

HR's New Priorities

In a world upended by a transformational crisis, HR leaders and consultants offer advice for moving forward in 2020.

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COVER STORY

HR's New Priorities BY ANDREW R. MCILVAINE

The global pandemic changed the world of work overnight, and HR leaders are now tasked with refocusing their organizations' priorities to keep up with the sudden disruption. Leaders from IBM, Marriott, i4cp and more share their insights on how HR should be tackling these unprecedented changes, including reshaping hiring strategies, tech investments and approaches to engagement. Page 8

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Meet the Top 100 HR Tech Influencers

BY HRE STAFF

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Smart employers, experts say, are ensuring their workers have access to robust benefits programs to help them stay safe, productive and engaged throughout the ongoing pandemic.



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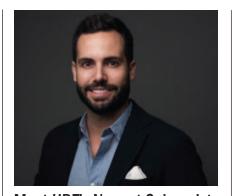
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Navigating the New Normal WorldatWork's Scott Cawood

explores what it takes to lead in today's new work environment.



Meet HRE's Newest Columnist

Dive into a new regular column from Ben Brooks, whose Pilot Inc. won Pitchfest at HR Tech.



Coronavirus and HR

Keep up with the latest news and analysis on how the virus is impacting the world of work.



Insights from a CHRO

See how leaders like HP's Tracy Keogh are bringing innovation to HR.

Insights from a CHRO

Rustin Richburg on Riding the Wave of Changes, Challenges in HR

BY JEN COLLETTA

ustin Richburg may be a country boy at heart, but he brings a global perspective to the HR teams at Walton Enterprises, Inc. and the Walton Family Foundation. As chief people officer, Richburg heads up HR for the family office and philanthropic work of Sam and Helen Walton—the founding family behind Walmart and Sam's Club.

Richburg has led HR teams around the globe, including in Africa, the Middle East and South America. He spent several years in the United Kingdom, working as managing director at Accenture and global HR operations director at Imperial Brands PLC. He returned to his Southern roots several years ago, relocating to Bentonville, Ark.—the headquarters of Walmart, where he served as senior vice president of the U.S. HR operations until 2018.

HRE recently interviewed Richburg—from his Bentonville home, where he is working remotely and practicing social distance—about his career highlights, the ever-changing landscape for HR leaders, and the personal and professional impacts of the pandemic.



Regardless of the industry, it starts with thinking about the problem or opportunity statement. You have to seek to understand the context of the words you're hearing—walking the halls and seeing the business in action and how it works and then looking back at the change you're trying to instill with a better context about how everything's actually working. Regardless of the industry I was working in, my clients liked me to bring big ideas. It shouldn't just be rinse and repeat: "Company A did that so Company B should do that, too." It's about finding innovation in the sector and what separates you. It's also important to find the opportunity to connect people together and help relationships form, whether that's through introductions of people in the company or outside of the business as well.

How has your work changed because of the current pandemic?

It's affected every aspect. The types of questions that employees are coming up with surprise me every day, and they're different perspectives because people have different lives. When we've always worked in such a steady flow—with A then B then C then D happening in a sequential way—and you start disrupting that at the level we have, [HR has] to spend a lot more time listening and helping employees get through this in their personal lives, so they can get their professional lives back in order.

And on a personal level for me, it's trying to work out new routines. In a professional environment, you come in, you start your normal routines, you have your colleagues



around and there's just a set of expectations, whether they're written or unwritten. Now, my husband is here at home as well, we have two dogs and we're figuring out how to not get on each others' nerves when we're together 24/7, plus the stresses of work. There [was] that moment when you leave work to go home and you can decompress, and now we don't have that, so I think it's important to try to replicate it in a new way.

What are a few of the skills that HR leaders of tomorrow will need for success?

We talk about using design thinking but I think we have to use design thinking to move from focusing only on reliability—doing the same act and getting the same predictable outcome—to ultimately getting to a higher level of innovation. Even if you don't have that reliability yet, you should be trying to find new ways of improving. Yes, you need to have consistency to have that level of stability, but you also need validity, meaning that we achieve the desired outcome, where the organization is constantly moving knowledge through the knowledge funnel to test new solutions. The balance is

between predicable—or reliability—and desired, higher outcomes—or validity.

Also, HR practitioners know about things like automation, robotics, machine learning, but there needs to be a next wave and deeper understanding of those and how people work. HR should be constantly learning and bringing ideas to the table to help innovate the organization.

There are also the dynamics around what our workforces are looking for. There are five generations and beyond so HR has to be in tune to how we can better understand individual needs and wants and how to align them with the organization's goals and objectives. We cannot forget that our workforces are made of individuals, and we need to appreciate the individual needs as well.

What was your very first job?

Working on my father's ranch. I am youngest of four brothers, no sisters —my poor mother. The time of year would dictate the type of job I had, so summers were all about bailing hay and fixing fences, and the autumn and through winter was feeding cattle and getting on the tractor to roll out big bales of hay. In the spring, we'd start weening calves and shredding pastures. Today, of course, we have different cycles going on and long, hard days, but I look back on those days and I don't think there's a job that's as hard as digging a posthole with a manual posthole digger in the middle of an East Texas summer in clay soil. It was just horrible. But it gave me a good foundation from which to grow.

To nominate yourself or another HR leader to be interviewed in Insights from a CHRO, email hreletters@lrp.com.



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Senior Vice President/Publisher, HR Products

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Vice President Global Events and Publisher

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Jason Averbook, Josh Bersin, Steve Boese, Peter Cappelli, William M. Kutik, Eva Sage-Gavin, John Sumser Contributing Columnists GRAPHIC SERVICES

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CIRCULATION

Dana KubickoDirector of Audience Development

ADVERTISING HEADOUARTERS

Tim landan

Associate Publisher Ste. 500, 747 Dresher Rd. Horsham, PA 19044 (215) 784-0910, ext. 6550 tiordan@lrp.com Joe Kirsche

Regional Sales Manager (215) 784-0910, ext. 6295 ikirschen@lrp.com

Sharon Staehle

Director of Sales Enablement (215) 784-0910, ext. 6390 sstaehle@lrp.com

Michele Garville

Digital Media Operations Specialist (215) 784-0910, ext. 6386 mgarville@lrp.com

For subscription information, please call (800) 386-4176, email human_resource_executive@omeda.com, or fax to (215) 784-0317.

Send payments to: LRP Media Group 360 Hiatt Drive Dept. 150F Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33418 All other written correspondence to: Customer Service Department Human Resource Executive Magazine P. O. Box 2132 Skokie, IL 60076



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HR's Role in Crisis: Creating A Sense of Trust





Up until recently, HR professionals were likely worried about organizational transformation, automation and skills gaps. In the course of only days, many of our businesses were upended, we were scrambling to implement new work processes and employees were worried about their jobs and very survival.

Just as we found after Sept. 11, one of the critical roles of HR in times like these is to foster a sense of safety, trust and collective thinking in our people.

According to the 2020 Edelman Trust Barometer, trust is based on competence (doing things well), ethics (living by an ethical value system) and voice (giving people a chance

to speak). As Edelman points out, today the trust matrix is challenged. The most trusted institution in peoples' lives is business. Yet, while business is rated highest in terms of competence, it is perceived as less than ethical. So, the pandemic actually represents an opportunity: If you focus on your people in a competent and ethical way and listen to their needs, you can drive up trust, teamwork and resilience.

Employees are the ones who will pull your company out of a financial slowdown. Therefore, we should be making decisions on issues such as working from home, social distancing, paid time off, and financial assistance for testing and treatment in ways that make people feel safe, protected and heard.

Amy Edmondson, a professor of leadership and management at the Harvard School of Business, has proven that companies that promote safety, ethics and voice drive improved employee and business performance. Her book, *The Fearless Organization*, points out how creating a true and genuine sense of safety drives results, as well as innovation and growth.

What About the Slowdown?

Clearly, there is going to be an economic slowdown, and this will result in layoffs and reduced pay. Even so, I ask you to think about people first.

Research shows again and again that, when these periods occur, companies that go through massive layoffs always underperform in the future and many eventually go out of business.

There are several reasons for this. First, you lose valuable skills and knowledge when people are laid off. Second, you lose customer relationships. But worst of all, you lose the trust of employees. The people who remain go through "survivor syndrome" and always wonder, "Am I going to be next?"

"These are the kinds of times that define the character of a company," Microsoft President Brad Smith said in an interview with the *Wall Street Journal* on March 14. "People want to work for an employer that cares about the bottom line and the wellbeing of its employees."

I'm hoping the coronavirus health crisis and its subsequent economic impact won't be as bad as we think, but right now people are uncertain and afraid. So let's slow down, accept the business interruption that's taking place and take care of our people. In times like these, CEOs should be chief empathy officers first, and we HR leaders need to be guiding, advising and supporting them in making the right people-focused decisions. If we take this approach, the recovery will be faster, and our companies, personal lives and entire society will be better off.

Josh Bersin is an analyst, author, educator and thought leader focusing on the global talent market and the challenges and trends impacting business workforces around the world. Send questions or comments to hreletters@lrp.com.

EMERGING INTELLIGENCE

John Sumser/Columnist

Focusing HR-Tech Development in the Time of the Virus



It's not easy being in HR or HR tech right now. We are required to get better at managing distributed teams, work through downsizing, make our recruiting procedures safer, soothe the organization's anxieties and find new ways to sustain employee trust in our organizations. We are operating in rapidly changing business, legal and practical realities, and are struggling to prioritize. Because we are managing in a pandemic with exponential growth, our collective sense of reality is challenged day by day. We face a relentless wave of new realization and understanding.

Ultimately, the pandemic will plateau. Still, the world will be very different. "Flattening the curve" does not change the virus. It makes the (hopefully reduced) number of cases happen over a longer period of time. Until there is a vaccine (at least a year from now), we will be dealing with health and safety as primary concerns. Social distancing will be a way of life.

It isn't yet possible to clearly see the next stage. It is possible to prepare for it, nonetheless. In the midst of coping with the disaster as it evolves, we have to continuously focus on where we are going to land. Survival is not enough. Surviving prepared to thrive is a minimal goal.

My colleagues Michael Kannisto, Heather Bussing and I are beginning to build a library of topics to follow to maintain your strategic edge while dealing with the overwhelming problems of today. It is important to solve today's issues in a way that prepares us for a deeply uncertain future.

Understanding and Inventorying Skills is Essential

For example, we see succession planning evolving from a "Who gets to join the club?" exercise to an ongoing capacity-planning and protection system. With an ever-present danger that 15% to 20% of the workforce will be sick for a significant period, the definition of who is or isn't essential will change.

Three questions to ask are, "Who, by name, are the people who understand the technologies we depend on? Are they the only people who understand that technology? And what do we do if they are gone?" The questions are particularly relevant while considering organizational rearrangements and downsizing. It's often the case that essential workers are often nearly invisible. Ask "Which systems

do we depend on, and who runs them?" It's likely you will discover that years of emphasis on efficiency have left us ill-prepared for disaster.

More than ever, we need a complete inventory of the skills and capabilities in the workforce. In most companies, only 20% to 25% of workers complete their HRIS employee profiles under normal circumstances. Right now, understanding this information is essential. Encourage and reward the participants.

Improving Search to Effectively Use Data

Once we have a thorough inventory, we need the ability to effectively search. HR-tech search is rarely as good as what we get from Google. So, we are going to need both a comprehensive inventory and the ability to use it effectively.

Fortunately, vendors of recruiting technology have been solving the search question. Companies like HiringSolved make it possible to search all of the data in your applicant-tracking, candidate-management and HR systems. You can see everyone in the ecosystem (as long as current employees complete their profiles).

There are a number of intelligent tools that focus on career path, internal mobility and skills identification. Comprehensive succession planning will need to build on that capacity. The goal is a process that identifies and inventories the broadest range of skills possible. Vendors include HiringSolved, Fuel50, Workday, IBM and Phenom. While none have a specific offering, all of them have the capacity to execute.

Using Intelligent Tools to Provide Updated Information

The next months will also find HR teams fielding an exploding volume of questions from employees. Installing a tool like Socrates.ai helps reduce the overall workload while ensuring consistent and accurate answers to pressing questions. For example, Socrates.ai integrates data from all of your HR systems to provide single-thread answers to over 9,000 questions.

As our work and work environment continue to evolve, intelligent tools make it possible to navigate the crisis while ensuring a good landing in the aftermath. Right now is the right time to start outfitting your company for the near future.

John Sumser is the principal analyst at HRExaminer. He researches the impact of data, analytics, AI and associated ethical issues on the workplace. Send questions or comments to hreletters@lrp.com.

The Latest Trends in Human Resources



Top Story

Coalition: Protect Employer-Sponsored Health Coverage Amid COVID-19

mployers, insurers and other benefit industry insiders are calling on Congress to help them maintain employer-sponsored healthcare as the coronavirus pandemic threatens to dismantle coverage for millions of employees.

A coalition called the Alliance to Fight for Health Care—which includes the American Benefits Council, AHIP, Blue Cross Blue Shield Association, Cigna



and Mercer—has launched in an effort to help maintain coverage for employees who have lost their jobs, and to assist employers that are struggling to afford insurance for their workforces in the new pandemic economy.

