to learn of the assassination of a US president, as it did of Lincoln's death in 1865. Today, our decision loops are faster and shorter, requiring answers to difficult but important questions: Is trust our number one value? If not, why now? Do we practice bold-focused or fear-focused leadership? Do we minimise or maximise trust and responsibility? Do we commodify or humanise trust? Do we obsess over trust, not just metrics? Do we make the invisible visceral? Do we prioritise human brilliance? How do we align AI to serve humanity's best interests? When your competitors have a courage advantage, they make decisions faster because courage is 80 percent culture and 20 percent process. Finding agility means showing the courage to give power back to employees, empowering them to make decisions and co-create the future. Firms leading the way, such as Haier, Nucor and Spotify, are developing adaptive operating models defined by networks of self-managing teams, rapid

decision-making cycles and a relentless focus on removing barriers to speed and execution. The most courageous firms and their future-focused CHROs, have created a new leadership edge for the Intelligence Age. They can act more quickly, mobilise talent to value and resources, win new customers and are more resilient in the face of shocks and setbacks. ROI doesn't just mean Return on Investment, it's Return on Intelligence and Imagination too. Will average firms ever be able to catch up? Research shows that when employees strongly agree that 'my organisation prioritises courage over conformity', there is a courage 'dividend' too. A culture of courage welcomes dissent and is defined as a way of leading that inspires workers to challenge the status quo and embrace the future. A culture of conformity is a way of leading that deters workers from challenging the status quo. It is silence over speaking up and 'fake' empowerment over agency. It demands deference.

When you think about it, change is a CHRO's calling to find the upside in disruption and turn barriers into breakthroughs. For instance, moving from 'checking' to 'coaching' and from 'transactional' interactions to 'transformational' ones. There is a natural Darwinian logic to what the Austrian economist Joseph Schumpeter called the 'gales of creative destruction'. Disruption always presents a choice: 1. Opportunity if disruption is managed as a tailwind or 2. Obsolescence, if disruption is dismissed as a headwind. CHROs are surrounded by risks that will shape the future - geopolitical risk, a technology super cycle, cybercrime, supply chain disruption, social instability, deglobalisation and talent scarcity. Disruptions are often interconnected, but there is an upside, too. When we crave the comfort of certainty, we usually miss the upside of disruption. CHROs, therefore, must navigate these disruptions with strategic foresight and demonstrate ambidexterity and be careful to manage the downsides, while boldly prioritising the upside. For example, the number-one reason employees quit a job

after money, is a lack of internal growth opportunities and most say that internal mobility is 'not a strength' in our organisations. The riskiest talent gaps are not the ones we know about, they're bubbling under the surface. One of the most unmistakable signs of leading at the speed of AI is rethinking assumptions about identifying and retaining talent. As organisations pivot to the future, replacing silos with internal growth opportunities is a must-have imperative. Even job titles need reimagining, as the forces of AI disrupt them, with recent examples - such as; Distraction Prevention Coach and Head of Uncertainty and Scenarios at the UK's Department of Trade. To seize future thinking from the start, CHROs should reject 'present forward' thinking and taken-for-granted norms that extend existing assumptions to tomorrow. This leadership style of doing the same thing repeatedly may have worked well in a predictable world but is less relevant for leading in a complex and turbulent one. Instead, leaders should avoid Zombie leadership - leading with dead norms and ideas from the 20th century - and focus on future-readiness skills such as; connectivity, co-creation and cognitive and character strengths. Firms such as Mastercard, Tata and Epic Games champion this anti-Zombie leadership principle, by sharpening their talent and value agenda in their organisations and creating an AI-powered skills revolution.

We met with the leadership team of a large pharma firm (let's call it Zenith) on a mission to sharpen its dual-purpose agenda. The meeting was held in Dubai, a city already living in the future, where flying taxis and delivery drones will soon be a reality. Dubai even has its own Minister for AI. Zenith wanted to equip its workforce with the cognitive and character skills to thrive in sync with AI. The CHRO said: "As the war for talent intensifies and working with AI increases, it has become more important than ever to put employees in the driver's seat of their careers. Internal surveys showed that nearly half of existing employees lacked internal mobility as their top

reason for leaving the business. We had a reputation for being a 'frustration office' and 'damn bloody slow.' We prioritised increasing internal growth opportunities powered by AI, flexibility and lifelong learning, called Future-fit Today, our workforce engagement scores are the highest they've ever been and the word 'happy' is mentioned by our workforce. This never happened before."

*"HUMANS ARE SOMETIMES
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With a fast-evolving global workforce of at least five different generations, the leadership team wanted to bring agility to placing the right talent in the right place at the right time. AI-powered talent marketplaces are a fast way to break down silos and match the supply and demand of talent within their organisation and unleash the collective possibilities of their people. Meaningful purpose is the fuel that drives sustainable performance and can be sparked through matching talent to internal gig work, mentorships, projects, and career transitions that the talent marketplace provides. AI is the fuel to power it. The challenges included: Prioritising future readiness and agility. Digital obsession and high learning orientation. Deploying talent at scale to match business needs on demand. Shift from 'talent hoarding' to 'talent sharing'. Unlock hidden potential and productivity and thriving at the speed of AI (fast, flat, human and hybrid) The soft launch of the AI-powered talent marketplace at Zenith has seen over 11,000 hours of productivity unlocked, \$13.7 million in savings through internal mobility and the most significant year-on-year increase in satisfaction for exceeding Dual Purpose within the organisation. The firm is leading from the future in more agile

ways, ultimately unlocking hidden potential and pushing others not to limit their challenges, but to challenge their limits. Leaders must make game-changing moves to avoid becoming obsolete, learn new skills and think in bold new ways to change the game. Since industry disruption is universal, every person must sharpen their future-readiness edge - insights, trust and execution. To paraphrase the scientist Carl Sagan: "Extinction is the rule. Thriving is a choice."

Humans are sometimes irrational and unpredictable, which can give credence to the idea that anything is possible. A healthier and more sustainable approach is to harness the courage advantage. Nearly 73 percent of CEOs list courage among the top three factors driving long-term financial performance. Research on firms with the courage advantage found that their returns to shareholders outperformed their peers by 18 percent over five years. The courage advantage is the capacity to play offence and defence and leverage disruption as a call to mobilisation. One mindset is daring to unlock the upside in disruption, launching new talent marketplace and reskilling programmes. The other mindset is prudence in managing the downside, being at the top of your peer group for talent, efficiency, and productivity. When volatility is high, being ten percent more proactive on winning the race to reskill or ten percent bolder on scaling the AI-powered skills revolution is an edge and a powerful way of turning obstacles into upside. We need to face facts. The current paradigm of organisations as preservers of the status quo must be reimagined to challengers of the status quo. We have cultures that reward bureaucratic work and compliance-led KPIs (Key Behaviour Indicators). This is insanity. Only then will CHROs and their organisations be able to turn the AI and skills revolution into a tailwind for sustainable bold growth and meaningful work.

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ARTICLE BY
AMY WALTERS COHEN - AUTHOR

Amy Walters Cohen is author of Ruthlessly Caring: And Other Paradoxical Mindsets Leaders Need to be Future-Fit (winner of The Business Book Awards Business Book of the Year 2024)
Published by www.wiley.com

RUTHLESSLY CARING

Rapid adoption of Generative AI¹, increasing cyber-attacks², the impacts of climate change (including resource scarcity, extreme weather and disruption to supply chains and infrastructure)³, a rising number of countries involved in cross-border conflict (such as the Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Hamas war)⁴, ongoing systemic workplace discrimination⁵, skills shortages⁶ not to mention an increasingly dispersed and hybrid workforce⁷. Today's operating environment is tough.

Unsurprisingly, business leaders are finding it increasingly difficult to achieve and sustain high performance, with statistics showing how company life expectancy is shrinking. In the past 30 years, 75 percent of UK FTSE 100 companies have disappeared, meanwhile those on today's Fortune 500 list do well if they last 15 years⁸. We are navigating a world that's fundamentally different from the one faced by previous generations. It's therefore not enough to rely on 'doing what's always been done' in terms of leadership development. To be future-fit, senior leaders need to radically step up and evolve their approach and HR leaders need to ensure they are equipped to make that gearshift. The modern business landscape is hyper-complex. At least 12 megatrends are interacting and converging, creating a multitude of competing demands and challenges, which leaders cannot break into stages and tackle sequentially.

Megatrends such as advancing technology, ageing populations, climate change, social media, high inequality and rising geopolitical tensions. To drive and sustain performance, senior leaders are consequently being required to deliver 'both-and' on multiple fronts - we need them to deliver both short-term results and create long-term value, as well as drive change and provide stability, create belonging and celebrate difference, protect well-being and deliver high performance. Navigating paradoxes is no longer a nice-to-have but a necessity for leaders. However, whilst as a society we need and expect business leaders to be delivering 'both-and' on multiple fronts, organisational values often remain one-dimensional. Many organisations have values of inclusion, care and integrity, but what about performance-focus, political skill and ambition? Senior leaders also need these qualities and yet these skills often go

unacknowledged, left off the list and in the shadows of leadership development. They are skills that are required and rewarded in practice, but not qualities that are always developed and encouraged. Five years of research indicates that a distinguishing characteristic of future-fit leaders is their ability to embrace paradoxical thinking into the very core of their leadership identity. Leaders today can't afford to be one-dimensional.

Interviews with senior leaders around the world, who have won awards for being future-thinking, innovative and disruptive, suggest five paradoxical mindsets are essential for leaders to adopt, if they are to be successful in the emerging business context, namely: *Ruthlessly caring*: a willingness to make the tough decisions necessary to drive results and the ability to remain compassionate no matter what.

Ambitiously appreciative: a relentlessness and determination to keep striving for ambitious goals, whilst always retaining a sense of balance and perspective. Politically virtuous - the ability to do the right thing at the first opportunity and be politically savvy in the circumstances. *Confidently humble:* an ability to inspire people to have confidence in them and their vision for the team or organisation, whilst acknowledging they don't have all the answers and must harness all the unique strengths of others. *Responsibly daring:* the ability to stay accountable for making a difference and safeguarding the business, whilst being willing to take risks and set audacious goals. No senior leader in the research exhibited all these mindsets in perfect balance. The common characteristic of future-fit leaders was their ability to embrace paradoxes into the core of their approach and identity. All the leaders had different paradoxical mindset strengths and development areas. In this article, we will take a closer look into the Ruthlessly Caring mindset.

Why does a Ruthlessly Caring mindset matter? Business leaders are increasingly judged on the way they take care of their multiple stakeholders (i.e., their suppliers, employees, customers, local community, society and the environment)⁹. Gen Z in particular have been termed 'the purpose-driven generation'; seeking socially responsible, human-centred and ethical companies to work for¹⁰. They want leaders and companies that care and show compassion. That said, the pressure on leaders to deliver results and continuously transform their business is unrelenting. Market disruptions have become more frequent and impactful and, to keep pace, organisations are needing to transform more frequently, with EY research showing how 85 percent of senior leaders have been involved in two or more major transformations in the last five years alone¹¹. Transforming a business inevitably throws up decisions that have a tough human impact; however, as EY's research demonstrates, leaders

can't drive successful transformation without tuning into the human-side of change¹¹. Tough performance focus and a compassionate, human-centred approach both need to be present for an organisation to succeed. Ruthlessly caring leaders are performance focused and driven to achieve results; they are challenging and willing to make decisions that have a tough human impact. They also deeply care about people, always show compassion, treat others with respect, are highly supportive, provide the feedback people need - but may not want to hear - and never shy away from the tough emotional conversations. Ruthlessness, in this context, refers to a leader's ability to stay task-focused and make the tough decisions necessary to achieve performance. Consequently, 'ruthlessness' can be broken into two elements; having a performance focus and making tough decisions.