The alliance was previously called the Alliance to Fight the 40 and successfully led the advocacy effort to repeal the Affordable Care

Act's Cadillac tax, a 40% tax on employer-provided health benefits.

"Now, more than ever, Americans need the security that their job-based health coverage will help take care of their families," says James Klein, president of the American Benefits Council. "Our diverse coalition fought to protect employer-based coverage from a harmful 40% tax, and now, we will continue our fight as a COVID-19 rapid-response team with very specific legislative and regulatory policy proposals to protect the coverage of nearly 180 million Americans."

Among its proposals, the alliance wants a payroll tax credit for employers and multi-employer health funds in industries affected by COVID-19 that provide continuations of health coverage. It's also backing the creation of funds or business loans to sustain health coverage provided by companies and health funds struggling to make premium payments.

"The COVID-19 pandemic is making it difficult or impossible for some employers and employees to pay their share of premiums for health coverage, as many businesses have been forced to shutter operations or vastly scale down their business," the group wrote in letters to Congressional leaders, President Trump and Vice President Pence.

"Employers are seeking policy solutions that prevent the loss of health coverage, protect against overwhelming Medicaid and safety net programs, and offer stability to our frontline hospitals and healthcare providers."

The group also is advocating for federal subsidies to provide support to help pay for 90% of COBRA premiums for employees who lose their employer-sponsored health insurance due to the economic impact of COVID-19.

The coalition is encouraging employers and organizations to join its efforts, Klein says.

Other industry insiders have reiterated the importance of employer-sponsored health coverage in the wake of the pandemic.

"Employers need to be assessing their short-term disability, paid time-off policies, layoff provisions and medical coverage," says Bill Gimbel, founder and CEO of LaSalle Benefits, a national insurance and employee-benefits brokerage firm.

As coronavirus shuts down businesses across the nation, employees who are laid off or furloughed are left vulnerable when it comes to health coverage. It is feared that other employers that are struggling financially may be forced to cut health coverage as well.

Obviously, income continuation due not only to illness, but also for employees who are healthy but unable to work is critically important, says Rich Fuerstenberg, senior partner in Mercer's life, accident and disability national practice.

"Some employers won't be able to continue income for the latter group for an extended period of time, if at all, especially for hourly employees in low-margin industries," Fuerstenberg says. "For those employees, continuation of health benefits—likely without employee contributions since there may be no pay from which to take contributions—will be valuable at a time when those with a COVID-19 diagnosis may need to access care."

-Kathryn Mayer

Averbook: Coronavirus is 'Biggest Opportunity in Our Careers'

ason Averbook frequently asks HR leaders what year it feels like inside their companies—and most typically give a year sometime in the last two decades.

That divide has become even more apparent with the coronavirus pandemic.

"Now, the outside of work and the inside of work have meshed together," he said about the overnight impact of the health crisis on employers, who have had to quickly start considering issues like virtual onboarding, successful remotework structures and the employee experience of a distributed workforce. "This is a massive opportunity for us to skip years of stuff we did that didn't actually feel like how life truly was outside of work."

In a webinar in partnership with *HRE* in March, Averbook, co-founder and CEO of Leapgen and columnist for *HRE*, outlined 10 guideposts HR leaders can look to in order to reprioritize their 2020 goals in light of our current crisis:

Data is now a mandate: Data is the "air we breathe," Averbook said, but HR hasn't maximized its potential; however, the disruptions caused by the pandemic can be used as a wake-up call. Now is the time to fully capitalize on data, specifically for enhancing the employee experience. "Those who use it the best will come out ahead," he said.

Job architecture has changed forever: The modern concept of a "job" is now gone. In a shift that had already begun before our current crisis, organizations of the future need to be focusing on tasks and skills instead of traditionally finite roles.

A new operating model: "We need to be incorporating digital delivery into everything we do," Averbook said. HR and HR technology have historically been considered separate entities—a shift that can't happen anymore. "The only way to deliver is through digital," he said. "We were behind 10 or 15 years—if not more—so we need to use this as our opportunity to get beyond that." In a live poll of webinar listeners, 64% said their organizations are not equipped to ensure digital thinking and execution are at its core.

Integrate employee experience: Employee experience

should be HR's top priority, Averbook said—company portals that are more akin to link farms than personalized experiences are a missed opportunity. In another live poll, nearly 75% of respondents said their organization did not have a workforce experience layer that brings together knowledge, content, analytics and transactions.

Good times and bad: "We're in a moment of time that's going to continue to be turbulent," Averbook noted, and the employee experience needs to account for that. "If we don't have a good way to communicate with people with good, relevant data, then we're not doing a good job as leaders in the organization."

Stay human: One of the primary tasks of HR leaders going forward needs to be helping business leaders stay "human," Averbook said. With a newly remote workforce and a rapidly changing culture, organizations need HR professionals to lead in this area, particularly around urging leaders to listen and respond to employee feedback.

Talent planning reborn: Lengthy requisition processes, background checks and more often drag down the hiring process, while strategies like instructor-led training can be seen as ineffective for learning and development. When it comes to building talent, organizations should be asking themselves, "Does it really matter?" If not, let it go, Averbook said.

Digital workplaces are HR's responsibility: The tools employees use to work are more important than ever now, but those decisions are often left to IT; that needs to change, he said. "IT doesn't know I may need to be able to offer my employees the opportunity to have a mental-health checkup through their job, nor should it; IT can help us bring what we need to life, but the tools and capabilities managers and employees need to do their best work is a big part of HR's responsibility."

Revise roadmaps: "Every business roadmap organizations had created for 2020 need to be revisited," Averbook said. Contracts are changing, priorities are shifting and what employees need is evolving. He encouraged 100-day sprints when it comes to planning—not long-term, multi-year plans.

It's up to us: Now is HR's opportunity to "get off the habit trail," Averbook said. "How do we steer this? We steer with us." Few business leaders are going to identify the people problems of this new way of working, so it'll be up to HR leaders to take the lead. "This will be the year that changed HR forever. But it's only going to change because of us—not because someone told us to change it."

—Jen Colletta

Will Coronavirus Spark a New Remote Workforce?

oronavirus has shifted how CHROs are thinking and leading within their organizations—but, through all the challenges, innovations abound as leadership embraces a new way of working.

Just a few months ago, HR pros were focused on strategic five-year planning and how to attract and

retain the world's top talent. In an instant, that turned into how organizations can continue working in a socially distant society, with HR leaders remaining agile in their reaction to the virus' spread.



Very quickly, she said, IBM was able to get close to 95% of its 250,000-strong workforce working from home. Thanks, in part, she added, to having the right tools in place.

"The toothpaste is out of the tube and there is no going back. It's going to be a more virtual world," she said, adding it's "encouraging" to see how quickly people who hadn't been working virtually had adapted.

But there is so much more to be done, she added, like addressing issues around mental health and the challenge of working with families at home—not to mention, employees getting sick. "This is all stuff HR is good at dealing with, but it's coming at such high volume."

Going forward, she added, HR should be focused on planning ahead. IBM has organized groups to strategize for both the next five weeks and beyond. "If we all focused on triage right now, we won't be ready for the next phase."

Even if companies don't have access to the resources that a tech giant like IBM does, they can still have tools in their back pockets, said Bryan Powers, head of people at hyperlocal socialnetworking service platform Nextdoor.

"While we were on the trajectory of becoming a virtual workforce, it was going to be when, not if," he said. "We had to flip three-quarters of the company

> to make remote work their primary way of thinking."

They scrambled over a weekend to lay tracks. "I was trying to read everything I could get my hands on about crisis management,"

he said. One example particularly struck Powers: On Sept. 11, commuter ferries were repurposed as waterborne ambulances. So, Nextdoor turned to its onboarding programs as a way to reinvest in its workforce.

"We invested a lot in the new hire [programs] to make them impactful," he noted. "We took the backbone of our onboarding structure to re-onboard all the employees into a remote onboarding."

The company included resources on issues like how to work from home, how to manage a remote workforce and how to interview virtually.

"Every company has black swan events and you have to plan for them," warned Josh Bersin, HR industry analyst. "This isn't the giant one and you'll see it again. This is part of our job and we need to be prepared for it."

-Nick Otto

Performance Management in the Time of Crisis

s founder and CEO of
OperationsInc, David Lewis
has been overseeing remote
workers for 19 years and was one
himself before that. More than half of
the HR consulting company's 100plus employees work remotely at any
given time. Yet, these days, even he
finds himself a bit flummoxed by the
unprecedented changes prompted by
the coronavirus pandemic that have
suddenly swept millions of U.S. office
workers into telework arrangements.

"We're in brand-new, uncharted territory," he says.

Managers who must now contend with managing the performance of large numbers of remote employees for an extended period would undoubtedly agree.

As a starting point, Lewis suggests, they begin by doing something that's normally ill-advised: micromanage.

"Most employees aren't used to working remotely," he says. "Plus, they're working in less-

than-ideal conditions."

In many cases, employees will also have their children and spouse home with them. Employees with roommates who are also stuck at home must find ways of remaining focused and productive. Teleworkers in most locations no longer have the option of working from their favorite coffee shop or the library as a place of respite.

All of this means that managers must play a guiding role in helping employees get acclimated to their new circumstances as best they can, says Lewis. "These workers may be dealing with technology-related issues, getting used to using Zoom and other tools, and at the same time their young children may be pestering them for a snack or help with their schoolwork," he says.

Don't assume that even your team members who normally work well independently will rapidly adapt to telework, cautions Lewis.

"It's a big adjustment for everyone," he says.

Managers should start by helping each of their employees create an at-home work structure. They should also schedule regular check-ins by phone each day for each of their direct reports to get a sense of how they're coping. In some cases, those check-ins should be twice a day—once in the morning and then late afternoon—to assess how they're doing and help resolve potential issues.

"Frame it as 'I'm not trying to monitor you, I'm here to help you establish structure because, right now,

structure's been obliterated.' "

Managers may also need to reset their expectations for productivity, says Lewis. "In terms of widgets, whereas before, they were to produce X number

within eight hours, perhaps now it could be 12 hours."

Working from home means that work may occur more sporadically throughout the day, in some cases after the kids have gone to bed, he says.

Striking the right tone is critical.

"If you tell your employees this is less about getting this amount of stuff done between nine and five and instead by having it done by this date, then that's huge," says Lewis. "It will go a long way toward keeping everyone sane and on track."

—Andrew R. McIlvaine

Interviewing in Our New Reality

espite all the money that employers invest in technology, many don't train recruiters on how to effectively prepare for digital interviews. It's an issue that's coming front and center now, as so many Americans are navigating the new reality of working from home.

"They're antiquated and fall behind the curve," says Paul Bailo, executive of digital strategy and innovation and adjunct professor of applied analytics at Columbia University. "It's like buying a Ferrari but not teaching them how to drive it through its [multiple] gears." Bailo, also author of *The Essential Digital Interview Handbook*, says many recruiters skip one of the most important components of digital interviews: preparation.

He compares digital interviews to a Broadway show. The stage should be set and equipment tested before the show—or interview—begins. He points to simple things like the fact that the camera lens should be eye-level and clean. If a microphone is used, position it off to the side and place a clock and list of interview questions behind the camera. Also, never wear a headset, which may be distracting or interfere with sound quality.

"You need lighting in the front, back and side, which should illuminate your face," he says, adding that office lighting typically casts shadows on a face. The camera should only capture the "triangle of love," which he explains is the recruiter's face and shoulders.

Likewise, pay attention to the background. Consider an interview that takes place in front of a home library or window with a highway in the background. Instead of listening, he says, many job candidates can be tempted to read the book titles on shelves or watch cars speed by on the highway. He says the best background is gray or blue marble photographic paper, which is used in photos of elementary school children.

Even your chair and the way you sit in it matter. Are you using an executive chair or a chintzy one without arms? Are you rocking back and forth because you're impatient or nervous? The idea is to establish a professional presence, he says, including in how you dress. Bailo says there's a direct correlation between the clothes people wear and how they speak or behave on or off camera. Avoid excessive jewelry, which can be another distraction.

When greeting an applicant, slightly nod your head, which he calls a digital handshake. But never wave hello, which is "what kids do at Disneyland," he adds.

He says these practices will help recruiters solicit better answers or responses from candidates and also weed people out.

"Take these extra steps," says Bailo.
"You can't expect [applicants] to do
what you should be doing."

—Carol Patton



Remote work and emerging tech will be among the areas demanding increased HR attention in a post-pandemic world.

BY ANDREW R. McILVAINE

arriott CEO Arne Sorenson began his recent video address to employees on a darkly humorous note.

"There were some concerns that video wasn't the best medium given my newly bald look," said Sorenson, who is undergoing treatment for pancreatic cancer. "But I want to assure you I'm doing just fine and am focused on our business."

Looking directly into the camera with a grave expression, he went on to list the serious challenges that Marriott, the world's largest hospitality company, is facing now that global travel has been thoroughly decimated by the coronavirus pandemic: projects put on hold for the remainder of the year, hiring paused for all but the most critical positions, pay cuts of 50% for the executive team while Sorenson and Chairman Bill Marriott will take no salary for the rest of 2020. And massive numbers of employees would be laid off or furloughed.

At this point, Sorenson's voice began to crack. "There is simply nothing worse than telling highly valued associates ... that their roles are being impacted by events completely outside of their control."