"AT LEAST 12 MEGATRENDS ARE INTERACTING AND CONVERGING, CREATING A MULTITUDE OF COMPETING DEMANDS AND CHALLENGES, WHICH LEADERS CANNOT BREAK INTO STAGES AND TACKLE SEQUENTIALLY"

A leader's job is to achieve results and, at an executive level, this means doing what needs to be done to deliver sustainable high performance at an organisation level. Leading ruthlessly is not about perceiving business as a 'dog-eat-dog', 'win-at-all-costs' world, but about providing focus, stretch and discipline so people can do their job well and achieve key objectives. When boiled down further, a performance focus involves two ingredients¹²; expecting the best from people and helping people achieve stretching goals. Expecting the

best from people empowers them and fuels them to take on challenges and draw on their strengths. Whether you realise it or not, what you believe about someone's ability will be transmitted to them - through your manner, tone of voice, energy levels, time spent with them, type of support offered and the goals you set - it all combines to send a message people pick up on. It is a leader's job to have high expectations of those around them, anything less will be doing people a disservice. Helping people achieve stretching goals, having high expectations of someone without being crystal clear about what is expected from them is just setting someone up for failure. People need to be certain about what outcome needs to be achieved, how success and progress will be measured and then empowered to determine the best tactical approach. To drive high performance, these goals need to be sufficiently ambitious and stretching. As mentioned earlier, setting easily achievable goals for people does no one any favours. It may feel like a 'confidence builder' but what actually builds people's confidence is a leader who has high expectations of them, sets them ambitious goals and provides them with both trust and support. It is about transmitting the message, 'this may feel scary, but I know you can do this well' and backing that with a deep, internalised belief in that person's ability to grow and perform.

Leading a business - especially in today's fast-changing environment - means making lots of tough decisions. People know this and yet still it catches leaders out when they reach the upper echelons of management. In one ten-year longitudinal study of more than 2,700 leaders, 57 percent of newly appointed executives said that decisions were more complicated and difficult than they had expected¹³. Sometimes decisions are made difficult because of the impact you know that decision will have on people, for example, deciding to close a chain of shops, shutting a factory which employs hundreds of people or making the call to fire a close friend. These choices are

always tough, no matter how obviously correct or necessary they may be. Other decisions may be tough because there is no right answer - you are stuck between a rock and a hard place - or the answer may be such an unknown grey area, that no matter how much research is done - or how many experts are consulted - the answer is still unclear. Here are a few strategies that can help leaders. For example: *Understanding the risk of inaction*: it is a common bias to overestimate the risk of action and underestimate the risk of inaction. To avoid decision paralysis, it is therefore important senior leaders are clear on the potential consequences of not making the decision within a certain time window. *Focusing on the integrity of the process (not the potential outcome)*: with some decisions, it can be hard to know how they will turn out. What matters is whether leaders can look at themselves in the mirror, whatever the outcome and trust in the integrity of the process upon which that decision was made. *Seeking clarity (not consensus)*: taking different viewpoints into consideration is not the same as seeking consensus. Tough decision-making is a lonely place; one person needs to make the final call. Senior leaders' primary goal should not be to appease everyone's views on a situation, but to decide on and commit to a clear course of action within a time frame.

Caring leadership is about showing compassion no matter what. However, true compassion is not simply about senior leaders 'being nice' or showing kindness. Compassion requires a leader to balance emotion, logic and action. It's about being able to listen, understand and feel what others feel, whilst having the courage and control to respond in the most helpful way. The four skills senior leaders need to develop to implement a caring mindset are: *Cognitive empathy*: knowing and understanding, at an intellectual level, how another person feels and what they might be thinking is what helps guides leaders to an appropriate response in a distressing situation (rather than an

impulsive one). Cognitive empathy enables leaders to respond to a problem with brainpower, not simply based on gut-reaction. *Emotional empathy*: the ability to share in someone's emotional experience, feel what another person is feeling and sharing their state of mind is what moves us as humans to comfort, reassure and help someone. The emotional system in our brain has a mirroring mechanism, which means, to varying degrees, individuals feel what others feel (whether that is joy, anxiety,

*"COMPASSION AND
EMBRACING A 'CARING
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PANDORA'S BOX AND
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EMOTIONS"*

anger, or sadness). In a modern age, senior leaders cannot afford the luxury of disconnecting, they must be tuned into the human impact of certain decisions and the 'on-the-ground' experience people are going through. *Distress tolerance*: the ability to avoid being overwhelmed by negative emotions; accepting a level of pain, suffering, or discomfort is crucial if leaders are to face into intense or emotional situations and still do what needs to be done. Distress tolerance is the skill that stops senior leaders from letting their emotions take over and make a situation worse. It is what helps leaders remain capable of helping. *Non-judgment*: the ability to not be condemning or critical of others; observing without evaluating is what helps leaders deal with situations constructively. As humans, our brains can be very quick to pass judgement and assign blame, but these two habits can obstruct compassionate action. To steer situations in a positive direction, leaders need to be non-judgemental and accept the reality of a situation, rather than dissecting its causes.

Acting compassionately in tough moments requires leaders to connect, without becoming so entwined in it that they are no longer able to offer the best support. When times are tough, it can be tempting to hold tightly on to logic and shut off from the human impact - perhaps seeing people as just 'numbers on a spreadsheet'. Or some leaders may find themselves caring so much that they end up swamped in the emotions of it all and burning out. Compassion and embracing a 'caring mindset' does not mean wildly flinging open Pandora's box and taking on everyone's emotions. It is about senior leaders being highly skilled at balancing emotion with rational thinking and helpful action.

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I SUPPORTING BEREAVED EMPLOYEES

HOW EMPLOYERS MANAGE EMPLOYEES WHO ARE GRIEVING IS FUNDAMENTAL IN THE IMMEDIATE PAINFUL EVENT AND INTEGRAL DURING THE MOURNING AND RECOVERY PERIOD, HOWEVER LONG THAT MAY TAKE. THAT EMPLOYEES HAVE TO RETURN TO WORK TOO QUICKLY AND BE EXPECTED TO JUST CARRY ON AS USUAL, IS AN ADDITIONAL AND CRUEL BURDEN TO ENDURE, WHEN EMOTIONS ARE STILL SO RAW. THAT IS WHY LEADERS, MANAGERS AND COLLEAGUES WHO ARE EMPATHETIC AND SUPPORTIVE IS SO IMPORTANT. REVISED LAW IS IMPROVING THE OUTLOOK AND EXPERIENCES OF MOURNING EMPLOYEES, BUT COULD EMPLOYERS BE DOING MORE?

THEHRDIRECTOR LINKEDIN POLL



theHRDIRECTOR @theHRDIRECTOR

In your experience, do you think that grieving employees in your organisation are well supported?



Yes

44%

No

56%

If you have an opinion on any of the articles featured in this section, please share it by going to this link www.linkedin.com/company/thehrdirector



ARTICLE BY CLARE HAYCOCK, WORKPLACE BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT OFFICER - SANDS

LOSS

PREGNANCY AND BABY LOSS IS PROFOUND AND CHALLENGING AND THE GRIEF IMPACTS EVERY ASPECT OF LIFE, PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL, RIPPLING OUT TO FAMILY, FRIENDS, COLLEAGUES AND THE BROADER WORKPLACE. IT IS CRUCIAL FOR ORGANISATIONS TO BE THERE WITH A COMPASSIONATE, SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT THAT HELPS BEREAVED PARENTS NAVIGATE THEIR RETURN TO WORK.

Pregnancy and baby loss is a unique form of grief. The emotional impact can manifest in anxiety, depression and a diminished sense of self-worth, exacerbated by the pressures of returning to work. The expectation to 'move on' or 'return to normal' can feel overwhelming and the physical toll of the loss can leave individuals feeling emotionally drained and void of their social battery. Colleagues may also struggle with how to respond, unsure of what to say or do, which can further isolate the bereaved parent. While many organisations have bereavement policies in place, they often fall short when addressing pregnancy and baby loss. Traditional bereavement leave may be insufficient for parents who have lost a pregnancy or baby. The recovery process, both physical and emotional, can be long and arduous. Parents could still be expecting post-mortem results or need follow up appointments. Expecting an employee to return to work fully functional after a brief period is not only unrealistic but can also be detrimental to their overall wellbeing. Effective support, however, goes beyond policies and procedures. It requires a shift in workplace culture toward greater empathy and understanding. Organisations should recognise that grief is not linear and returning to work is not just about resuming tasks, but about reintegrating into a community while navigating deep personal pain.

Creating a compassionate environment starts with education. Managers and HR professionals need training to understand the complexities of grief, particularly in the context of pregnancy and baby loss. This training should include practical guidance on approaching conversations with bereaved employees, offering support without

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overstepping boundaries and recognising when an employee may need more time or resources to cope. Flexibility is another critical component. Bereaved parents may need to ease back into their work routine gradually and offering flexible working arrangements can help facilitate this process. This might include options such as part-time work, remote work, or adjusting workloads temporarily. Flexibility should also extend to the understanding that grief can resurface unexpectedly and employees may need

additional time off or adjustments even months after the loss. Peer support can be invaluable as well. Encouraging a culture where colleagues can express their condolences and offer support without fear of saying the wrong thing can make a significant difference. Sometimes, just knowing that their coworkers are there for them can help bereaved parents feel less isolated. Peer support networks or support groups within the organisation can also provide a safe space for those who have experienced similar losses to share their experiences and coping strategies.

The impact of pregnancy and baby loss is not confined to the bereaved parents; it can also affect their colleagues. Those who work closely with the bereaved parent may experience feelings of helplessness, anxiety, or uncertainty. It is important for organisations to acknowledge this and provide resources and support for colleagues as well. By fostering an environment where grief is acknowledged and addressed openly, the workplace can prevent the creation of a culture of silence and discomfort. Pregnancy and baby loss is a profound experience that impacts every aspect of an individual's life, including their work. As organisations must create environments where bereaved parents feel supported, understood and valued.

FOR FURTHER INFO
SANDS.ORG.UK/RETURNING-TO-WORK



ARTICLE BY LOU CAMPBELL, FOUNDER & MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL
& PROGRAMMES DIRECTOR - WELLBEING PARTNERS

HARD RETURN

"POWERFUL WAVES OF OVERWHELMING GRIEF, SADNESS AND DEPRESSION
ARE COMMON IN THE EARLY STAGES, SO HAVE REGULAR REVIEWS, WHERE
YOU CAN CHECK IN AND MAKE ADJUSTMENTS"

The death of a family member, loved one or someone of significance in our lives can bring on feelings that are powerful and unpredictable. In the early days and weeks following a death, we may experience shock, disassociation, numbness, flashbacks, nightmares, sleep deprivation, changes in eating patterns and overwhelming waves of emotions such as; sadness, anger, horror, confusion and guilt. These are all a part of the human experience of bereavement and grieving after someone close to our heart has passed away.

Bereavement and subsequent grief are experiences we will all face and understanding how bereavement affects individuals and their work can create a more supportive environment. This is important in an employment context, because grief can also change the way we work - affecting our concentration, diminishing our engagement with tasks and dramatically reducing efficiency. Sometimes even the simplest of tasks can seem like insurmountable challenges when we are feeling overwhelmed by grief. It can also impact how we relate to our colleagues and our clients, with issues around isolation, distressing thoughts, anger and fear impacting our interactions. But work too can be an important lifeline for some, the routine of tasks and interaction with others helping to give structure and purpose to an otherwise

chaotic or surreal phase in our lives. The stages of grief are unpredictable and not linear and the different stages are: *Shock* - which may be experienced as numbness, unexpected behaviours, not connecting with the experience and may involve horror flashbacks if the death or dying process was traumatic in any way. *Denial* - which is disbelief, expecting the person who has passed away to reappear and people and the environment can take on a surreal quality. *Anger* - with themselves and/or with the person who has died for abandoning them and/or with medical staff or other family members or friends. *Guilt* - which often closely follows, particularly for those who view anger as a negative or "bad" feeling. *Bargaining* - which is trying to make a deal with a higher power such as a god or the universe, with thoughts such as: "I will

do anything to have them back". Or bargaining with the person who has passed away: "If you return, I will do anything for you". *Depression* - a deep and overwhelming sadness and often absence of joy - that may come in waves for hours or days or weeks, or may last for many months - or if untreated, sometimes years. *Acceptance* - is recognition and acknowledgement that the person who has died is not returning and this can be the most difficult stage to experience and can also be a turning point in the grieving process.

Factors that can influence how we grieve include the relationship we had with the deceased, the cause or circumstances of the death, our past experiences with loss, our personality and coping style, our cultural background and whether we have a strong support

STOIC

Traditional gender and cultural stereotypes really do have a lot to answer for. Too many men still believe that displaying visible signs of grief is a weakness. Indeed, research from the Sue Ryder Trust found that 52 percent of men hide how they are feeling, even from those closest to them, during the grieving process and many fear being excluded by friends, if they talked honestly about their feelings, with 46 percent believing their grief would make others uncomfortable.

"WITHOUT ANY FORM OF EMOTIONAL RELEASE, STRESS LEVELS IN GRIEVING MEN CAN CONTINUE TO REMAIN HIGH AND THEY MAY BE MORE LIKELY THAN WOMEN TO TURN TO ALCOHOL AND DRUGS"



ARTICLE BY MUSAB HEMSI, PARTNER IN THE EMPLOYMENT, IMMIGRATION AND PENSIONS TEAM - ANDERSON STRATHERN



If a third of men are covering up their emotions to friends, it is reasonable to assume that they are making even bigger efforts to disguise their grief at work. Without any form of emotional release, stress levels in grieving men can continue to remain high and they may be more likely than women to turn to alcohol and drugs to help them cope. As these statistics show, men are far less likely than women to disclose to their employer that they are struggling with grief. In fact, men can often work more than normal to distract themselves from what's going on in their personal lives, or to feel more in control. This can sometimes lead to burnout. Put this together with heightened anxiety about job security during these challenging economic times and there's a worry that the suffering of recently bereaved men can go under the radar at work. After all, how do you support someone who you don't know is hurting or insists they don't want to talk about it? It's worth noting that all the above can be especially true of men when it comes to baby loss. It's estimated that one-in-four pregnancies end in loss, either during pregnancy or birth. It's important to recognise that baby loss - at any stage - can be a harrowing experience for both parents. Colleagues can often make well-meaning but painful comments, such as 'you can always try again' or 'at least it happened early'. Again, there's a societal expectation on dad to 'be strong' for their partner, which can pile on the pressure. Sadly, statistics show that the stress of coping with baby loss can increase the risk of a couple separating. Everyone deals with the grief of baby loss differently. While some are more resilient and able to return to work, others understandably need more time to heal before they can face a return to the office. Since the introduction of Jack's Law in 2020, employees have the right to up to two weeks of paid parental bereavement leave after the death of a child under 18, or a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy. In the case of a stillbirth, a birth father is also entitled to up to two weeks of paternity leave or pay on top of this. However, when other loved ones classed as dependants die - such as a spouse, parent or person who relies on them for care -

there's no definition of how long can be taken other than it needs to be 'reasonable'. There's also no right for this time off to be paid. It becomes even trickier if a person has lost someone they were very close to, but does not qualify as a 'dependant' - such as a best friend, or favourite cousin or uncle. In these cases, there is no legal right to time off at all. If a miscarriage happens in the first 24 weeks of pregnancy, there's no entitlement to statutory maternity, paternity or parental bereavement leave.

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While there's a limit to what workplaces are legally required to do to support men through bereavement, what they should be doing from a compassionate perspective is another matter entirely. In practice, most employers do offer at least some compassionate leave, or other types of leave, to bereaved employees. If taken as sick leave, some employers may offer full pay, while others may only pay the statutory amount. Employers should be warned that the latter can often lead to someone returning to work before they are ready, especially if they feel their job role could be at risk. This can lead to longer term problems for both the bereaved person and the employer. Some employers suggest using annual leave to cover time off after a bereavement, if an employee doesn't want to lose wages. However, the intended purpose of annual leave is for rest and relaxation. So, what happens if an employee is bereaved after they have already used up all their annual leave for the year? A practical step employers may want to consider is offering an income protection scheme that will cover their salary for a longer

period, if they are unable to work - whether that is due to bereavement or another health reason. Notably, when it comes to pregnancy loss, some progressive employers, such as NHS England, Tesco and John Lewis, have policies that give both the mother and father a period of paid leave. When a bereaved person does return to work, an employer may also need to allow for a temporary impact on their performance, even if they appear stoic on the surface.

If an employee keeps telling you they're fine, it's difficult to support them. So employers should keep a compassionate eye on the behaviour of someone who has recently lost someone close to them and, if available, proactively signpost them to the firm's mental health first-aider or counselling support. If your workplace offers an employee assistance programme, consider allowing the employee paid time off to attend counselling appointments. It might be worth reminding them that these appointments are genuinely confidential and that nothing they discuss at them will be shared with their colleagues. I know of several companies who have partnered with charities to encourage conversations on bereavement within staff groups. They often have excellent resources to help employers support people better. But if the psychological impact on your bereaved employee is prolonged or severe, they could be considered disabled - and that is when the Equality Act kicks in. An employer will then have a duty to ensure the employee is receiving the correct mental health support and perhaps adjusting their role by relaxing certain duties or deadlines. This should be along with medical input - in collaboration with an employee's GP or occupational health - and not imposed on them. But even if the law doesn't apply, there is an argument that employers should be doing all of this anyway, simply because it's the right thing to do. After all, people going through a vulnerable period in their lives will always remember the actions of an empathetic employer.

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WWW.ANDERSONSTRATHERN.CO.UK

II

PRODUCTIVITY

IN THE PAST, HR'S HAS STRUGGLED TO GREASE THE WHEELS OF PRODUCTIVITY. EVERYTHING WAS COMPARTMENTALISED AND SEPARATE. BUT DATA HAS BECOME A SUPERPOWER, A REAL-TIME CHRONICLER OF HOW EVERY STRATEGIC DECISION AND INITIATIVE IS CONTRIBUTING TO THE DELIVERY OF KPIS, PRODUCTIVITY AND THE INEVITABLE BOTTOM LINE. DESPITE THE CONTINUED INTEGRATION OF AI AND AUTOMATION, THE SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF A BUSINESS STILL DEPENDS LARGELY ON EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY, BOTH INDIVIDUALLY, AS TEAMS AND ACROSS THE BUSINESS. BUT THE WAY KPIS AND PRODUCTIVITY ARE MEASURED - EMPLOYEE OUTPUT, WITHIN A SPECIFIED INPUT (COST) AND A SPECIFIED DURATION - HAS TO CHANGE.

THEHRDIRECTOR LINKEDIN POLL



theHRDIRECTOR @theHRDIRECTOR

Do you think HR in your organisation is playing a positive role in productivity?



Yes

68%

No

32%

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ARTICLE BY AISLINN CARTER - FREELANCE JOURNALIST

IN TOTO

IN THE RAPIDLY EVOLVING BUSINESS WORLD, HR PLAYS A VITAL ROLE IN DRIVING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE, PRODUCTIVITY AND SHAPING ORGANISATIONAL SUCCESS. COMPANIES HAVE AWOKEN TO THE FACT THAT BY ADOPTING CUTTING-EDGE HR TECHNIQUES, THEY CAN FOSTER A HIGH-PERFORMANCE CULTURE, ATTRACT TOP TALENT, AND MAINTAIN A COMPETITIVE EDGE.

When employees are free to work when and where it suits them - as long as they produce what's needed - performance can rise dramatically. Collaboration is key and digital tools like project management platforms, communication apps, leave management systems and virtual workspaces can play an important role in ensuring that employees remain connected, engaged and productive, wherever they are. These tools enable seamless collaboration, real-time feedback and continuous performance tracking, keeping remote teams aligned with organisational goals. Data-driven decision-making is transforming HR's ability to manage employee performance. New technologies, such as AI and data analytics, can provide deep insights into the workforce, enabling HR teams to identify high achievers, anticipate training needs, predict problems and produce personalised development and performance improvement plans with ease. The potential is endless and with enough data, AI can identify when employees are at risk of disengagement - based on changes in their productivity or engagement levels - and alert managers early so that they can intervene with targeted support or coaching.

Incorporating game-type features into work systems can be a clever way of encouraging employees to meet goals,

undertake training and contribute to a positive work culture. Gamified platforms can transform routine tasks into engaging activities, offering badges and leaderboard points in return for completing tasks.

"HR MUST FORM STRATEGIES THAT BALANCE FLEXIBILITY WITH ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESULTS-ORIENTED PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS THAT FOCUS ON OUTCOMES"

Gamification of performance reviews can be particularly effective, enabling HR teams to turn traditional feedback systems into dynamic processes which encourage ongoing tracking and make it easy to adjust goals quickly. But that's not all, gamification can also work wonders well beyond individual performance.

Organisations that support their employees' wellbeing holistically have greater employee engagement, lower staff absence levels and increased productivity and so it's vital to ensure a high-quality wellness strategy in place. For a wellbeing support package to be truly holistic,

it should consider mental and physical health support as well as financial wellness. Health initiatives can include access to counselling, stress management tools and mindfulness workshops, along with the provision of wellness technology - such as apps that track physical activity, nutrition and sleep to help employees better manage their health.

In today's rapidly changing business environment, continuous learning and upskilling of the workforce has become non-negotiable. When employees feel supported to come up with fresh ideas, take calculated risks and find new and improved ways to collaborate across departments, significant performance improvements can follow. HR can play an invaluable role in supporting this and other workforce innovation. By creating channels through which generated ideas can be considered and implemented, HR can ensure that these activities achieve maximum impact for the business. Together these interventions will help improve employee engagement, foster a sense of commitment to the business and support the development of strong team relationships which enhance productivity significantly.

FOR FURTHER INFO
[WWW.LINKEDIN.COM/IN/AISLINN-CARTER-102386327](https://www.linkedin.com/in/aislinn-carter-102386327)



ARTICLE BY MARYNA STIAHALO, CEO - NEXTGENHR

PEAKS & VALLEYS

"IMAGINE A WORKPLACE WHERE EVERY VOICE IS HEARD, WHERE
 INNOVATIVE IDEAS EMERGE FROM ALL LEVELS AND WHERE CONSTRUCTIVE
 DIALOGUE FLOWS FREELY ACROSS THE BUSINESS"

Productivity extends beyond the mere measurement of output, it involves an intricate balance of efficiency, quality and employee wellbeing. Unlike performance, which often emphasises short-term goals and quantifiable results, productivity encompasses a broader view of how effectively resources - time, effort and talent - are utilised to achieve meaningful outcomes. It reflects the value of optimising processes and fostering an environment where continuous improvement and innovation thrive. In essence, prioritising productivity is about redefining how success is achieved and measured.

Here are some strategies for cultivating a culture of innovation and creativity.