While it's impossible to predict how long this crisis will last, he continued, "I know we as a global community will come through on the other side, and when we do, our guests will be eager to travel this beautiful world again. And when they do, we'll be there to welcome them with the warmth and care we are known for the world over."

He signed off by urging employees to take care of themselves and their loved ones.

Rebecca Ray thinks other leaders may learn a few things by watching Sorenson's address.

"Think about how emotionally authentic and impactful his remarks were," says Ray, who leads the Conference Board's U.S. Human Capital Center. "Hopefully, not too many leaders will have to deliver that particular message. But if they do, that was a masterful example."

Senior leaders have to not only be excellent communicators but be exceptionally skilled in crisis situations because the world is only going to become more tumultuous, not less, says Ray.

Unfortunately, many aren't up to the challenge.

"I don't know too many leaders who are naturally good communicators in crisis situations—it's not a natural fit for many people," she says. "I don't think we've done enough to help leaders present their authentic selves."

Strong leadership is always important, but never more so than now, says the Hackett Group's Max Caldwell, who leads its People & Transformation group.

"Some leaders are naturally inclined to empathize and reach out to employees," he says. "That sort of thing goes a long way to building a sense of employee involvement and belonging. People are desperately hungry for leadership and guidance now."

The quality of a leader's communication skills has never been more important, says David Rodriguez, Marriott's CHRO (and *HRE*'s 2019 HR Executive of the Year).

"Given the likely length of time it will take many businesses to recover from the current



David Rodriguez, Marriott

circumstances, it's essential that leaders be able to explain the business context," he says. "And, all of this must be communicated in a manner that attends to both the cognitive and emotional needs of their audience."

This is essential in order to inspire people to build the new

future, says Rodriguez. "Resilience, openness to change and learning agility will be essential for everyone. The reality is that we may be creating a 'new normal' more frequently than ever before, due in part to the interconnectedness of the modern world."

Rethinking Workforce Planning

It was only recently that HR's biggest challenge was finding and retaining employees amid a historically tight labor market. What a difference a global pandemic can make: It now appears the U.S. and much of the world is headed for the biggest economic contraction since the Great Depression. Unemployment has already hit double digits, and economists predict there's more pain to come.

Kevin Oakes, CEO and founder of the Institute for Corporate Productivity (i4cp), recently crowdsourced to his organization's members the question of what HR needs to prioritize now and the biggest "rethinks" it needs to undertake. i4cp has set up an employer resource center to highlight what specific organizations are doing to adjust to the situation

in creative ways that other organizations might borrow.

Not all companies are doing poorly, he notes. "Many companies are having problems, but others—like Peloton—have businesses that are exploding"

One important theme, says Oakes, is around workforce planning and hiring. "Some companies are doing massive layoffs and furloughs while others are doing massive amounts of hiring," he says.

For companies that need to cut staff, China offers an intriguing example: Rather than laying off employees, says Oakes, many companies there have built a process for lending their talent to other organizations.

"Sharing talent is a new concept in the U.S., but some companies here are already doing it," he says, citing McDonald's and Aldi as an example. The fast-food chain, which like other restaurants has had to ban in-store dining, has lent some employees to help stock shelves at Aldi markets so that the grocery chain can keep up with surging demand. "I think we'll see more of that going forward," says Oakes. "Companies will be looking at how they might leverage external talent to augment the projects they're doing, given how screwed up hiring is right now."

Workforce planning will also need to be rethought, says Oakes, as senior executives delay their planned retirements and high potentials consequently see less opportunities for moving up. "You don't want to lose those folks, so you're going to have to do something to retain those high potentials."

For most companies, it's time to rethink their talent-management strategies, says Frank Girimonte, associate principal at The Hackett Group.

"Every industry is going to be impacted in different ways," he says. "Whatever strategies you had in place prior to this year are probably going to have to be thrown out and redone."

A New Virtual World

Given that working from home may be the new normal for quite some time, one strategy might be preparing managers to be effective virtual leaders in order to boost engagement and productivity.

Many senior executives have been forced to live as teleworkers for the first time, says Oakes. "That firsthand experience is going to change their opinion of what working from home is like, and the notion of a workplace—where and how work





"Cultural transformation and careers are great, but the bottom layer is safety—and, for us, the health and safety [of our workforce] will be dominant for the foreseeable future."

—DIANE GHERSON, IBM

gets done—is going to change in the short- and long-term," he says. Issues such as how to measure collaboration between managers and remote employees will come to the fore.

Managers of every stripe are finding themselves in situations they're not prepared for, says Ray. Frontline managers typically receive training in the basics, she says, but now "we're in a whole new world. How do we help them through the nuances of video interviewing, virtually onboarding new hires, building a virtual team?"

At Aerotek, a global staffing firm with more than 8,500 permanent employees, HR is focused on ensuring managers have the right tools to "engage holistically," says CHRO Tanya Axenson.

"A common bias many folks have is 'proximity bias'—you're more likely to engage with the people you see every day," she says. "We're teaching them to be deliberate in how they're engaging all their people."

Companies are learning the hard way that employees who thrived in traditional work environments can struggle while working remotely, says Cara Zibbell, CHRO at mid-sized staffing firm Atrium.

"Not everyone can navigate these tech tools comfortably," she says. "It's important to provide training in this area."

Ray sees engagement as yet another challenge in the new environment. In many cases, employees are teleworking while taking care of kids and older relatives who are also homebound. "In these situations, it's simply going to add to the stress and exacerbate the situation," says Ray.

i4cp has just completed a major study on holistic (financial, mental and physical) wellbeing. "We think more companies are going to pay attention to this," says Oakes. High-performing organizations in this area have twice the gains of low-performing ones in productivity, retention and customer satisfaction and six times the creativity and innovation of their low-performing counterparts, he says.

"The same study found that only 15% of organizations rate their effectiveness in addressing

mental-health issues as very high, even though high performers are twice as likely to address this as low performers," says Oakes. "We anticipate more companies will recognize the need to offer mental-health programs, because this pandemic is going to take a major toll."

A Tech Opportunity

Technology will likely be more important than ever.

At IBM, the company's investments in online learning and collaboration tools are paying off, says CHRO Diane Gherson. Employees are using the tools to aid other employees in addition to getting their own work done.

"Every minute, I've been getting messages about employees assisting each other on these platforms," says Gherson, the 2018 HR Executive of the Year. IBMers have created pages of resources on topics ranging from technical advice to taking care of toddlers while working. "It's been incredible, this rallying around. It's led to a community that people can go to for help when they have specific questions."

Even when the bulk of IBM's workforce returns to the office (as at many organizations, a number of IBMers have continued their on-site work), health and safety will be paramount, says Gherson.

"We anticipate there may be a 'bounce' in infections requiring us to go back home, so people will need to focus on wellbeing and safety in greater numbers than before," she says.

Technology innovations will make this easier, says Gherson.

"We're going to need to screen people for symptoms for the foreseeable future while maintaining their privacy," she says. "We see a role for blockchain there."

Blockchain, which creates an immutable record of data, may make screening more efficient and private. Wearables will also make it easier for individuals and organizations to monitor symptoms.

"These innovations will enable us to capture real-time data that could support public health," says Gherson.

The smart use of data analytics will let HR play a prominent role in helping their organizations return to prosperity, says Girimonte.

"Some leaders are saying, What if we give everyone a 10% salary cut?" he says. "Finance might say, 'This is what we'll save,' but HR could look at different segments of the workforce, model the potential impact and come up with potentially better solutions," he says. Certain segments might get a higher cut while other, more vulnerable sectors would get smaller pay cuts.

"HR would look at it more strategically in terms of the implications for talent," says Girimonte. "They could save the company money while preserving its ability to ramp up quickly when needed."

A Path Forward

The crisis has altered HR's priorities, says Gherson.

"There's much more emphasis on the low end of Maslow's Hierarchy," she says. "Cultural transformation and careers are great, but the bottom layer is safety—and, for us, the health and safety [of our workforce] will be dominant for the foreseeable future"

On a macro level, IBM's globally dispersed businesses will be expected to take on more decision-making.

"Even though we've moved to global management for a lot of our functions, going forward, there's going to be more focus on our geographies," says Gherson. Different countries will have varying return-to-work strategies, while limits on travel will change the nature of some global-management jobs. As a result, more decisions will be made at the country level.

"It's a trend that's been happening for a while and it's only going to accelerate," she says.

When employees eventually return to the office, they may find themselves working in a changed physical layout, says Oakes. "The movement to open-plan offices and WeWork spaces is probably going to go away pretty quickly."

Although a return to traditional offices likely won't be widespread, an ongoing need for social distancing will require greater space per employee, he says.

Employees at IBM and other companies will most likely return to the office in stages, while others may continue working remotely for the foreseeable future, says Gherson. "We'll be thinking hard about which groups need to go back first and which need to go back ever," she says.

For Zibbell, the crisis has forced her to consider the critical qualities necessary for being effective as an employee and a leader.

"One of the most critical skill sets you need in a time like this is to have dexterity, grit and aptitude," she says. "Those can't be taught—they're what you come to the table with."

Send questions or comments to hreletters@lrp.com

HR Technology



Introducing the 2020 Influencers

GETTING TO KNOW FIVE INFLUENCERS

Also:

- See the full Top 100 list on page 18.
- Visit HRExecutive.com soon for more from this year's

ow more than ever, leaders are needed. Whether it's CHROs creating innovative benefits packages for struggling workers, product developers pioneering solutions to target the new challenges facing our workforces or industry analysts providing needed guidance and insights to guide this new world of work, strong leadership will be essential to workforces across the world not only as they recover from the global pandemic, but eventually begin thriving again.

The work that lies ahead will need the unique human touch that only HR can provide—and that approach can be magnified by the deployment of smart HR-technology solutions. Expert HR strategies paired with forward-thinking tech tools can see our workforces through the challenges coming down the pike. To recognize the leaders whose work will be critical to this new age of HR, Human Resource *Executive*[®] and the HR Technology Conference & Exposition® are honoring 100 Top HR Tech Influencers

The visionaries included on this second annual list work across a range of functions—as business executives, HR leaders, consultants, advisors, systems implementers, product leaders, industry analysts and more. The HRE and HR Tech teams evaluated their records of influence—unique strategies they brought to HR organizations,

solutions they've introduced, new directions they ushered in that have shaped conversations in the HR-tech marketplace—as well as their potential for continued innovation.

We welcomed back many influencers who appeared on our inaugural list, whose accomplishments in just the last year are impressive, while a number of new faces also joined this year's Top 100 HR Tech Influencers, many of whom are helping their workforces weather today's new challenges. The list includes Walmart Chief People Officer Donna Morris, who is spearheading the hiring of 150,000 new associates by the end of May-in some cases, in just 24 hours-to respond to increased consumer demand because of the pandemic. At Microsoft, CPO Kathleen Hogan recently helped the organization move its internship program, which has 4,000 students worldwide enrolled, to a virtual format, owing to the crisis.

The bold ideas, diverse viewpoints and unrivaled passion of these 100 leaders will be essential to the ongoing transformation of HR. However, they are certainly not alone; this list showcases just a sliver of the work being done to redefine human resources, for today and the future. We look forward to continuing to acknowledge the countless individuals whose contributions will be influential to HR innovation in the years to come. —Jen Colletta

Using People Data for Good

Al Adamsen's diverse career in HR tech has illuminated the need for the forward-thinking use of people analytics.

BY JULIE COOK RAMIREZ

eginning with his days as internship coordinator for the Davis-in-DC program at the University of California-Davis in the 1980s, Al Adamsen has "accidentally" racked up an array of diverse experiences that enabled him to develop a unique perspective on the worlds of HR and HR tech. He served as a senior consultant at Ernst & Young; director of employee insights at Gap Inc.; vice president of North American consulting services at Infohrm; and HR Analytics practice leader at Kenexa, an IBM company.

For the last several years, Adamsen has brought those experiences to bear as a renowned advisor, educator and thought leader in the areas of talent strategy, workforce planning and analytics, talent measurement and organizational change. In 2008, he founded the Talent Strategy Institute to help leaders inside and outside HR understand the future of work and how talent strategies can be orchestrated to create culture, mitigate risk and drive desired business outcomes. Two years later, he founded the People Analytics & Future of Work Community and Event Series (PAFOW), which provides



"enlightening and inspiring learning experiences" for those in the people analytics profession. Most recently, he co-founded Insight 222 in 2017 to "accelerate the maturation of the workforce/people analytics space, so it benefits the people doing



the work, as well as executives and shareholders."

Adamsen's mantra is "People Data for Good," which he describes as the "responsible, ethical and virtuous use of people data and analytics for the benefit of individuals, teams, groups, organizations and society at large." Over the past 25-plus years, he's witnessed HR technology evolve from largely transactional and processdriven to empowering the worker and providing a greater level of insight.

"When I first started in this field and even before, these were largely transactional systems that were created to either create or improve a process," says Adamsen. "Now, there is more thought being given to what that technology might do to the worker experience ... to the insight that that data is going to create not only for the HR professional or business leader, but for the individual him- or herself."

The COVID-19 pandemic has "changed everything," says Adamsen, and it will continue to guide HR's priorities for the foreseeable future. "Everything from understanding workforce capacity, workforce capability, people's thoughts, feelings and ideas is going to be within the realm of HR tech and analytics, specifically," he explains.