1. Fostering open communication:

In today's intricate business landscape, fostering open communication is not just beneficial but a strategic necessity. In an era marked by disruption and rapid adaptation, leaders must create an environment where employees feel not only encouraged but empowered to share their ideas, perspectives and feedback openly. Imagine a workplace where every voice is heard, where innovative ideas emerge from all levels and where constructive dialogue flows freely across the business. This is the essence of fostering open communication - an environment where transparency is the foundation of collaboration and active listening is prized. Achieving such a culture of candid dialogue requires more than mere lip service. It demands

a fundamental shift in mindset, where communication is seen not as a one-way street but as a dynamic exchange of ideas and insights. So let us look at how organisations can cultivate a culture of open communication: *Encourage fearless expression:* In a culture of open communication, employees should feel empowered to speak their minds without fear of reprisal or judgment. This necessitates cultivating an atmosphere of psychological safety, where individuals feel comfortable expressing dissenting opinions and challenging conventional wisdom. *Embrace vulnerability:* Genuine communication thrives when individuals are willing to be vulnerable - to admit when they lack answers, to ask for help when needed and to share failures as openly as successes. Leaders must lead with vulnerability, setting the tone and creating permission for others to do the

same. *Promote active listening:* Effective communication is a two-way street and active listening is its linchpin. Encourage employees to listen not just with their ears but with their hearts and minds - to seek understanding, validate others' perspectives and engage in genuine dialogue. *Lead with transparency:* Transparency builds trust, the cornerstone of open communication. Leaders must be transparent in their actions, decisions and communications, even when the message is difficult or uncomfortable. This builds credibility and fosters a culture of authenticity and accountability. *Provide channels for feedback:* Feedback fuels growth and improvement. Offer employees multiple channels for sharing feedback, whether through one-on-one meetings, suggestion boxes, or digital platforms. Crucially, act on that feedback - demonstrating that it's not just about

hearing what employees have to say but truly listening and taking action.

Celebrate diversity of thought: In a culture of open communication, diversity isn't just a buzzword, it's a strategic asset. Celebrate diversity of thought, recognising that innovation flourishes when individuals with varied backgrounds, perspectives and experiences come together to tackle challenges. By fostering open communication, businesses tap into the collective intelligence of their workforce, driving innovation, fostering collaboration and achieving sustainable success in today's fast-paced business environment. It's about creating a culture where every voice is valued, every idea considered and every individual empowered to contribute.

2. Embracing diversity and inclusion: In the quest for innovation and creativity, organisations must recognise the pivotal role that diversity and inclusion play in driving forward-thinking solutions. Diversity encompasses more than surface-level characteristics it spans backgrounds, experiences, perspectives and ways of thinking. By embracing diversity and fostering inclusion, businesses unlock untapped potential and propel themselves toward greater innovation and success. So how can organisations can embrace diversity and inclusion to cultivate a vibrant tapestry of ideas and experiences? *Celebrate cultural diversity:* In a globalised world, cultural diversity fuels innovation. Embrace it within the workplace, celebrating unique traditions, customs and perspectives. Encourage employees to share their cultural heritage, fostering belonging and appreciation. *Promote cognitive diversity:* beyond demographics, cognitive diversity includes differences in thought processes and problem-solving approaches. Recognise its importance for innovation, as it encourages individuals to challenge assumptions and explore new perspectives. Foster interdisciplinary collaboration and value diverse expertise. *Create inclusive spaces:* Inclusion is vital for diversity to thrive. Cultivate a workplace where all feel respected and empowered to contribute. Encourage open dialogue and

collaboration, where individuals from all backgrounds participate without fear of bias. *Provide equal opportunities:* Ensure all employees have equal access to growth opportunities. Implement inclusive hiring practices and provide mentorship programs to support underrepresented groups. Address unconscious bias: Raise awareness of unconscious bias and provide training to mitigate its impact. Encourage ongoing dialogue to foster awareness and accountability. *Measure progress and hold accountable:* Establish metrics to track progress toward diversity goals. Assess practices and outcomes regularly to identify areas for improvement. Hold leaders accountable for fostering an inclusive culture. Embracing diversity and inclusion empowers businesses, fostering innovation and driving sustainable growth. It's not just a moral imperative, but a strategic one for thriving in today's business landscape.

"A CULTURE OF OPEN
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IDEA-SHARING, FUELLING
INNOVATION FROM WITHIN
THE ORGANISATION"

3. Providing adequate resources and support: Innovation thrives when individuals have the tools, resources and support to bring ideas to life. Firms that prioritise providing resources and support not only foster innovation but also empower creativity. *Invest in cutting-edge tools:* Provide access to state-of-the-art tools and technologies, enhancing employees' ability to innovate. *Support ongoing learning:* Invest in professional development to equip employees with skills and knowledge for effective innovation. Encourage continuous learning and exploration of new areas. *Foster mentorship:* Pair employees with mentors to provide guidance and support. Encourage collaboration and leverage

strengths. *Create innovation spaces:* Designate areas for brainstorming and experimentation, providing resources for creativity to thrive. *Encourage risk-taking:* Cultivate a culture that encourages calculated risks and experimentation. Emphasise the importance of iteration and learning from both successes and failures. By providing resources and support for innovation, organisations create an environment where creativity drives growth and engagement.

4. Celebrating failure as a learning opportunity: innovation involves risk and experimentation, inevitably leading to failure at times. Rather than viewing failure as a setback, businesses can see it as part of the innovation journey, extracting valuable insights for continuous improvement. *Shift perceptions:* Encourage a mindset shift that views failure as a natural aspect of innovation, fostering growth and learning. *Normalise experimentation:* Create an environment where experimentation is encouraged. Emphasise that failure brings valuable lessons for future success. *Extract insights:* Reflect on failures to identify root causes and actionable insights. Encourage open discussions and learning from failure. *Celebrate learning:* Highlight the value of learning from failures, recognising individuals and teams for their resilience and innovation. *Encourage growth mindset:* Cultivate a culture where individuals embrace challenges and view failure as a stepping stone to mastery. By reframing failure as a learning opportunity, leaders create a culture where individuals feel empowered to take risks and innovate. Innovation and creativity serve as indispensable pillars for organisational success, igniting growth and enhancing competitiveness. To fully harness their potential, companies must foster a multifaceted approach that encompasses open communication, diversity and inclusion, resource provision and a healthy perspective on failure.

FOR FURTHER INFO
[BEST-HR-SOLUTIONS.COM](https://www.best-hr-solutions.com)

MEASURE FOR MEASURE

It is time for change - in essence, a shift in focus from KPIs to OKRs for measuring the productivity and strategic success of teams - to meet the needs of distributed and hyperconnected workforces, hybrid work models and the need for seamless, real-time collaboration within and across teams demands a well-defined, focused framework of measurements. This isn't to suggest that we abandon KPIs altogether - they certainly have their place - rather, integrating them with objectives and key OKRs.

"EXCESSIVE FOCUS ON A LEADER OR EXPERT RESULTS IN SLOW
DECISION-MAKING, PATH DEPENDENCE IN IDEAS, BURNOUT OF THAT
INDIVIDUAL AND LACK OF ENGAGEMENT FROM THE TEAM"



ARTICLE BY LORRIE LYKINS, VICE PRESIDENT, RESEARCH - I4CP

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By integrating specific KPIs into the OKR framework, organisations can align their measurements with strategic objectives, creating a robust system for tracking outcomes that also fuels innovation and collaboration. Combining the two approaches of measurement allows organisations to balance ambitious, bottom-line goals with practical operational efficiency that is also people focused. A recent study *The Team Network Effect: How Precision Collaboration Unleashes Productivity*^{*}, found that, while there is commonly a great deal of focus on managing performance at the organisational and individual level, too little attention - or none at all - is devoted to team performance, despite the reality that arguably the most substantive things that occur in organisations happens in and is driven by teams. The research found that people now move in and out of teams frequently and are typically on more teams than they have been before assigned to.

Clearly, conventional thinking about teams must evolve in tandem with new ways of working in technology. Failing to do so will render organisations unable to keep up with competitors that are adapting to new ideas, approaches and objectives to managing teams. But there is also a great deal of opportunity to improve the ways in which teams in businesses collaborate and doing so can impact employee engagement, innovation and operational efficiency, while maintaining employee focus, especially in hybrid work environments and among diverse, distributed teams. Simple remedies such as being intentional about how teams are assembled, how new members are integrated, how safeguards are put into place to prevent people from becoming overwhelmed - and raising the alarm if they are headed in that direction - can make a tremendous difference in the quality of interactions and collaboration in teams. An OKR/KPI hybrid framework can help address these and other elements such as team dysfunction and underperformance. Let us look at those. *Priority overload*: Excessive or misaligned goals are set by too many external stakeholders with

competing needs and demands, resulting in too many uncoordinated requests from disconnected stakeholders. *Misalignment*: Factions in the team create tensions and undue conflict; teams waste time on politics rather than content and decisions may be watered-down compromises rather than optimal choices. Team members do not trust other team members. *Hub and spoke syndrome*: Excessive focus on a leader or expert results in slow decision-making, path dependence in ideas, burnout of that individual and lack of engagement from the team. *Overwhelmed*: All team members are involved in all processes and communications, leading to insufficient time to do individual work, inefficient decision making, lower engagement and burnout. The organisational norm is saying yes to all work (versus prioritising in the moment).

"WHEN TEAM MEMBERS
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FROM THE TEAM'S CORE,
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ENGAGEMENT SUFFERS"

Disenfranchisement: When team members become disconnected from the team's core, expertise goes untapped, miscommunication rises dramatically and engagement suffers. Team members checking out due to overload, burnout or being assigned to work they do not care to do. *Isolated*: Ideas are developed in isolation from their context, downstream users of the output and experts outside the team; this is the typical failure of self-managed teams that operate with a high degree of autonomy to develop new products or projects. Team members rely on themselves rather than reaching out to new experts when project outcomes or priorities shift.

Adopting practices that enable employees to thrive and, in turn, the teams they are

part of to collaborate more precisely are more than worth the effort economically. And obtaining these results does not require a massive investment of time or money. Rather, it is accomplished by helping teams work and collaborate differently in today's hybrid world of work. In the context of teams, the quality of their collaborations and their performance, establishing OKRs provides a clear path forward, through identifying and articulate what the priorities are to ensure alignment. They also provide flexibility, particularly because they can be short-term goals that enable teams to react and adjust as needed in real-time - as opposed to KPIs, which are more often fixed and long-range. They make room for stretch - or even bold goals - that can spark imagination, innovation and new ways of thinking, because there's less pressure to maintain continuous momentum often brought by KPIs. They place emphasis on the end result, which fuels new ways of thinking and collaboration because the focus is less about activities. They encourage openness, trust and transparency and support a culture of continuous feedback, check-ins and other touch points, which can be invaluable in identifying and quickly addressing dysfunctional patterns that can result in underperformance. OKRs function as a holistic framework that provides teams with the clarity they need to enable collaboration, align with strategic objectives and foster a culture of innovation and accountability, while KPIs serve as the performance tracking tools. A combined framework of KPIs and OKRs can optimise team performance, spur productivity and drive business results because such a structure allows for more ambitious, quantifiable and time-based goals, while also fostering a balance between business objectives and employee wellbeing.

^{*}*The Team Network Effect: How Precision Collaboration Unleashes Productivity*, was Published by The Institute for Corporate Productivity (i4cp), co-authored by Rob Cross and Katheryn Brekken, Ph.D.

III

TALENT MANAGEMENT

THE KEY DRIVERS OF THIS RADICAL CHANGE ARE AI INTEGRATION, A TOUGH RECRUITMENT ENVIRONMENT - WITH UNRELIABLE SKILLS PIPELINES - AND EVOLVING EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS. CONSEQUENTLY, TALENT MANAGEMENT MUST EVOLVE TO A WIDER AND YET MORE AGILE STRATEGY TO ADDRESS WIDENING SKILLS GAPS - IMPLEMENT ONGOING RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING - AND NURTURING TALENT IN AN INCREASINGLY REMOTE AND AUTONOMOUS CULTURE, THROUGH EMBRACING FLEXIBLE AND REMOTE WORK ARRANGEMENTS AND TOOLS. THE GREAT RESET OF WORK, DUBBED WORKFORCE 2.0, REQUIRES A COMPLETE REIMAGINING OF TALENT MANAGEMENT.

THEHRDIRECTOR LINKEDIN POLL



theHRDIRECTOR @theHRDIRECTOR

Do you believe that talent in your organisation is well managed?



Yes

18%

No

82%

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ARTICLE BY JC TOWNEND, CEO - LHH (UK&I)

AWARENESS = IMPETUS

THE GLOBAL WORKFORCE OF THE FUTURE REPORT 2024* HAS FOUND THAT ALTHOUGH THE CURRENT ECONOMIC INSTABILITY MEANS THAT NEARLY THREE-QUARTERS (73 PERCENT) OF WORKERS GLOBALLY ARE CURRENTLY PLANNING TO STAY IN THEIR ROLES, MORE THAN HALF OF THESE (51 PERCENT) INDICATE THAT THEIR DECISION TO STAY IS CONTINGENT ON THEIR CONTINUED UPSKILLING AND CAREER PROGRESSION.

Employees are now much more in tune with their own career paths and development and yet often lack the tools to fulfil their growth opportunities within their existing companies, sometimes pushing them to look elsewhere. At the same time, HR teams sometimes struggle to keep up with rapidly changing career paths as tech changes roles substantially. Also, there can often be a misalignment between top-down career pathways and the individual ambitions of the employees themselves. A key part of the solution, therefore, is to put more information and power into the hands of the employees themselves - not just for upskilling - but for truly understanding how their ambitions fit with key needs in the company. This should incorporate learning all the techniques to land their next key role - from building their skills through formal training and gig assignments - to enhancing their reputation in the areas in which they are interested, as well as networking with key decision-makers and honing those same CV and interview skills they used externally. This requires effectively training supervisors to support them on this journey, to ensure that employees receive the right guidance, training and development. With the right career transition supporters - both software and career coaches - employees can

easily learn the skills to take charge of their own careers internally.

One company CEO announced: "Career development support has almost paradoxically made our employees more patient with their careers. Because we've put the power in their hands, they are no

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THEMSELVES"

longer frustrated, waiting for someone else to take action or for a desired role to come available, because they know they are doing the right things to build for their future role. Our most ambitious employees are staying with the company, because they know we are giving them the power to grow in their own unique pathways, defined by them". Providing career development support can help reduce redundancies by helping employees, across levels, to find real opportunities to transition into hard-to-fill roles in the company. Redundancies

are as prevalent as ever, indeed, the recent *Outplacement and Career Mobility 2024 Trends Report* found that more than half (51 percent) of UK HR leaders report their company is currently undertaking or considering, redundancies, with nearly two-thirds (65 percent) considering redeployments as an alternative to layoffs. However, sometimes companies have imposed redeployments in ways that meant less-suited candidates were squeezed into roles where they were less likely to be effective. Notably, the best redeployments are ones where the candidate is selected through a similar process as external candidates. Moving to a new role in a different department but within the same business can empower employees, as their potential and goals are recognised, giving them the choice to find the right growth opportunity. Unquestionably, the career development support these candidates have received will be crucial to successful moves within the company. In the current market, companies have a brief respite while employee moves are lower - but this will not last long - so now is the time for companies to invest in employee retention and attraction.

FOR FURTHER INFO
WWW.LHH.COM/UK/EN/



ARTICLE BY CLAIRE WHITEFORD, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER - JOIN TALENT

GAINS WITHOUT FRONTIERS

"ORGANISATIONS THAT EFFECTIVELY BRING THEIR EVP TO LIFE WILL SEE IT EVOLVE FROM MERE DOCUMENTATION OF BENEFITS TO A LIVING, BREATHING SHOWCASE OF THEIR WORKPLACE CULTURE"

As global borders diminish, organisations are presented with the potential to tap into a wider, more diverse pool of talent. But for those in risk-averse sectors, expanding into new geographies can feel challenging and, as a former risk practitioner, I understand this hesitation. Yet, recent workplace disruptions have yielded unexpected advantage for companies looking to expand their talent strategy and succession planning. Indeed, these changes present the chance to view workforces holistically, aligning employee aspirations with business needs, regardless of geography.

By actively facilitating talent mobility across regions, businesses have a phenomenal opportunity to enhance their Employee Value Proposition, not only as a tool for attracting talent but also for retaining those who aspire to live in multiple geographies - particularly now, as remote work becomes a key driver for many. Remote work isn't just a trend; it's a fundamental shift in how we approach work and productivity and is enabling businesses to hire top-tier talent from virtually anywhere. This flexibility, if communicated effectively, can serve as a massive differentiator in an increasingly competitive talent landscape. Highlighting how employees can balance both professional growth and personal aspirations, organisations can build an

authentic and attractive EVP that resonates on a global scale. Organisations that effectively bring their EVP to life will see it evolve from mere documentation of benefits to a living, breathing showcase of their workplace culture. Promoting employee-generated content is one of the most effective ways to bring the culture of the organisation to life. Videos and testimonials from employees sharing their roles and experiences vividly illustrate how the EVP of the organisation has afforded them opportunities and shaped their careers. This authenticity provides new employees with a true glimpse into the organisation's culture and values in the run up to and during, their onboarding. The expanding global approach to talent management has also transformed the

conversation around skills. Identifying skillsets within your organisation, regardless of geography, shifts the focus to nurturing those individuals and helping them with career progression.

When an organisation effectively communicates a focus on skills within its EVP, it becomes a beacon for individuals who are not only seeking a job but also a place where they can grow their skillset and achieve their personal development goals. A strong EVP can highlight the organisation's commitment to employee development, encouraging individuals to view their roles as part of a broader journey. This alignment of expectations fosters an environment where employees feel empowered to identify their own skill sets, nurturing them in ways that are

mutually beneficial to both the employee and the organisation. As employees see their growth aligned with the company's objectives, they become more engaged and invested in their work, which ultimately drives performance. Never has this been truer than now, being authentic and passionate about enabling individuals to develop and progress will be crucial to future TM. In doing so, businesses can future-proof their operations by continuously upskilling their existing workforce, ensuring they remain agile and adaptable to market changes. By focusing on career development, companies not only increase retention but also foster a culture of continuous learning and internal mobility. Employees are more likely to stay with organisations that invest in their future, especially in sectors where technological advancements are rapidly shifting the skills landscape. Thriving organisations continually ask how they can identify and nurture the skills they need for future success, ensuring they have a clear understanding of the skillsets across their workforce and are deploying strategies to enhance their existing resources. To succeed, companies must also focus on how they onboard and manage geographically distributed teams effectively. Understanding the full spectrum of channels available is critical to TM, as is the organisational approach to how that talent is moved internally within a business. Early careers, upskill & reskill, internal mobility, contingent labour, permanent/FTC hiring and services procurement, are all legitimate channels to help access talent globally. It's worth considering if you have a truly holistic strategy in place or a siloed approach with different channels, owned by a number of members in the C-suite.

The onboarding phase is a critical touchpoint in the employee journey, especially for those in remote roles. Indeed, effective onboarding goes beyond simply handing over documents or arranging virtual introductions; it's about embedding new hires into the organisational culture from day one. When executed well, onboarding can significantly impact employee satisfaction

and retention. Regular touchpoints, both formal and informal, help maintain a sense of belonging and alignment with organisational goals, making employees feel like integral parts of the business, regardless of where they are physically located. Onboarding platform tools help new employees feel connected and engaged by providing regular check-ins and pulse surveys. Keeping remote employees motivated and integrating them into the company culture are crucial for long-term retention. There are a number of approaches including; engaging pre-onboarding content, structured induction materials and

"WE MUST AVOID OVER-AUTOMATING ASPECTS OF EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE THAT ARE DEEPLY PERSONAL - MANAGING COMPASSIONATE LEAVE OR PAY REVIEWS - WHERE HUMAN INTERACTION IS STILL INVALUABLE"

ongoing support. Concurrently, managers play a key role in ensuring employees feel welcomed and supported, while regular team calls, virtual hobby clubs and geographically-based 'squad calls' keep employees informed and connected. Additionally, branded merchandise provides a strong feeling of belonging for teams, regardless of which geography they are based in.

As organisations increasingly turn to AI to enhance their people processes, they can leverage data-driven insights to personalise the experience for each employee. AI can help identify potential challenges early on and suggest tailored resources, creating a more engaging and supportive employee journey that meet individual's needs. By integrating AI into processes, companies can ensure that employees receive the guidance and support they need to thrive, ultimately

setting the foundation for long-term success. AI also plays a transformative role in the future of talent management. From gamified assessments to personalised learning paths, AI is enhancing how organisations enable employees to develop their skills. A data-driven approach allows organisations to make more informed decisions about recruitment, development and retention strategies while enhancing the employee experience. However, it's crucial to maintain the right balance. While AI can improve efficiency, we must avoid over-automating aspects of employee experience that are deeply personal - managing compassionate leave or pay reviews - where human interaction is still invaluable. As remote and flexible work arrangements continue to rise, fostering employee autonomy is crucial. By focusing on autonomy and flexibility, organisations can boost employee satisfaction, creativity and productivity, aligning with the evolving expectations of the modern workforce.

At the heart of all of this is listening to your employees. A culture of open feedback, supported by pulse surveys and an open-door policy, ensures that employees feel heard. It's not enough to gather feedback, it must be acted upon. Initiatives like 'you said, we listened' are powerful ways to demonstrate that employee input is valued and acted upon, fostering deeper engagement. Organisations that will emerge as leaders in this era of workplace disruption are those that embrace innovation, listen to their people and continuously evolve their people strategies in line with the changing world of work. Ultimately, the ability to adapt and thrive hinges on recognising that talent is not merely a resource to be managed, but a dynamic force that, when nurtured and empowered, can drive unparalleled success. Cultivating an environment where talent feels valued and aligned with the organisation's mission will set the stage for sustained innovation and achievement.

FOR FURTHER INFO
[JOINTALENT.NET](https://www.jointalent.net)

UNITY IN DIVERSITY

Diversity-of-thought and capability make an organisation richer socially and literally. Yet it is inclusion that unlocks people's talents and skills, while equity that retains talented staff and attracts others who feel represented. DEI requires a reset of workplace culture, where innovation and creativity springs from a wide set of experiences and perspectives. One of the most common mistakes employers make, is to take a surface approach to diversity which at best is half-hearted and at worst smacks of tokenism.

"WHILE EMPLOYERS MUST BE AWARE OF DIVERSITY, THEIR
PRIMARY FOCUS MUST BE ON TALENT AND POTENTIAL. COMMITTING
TO THIS WILL YIELD REWARDS"



ARTICLE BY PAUL SESAY, CEO AND FOUNDER - INCLUSIVE COMPANIES



Seeing diverse people thrive in a workplace makes the business very attractive. But the building blocks must be in place to engage with people from diverse backgrounds. Be aware that some people from a minority background may have talent, but lack confidence. If they are the first in their family or community to take on such a role, they may need a mentor or sponsor to support them. As their confidence grows in line with their skills, they will thrive. People who have experienced adversity and overcome obstacles have learned how to adapt, manage and be resilient. They are often the most extraordinary colleagues and go on to be fantastic mentors for others following in their footsteps. While employers must be aware of diversity, their primary focus must be on talent and potential. Committing to this will yield rewards, by bringing the best out of people.