HR leaders are central to the many task forces and committees that have been formed to deal with the crisis, says Adamsen, and those types of governance structures are likely to be sustained once the crisis has passed, hopefully with HR as facilitator. When it comes to HR tech specifically, Adamsen says, the need to aggregate and analyze data across not only the employee lifecycle, but also through employee experiences is going to become non-negotiable.

"Historically, we in HR tech have focused on creating or improving HR processes," says Adamsen. "Now, we are going to be charged with understanding worker experiences over time. That's going to require us to capture and analyze behavioral data through email traffic and badge data. A lot of data that formerly was thought to be outside the realm of HR is now going to be part of how we understand the worker experience."

It's Adamsen's hope that change perpetuates, leading to a "more agile worker-centric view of the world." Right now, he says, HR has a unique opportunity to facilitate talent governance and the worker experience. He expects those who are more adept at understanding workforce capacity, capabilities and worker experiences are going to be increasingly valued, while those who are not able to provide insights that

advance discussions about the future of work will fall by the wayside and someone else will step in and assume

"That's where I see us in HR as more of a process evolution in terms of facilitating executive governance as opposed to some technology innovation," says Adamsen. "HR tech is going to be more about understanding human experiences within organizations, as opposed to just

managing what was formerly known as HR processes."

An avid beach volleyball player, Adamsen sees parallels between the sport he loves and the world of HR and HR tech. In both, he says, you are dealing with an immeasurable number of variables, including the skill level and mood of your team members and your ability to function together. The ability to learn and adapt is critical, and a commitment to being

kind and compassionate, creative and courageous is non-negotiable. Mistakes happen, but you still need to celebrate your teammates. To that end, Adamsen adopts what he calls an "abundance mentality," focusing on what's right instead of what's wrong.

"If we take that perspective and explore how things can be leveraged to get where we want to go, it creates a healthier and more engaging experience," he says.

Taking Experience to the Next Level

At SAP SuccessFactors, Meg Bear develops innovative approaches to managing human experience. BY MAURA CICCARELLI

or longtime human-experience management (HXM) developer Meg Bear, the global coronavirus pandemic has made many HR-tech trends that were starting to gaining traction a reality, literally overnight.

"The 'new normal' for millions of people is transitioning to remote work," says Bear, who joined SAP SuccessFactors in October as senior vice president of products with a focus on HXM solutions. "For this to be successful, employees and teams need the resources to help them feel safe, supported and equipped to do their jobs well—while also providing community, clarity and connection."

That's where HR tech will play a huge role—by supporting employee wellbeing, helping employees continue to grow and guiding them during moments of change, she says. New HR listening and collaboration tools also will play a vital role in helping organizations get feedback from employees and help HR understand the sentiments behind them.

"With this understanding, organizations can make more 'in-the-moment' decisions that are people-centric," Bear notes.

In addition, learning platforms will continue to play an important role as organizations look to reskill

Ultimately, Bear says, employees will come through these challenging times with new understandings about how to work more effectively.

"We are all learning new ways to be collaborative, supportive and agile as teams and organizations-and we'll take those learnings with us moving forward," she

At SAP, Bear is responsible for developing, scaling and integrating technologies such as artificial intelligence, machine learning and experience data for SAP's HXM products.

Prior to joining SAP, Bear was senior vice president of product and engineering at Juvo, a financialservices company that employs data science, machine learning and game mechanics to create financial identities for mobile subscribers. Before that, she was general manager of cloud services for cybersecurity



firm Imperva and spent 11 years at Oracle, holding various leadership positions in HCM and customer experience. She also held several engineering and product leadership roles at PeopleSoft and Saba Software. She has a bachelor's degree in economics and entrepreneurship from the University of Arizona.

During her almost three decades of experience, she has created six technology patents (with five pending) and has been a keynote speaker, a TEDx host, an advocate for women in technology and a mentor.

Bear describes herself as "passionate about applying technology to solve business problems, building and growing teams, and defining product strategies that are customer-centric and innovative. I leverage market and technology shifts to build innovative solutions for customers

'My goal is to make work better," she adds. In that vein, Bear sees employee experience (EX) continuing a trajectory that tech can support.

"Providing an exceptional employee experience requires the right tools and visibility into employees' workplace, as well as life experiences, so HR leaders can preemptively uncover and address problems," she says. "Business leaders are beginning to recognize that optimizing their employees' experience is key

BEAR continued on page 14

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HR Technology

Putting the Individual First

Throughout her varied HR career, Yvette Cameron has recognized the power and value of the individual worker.

BY JEN COLLETTA

has exploded—and Yvette Cameron has noticed that many such virtual meetings, especially those with high-level executives, signal an important message about the future potential of HR. "People are showing up in T-shirts with their kids and dogs and the postman interrupting—it's bringing us down to a more human level," says Cameron, founder and principal analyst of NextGen Insights, LLC, and co-founder and executive vice president of Velocity Career Labs. "When you take the clothing and the positions out, there's such a great humanization of the relationships and the conversations and a greater degree of empathy for the challenges we all deal with every day. That's going to be important for culture shifts as we come out the other side of this outbreak."

ince the start of the coronavirus pandemic, the use of videoconferences

Empathy, the ability to trust and empower workers, and a collaborative digital mindset are all components of successful HR leaders of tomorrowand they're qualities that work hand in hand with innovative HR technology.

"We can never think of our technology as a replacement for really great processes led by the HR organization," Cameron says. "Technology ultimately is the enabler of great HR strategies.'

What that technology looks like has shifted considerably during Cameron's more than 30 years in the HR space.

She's seen the rise of self-service applications, the move to client servers and the transition to the cloud, all while HR has transformed from a focus on compliance to enabling talent. The emergence of AI and blockchain have been among the most meaningful developments for the industry, she says.

The opportunities of AI have been transformational and will continue to be so-it's allowing us to interpret and infer information based on the activities we're witnessing and learn how to get even better information; it's phenomenal," she says.

Blockchain started in the financial space as a way to exchange money while cutting out the middle man and has now made its way into HR. "It's so exciting because, for the first time, blockchain is giving us in HR the opportunity to put control of information back into the hands of individuals," Cameron says. "The combination of blockchain and AI together is going to blow our minds in the next five years in terms of what's possible.'

That potential is at the heart of the Velocity Network. Rolled out in February by the newly formed Velocity Network Foundation—featuring more than a

dozen big names in the HCM and education fields—the verified career-credential platform aims to give individuals, including

employees, job applicants and students, self-sovereignty over their identity records.

"It's an exciting moment for us and, more importantly, for where this kind of technology is going to take the industry," she says.

Velocity is the latest career turn for Cameron, who has worked across research, product, strategy and other areas in firms such as SAP SuccessFactors, Gartner, Constellation Research, Saba Software and Oracle. In 2018, she founded NextGen Insights, LLC, an HCM technology research and advisory firm.

Cameron was used to wearing several hats throughout her career but, when she started her own company, she saw she had to not only wear the hats-but she also owned them.

"There are a lot of ins and out for entrepreneurs that you may have taken for granted before: sales, marketing, communication, bookkeeping, event management. That was a big shift for me as I moved to my own company," she

What remained constant as she transitioned to becoming an entrepreneur was the need for resilience.

"Whether you're working at a big organization or for your own company, you've got to be resilient when faced with challenges if you want to really be successful at moving in a certain direction," Cameron says.

As she continues her consulting work, leadership at Velocity and other future endeavors, that commitment to resilience will be paired with another guiding principle that has defined her career, Cameron says.

"It's always been about the individual," she says. "Making sure the individual is at the heart of all the HR processes we're designing, at the heart of what the HR-tech vendors are delivering and how we're supporting, enabling and empowering the individual to bring their best to the table always has and always will be my focus."



BEAR continued from page 11

to business success. This success comes in the form of notably higher engagement, productivity, increased revenue and less turnover. Simply put, better employee experience means better business

Plus, Bear says, putting employees and their EX first means companies can make diversity and inclusion, employee wellness and wellbeing, and sustainability front and center.

"It's more than talk," she adds. "Companies are taking action. For example, prioritizing sustainability across the business requires leadership that is focused on combining economic performance, environmental protection and social responsibility. Taking a stance on these issues is impactful for employee brand advocacy and for helping employees feel a sense of purpose within the company."

She also sees employers continuing to invest in employee upskilling and reskilling. "When organizations maximize the skills and capabilities of their employees," she says, "it enables employees to contribute to the broader business."

The COVID-19 pandemic is presenting both immediate and long-term challenges for employers, Bear says, and they will largely shape the future of the HR-tech industry.

"We are in an unprecedented, challenging time," she says. "I feel strongly that this is an opportunity for HR to be leaders of change. Organizations of all sizes are figuring out how they can maintain their business operations while taking care of their people—and HR understands

Luckily, HR teams that have made significant investments in digital transformation over the past several years have an advantage: They can engage employees and check in on how they are doing, enable learning programs to foster new skills, promote wellbeing, analyze people data and more, no matter where they are working.

"HR has the opportunity to demonstrate how important these technologies are in maintaining business continuity while also supporting employees in times of change," Bear says.

"As we move forward and experience the broader impacts to the global economy and how workforces operate, agility and flexibility will be at the heart of HR-technology innovation," she concludes. "Human-experience management will become increasingly important in supporting workforces that are more remote and incorporating employees' holistic wellbeing."



Climbing the HR Ladder

Andrew Saidy has had a well-rounded impact at Schneider Electric. BY CAROL PATTON

ver the past six years, Andrew Saidy has been able to touch a range of HR processes and policies at Schneider Electric—a global energy management and industrial automation organization that supports roughly 135,000 employees in more than 100 countries, including 25,000 in the U.S.—as he has moved upwards through six leadership positions

Initially hired as an HR business partner for the company's secure power and supply chain, Saidy is now vice president of talent digitization and vice president of employer branding and university relations. He has most recently led the company's ambitious efforts to bring digitization, AI and machine learning to the HR ecosystem.

While his primary challenge is soliciting buy-in and funding for innovative ideas from both the company's senior leaders and large teams, he says, he is most proud of achieving two goals. First is Schneider Electric's new digital capabilities that streamline work tasks, create flexible workplaces and enhance engagement and productivity. He also helped develop "Step Up," a now five-year-old global recognition program that has produced more than 500,000 employee recognition moments

"HR professionals can't always put something in place that touches every employee in the organization," Saidy says. "Our employees were telling us they needed more thank-yous.

This is a positive program, and we were able to move the needle in terms of making recognition and gratitude part of our culture."

Nearly two years ago, he also helped launch the company's open talent market, an innovative, digitally disruptive platform for employees interested in exploring full-time jobs, part-time projects or other careerdevelopment opportunities at Schneider. Approximately 38% of the company's employees have registered on the platform; however, he says, many more are expected to do so when the platform becomes multi-lingual. Because the employee population is globally dispersed, the platform, which now "speaks" English and French, will also be translated into Spanish and Mandarin.

While Saidy continuously improves his digital workplace, he also seeks ways to improve himself.

"I have seen ideas fail when we have tried to move too fast or not give an idea the time needed to fully see it through," he says, adding that he is very results-oriented. "In the past, it was more about speed versus making sure everyone was on board. I have since changed my own internal process. Now, if something needs more time, like a coalition needs to

SAIDY continued onpage 16



Finding the Silver Lining of Crisis

John Sumser believes the current challenges in the world of work could lead to increased innovation. BY TOM STARNER

ohn Sumser, founder and principal analyst for HRExaminer, has witnessed change in the HRtechnology realm that puts him among the pantheon of advisors and observers.

But he'll be the first to admit that nothing could have prepared him for the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on HR, including on executives and decision-makers who are representing employers of all stripes, sizes and industry sectors.

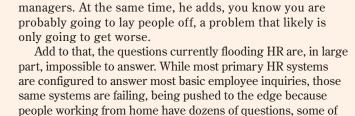
An engineer by training, Sumser has worked an array of jobs. He sold doughnuts door-to door, dug ditches and helped build railroads. He also served as a corporate executive (CEO included), a director and editor. As his true calling, Sumser has worked as an independent analyst covering HR technology and the intersection of people, tech and work.

Despite all of that experience, he never dreamt the HR-tech vendor community and the employers they serve would ever face the crushing duality of trying to keep employees' lives safe while battling an economic crash that could lead to the next major recession, if not an outright depression.

"Yesterday, I had a great productive business day for these times; here's how it went," Sumer said recently from the solitude of his home. "I spent one-third of the time crying. I spent one-third of the time being scared

out of my mind. That left one-third of the time doing productive work. I'd say that's a good day right now."

Turning to the current state of HR, he says, the challenge of being an HR leader right now is two-fold: One, you must be a compassionate representative of people who are dealing with new ways of thinking about benefits and



which are HR-related, though many may not be. "HR today isn't set up to have a lot of questions thrown at it all at once. It is set up to manage a specific type and level of inquiry," he says, adding that we'll likely start to see the demands on HR shifting in fundamental ways; it's not going to be possible to perform the core responsibilities of HR within the same budget and constraints as before the pandemic,

because HR is serving a very different function right now. SUMSER continued on page 17



HR Technology

PEOPLE SIDE OF DIGITAL

By Jason Averbook/Columnist



Navigating the Now of Work

It seems silly now to talk about the "future of work." There's only one thing to talk about: the "now

Not so long ago, we were setting strategic priorities and planning roadmaps for 2020. Making New Year's resolutions, buying technology,

embarking on program rollouts, cherry-picking from the future of work what we might have the time, bandwidth and budget to address today.