Organisations struggle to find diverse talent in the first place - they advertise and publicise - but no one applies and that is usually because the advert is in the wrong place. If you want to attract diverse talent, you need to appeal directly in their community. For example, I know of a bank based in an Asian community, which has not one Asian in its workforce, because their senior leaders based in the city centre make the recruitment decisions. To succeed, they needed to engage with local community organisations and senior leaders to find where best to advertise jobs to attract the right talent. So, think local - Job Centres, councils and recruitment fairs based in a diverse area - will take you to the heart of the community you are trying to reach. Ask colleagues from a diverse background who they know and where they would advise you look, they will relish the chance to bring about change. It makes sense to advertise roles in media which your target audience reads - not the usual industry press - but publications such as *The Voice*, *Ability Today* and numerous online platforms that speak to the heart of respective communities. Of course, recruiting diverse talent is just the start, next they must be onboarded, engaged and retained and that requires a more

innovative approach to talent management that incorporates inclusion and equality, to make people feel valued.

Integration is the key to providing a sense of belonging with networks the best foundation for this - not only for those representing certain protected characteristics - but for all employees, to make people aware of their colleagues' backgrounds and experiences. Indeed, successful networks increase tolerance and understanding, decrease discrimination and encourage diverse talent to thrive. Network chairs need to be given the agency to speak up and a direct line to the

"FIRST, DECLARE
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BUILD EMPATHY AND TRUST"

CEO/C-suite/changemakers. Better still, senior colleagues should join the networks - not as a token representation - but as a sincere commitment. Also, beware of balance among networks and be mindful of some gaining more support and recognition than others. Of course, the success of a network relies on people joining and so champion people who show passion and appetite and the best network leaders are those with a story to tell who can bring people with them. That said, this is not just a passion project and network leaders need to be accountable and this gives them the potential to drive an organisation forward, by using feedback from their sessions to shape the way the business works. Everyone, irrespective of their ethnicity, politics, religion and sexuality, should be able to go to work and excel in their job, feeling safe while they do it. It is important to be informed and stay alert to what is going on in the outside world that may be making staff feel unsafe. From the Black

Lives Matter movement, to the recent riots and the current religious unrest relating to Israel and Gaza, such issues where inclusivity and tolerance are limited can make people feel unsafe. Here, networks must be supported to address these issues and be mindful that colleagues will fall on both sides of the divide. This means encouraging dialogue on intersectionality and tolerance will go a long way to alleviating stress.

The diversity is in the detail and so analyse the data, run anonymous employee engagement surveys and drill down to the lived experiences across the workforce. Learning from what this data shows, you can devise training, inclusive policies and appropriate networks. Repeat the survey process annually to benchmark your progress. Having a diverse talent pool will enhance a business and brand reputation in terms of recruiting further people. It goes without saying that senior management buy-in is crucial for safeguarding staff and has to start with the CEO. What they say and do will have a huge impact across the rest of the organisation. First, declare zero tolerance on discrimination or bullying of anybody within the workforce. Then share their story and invite others to follow suit to build empathy and trust. Training is important but storytelling is vital. It is through storytelling that people can relate to the journeys of their colleagues. There is nothing more powerful than somebody who has come from a diverse background, engaged with their workplace and progressed. Don't be afraid to make mistakes, EDI is a journey for individuals and organisations and diverse talent will appreciate your effort and commitment even if things aren't perfect. Finally, remember that recruiting and retaining diverse talent is an investment in money as well as time and effort. Don't be tempted to cut your EDI budget when times are hard. Diverse talent always makes an organisation richer culturally and literally.

FOR FURTHER INFO
WWW.INCLUSIVECOMPANIES.CO.UK

GHOSTS IN THE MACHINE

WHAT IS TO BECOME OF HUMAN TALENT IN THE TIME OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE? THE PATH TO TALENT HAS UNIVERSAL STEPS - CURIOSITY, AMBITION, FOCUS, DILIGENCE AND AN UNWAVERING GROWTH MINDSET - OFTEN GUIDED BY A COACH OR PROVOCATEUR. BUT WORKFORCE 2.0 DEMANDS A REIMAGINING OF TM, IN A WORLD OF WORK THAT IS SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT TO WHICH TM WAS ORIGINALLY DESIGNED FOR.

ARTICLE BY MATTHEW COLLINGTON, HR DIRECTOR - (FORMERLY PILGRIM'S FOOD MASTER)

Studies by Gallup and Deloitte respectively, both show that high performance and engagement don't always stem from office work. Remote workers often orchestrate their day more effectively, blending work with growth and uncovering more learning opportunities than in a chaotic office environment. The old rule of PIE still stands: Performance is key for moving up, but it's also important to develop a strong image and be exposed to those who may influence your future career success. When assessing talent, it is key to determine at which of three levels a person operates: Are they sinking beneath their role, overwhelmed by tasks? Are they handling the daily grind at the level of their position? Or do they rise above their role, diving deep when needed, but mostly engaging in strategic activities? AI should elevate everyone's performance by easing the load of mundane tasks - and will help identify valuable skills - to learn and create a more efficient development schedule, covering all aspects of learning, from compliance to technical skills. Indeed, AI should create more space to grow, but the 10,000 hours of work to achieve mastery remains. It is essential to clearly define what constitutes talent within a business and empower individuals to master those skills and competencies.

In the era of Workforce 2.0, it is crucial to enable employees to be confident in AI. Ensure that everyone has a basic understanding of ChatGPT, provide Copilot to all, and include basic, intermediate, and advanced AI courses in the online curriculum. Consider early investments in specific process AI tools so everyone can become involved. Then Behind the tools, foster a culture of talent and growth, with leaders, inclusive of all team members, engaging in regular development-based coaching with everyone, with a conscious intent to cultivate

their potential. Focusing solely on those rated highest in tools such as the 9-box grid diminishes the overall potential of the business. A fresh, inclusive and abundant approach to talent and potential should be the leader mindset, there may be people in the team for whom AI is the catalyst to release their nascent talents. Leaders should ensure they are personally invested in learning the fundamentals of AI and be early adopters of tools and encourage their team members to do the same. It pays to keep curious and seek to understand the key attributes that will support growth and fuel a career within the organisation. Seek a coach or mentor and identify what you do best and determine what is needed to develop mastery in this area.

Organisations must strike a delicate balance between skills and ensuring well-rounded competencies, which include experiences, behaviours, and attitudes. Skills-based approaches offer flexibility in hiring and agile development, providing targeted training. Advocates of AI-driven hiring and development toolkits may overemphasise the skills agenda, as it aligns seamlessly with their tools' lexicon. However do recall the lessons from the multi-skilling movement of the 1990s. While it increased flexibility and efficiency, it ultimately faltered due to costs, quality concerns and increased workload and disengagement from employees. Workforce 2.0 presents a remarkable opportunity to rejuvenate the entire employee lifecycle through the integration of technology and human psychology. Defining talent should be based on the specific needs of the business, supported by research and high employee participation.

FOR FURTHER INFO
[WWW.LINKEDIN.COM/IN/
MATTHEWCOLLINGTON/?ORIGINALSUBDOMAIN=UK](http://WWW.LINKEDIN.COM/IN/MATTHEWCOLLINGTON/?ORIGINALSUBDOMAIN=UK)



“Sometimes you find a partner, where the investment of them in your business is almost as great as the investment you have in your own business...”

Former VP Head of CIS Europe, DHL Express



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IV

FUTURE OF RECRUITMENT

STILL THEY BUILD THEM, BUT WILL THEY COME? IN THE WAKE OF THE PANDEMIC, HYBRID/FLEXIBLE/REMOTE WORKING, BECAME AN AS-STANDARD EXPECTATION IN RECRUITMENT. BUT BETWEEN JUNE 2023 AND JUNE 2024, ONLY 31 PERCENT OF ALL JOB ADVERTS EXPLICITLY MENTIONED IT, WHILE KEY EMPLOYERS HAVE BEEN ORDERING PEOPLE BACK TO THE OFFICE. THIS UNEXPECTED TURN OF THE TIDE PARADOXICALLY COINCIDES WITH THE UPCOMING EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS (FLEXIBLE WORKING) ACT 2024, WHICH ALLOWS EMPLOYEES TO REQUEST CHANGES TO THEIR WORK PATTERNS FROM DAY ONE OF THEIR EMPLOYMENT. SO HOW SHOULD RECRUITERS REACT TO THIS DICHOTOMY IN TRENDS AND WHAT OTHER ISSUES MUST BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION?

THEHRDIRECTOR LINKEDIN POLL



theHRDIRECTOR @theHRDIRECTOR
Do you think that the way your organisation recruits is in line with today's candidate expectations?



If you have an opinion on any of the articles featured in this section, please share it by going to this link www.linkedin.com/company/thehrdirector



ARTICLE BY LUKE SHIPLEY, CEO AND FOUNDER - ZINC

PARANORMAL ACTIVITY

THE TERM "GHOSTING", WHICH WAS ONCE ASSOCIATED WITH THE DATING WORLD TO DESCRIBE ABRUPTLY CUTTING OFF COMMUNICATION WITHOUT EXPLANATION, HAS NOW FOUND ITS WAY INTO THE WORKPLACE. THIS IS A PHENOMENON WHICH HAS NOW BECOME A COMMON CHALLENGE BOTH FOR THOSE MANAGING POOLS OF CANDIDATES, AS WELL AS THE CANDIDATES THEMSELVES.

The way we recruit has undergone significant changes in recent years, especially with the rise of remote and hybrid work environments. Recruiters might ghost a candidate to indirectly signal that they are no longer being considered for a role, often to avoid a potentially uncomfortable conversation. On the other hand, candidates might ghost a hiring manager, due to various factors such as; a lengthy hiring process, poor communication, or personal reasons beyond the company's control. HR teams across the country are feeling the strain, with more than half of businesses citing ambitious hiring goals this year. In this context, it's understandable that hiring managers may become overly focused on attracting new talent, sometimes at the expense of maintaining a positive experience for current candidates in the interview process. Candidate ghosting can occur at any point in the hiring process, whether right after the first email or even at the job offer stage, with jobseekers skipping scheduled job interviews, while others report that businesses have missed their phone interviews. While many reasons for ghosting are beyond the hiring manager's control, they should take charge of what they can, by ensuring a smooth candidate experience, guiding them through the process and creating the most positive interactions possible. Large companies are increasingly prioritising the speed of

hiring as their top metric, but while this focus may help in securing qualified candidates more quickly, many businesses still struggle with slow hiring processes, due to resource constraints. Ultimately,

"ULTIMATELY, THE CHALLENGE IS TO BALANCE THE NEED FOR FAST RECRUITMENT, WITH THE IMPORTANCE OF A SEAMLESS CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE"

the challenge is to balance the need for fast recruitment, with the importance of a seamless candidate experience. While speed is crucial for bringing new talent on board, hiring managers must also pay attention to the pacing and management of the entire candidate journey.

Put yourself in a candidate's shoes, you are in the midst of interviewing with five different companies, dedicating countless hours to preparing and trying to make the best possible impression on each hiring manager. Finally, after an interview you feel went particularly well, you are told to expect a response soon, but weeks go by without any word from the hiring manager. At this point the feeling of abandonment is understandable

and the candidate's impression of the company can only be negative. For hiring managers, it is crucial to show candidates that their time and effort are valued, by ensuring timely communication is key to this. No one benefits when a candidate is left waiting indefinitely for feedback and it creates stress on both sides. Assuming candidates are applying for multiple roles, the challenge for the hiring manager is clear, how to make the candidate feel valued, special and engaged, without dragging out the hiring process unnecessarily. Clearly, human interaction is vital and cannot be fully replaced by technology. So, the evidence is clear, prolonged hiring processes can drive candidates away, increasing the risk of ghosting and harming the company's brand. Even if a candidate isn't selected, personalised rejection emails are crucial. Indeed, more than half of rejected applicants don't even receive any formal rejection, which served to highlight serious flaws in many hiring practices. Ultimately, businesses must ensure a positive candidate experience from start to finish and by automating time-consuming tasks with the right tools, companies can maintain the human touch, maintain consistent communication, keep candidates engaged and reduce the likelihood of ghosting.

FOR FURTHER INFO
ZINCRECRUITMENT.CO.UK



ARTICLE BY ROGER CLEMENTS, CHIEF GROWTH OFFICER - MATRIX

CROSSROADS

"WHAT ON EARTH IS DETERRING OVER TWO-THIRDS OF RECRUITERS FROM SELLING THEIR ORGANISATIONS ON THE BASIS OF THEIR HYBRID OFFER? WHY ARE FLAGSHIP BUSINESSES DRAGGING PEOPLE BACK TO THEIR DESKS?"

The integration of automation, data analytics and AI has undeniably brought important efficiencies that are transforming processes for the better. But as Amazon steps back from using AI-enabled application screening in its candidate selection process - while Google, Apple and Meta are discouraging hybrid working - recruitment finds itself at a crossroads. Between June 2023 and June 2024, only 31 percent of all job adverts explicitly mentioned hybrid working which flies in the face of the upcoming Employment Relations (Flexible Working) Act 2024.

There is a growing unease about digitalising the recruitment process. It may well be saving time and resources, but is it helping organisations recruit better, more appropriate candidates? Is it driving the critical diversity, equity and inclusivity (DEI) agenda? With so many technologies now able to deliver live support to candidates, via video assessments or going through the assessment processes, tech savvy candidates can enable their AI-driven intelligent assistants to support them pretty much through the entire recruitment cycle, without the employer noticing. Traditional hiring managers simply aren't equipped with the experience and knowledge to tell the difference between those candidates that are being assisted by technology and those applying through their own endeavours. This is

understandably creating a nervousness around smart technology, but why are the tectonic plates of arguably the two biggest trends in the workplace suddenly starting to shift? What's behind the impending recruitment earthquake? Where do the fault lines lie? How can we avert disaster for employers and candidates? There is no more obvious place to start than flexible working, what on earth is deterring over two-thirds of recruiters from selling their organisations on the basis of their hybrid offer? Why are flagship businesses dragging people back to their desks? It's as if the pandemic never happened. Have organisations forgotten the need for flexibility and agility should another pandemic or similarly disruptive event occur? The hope is that we've all learned from the past and that the rapid rise of digital connectivity enables remote

working as, when it's needed. Surely our memories aren't that short. No, the growing hybrid hangover is more to do with the impact the trend is having on culture, socialisation, motivation and morale. After a couple of years of hybrid working, the disadvantages are becoming increasingly apparent. From an employer perspective, a disparate workforce can damage team spirit and hinder the ability to rally employees behind the brand and a common purpose. Creating a sense of belonging can drive a business forward, heightening motivation and morale. This is also important for employees, who want to feel part of something, which many are being starved of when offices close down and they are forced to work 'home alone'. The sudden change and lack of social face-to-face interaction can negatively impact mental health and wellbeing.

Surprisingly, it seems to be the new kids on the recruitment ladder that are most averse to working remotely. Yes, Generation Z may be digital natives, but that doesn't mean they want to sit at home in front of their computer screen, when they could be socialising in a far more personal and interactive way in the office with their colleagues. It could be said that they spend so much leisure time staring at a screen, that they crave deeper collaboration and social connections at work. Why should they be denied having a regular drink with their colleagues to let off some steam at the end of a tough working day? But does this mean the days of hybrid working are numbered? That is unlikely and unwelcome, considering the balance it can give to employees with families who waste valuable time on the commute. In that sentence lies a hint of what the future probably holds, although hybrid working is not a one-size-fits-all approach, there is no doubt that more careful thought needs to be put into the flexible offering. This should start with the workforce, how do they want to work? How does this fit in with the work that needs to be done? Is it possible to create an offer that is sympathetic with different people's lifestyles and demographic? How can you help a hybrid workforce come together to bond and socialise on a regular basis? The answer is choice and flexibility, led by an inclusive and carefully considered strategy. We can all now work anywhere thanks to digital technology, but where can we work best and happiest?

Thanks to digital innovation, we are also supposed to be working smarter, but in the recruitment sphere, perhaps we are not working quite intelligently enough. Automation, particularly the more sophisticated applications using AI to power the selection and shortlisting process, has massively reduced time and cost, driving efficiency. Where traditionally you would have teams of recruiters sifting through CVs to create a manageable short list, this can now be managed by intelligent automation, which is proving transformational. The key is understanding and being

thoughtful about where you apply the humans to the process. In response to fears over candidates chat-botting themselves into a role, employers are beginning to change their selection process. They are finding that intelligent automation is perfect for carrying out the technical side of interviews. Most of the time, skills can be assessed using smart technology, but what technology cannot do is manage the cultural side. That is where the human touch is proving essential, in identifying candidates that are the right cultural fit. DEI is another area where intelligent automation has been deployed with worrying results.

"AS THE LANDSCAPE OF
OUR INDUSTRY CONTINUES
TO EVOLVE, WE SHOULD
REMAIN STEADFAST IN
OUR COMMITMENT TO
MAINTAINING THIS DELICATE
BALANCE"

Amazon recently stopped using AI for their selection process because it was perpetuating EDI issues. Because intelligent automation cannot (yet) think for itself, it learns from previous behaviours, by finding patterns and trends in data. So, if you have recruiters making hiring decisions based on their own preference and bias, overtly or subconsciously in terms of ethnicity, gender, class, cultural and social standing, amongst others, all AI does is respond to patterns in the data and replicate this behaviour. This makes matters worse rather than better, actually perpetuating the problem. The answer is to analyse independent data to discover why decisions are being made and identify patterns of behaviour that encourage DEI. These can then be used as a template to drive an unbiased approach to the shortlisting process. Another key area where current automation techniques fall down is reasonable adjustments.

The levels of sophistication are simply not there and may never be. Indeed, the human element is vital to make the subtle and empathetic judgements needed in complex areas, such as disabilities.

As mentioned, Gen Z's needs might reach further than access superfast digital experience, they also want simplicity and personalisation. The biggest thing that tends to frustrate the younger cohorts - as well as older digital natives - are experiences that are not personalised. What they actually want is a choice with respect to how they are being engaged. If the experience is not good enough, it is an immediate turn off and so once again, that old cliché one-size-does-not-fit-all, applies in the world of intelligent automation. Digitalisation holds the key to faster, more efficient HR, screening and recruitment in the future, as well as enabling flexible working. But the true leaders in this evolving and complex landscape are those that can strike the right balance between technology innovation and human empathy. This means using the latest forms of data analytics, smart personalisation and automation to streamline processes to deliver a more efficient and engaging service. But managing and informing this with human expertise and intelligently thought-out strategy is fundamental to outcome, along with that personalised human interaction where it's needed. Achieving this optimal balance is a strategic imperative. Digitalisation should enhance, not eclipse, human interaction. As the landscape of our industry continues to evolve, we should remain steadfast in our commitment to maintaining this delicate balance. By harnessing the power of technology while preserving the invaluable human element, we can empower organisations to attract top talent and foster meaningful connections that transcend mere transactions leaving a legacy of respect, empathy, and authenticity in the hearts and minds of candidates everywhere.

FOR FURTHER INFO
TEAMMATRIX.COM

MILITARY MANOEUVRES

As we are all very aware, AI is no longer a technology of the distant future, it is changing the way we work at a rapid rate and the statistics back this up, with 80 percent of executives surveyed reporting that they regard AI as a transformative force within their sector. Unquestionably, using AI for recruitment purposes has several benefits, including improved efficiency, reduction of bias and cost savings, but could it take the soul out of recruitment?

"PEOPLE STILL RESPOND TO THOSE INTRINSICALLY HUMAN CONCEPTS OF VALUES AND CULTURE, WHEN CHOOSING WHICH JOBS TO HIT THE 'APPLY NOW' BUTTON FOR"



ARTICLE BY DANIELLE GOWER, HEAD OF TALENT ACQUISITION - EXPLEO

With the current unemployment rate at a record low - and specific skills in engineering and technology in high demand - it has been a candidate's market for some time now, with high-calibre talent able to cherry-pick which company they want to work for. In these highly competitive times, the recruitment sector has embraced innovative new ways of working, adopting traditional marketing techniques to feed candidates into the recruitment funnel. Indeed, showcasing a company's values, culture and development opportunities helps candidates imagine themselves in a new role and they are more likely to apply. These attraction campaigns are a world away from the simple job ad and partner particularly well with the employee value proposition and employer brand, helping to paint a picture of the overall employee experience. One of the best examples of this type of recruitment marketing is the Royal Navy's *Made in The Royal Navy* campaign. Starting with a 60-second TV ad, the campaign shows a boy's journey from childhood to adulthood, highlighting how joining the Navy helped him grow. This campaign marked a shift from focusing on functional offerings to emphasising personal development and it was a huge success - the campaign increased interest tenfold - requiring call centres to double staff. Vice Admiral Sir David Steel even referenced it in his resignation speech, saying: "I was born in Walthamstow, but I was made in The Royal Navy." As a global engineering and technology business, we have adopted a similar approach to attracting talent - especially when targeting hard-to-recruit talent pools. Because of our engineering focus in sectors including automotive, aerospace and defence, we have developed an attraction campaign that targets highly-trained and capable candidates from the forces. Not only does this help us to fill skills gaps, it offers members of the ex-forces community the opportunity to build a second career.

There are 2.4 million veterans in the UK, around 48,000 of which were engineers in the forces. To highlight opportunities in our business, we run an attraction campaign that directly targets

veterans looking to transfer their skills and experience to a corporate role and we work closely with our ex-forces colleagues, to understand the landscape and choose specific channels for our campaigns that we know our target audience will visit, including jobs boards like SaluteMyJob and events such as, DSEI and the Farnborough Air Show. The personalised, human-centred approach to developing talent acquisition campaigns has delivered results too and we are proud to employ many people who are taking their first

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career steps beyond the forces with us and have found a welcoming home in the ex-forces community we've built. One of our colleagues is Steve Elce, who is Head of Cybersecurity in the UK at Expleo. Steve joined, in May 2022, bringing with him 24-years of distinguished service in the forces with him. As a former IT & Telecommunications specialist, he transitioned from The Royal Lancers to a leadership role in cybersecurity at Expleo and his forces career clearly equipped him with essential skills, including technical expertise in IT and telecommunications, leadership skills and a deep understanding of cybersecurity and technology. Steve now leads the cybersecurity practice in the UK, applying his expertise to protect clients from cyber threats and his journey highlights the importance of adaptability and resilience, qualities he credits to his time in the forces. Reflecting on how these skills are invaluable in his current role, he said: "The military taught me to anticipate obstacles and plan several steps ahead." Steve's transition was supported by connecting with other veterans and providing opportunities to leverage his expertise in technical delivery and

governance. Now, he is building our cybersecurity practice, demonstrating how personalised, human-centred talent acquisition can successfully help ex-forces talent to establish their second career and is a highly-valued member of the corporate culture.