Business was booming, the economy was at an all-time high. Overnight, all of that changed. The now of work didn't just knock on our door; it let itself in

The only thing we can control is our reaction: What will we do now that it's here? How will we react in a time of need? Most importantly, how do we ensure we're creating the next future of work, together?

How the workforce looks in the now of work:

- completely remote in almost all cases;
- stretched as thin as it's been in many decades;
- possibly scared for their lives and those of their families;
- but ... still figuring out how to do their jobs every day; and
- trying to figure out what's next.

HR is on the front lines of all this, trying to help. How HR needs to look in the now of work:

- Now is the time to be as empathetic as possible;
- Now we have to work together as a community to create the answers. Not find them—create them;
- Now we work together as an HR community to help leaders in business adjust on the fly, stay in business, determine the future of the business and simultaneously deal with the next phase of the unknown; and
- Now is the time to act—to bring out the human side of HR. Not the transactional side, the human side.

Employee Experience in the Now of Work

Everyone is confused. Everyone is hurting. Everyone is shocked. This is the time to get to work. This is the time to think about the experience we're creating for our employees. Employee experience matters in good times

and in bad. Right now, the littlest things are the biggest things: how we're solving employee inquiries, the knowledge we're putting out for employees, the changes we're making and, above all, doing it with empathy.

Employee experience in 2020 was to be about two things: a business mandate and putting people first. That hasn't changed, only grown in importance. Employee experience is not a nice interface or a piece of technology. It's so much bigger than that. Now, it's about checking in with people, hourly if necessary, just to see how they're doing. Checking in to see if they're able to work. Knowing they're working with their kids learning alongside them. Understanding if they have what they need at the most basic level. Employee experience has always been about people; that point is now driving itself home in the most urgent ways.

The irony of all this? This is the way life was happening all along outside of work. We already communicate in real-time, globally, omnichannel and using creative and inventive tools. I've long been asking what year it feels like inside work compared to outside of work. Suddenly, that chasm is slamming itself shut.

This is Not a Stopgap

The most important thing to know about the future of work is that it's now—on your doorstep, in your house, in your face. It must be addressed now. We've been working backward for some time, preparing the workforce for the workplace. Now is the time to prepare the workplace for the workforce, truly meet them where they are, truly meet their most basic needs but also their most elevated expectations.

We haven't worked fast enough; we know that. We were already behind, putting greater pressure on us to meet the demands of the now of work when our hands are forced. We can't say, "We're not ready." It's no longer a choice. But I beg you, do not treat this as a stopgap. This is your opportunity to address what already needed to be addressed, to rise to the challenge, to do the right thing for your people and your business in a way that is sustainable and durable. This is not a stopgap; this is the new normal.

Jason Averbook is a leading analyst, thought leader and consultant in the area of HR, the future of work and the impact technology can have on that future. He is the co-founder and CEO of Leapgen, a global consultancy helping organizations shape their future workplace. Send questions or comments to hreletters@lrp.com.

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be formed to help push a project through, I give it

Throughout his career, Saidy has experienced firsthand different parts of the HR world.

For instance, he honed his executive-coaching skills while employed at Baker Hughes, a global industrial and oil field services company. Between 2012 and 2014, he served as a business and management coach, where he coached company executives on everything from public speaking and project management to delivering 360 feedback.

That exposure to coaching now helps him informally coach Schneider executives to develop more self-awareness, enhance their own skills and build the capabilities of their teams.

"I've been fortunate to have had the opportunity to experience HR digital transformations, talent acquisition and management, learning and development, executive coaching, HR business

partnering and HR project management," he says. "Looking forward, one of the areas that I'd like to pursue and gain greater experience in is around HR strategy, especially focusing on mergers and acquisitions."

Another area he's involved in is supporting business partners to leverage digital tools in challenging or uncertain times. In his current role, he also helped develop robust, flexibleworking arrangements and workplace initiatives that focus on new ways of working, which are now part of the company's business-continuity and contingency plans.

Over the past several years, he says, some employees started working from home several days a week, which recently has been extended to five days a weeks for many workers. The myriad technologies now available for organizations and their workforces have made remote work and managing remote workers possible, he notes.

"There was already a trend happening toward remote work," Saidy says, anticipating that focus will continue to grow. "Some companies want to spend less time on workspace or office planning. In the executive plans they put into place, there will be less real estate and more digital, integrated and interoperable technologies permeating the HR

The end result will not only produce efficiency and productivity gains for the broader organization but will also build a bigger digital workforce capable of designing and implementing HR's and the company's agenda. Likewise, he says, HR business partners will also assume the role of digital transformation business partners around everything that touches or impacts employees.

Despite a varied career in HR, Saidy says his "passion remains in HR operations, where I believe I can have the biggest impact on employee lives."



INSIDE HR TECH

By Steve Boese/Columnist



Coronavirus and the Challenge to HR Everywhere

It is now almost certain that the coronavirus pandemic will be the defining event for a generation, maybe two. There are very few transformative events in a lifetime, the ones that serve as markers or that delineate history and memory and even cultural identity. These events often compel us to recall and describe the world with a

new "before" and "after" framework: the assassination of President Kennedy, Neil Armstrong setting foot on the surface of the moon and the explosion of the Space

The attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, and the subsequent fallout from those events have been the global crisis to which the current pandemic has most often been compared. I think, in part, that comparison is apt. Both situations were, for the most part, completely unsuspected by the average person; both have shaken to the foundation our general sense of safety and security (certainly here in the U.S.); and both are particularly unsettling due to a sense of ominous uncertainty

Immediately after Sept. 11, most of us wondered, perhaps even expected, more and similar kinds of incidents. Where would the next attack happen? What places or locations should I avoid? When will it be safe to get on an airplane? When will we begin to hold large-scale events like concerts and baseball games again? And on and on. Until, at some point, that feeling began to ebb, and it became clear that additional or ongoing significant attacks were unlikely. And life, more or less, went back to "normal," or the new normal as it evolved. We eventually felt safe, but for those of us who experienced those years, there was, and remains, a small, deeply held realization that things would never be the same as they once were.

Let's shift the focus to today. The coronavirus pandemic, while sharing some of the effects of Sept. 11 (surprise, sudden and dramatic impact, lingering doubt and insecurity as to how long and how deep its impact will turn out to be), is already driving several other different and, honestly, even more unsettling effects on our world and our workplaces.

More than 3 million Americans filed for unemployment in just one week in March; I read one headline this morning suggesting the unemployment rate might approach 20% as a result of massive, widespread economic disruption. This comes after the U.S. unemployment rate as of February was just 3.5%.

All of us in HR and in HR leadership have been wrestling with the incredibly tight labor market for much of the last eight or nine years. In just weeks, the

pandemic completely flipped that script and changed the HR and workplace narrative for who knows how long. Instead of our primary focus being divided across filling open roles, retaining good performers and developing a deep leadership bench, many of us will be forced into making hard decisions around staffing levels, reducing workers' hours and cutting costs wherever and however possible.

While Sept. 11 was awful, here is just one bit of context to help understand how the comparison of the pandemic to that incident is not a perfect one. At the end of August 2001, just 11 days before the attacks, the unemployment rate in the U.S. was 4.9%. In the immediate aftermath of the attacks, and with businesses of all kinds facing significant pressure and disruption, as well as the general uncertainty in the world, unemployment began to climb. But the rate only reached a post-Sept. 11 high of 6.3% in June of 2003. By August 2005, it had fallen back to the pre-Sept. 11 level of 4.9% and continued to fall from there, bottoming out at 4.4% in May 2007 (after which it began to rise once again as the financial crisis was beginning). By most accounts, the workplace and laborforce effects of Sept. 11 were relatively mild and relatively short.

The workplace and workforce impacts of the pandemic, even the most optimistic ones, suggest much more adverse and troubling times for workers and organizations. It is already happening in the most directly impacted industries—airlines, hotels, restaurants, sports organizations—and it's certain to trend worse for at least a few months, perhaps many more. As HR and business leaders, all eyes will be on us to help our people navigate these unprecedented times and uncharted waters. Before the pandemic, it could be argued that no role in the organization was more important than HR, since having the best, most engaged, most empowered people was the only way to succeed in a competitive world. I'd argue that now, HR, and your work, is even

I will close with a quote from the Paulo Coelho: "When we least expect it, life sets us a challenge to test our courage and willingness to change; at such a moment, there is no point in pretending that nothing has happened or in saying we are not ready. The challenge will not wait. Life does not look back.'

Good luck to all. Be safe, be well and please take care of each other. It has never mattered more.

Steve Boese is a co-chair of HRE's HR Technology Conference & Exposition®. Send questions or comments to hreletters@lrp.com.

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"In order to meet that challenge, you need to do things like install technology that answers those questions for you, and right now, there is a hole in that capability," he says.

Along those lines, Sumser mentioned a company called Socrates as a platform that might help fill that void during the pandemic. Socrates uses artificial intelligence to pull together relevant information and applications, starting with policy and compliance documents, while creating a "single core" knowledge base, out of which come consistent answers on myriad employee questions.

Sumser's focus in recent times, in fact, has been on AI, and he believes the current situation is a "great time" to apply AI tools, just in different ways than they've been used in the past.

Sumser predicts the point where Americans fully adjust to new daily routines (social distancing prime among them) and stabilization in the pandemic occurs may be later than most believe; he speculates that will occur around

'At that time, HR is going to have to wrestle with some fairly tough things," he notes, for instance, the complexities around in-person meetings resuming. "Everybody who goes to the meeting is going to want to have some way of knowing that everybody else isn't contagious, right? Well, I think that's probably a HIPAA violation."

But Sumser the optimist believes good things can come out of these desperate times.

What so often happens in times of crisis is that innovation explodes," he says. "I expect that there is a very strong possibility of that happening during this trying period too."

Personally, the past few months have had a serious impact on Sumser's world view—and he figures he's not alone.

"I've become a much better human being in a fairly short order," he says. "Each time I go to the grocery store, I thank every single employee I see for being there. And when I get on video calls with people I've been working with for any significant amount of time in my life, I tell them how much I wish I could be there with them."



2020 Top 100 HR Tech Influencers

	Name/Title	Company		Name/Title	Company		Name/Title	Company
	Jeanne Achille Founder and CEO; Chair	The Devon Group; Women in HR Tech Summit, U.S. and Singapore		John Boudreau Professor Emeritus of Management and Organization, Senior Research Scientist	Marshall School of Business, University of Southern California		Adam Grant Professor of Psychology	The Wharton School, The University of Pennsylvania
	Al Adamsen CEO and Executive Director	PAFOW / Insight222	9	Sarah Brennan Founder, Principal	Accelir Insights	9	David Green Managing Partner and Executive Director	Insight222
	Aron Ain CEO	Kronos		Mimi Brooks CEO	Logical Design Solutions		Boris Groysberg Professor of Business Administration	Harvard Business School
	Gretchen Alarcon Group Vice President, Human Capital Management Strategy	Oracle		Ben Brooks Founder and CEO	Pilot Inc.	2	Ron Hanscome Vice President, Analyst	Gartner
	Matt Alder Producer; Talent acquisition and HR tech innovation speaker and consultant	The Recruiting Future Podcast; MetaShift		Marcus Buckingham Head of Research, People and Performance	ADP Research Institute		Graham Hardiman SVP Global Talent Solutions	Pfizer
A STATE OF THE STA	Cecile Alper-Leroux Vice President of Human Capital Management Innovation	Ultimate Software		Yvette Cameron EVP Ecosystem	Velocity Career Labs		Stacey Harris Vice President of Research and Analytics	Sierra-Cedar Inc.
	Roxanne Armbruster Assistant dean and CHRO	Harvard Law School	2	Kelly Cartwright Director, Talent Acquisition Tech Strategy	Amazon Web Services Recruiting	A	Zoe Harte SVP of HR and Talent Innovation	Upwork
	Sarah-Beth Anders Director of Product Marketing	LinkedIn		Elizabeth Clarke Executive Editor	Human Resource Executive		Chris Havrilla Vice President, and HR Technology & Solution Provider Strategy Research Leader	Deloitte Consulting
9	Jason Averbook Co-founder and CEO	Leapgen		Jason Corsello Founder and General Partner	Acadian Ventures		Emily He Senior Vice President of Marketing, Human Capital Management	Oracle
3	Meg Bear SVP of Products	SAP SuccessFactors	1	Mervyn Dinnen Analyst	Two Heads Consulting	3	Loren Heeringa SVP and CHRO	Land O'Lakes
	Steven Beauchamp CEO	Paylocity		Stacy Donovan Zapar Founder and Principal	The Talent Agency		Kathleen Hogan Chief People Officer	Microsoft
3	Derek Belch Founder and CEO	STRIVR	1	Kris Dunn Chief Human Resources Officer	Kinetix		Jim Holincheck VP of Advisory Services	LeapGen
	Jen Benz Senior Vice President, Communications Leader	Segal Benz		Debasis Dutta Vice President and General Manager, Products	Sumtotal Systems	15	Tim Huval Chief Administrative Officer	Humana
	Doug Berg Chief Zapper	ZAPInfo		Jonathan Ferrar Co-founder and CEO	Insight222		Jon Ingham Consultant and author	The Social Organization
	Josh Bersin Analyst and founder	Josh Bersin Academy		Anne Fulton CEO	Fuel 50	•	Ilonka Jankovich Fund manager	Randstad Innovation Fund
	Steve Boese Co-founder; Co-chair	H3 HR Advisors Inc.; HR Technology Conference & Exposition		Stacia Garr Co-founder and Principal Analyst	RedThread Research		Neil Jensen VP Product Strategy	Workday