Although I strongly believe in the power of personalisation in talent attraction campaigns to address specific skills gaps, there is no denying that technology also has a role to play. Once an attraction campaign has brought candidates into the recruitment funnel, technology - like AI-powered chatbots - can provide tailored answers to questions about specific roles, eligibility criteria and the application process. Personally, I don't believe bots should ever replace the human touch, because recruiters will always be need to understand candidate motivations and build relationships. But tech like this has huge potential, such as recommending other available positions to candidates, based on their interests, which ultimately helps to provide a better employee experience. From a recruiter's perspective, AI can help optimise the recruitment tech stack, providing valuable insight into which tools and platforms that might best suit a particular organisation's needs. AI tools can also help reduce bias and promote diversity in the recruitment process. For example, they can be used to remove identifiable information from applications, ensuring that evaluation is based solely on the candidate's skills and experience. It's important to strike the right balance between using technology to streamline recruitment processes and find the right people without sucking the soul out of talent acquisition. A recruiter's ability to feel empathy and understand what candidates are looking for - while balancing with the needs of the business - is key to finding and hiring top talent. In this fiercely competitive market, an organisation's ability to offer personalised recruitment campaigns that speak directly to its target audience is going to be crucial in plugging the skills gap and winning the war on talent.

FOR FURTHER INFO
[EXPLEO.COM](https://www.expleo.com)

THE V.I.P.s

THE TALENT LANDSCAPE HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY COMPETITIVE, WITH SKILLED WORKERS IN HIGH DEMAND AND TRADITIONAL HIRING METHODS NO LONGER EFFECTIVE. THIS CHALLENGE IS PARTICULARLY EVIDENT IN THE PREVALENCE OF HARD-TO-FILL POSITIONS AND A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF JOBS - ESPECIALLY THOSE REQUIRING HIGHER LEVELS OF SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE - REMAIN OPEN FOR AN AVERAGE OF 60 DAYS OR MORE.

ARTICLE BY TRACY STANTON, SVP CLIENT SERVICES, EMEA - MAGNIT

A surge in AI technology adoption has heated up demand for professionals proficient in AI and machine learning (ML), piling more pressure on recruiters, as organisations try to compete for a limited pool of candidates with cutting-edge technical skills. This trend is notably pronounced in sectors such as industrial and electrical engineering, as well as FS markets, particularly the insurance industry. So, promoting and supporting flexible hiring practices, while others rail back, could gain an advantage. Looking across borders reveals some interesting trends, such as the fact that, for example, while London remains a hub for software engineers, recent data shows that Prague's metropolitan area offers a higher professional-to-job-posting ratio. Organisations should conduct this sort of analyses for critical roles, potentially partnering with third-party experts to determine the best expansion strategies for their unique situations, while considering how to implement genuine flexibility in their workforce. While many employers have taken "flexibility" to mean the ability to work remotely, it's about so much more than that. True flexibility in the workplace means making accommodations based on individual circumstances and making it a part of the organisation's ethos across the extended workforce.

Another creative approach involves prioritising worker experience through innovative training programmes and clear career development pathways. With high-skill roles becoming harder to fill, organisations are investing in their employees' growth. Using data and AI-driven technology, organisations can identify skills gaps within their current talent set and opportunities to upskill existing workers to fill these gaps. This approach not only attracts new talent, but also retains and develops existing employees. Leveraging advanced analytics and machine learning algorithms, those firms that are implementing skills-based hiring and retention strategies with precision are able to gain an edge.

Indeed, AI-driven tools can analyse vast amounts of workforce data to predict future skill requirements and match candidates to roles based on their capabilities, rather than just their credentials and create personalised development plans for each employee. This aligns with a common question from prospective employees now which is, "what does internal progression look like at your company"? So being able to show structured career paths, which provide a clear framework outlining advancement opportunities within the organisation, give candidates visibility on their potential trajectory and how to achieve it. By prioritising worker experience through these multifaceted approaches, companies can build a workforce that is not only skilled, but also deeply engaged and committed. This strategy helps organisations thrive in the rapidly evolving business landscape, ensuring their continued competitiveness in an increasingly challenging market.

A third innovative strategy involves turning to Managed Service Provider (MSP) partnerships. This not only accelerates the job-filling process but also provides flexibility to withstand economic volatility and access diverse global talent pools. Vendor-neutral MSPs, unaffiliated with specific staffing agencies, offer unbiased access to a broad talent pool. This model incentivises suppliers to present their best candidates at competitive rates, leading to improved talent quality and cost-effectiveness. It also provides greater access to niche, diverse and geographically dispersed talent - a crucial advantage in the global marketplace. With support from local experts offering up-to-the-minute insights, companies can quickly adapt their hiring strategies to changing market conditions and talent availability. By implementing these creative strategies, organisations can not only fill roles more efficiently, they can also stay ahead of market trends and regulatory changes.

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WHERE'S THE RESPECT?

IN TODAY'S POLITICAL ARENA, RESPECT HAS BECOME SCARCE - THE 2024 UK ELECTIONS AND U.S. POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS REVEALED A TROUBLING SPECTACLE - WITH CANDIDATES ENGAGING IN INFANTILE JIBES AND POPULIST MUDSLINGING, RATHER THAN DISCUSSING POLICIES. THIS BEHAVIOUR IS COMMONPLACE IN POLITICS, AS IT HAS BEEN FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS, BUT NOW AMPLIFIED THROUGH THE MEGAPHONE OF SOCIAL MEDIA.



ARTICLE BY THOM DENNIS, CEO - SERENITY IN LEADERSHIP

As riots erupt and public figures face increasing vilification, we're left to ponder a crucial question: in the realm of leadership and public discourse, where has all the respect gone? Imagine job candidates behaving like politicians during interviews - they'd be shown the door immediately. Yet in politics, character assassination is typical and inflames deep divisions among voters. The result? A decimation of public trust in leadership and democratic institutions and a damaging polarisation of people. Citizens increasingly view politics as a toxic arena rather than a platform for addressing societal issues. This degradation of discourse not only undermines the political process but also sets a troubling example for public behaviour. Indeed, around the world, we are witnessing a leadership crisis unfold.

The erosion of respect in leadership has far-reaching consequences. In 2023, France saw months of protests over pension reforms, while Israel faced widespread demonstrations against judicial overhauls. In the U.S., the storming of the Capitol showcased how inflammatory rhetoric can escalate to

violence. The revelations of the Grenfell Enquiry of corruption, greed, laziness, buck-passing, systemic failings, arrogance and the immorality of the companies involved are grim. When leaders fail to engage with opposing views or popular concerns with a level of respect that enables people to feel heard, the eventual results are the breakdown of societal cohesion and trust between the ruling elite and the general population. It would be unforgivable for us to continue down the same road when it is so clear this is what is happening. Respectful leadership is crucial for effective governance and social harmony and we really need it now. When leaders show care, transparency and vulnerability, it fosters an environment of trust and cooperation.

To restore respect in leadership, there are opportunities for systemic change. Media outlets could prioritise substantive policy discussions over sensationalism, as seen in some Nordic countries where public broadcasting maintains high standards of political coverage. Voters can demand better by supporting candidates who demonstrate respectful behaviour and by engaging in civil discourse themselves.

HR professionals can play their part by implementing leadership development programmes that focus on self-awareness, ethics and empathetic decision-making.

Education systems can emphasise critical thinking and civic responsibility, as Finland has done with its anti-fake news initiatives. Political parties can consider adopting codes of conduct that penalise disrespectful behaviour. Leaders themselves can step up, following the example of figures like Nelson Mandela, who used dialogue to heal deep societal divisions in post-apartheid South Africa. The absence of respect is leading to division, unrest, ineffective governance and eventually social collapse, but there is hope. It is time for all to recognise that respect is not a sign of weakness, but a cornerstone of strong, effective leadership. Only then can we address the complex challenges of our time and build a more collaborative, cooperative, productive, and community-oriented society. Will the real leaders, those rooted in ethics, truthfulness, transparency and respect please stand up.

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WWW.SERENITYINLEADERSHIP.COM

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WELCOME TO THIS ISSUE'S ROUND UP OF THE PEOPLE AT THE TOP OF THE HR & PEOPLE MANAGEMENT PROFESSION, WHO HAVE MOVED TO NEW JOB ROLES.



Ade Rawcliffe

ROLE CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER
COMPANY ITV

Ade Rawcliffe has been named ITV's new Chief People Officer, effective from January 2025.

As Chief People Officer, Ade will take responsibility for the Group Human Resources and Global Risk Operations teams, including Duty of Care, in addition to her DEI responsibilities. She has over 20 years of experience working in the television industry, having started her career in production across the independent sector and at the BBC. Her career also includes a ten-year stint leading the Creative Diversity team at Channel 4, before joining ITV in 2017 as the Head of Diversity Commissioning and subsequently promoted to Director of Creative Diversity. Ade has led the development of ITV's £80 million Diversity Commissioning Fund, launched new inclusive internal talent initiatives like ITV's leadership programme *Amplify*.

Helene Williamson

ROLE GLOBAL PEOPLE DIRECTOR
COMPANY THE DOT GROUP

The Dot Group has announced the appointment of Helene Williamson as Global People Director.

Helene will join Dot's growing and experienced Executive Leadership Team, bringing a wealth of experience and a proven track record in human resource management and organisational development. She will be instrumental in shaping and executing human resource strategies that align with The Dot Group's vision of being the global leader in student living. She will focus on fostering a cohesive and dynamic organisational culture, working with leaders to deliver exceptional employee experience, and developing diverse global talent. With a focus on data-driven strategies, Helene's role will be fundamental in embedding market-leading practices that will drive sustained growth for The Dot Group. Helene has extensive experience, highlighting her capability to lead large-scale human resource initiatives and drive organisational success. Her global and diverse experience will be instrumental in enhancing the Group's capabilities and supporting growth.

Rosamund King

ROLE CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER
COMPANY PRAXIS

Real-estate platform Praxis appoints Rosamund King as its new CPO, as it strengthens its senior leadership team.

As a member of the group board, Rosamund will have responsibility for all people functions across the business and will be responsible for implementing a strategic HR framework that aligns with, and propels, Praxis' growth ambitions. She has more than 15 years of

experience leading people agendas. King started her career specialising in financial services recruitment and had subsequent senior roles in banking and professional services, most recently at First Bank. Rosamund will be taking on this role during a period of rapid expansion, leading initiatives that drive employee engagement and performance, whilst promoting an environment for people to develop their careers that cements Praxis as a destination for top talent."

Gray Zhang

ROLE GROUP DIRECTOR HUMAN RESOURCES
COMPANY THE HAECO GROUP

The HAECO Group has announced Gray Zhang as its new Group Director Human Resources.

With over twenty-five years of experience in HR across multiple industries, Gray Zhang brings a wealth of expertise to the leadership team and will be responsible for shaping and implementing global HR strategies that support HAECO's commitment to people excellence and its growth across various markets. With HAECO's commitment to cultivating a diverse and inclusive workplace, Gray's objective is to support a culture where every employee feels valued and encouraged to speak up and to contribute their perspectives.

FOR FURTHER UPDATES

To see full updates, movers & shakers and much more, please visit our website thehrdirector.com

NEWLY APPOINTED



NEXT MONTH
ISSUE 242

If you have an opinion on any of the articles featured in this magazine, please share it by going to this link www.linkedin.com/company/thehrdirector

INTERVIEW

Next month we interview Kerri O'Neill, Chief People Officer - IPSOS.

EXCLUSIVE EXTRACTS

From new book releases:
Execution challenge and The power of inclusion.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

KM can improve the employee experience and EVP, spanning from recruitment and onboarding to exit.

COLLABORATIVE ORGANISATIONS

Collaboration increases the quality of the decision, stimulates commitment.

STRESS & BURNOUT

Organisational culture has to be reinvented in order to tackle the escalation of stress and burnout.

CORPORATE PLANNING

HR must strike clear lines between people and corporate planning practices.



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