	Name/Title	Company		Name/Title	Company		Name/Title	Company
	Ravin Jesuthasan Managing Director	Willis Towers Watson		David Ossip Chairman and CEO	Ceridian		Heidi Spirgi Chief Marketing and Strategy Officer	Cornerstone
	Katherine Jones Independent Analyst			Jason Phillips VP People Experiences	Cisco		Dan Staley Global HR Technology Leader, Oracle HCM Cloud	PwC US
3	David Karandish Founder and CEO	Capacity		Frida Polli CEO and Co-founder	pymetrics	ख	Mark Stelzner Founder and Managing Principal	ia
	Gaurav Kataria VP of Product	Betterup		Joey Price CEO	Jumpstart: HR		Lisa Sterling Founder and CEO	R3-Engage
9	Kelly Kauffman CHRO	Milwaukee Bucks		David Rodriguez Global CHRO	Marriott		Jill Strange Director Talent Development	Keurig Dr. Pepper Inc.
3	Jennifer Kraszewski Vice President of Human Resources	Paycom	(3)	Laurie Ruettiman CEO	Let's Fix Work		John Sumser Founder, Principal Author and Editor-in-Chief	HRExaminer
	Brian Kropp Chief of Research and Group Vice President	Gartner		Tim Sackett President	HRU Technical Resources		Jerome Ternynck Founder and CEO	SmartRecruiters
	Michael Krupa Senior Director, Technology and Platform Strategy	Cisco		Eva Sage-Gavin Senior Managing Director, Accenture Strategy Talent and Organization	Accenture		Matthias Thurner Chief Product Officer	Unit4
	Bill Kutik Host and Managing Editor	Firing Line with Bill Kutik®		Andrew Saidy VP Talent Digitization	Schneider Electric		Dave Ulrich Partner; Rensis Likert Professor	RBL Group; Ross School of Business, University of Michigan
	Madeline Laurano Co-founder and Chief Research Officer	Aptitude Partners		Robin Schooling Managing Partner, HR + People Strategy	Peridus Group		Erica Volini Global Human Capital Leader	Deloitte Consulting
75	Jason Lauritsen Keynote speaker, author and consultant		1	Jonathan Sears Principal and Partner, People Advisory Services	EY	3	Phil Wainewright Co-founder	Diginomica
\$ A	Melanie Lougee Head of Strategy for Employee Workflows	ServiceNow		Sarah Sheffer Director, Strategic Workforce Planning	Henry Ford Health System	E)	Ray Wang Principal Analyst and Founder	Constellation Research Inc.
	Lexy Martin Principal, Research and Customer Value	Visier		Ellyn Shook Chief Leadership and Human Resources Officer	Accenture		Don Weinstein Corporate Vice President, Global Product and Technology	ADP
	Trish McFarlane CEO and Principal Analyst	H3 HR Advisors Inc.		Al Smith Chief Technology Officer	iCIMS	9	Jeroen Wels Executive Vice President for HR	Unilever
	Rebecca McKenna Vice President of Global Events and Publisher	LRP Media Group		Tyrone Smith Jr. People Operations and Workforce Analytics Leader	Ryan LLC		Rebecca Wettemann Founder and Principal	Valoir
	Jeanne Meister Founding Partner	Future Workplace		Brian Sommer Founder and President	TechVentive Inc.	E	Colleen Wood Chief People Officer	Level Access
	Donna Morris EVP, Chief People Officer	Walmart		Andy Spence Workforce Futurist	Glass Bead Consulting	E	luman Resource (ecutive	
3	Holger Mueller Vice President and Principal Analyst	Constellation Research Inc.	3	Erin Spencer Senior Research Analyst	Deloitte Consulting		lechi Conference 8	nology ®



Benefits



Continued health coverage, paid sick leave, financial-wellness programs and more take the spotlight as employers feel the impact of the pandemic. BY KATHRYN MAYER

A New Era for Benefits

s the coronavirus pandemic changes workplaces all over the country, employees find themselves stressed out about their new reality, questioning their health coverage, financial security, job security and much more.

As a result, smart employers are reevaluating policies and offerings, putting a spotlight on employee benefits in a way that is more needed than ever, experts say.

"What we are finding is that employers are looking at their benefits packages to ensure they know everything offered to employees in detail, so that they are ready to answer the influx of questions employees are having," says Bill Gimbel, founder and CEO of LaSalle Benefits, a national insurance and employee benefits brokerage firm.

"Employers need to be assessing their short-term disability, paid-time off policies, layoff provisions and medical coverage," he says. "More than anything, right now employers are making sure that their employees are safe and healthy."

Perks that are already part of an employer's benefits package should be actively communicated to employees now to address their concerns. Others can be expanded or added in the wake of the country's crisis.

Here are eight benefits employers should zero in on in wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

Health coverage. Comprehensive and continued medical and disability coverage is vital in the wake of the pandemic. Without it, employees could go into debt and bankruptcy as they face treatment or become hospitalized due to coronavirus.

Though it's important for all employees, continued health coverage is essential for workers who are suspended from their jobs as industries and businesses temporarily shut down.



Employers would be wise to continue coverage for them, experts say.

"Obviously, income continuation due not only to illness, but also for employees who are healthy but unable to work, is critically important," explains Rich Fuerstenberg, senior partner in Mercer's life, accident and disability national practice. Some employers won't be able to continue income for the latter group for an extended period of time, if at all, he notes—especially for hourly employees in low-margin industries.

For those workers, he says, "continuation of health benefitslikely without employee contributions since there may be no pay from which to take contributions—will be valuable at a time when those with a COVID-19 diagnosis may need to access care."

Paid sick leave. Employers should be revisiting and rethinking their sickleave policies, experts say.

"Traditional employer paid sick -leave policies are likely to have holes when it comes to continuing income for coronavirus-related absences," Fuerstenberg says. "First of all, for employees who are expected to use accrued sick or vacation, that may not be adequate based on how long they will be out and how much time they have accrued."

Meanwhile, the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention advises employers to "ensure that your sick-leave policies are flexible and consistent with public-health guidance and that employees are aware of these

Several employers have expanded paid-leave benefits to more employees; others rolled out specific COVID-19 policies. Amazon, DoorDash, Instacart and Lowe's, for instance, said they would provide up to 14 paid days off to any employee quarantined or diagnosed with the coronavirus.

Telemedicine. Many large employers already offer access to virtual healthcare through their plans, and they should actively urge their workers to take advantage of that benefit, experts say.

Telemedicine benefits are vital to keeping employees safe from exposure to COVID-19. It is especially helpful for those who can work offsite or while in quarantine at home, explains Gigi Sorenson, chief clinical officer of GlobalMed, a telehealth provider.

"If a doctor feels the employee needs to be tested, they can advise the way to go about it. If their

symptoms are critical, they can make arrangements for them to be transported and seen at a higher level, all [while] keeping exposure at a minimum," she says. "The overarching purpose is that telemedicine can offer both infection containment and treatment without exposing others to

Renee Schneider

an infection." For employees who must work during this time at a brickand-mortar facility-such as airportsand are at a higher risk for exposure, "telemedicine

stations can be set up at the facility for patients to reach a healthcare provider without having to drive to the doctor's clinic and exposing other patients in a waiting room," Sorenson says.

Remote work. Allowing-and even obligating-employees to work remotely and not come into the office has been one of the most encouraged benefits to date in the wake of coronavirus. That's because social distancing and isolation are being encouraged to "flatten the curve" and reduce the number of COVID-19 cases around the country. Research finds that some Americans are afflicted but asymptomatic, carrying the virus unknowingly yet still going to work, infecting others as a result.

"In the right industry, working from home is crucial," Gimbel says. "Grocery stores and hospitals need to stay open, and working from home is not an option for them. For industries that can work from home, it's a must. It is the right thing to do not only for your employees, but for the health of Americans.'

While government mandates have now made remote work the rule, not the exception, employers including Amazon, Facebook and Twitter were some of the first to tell workers who could to work from home for the indefinite future

Mental-health assistance. Coronavirus isn't just affecting employees' physical health—it's causing mental-health issues in employees who are stressed, upset and anxious about the situation. Employerprovided mental-health programs can make a positive impact, says Renee Schneider, vice president of clinical quality at Lyra Health.

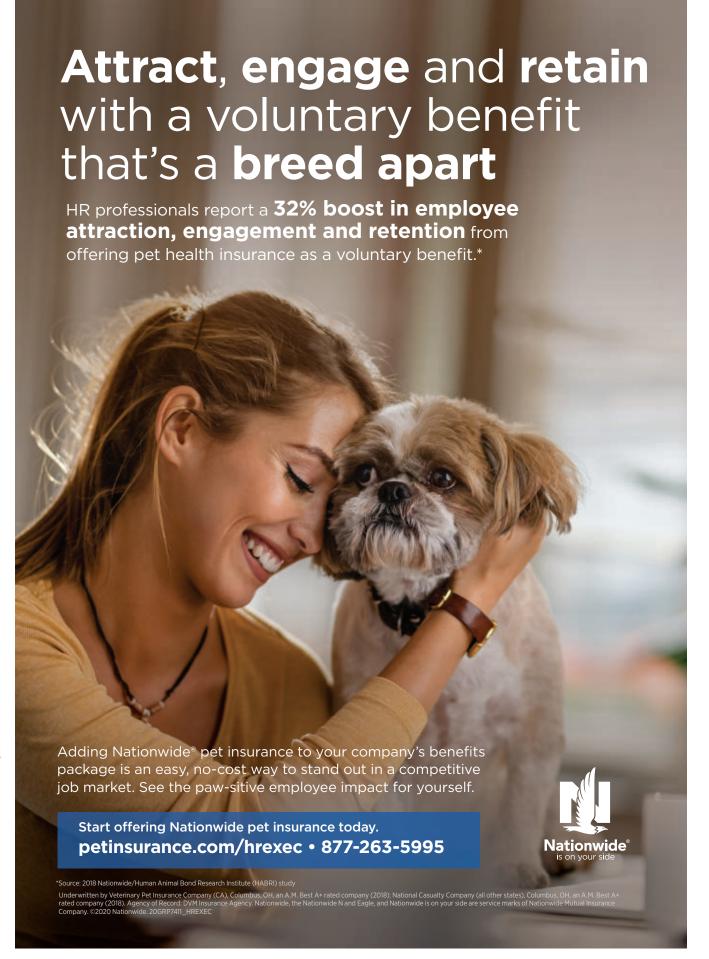
"As employees are inundated with news related to coronavirus, from the World Health Organization declaring it a global pandemic to Walt Disney World closing, feelings of anxiety and stress are inevitable," she says. "Mental-health programs can help normalize employees' feelings, while

also teaching them new skills for effectively managing distress.'

Coaches, therapists and even apps can teach an employee who is feeling scared and overwhelmed strategies for managing increased stress, like use of relaxation techniques, means of selfsoothing or ways to challenge cognitive distortions, Schneider says.

"By helping employees to cope more effectively with their stress, mental-health programs can increase employee productivity, which benefits both employers and employees, many of whom derive significant satisfaction from being successful at work," she

Bonuses. Bonuses may help employees through tough times during the pandemic, as well as show appreciation for workers.



Benefits

In March, Facebook said it will give \$1,000 bonuses to full-time employees working from home because of the pandemic, and Workday is providing a one-time payment—equivalent to two weeks' pay-to the majority of its employees to help accommodate any

unforeseen costs. Walmart will pay \$300 to full-time employees and \$150 to part-time employees, for a total payout of more than \$365 million. Kroger is providing one-time bonuses to every hourly frontline grocery, supply chain, manufacturing and customer service

associate, amounting to \$300 for every full-time associate and \$150 for every part-time associate.

"The true heroes in this story are our associates, and we want to provide them with additional resources and support to help them

Executive BENEFITS LEADERSHIP CONFERENC

continue their remarkable effort," Kroger CEO Rodney McMullen said in a statement.

Childcare assistance. As schools around the country have closed, employees with children are facing a dilemma: how to take care of their children while they continue to go into the office or work remotely. Employers that offer caregiving leave or childcare benefits—whether at an onsite daycare or by subsidizing employees' childcare costs to help them afford outside daycare—are already at an advantage, but companies can also roll out or enhance programs.

Target, for instance, is giving all its employees access to a backup family-care benefit—a plan that was previously offered to some of the retailer's workers—to help employees through the pandemic. "In the face of school and other care-facility closures, backup care will be available to all, including frontline team members who are doing so much right now," Target CEO and Chairman Brian Cornell said recently.

Target rolled out a backup daycare



Edward Gottfried

benefit last fall, providing workers with 20 days of "in-center childcare or in-home childand eldercare" through a partner network. In light of coronavirus,

the retailer is waiving eligibility requirements, copays and other program details.

Financial-wellness programs. Financial wellness and education are "all the more important in this moment," says Edward Gottfried, group product manager for Betterment, a retirement provider that works with 500 employer clients.

Programs that help employees budget, save and create an emergency fund should "absolutely" be promoted as employees deal with financial challenges that may arise: loss of a job in the family, higher medical bills, money lost in the volatile stock market and so on. Providing resources may help encourage smart behaviors and

"Financial preparedness isn't just about retirement; it's also about your ability to face down unexpected challenges or unexpected expenses in a shorter time horizon," Gottfried says. "Employers need to think about this."

Send questions or comments about this story to hreletters@lrp.com.

BEYOND BENEFITS

By Kathryn Mayer/Columnist



Shining a Light on Remote Work

Each morning I get dressed, walk downstairs to my kitchen for coffee and generally head to my home office at 7:30 a.m. or so. My days are filled with Zoom calls and

instant-message exchanges with co-workers. There are telephone calls with sources, plenty of emails to return, numerous stories to write and usually a midday walk

This isn't a new coronavirus routine. It's been my normal work-from-home schedule for the past several

I've been working remotely from my home in Denver since 2016, when I was hired by a New Yorkbased company. I continue to work from home in my current job at Human Resource Executive®. Now that most employees are working from home because of the coronavirus pandemic, enjoying a benefit they may never have asked for, I say, "Hello; welcome to my world."

Remote work is one of those employee benefits that has sparked a lot of debate over the years: Are workers really more productive at home? How do you manage remote employees? How do you build camaraderie? Are employees (gasp) working in sweatpants?

Sure, there are pros and cons to every situation, but my work-from-home experience has been great. I have always worked much better in the quiet and without distractions, especially when it comes to writing and editing articles. Plus, as someone who interviews people on a regular basis, I don't have to worry about distracting others or being too loud on the phone. Do I miss random gatherings, team lunches, water-cooler conversations, happy hours? Sure. But connection with my team members and co-workers has never been an issue, despite the physical distance.

Coronavirus has put a spotlight on remote work benefits, to be sure. A vast majority of employers have been forced to move their employees home as the virus spreads and social distancing and quarantining become the norm. While it's a necessary step, it's been filled with a lot of surprises. One big one? How many companies were so vastly unprepared for or unwilling to allow remote work.

Truth is, the vast majority of employees have been working remotely since the advent of the smartphone, when constant emails, phone calls and text messages were in the palm of our hands. For many with office jobs, work is not being done just in an office—it's done in our homes and on our commute and when we sneak in just one more email on our phones while in bed

before we go to sleep. Work is not 9-to-5, in the same way not all work is done in the same brick-and-mortar location in a cubicle.

The coronavirus pandemic is reinforcing the benefits of remote work and workplace flexibilitysomething employees were universally clamoring for before COVID-19 entered the conversation (research from benefits provider Unum, for instance, found that flexible and remote work was the top non-insurance perk desired by employees). The benefit is essential in a pandemic, to be sure, but it's also an important offering for employees in a number of situations, whether they're parents or caregivers or employees with chronic health conditions.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created an unforeseen, massive experiment of a workplace model many employers were hesitant to adopt, but it's one that will teach us how work can be done, how employees can be flexible, how managers can best manage and, yes, the importance of HR technology to help make it all possible.

It is important to say: This is not usual work-fromhome business. Our collective worlds are turned upside down. Kids are home. Spouses are home. Stress and anxiety are high. In these tumultuous times, it's hard not to let your mind wander. To have anxieties and fears that crop up several times a day, to click on the latest headlines, to be engrossed in the press conferences, the stunning statistics, the most updated case count. You get worried. You get distracted. As someone with chronic health conditions, I get worried about my own safety. I get worried about family, about my aging parents and in-laws. About job security and healthcare coverage and my 401(k) balance. And so does everyone else.

Whether it's during a pandemic or when work gets back to normal, the biggest way to ensure successful implementation of remote work is for employersmanagers and HR leaders among them-to offer the right support, give employees flexibility, create a culture of trust and be compassionate. These things are always important, but all the more so now in a world that is so upended.

The pandemic and the quarantine will end eventually. But if employers are willing to learn from the experience, I suspect remote work will be around much longer.

Kathryn Mayer is HRE's benefits editor and chair of the Health & Benefits Leadership Conference. She has covered benefits for the better part of a decade. She holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Denver. She can be reached at kmayer@lrp.com.

Case Studies IN HR EFFECTIVENESS

Unum Enhances Efficiency and User Experience with Workday

Challenges

num was operating a complex network of 39 HR and financial applications—the majority of which were on-premise, rigid and subject to a limited user base. Finance and HR teams were burdened with multiple sources of information and a lagging capability set.

With Workday

Automated absence management in Workday laid the foundation for the development of HR Connect: Unum now provides HR Connect services for more than 110 mutual customers using the service, with another 70 currently implementing streamlined processes such as absence, evidence of Insurance (EOI), billing and enrollment.

Workday Applications

- Human Capital Management
- Financial Management
- Prism Analytics
- Planning, Payroll
- Time Tracking
- Absence Management
- Recruiting
- Learning
- Procurement
- Expenses
- Workday Cloud Platform

Benefits and Results

System Consolidation: Unum consolidated more than 20 corporate applications and delivered new functionality and an expanded capability set benefiting from role-based security, always-on audit and real-time processing via web service call. Unum also redesigned the internal IT support model and transferred partial system ownership to the business.

- Reduced HR and finance systems from 39 to 17
- \$200K net annual cost savings
- \$1.4M upgrade cost avoidance

Overall Efficiency: Unum has simplified its IT environment and reduced manual and transactional administration via automation and configurable workflows, enabling the reorganization of IT, HR, supply management and finance teams. Key



improvements include a reduction in period close, accounts payable, compensation planning and upgrade-management cycle times.

- \$1.7M annual head-count cost savings
- Reduced financial year-end roll forward from three days to one hour

User Experience

With a more intuitive interface, prospective employees benefit from a faster application process and an improved digital onboarding experience, while existing employees benefit from a "futureready" environment boasting high adoption rates.

- \$42K annual cost savings for new-hire packages
- 85% adoption of performance tools
- 50% reduction in time to apply

Decision Support: Process improvements enable a redirect of time to high-value, strategic projects. Unum is now equipped with the tools to drive strategic, data-driven business decisions related to turnover and retention, diversity and inclusion, merit allocation and vendor spent.

• \$2.5M annual maverick spend reduction

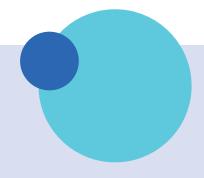
HIGHLIGHTS

Customer name: Unum

Headquarters: Chattanooga, Tenn.

Industry: Insurance

Problem solved: Workday helped Unum streamline its HR and finance processes and provide a better user experience.



May 2020 23 SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION



Cardinal Innovations Healthcare Nurtures Healthy Learning Environment with OpenSesame

ardinal Innovations Healthcare was founded 11 years ago as a managedcare organization, connecting those with complex needs to services and support within their communities. The organization now serves as a model, not just within its home state of North Carolina, but across the country, thanks to its success in helping members and their families live their healthiest, happiest lives. Cardinal Innovations Healthcare's team of 800 employees works each day to create a high-performing culture that supports the success of its members, its employees and its communities. As part of that work, the organization rolled out a comprehensive learning-management system leveraging content from OpenSesame.

Compliance Content—Plus a Whole Lot More

When Samantha Bell joined Cardinal Innovations Healthcare, the organization was moving to implement a formal learning-management system (LMS), combined with a comprehensive course offering. "Until that point, we didn't have a way of bringing all our training resources together," she recalls. "Each department was responsible for its own training, from creating or locating curriculum to tracking course completion. There was no organizational visibility into our training efforts, no standardization of curriculum and no way to run reports or queries into who had completed what courses."

Many members of Cardinal Innovations Healthcare's team are required to maintain healthcare-related certifications or complete continuing education as part of their jobs, and OpenSesame provides access to the needed courses.

"OpenSesame offers courses from a well-regarded healthcare-education provider, so that immediately made them a good fit for us," says Bell. "In addition to that, though, we get so much more from OpenSesame. We have access to hundreds of different publishers' courses across every imaginable topic."

Eager Adoption

"While Cardinal Innovation has always prioritized employee training, it wasn't until we had OpenSesame and our LMS that we had the mechanism to organize, track and manage that training," says Bell.

All 800 of Cardinal Innovations Healthcare's employees have access to OpenSesame courses, from new-hire onboarding through customerservice training, technical training, compliance and career-development education. "Our staff is hungry to learn," says Bell. "Before we launched OpenSesame, we had a series of live webinars to introduce the solution to everyone. The reaction was overwhelmingly positive—people couldn't wait to get started."

Anywhere, Anytime Training

Cardinal Innovations Healthcare's care team covers much of the state of North Carolina, some a several hours' drive from the main offices. Previously, members of that team had to make the trip to attend periodic training classes. Now, the training is available online through OpenSesame, ready to go at any time and from any place.

"Our team can get their training locally, or even from home if they want," says Bell. "It saves everyone time and effort and makes it much easier to get required coursework done on time."

Continual improvement

Bell and members of her training team look forward to the annual OpenSesame user conference. "We always come away with new ideas," she says, "and what is particularly impressive is that OpenSesame is continually improving its solution. They actively seek our feedback and work to incorporate our suggestions into the offering."

OpenSesame impresses Cardinal Innovations Healthcare with its service levels as well. "Working with OpenSesame is a really positive experience," says Bell. "They are quick to respond, proactive in their assistance and always willing to help us research the courses we need."

Bell says that using OpenSesame has changed the focus of her job. "Instead of administrative tasks related to training, I'm able to be strategic, actively working with our managers and staff to further both our employees' and our organization's goals."

"OpenSesame really opens doors for our organization and our employees," she concludes. "It provides an easy way to bring all our training and career-development curriculum together. It's almost like magic."

HIGHLIGHTS

Customer name: Cardinal Innovations Healthcare

Headquarters: Charlotte, N.C.

Industry: Healthcare

Problem solved: OpenSesame helped Cardinal Innovations offer a centralized and standardized course catalog that saves time and reduces costs.





Learn in place

We are here to help you to emerge stronger from this crisis.

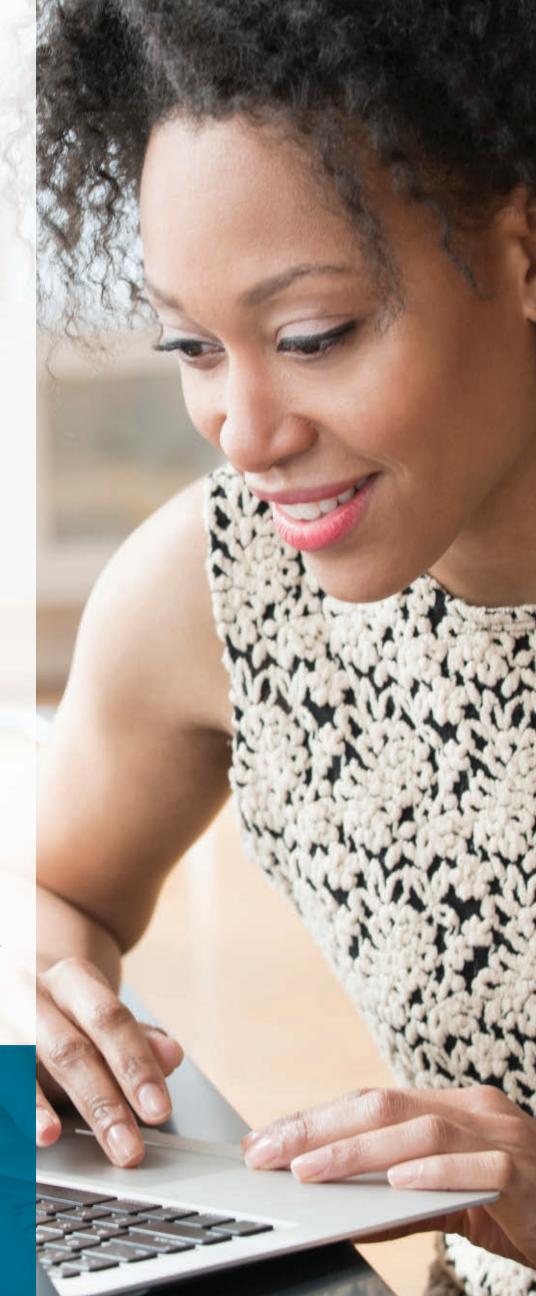
With travel bans widening and instructor-led training no longer an option, elearning can provide a critical and efficient path to rapidly educate employees during the coronavirus pandemic.

Sign up today at **go.opensesame.com/ free-offer** to access free courses about preventing the spread of coronavirus, how to work and manage remotely, the importance of social distancing and more until 15 June 2020.

We are ready to support your organization to curate the best courses to meet your other training needs and quickly deploy them to your employees. Contact us today for a free elearning consultation at (503) 808-1268.

Sign up today at go.opensesame.com/free-offer

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Talent Management

ANEL OF EXPERTS



Bhushan Sethi, joint global people and organization leader, PwC



Jill Popelka, president, SAP SuccessFactors



Kara Hamilton, chief people and culture officer, Smartsheet



Karen Oakey, director of human resources, Fracture



Kris Meade, labor and employment group chair and partner, Crowell & Moring



Mary Mathews, director of human resources and business operations, Keyfactor

Is Remote Work Here to Stay?

A panel of experts explores HR's challenge to keep workforces productive and engaged—largely from home—during and after a dangerous and uncertain pandemic.

BY JIM ROMEO

the health officials of
American communities
are now grappling with an
epidemic that they do not
understand very well." That
sounds like a recent news
headline, but in reality, it
was from "The Spanish
Influenza," published in
the New York Times on Oct. 7, 1918. In
that pandemic, 50 million people died
worldwide, including about 675,000 in
the United States.

nder adverse conditions,

If history repeats itself, we could say the same thing about our present day, as we face an unprecedented pandemic, unfamiliar to us all and rife with uncertainty, prompting employers to struggle to understand where we are and what the road ahead looks like.

To gain a better grasp of how we are working, and how our workforce will work in the months to come, we assembled a diverse panel of thought leaders to share their insights and experiences. They are geographically

diverse, and have different job functions and responsibilities, but one commonality: an investment in human resources.

Many companies are working remotely. Is it possible to sustain our GDP with that work model?

Oakey: Remote-work situations are directly dependent upon the industry and the specific position requirements needed to complete the assigned tasks. This directly correlates with sustaining the GDP. Companies should ensure they have a plan for remote work to ensure the delivery of products and services. If remote work is not a normal business process, it will be helpful to include specific positions and processes within their business-continuity plan to have available during any unplanned crisis. Due to technological advancement, we have improved communication with our professional cohorts. This makes it possible to work remotely and deliver within our position without severely impacting the GDP. We would not be able to have success in our roles without the many ways of virtually connecting.

Meade: While we are fortunate that many sectors of our economy are telework-ready, many are not. The key question for all of us is how long this disruption will last, as teleworking will not be the answer for so many of our citizens.

Hamilton: The current situation has forced many of us to transition completely to remote work. The interesting challenge is that it's not just a question of technology and tools—don't get me wrong, that's a huge part of it; it's also about adapting to a different way of work. We've created a COVID-19 dashboard in Smartsheet as an on-demand way for our employees to stay up-to-date or log

Read more of our conversation at HRExecutive.com/category/talent management

a request. We're also using Workplace by Facebook to share updates, like our recent live-streamed All Hands meeting, and connect employees during this difficult time, and [we are using] Zoom, where we held a town hall to answer manager questions about our COVID-19 response.

Sethi: Firms that introduce remote work for the first time are going to experience a learning curve, but we've seen that firms that invest in the right tools and offer flexibility and remote work can be more productive. In fact, the data show from hire to retire, workers prefer flexibility; slightly over half of job candidates said they would forgo higher salaries for more flexibility. About 77% of business and HR leaders said they're able to attract talented people by providing good work/life balance and flexibility over hours and working locations. There's not a one-size-fits-all formula, but really understanding your employees is key.

What do you say to a CHRO who must confer with top leadership about the future of remote work, given the great uncertainty?

Oakey: When conferring with top leadership about remote work, it's important to ensure that the business can support such positions. Come to the discussion prepared with information on what is necessary for successful remote positions. This is crucial whether the discussion is had under a normal business guideline or in an unplanned crisis situation.

Popelka: CHROs have an opportunity and obligation to lead and push their organizations to adopt a people-first outlook. The highest priority is to make sure employees are supported to do their job. That means working with the CIO to make sure there is technical infrastructure in place to support that work and providing employees with training and resources. It also means providing the resources to support employees emotionally, professionally and financially as much as possible. It's important that policies and resources are in place that enable employees to adapt based on their individual needs.

Many of the trends we've been discussing around the future of work have become a reality overnight: remote work, flexible hours, employee engagement, the importance of people data. CHROs have full visibility of the workforce.

Meade: It's a tough time to have such discussions, as the CHROs are all-out doing what they can to maintain operations in this moment. But this is a very good test case for many companies that likely had the ability to permit their workforces to telework but had not. We suspect there will be some real lessons learned from this imposed exercise, most of which will be quite beneficial to remote-working options in the future.

Mathews: Given the great uncertainty of this time, putting a strategy in place for remote work is a must. Luckily for most mid-large-sized businesses, they are well equipped to do so and already have such strategies in place. The best approach to building a strategy is to first create a business-continuity team that includes representation across functions such as IT, finance, HR, customer support and, in our case as a software company. development. Once the team is in place, they should meet regularly to develop a business-continuity and disasterrecovery plan.

Business continuity is a documented plan that ensures regular business will continue even if a disaster has occurred. Disaster recovery (a facet of the business continuity plan) is related to the technical operations of your business that ensures the appropriate systems can be restored.

How can our technology infrastructure support remote work in the long run?

Popelka: There are gaps in accessibility, but we are seeing companies step up to address those gaps by providing internet service or reducing bandwidth, among others. No industry is exempt from the impact of COVID-19, and it's exposing the importance of digital infrastructure and the need for strong digital-transformation strategies. Companies who are well on their way in their transformation journeys most likely have the infrastructure in place to support a remote workforce. But those who have been slower to adopt or change will certainly face more challenges, especially given how abruptly things are changing. We are at the beginning of a new normal.

Meade: That's the big question that has kept every CTO up at night since this crisis began. While there will surely be failures in the system, we have now seen many companies scale quickly and relatively successfully, so at this point, there is room for real optimism.

Hamilton: Smartsheet, like many SaaS businesses, is already conducting much of our work digitally. Given the current situation, we've pivoted quickly where needed—including sharing frequent updates and leveraging virtual meeting capabilities—so our employees can continue to provide the best support to our customers and others, regardless of location. We, again like many businesses, also have business-continuity plans in place that are designed to maintain platform availability through events such as this.

Mathews: Our technology infrastructure can support remote work; however, our human practices need to change. There is already a concern about running out of room for data. The same likely applies to bandwidth and platform availability and agility. As stewards of this technology, we need to make sure that we are actively securing and managing our critical employee and customer data.

The Hard Questions Behind the Virus



The reality that epidemiologists have been explaining for months about the coronavirus is finally sinking in. The socialdistance practices in place now are not going to prevent us from being exposed to the

virus. Even if we do it for a year or more, the virus will still be around. It is highly contagious, we can be infected and spread it before we have symptoms, and good hygiene will not prevent it as most of us catch it by breathing.

The point of these social-distancing practices is to avoid a sharp spike in the growth rate that would create lots of victims at once and overwhelm the healthcare system. The 3% or 5% of those who will need hospital care is a big number when the estimates are that a third or more of people could be sick from the virus

The good news is that not everyone gets sick from being exposed to it, most of those who do get sick will not be very sick, and once we recover, it appears we will not contract it again.

The process of infection and recovery will, we are told, likely go on for a year or more. Social-isolation practices are also tanking the economy and will bury it if it continues. That is one of the reasons policy-makers are hinting, or outright saying, they will be lifted soon, even though the virus will not have been defeated.

So we will soon have to go back to work, back to school, back to "normal" life. It will look like a really bad flu season with many people getting sick and a small number, mainly not in the workplace, needing hospital care. How do we manage?

First, we have to get people back to work and those who are healthy to stay at work. People who test positive for the virus and never got sick, or if they did, have recovered, have won the lottery. They are safe, they can't transmit the virus, nor can they get it. We need them to come back to work, and we need them to be consumers again. Virtually everyone will eventually be in that situation, but we can't wait for everyone before we start up again.

The problem is that they won't know if they are in that situation unless they are tested. It is in their interest and surely that of their employers as well to be tested—as soon as we actually get tests, which is another story. If I was an employer, I wouldn't wait for my employees to go on their

own to their doctors, get the insurance approvals for tests and so forth. I would cut a deal with a testing company and make it available to all my employees for free and beg them to take it. Otherwise, many people who did not get sick, or maybe just thought they had a cold, will not know that they are now safe and can stop worrying.

Second, employees and, indeed, all people need to understand that they cannot drive the risk of getting the virus to zero by staying home past the quarantine period. We need to make sure that the risk of infection in the workplace is as low as possible so that employees understand that it is no riskier to come to work than it is to go shopping or to religious services or other aspects of normal life. Unless they want to give up anything that looks like normal for a long, long time, they might as well come to work.

Yes, it is possible to make employees come to work as long as the risk of being sick there is not unreasonable. But it is not practical to do so, especially with the new Families First legislation that mandates paid sick leave and then FMLA leave for anyone with coronavirus related problems, such as feeling that you might have symptoms, having a family member with symptoms, a child whose school is closed and so forth. It would be impossible to police all those, and the government has also said not to ask employees to get doctor's notes for being sick, given the demands on the system.

An interesting, also disturbing, survey result from Axios reports that employees trust what their employer says about the coronavirus more than they trust what the government says. In this context, employers need to be straight-up with them about the realities of the path of this virus. They also need to tell them that we really need their help: The business and the organization will go under if we can't get employees to show up. We may well be short-staffed during this period, and this could be difficult, but we are going to do our best to take care of you: Here's the path out of here.

If you have a good, honest relationship with employees, my guess is that they will rally to the need. If you don't, this is a powerful incentive to make it better, at least for the next crisis.

Peter Cappelli is the George W. Taylor Professor of Management and director of the Center for Human Resources at The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. Send questions or comments to hreletters@lrp.com.

Any parting advice you'd like to offer HR leaders, given the fear and uncertainty they and their employees are experiencing right now?

Oakey: Be transparent and timely in your communications within your team. These are strange times for everyone on both the personal and professional levels. All companies are in the same situation of reviewing the current state of their business. We are all asking how much runway is available to operate and weather this storm. It is a fine balancing act to do what's right for employees, face the uncertainty of the economy and follow government mandates. In the end, don't lose sight that we are all people with different life scenarios trying to keep our family intact and keep our jobs. We're all human beings. Be kind and have positive intentions in all you do, even when you might be delivering tough news.

Popelka: Human connection remains crucial to our own wellbeing, our sense of purpose and even our productivity. Continue putting people at

the center of everything you do because human connection and the feeling of community—even if virtual—are what propel businesses to succeed. We are in uncharted territory, but we are human, first and foremost, and we are in this together. Communicate constantly, listen to their feedback and concerns respond to every question no matter how small and lead with empathy.

Hamilton: As people leaders, we feel a responsibility to help our employees navigate the global uncertainty we are facing. We want to provide the best information and guidance we can, keep our team members safe and continue to serve our customers and move our business forward. In times of stress and pressure. I believe it's important to communicate with authenticity and transparency, to acknowledge the unknowns, and to state and restate the priorities of health and wellbeing.

Sethi: My advice for CHROs would be to ask yourselves "what you'd want

to be remembered for" if you look back a year from now. How did you put the health and safety of your people first during this time of crisis? Did you focus on their wellbeing and mental health? If you have to transition people out, are you putting them in a position where they can be more employable? It's important to lead with purpose, especially now, and make deliberate choices to do everything possible to protect your people and community at the expense of short-term profitswhich, in turn, can drive a faster recovery and long-term economic gains.

Mathews: Be transparent and supportive of your employees. People are what make businesses most successful. Without people, businesses are nothing. Direct your focus to your employees' health, which should be the No. 1 priority during this time. We will get through this time.

Send questions or comments about this story to hreletters@lrp.com.

Leadership



What COVID-19 Has Already Taught Employers

Leaders from Wells Fargo, Novartis Pharmaceuticals and Northwestern Mutual share their crisisresponse experiences.

BY JEN COLLETTA

hough the coronavirus pandemic didn't start picking up considerable steam here in the United States until March, Wells Fargo's American operations had been preparing for the crisis since January.

"Our teams in Asia started picking it up and we knew we were going to have to make some decisions about how we were going to communicate to our employees," said David Berger, senior vice president of communications at Wells Fargo. Berger was one of several executives who shared their companies' early learnings from the pandemic on a webcast in late March hosted by Velaku Software.

As Wells Fargo strategized an internal communication plan, executives were concerned about contradictory information and messaging about the health crisis and its effect on the business, especially given a globally distributed workforce with many different individual lines of business. It became clear, Berger said, that they "needed a single source of truth," which ultimately was its intranet, where all employees can now look for updates on the pandemic and each step the company has taken in response.

"I couldn't imagine what would have happened since things have developed if we had individual teams posting their own information," Berger said. "It would be chaotic and high-risk for the company."

Involvement of senior executives in all internal and external messaging was also important; new Chief Operating Officer Scott Powell became the "face of the response," Berger said. The organization's operating committee has met twice daily as the crisis has grown, and the communications team is present for each meeting.

Disseminating accurate, timely information to employees has also been a priority at Novartis Pharmaceuticals, said Tina Tuttle, head of the company's U.S. enterprise and executive communications. The organization has

developed three priorities in its response to the crisis. First, business continuity, which involves decisions on remote work and developing new ways of doing business—and ensuring employees are informed each step of the way.

Associate engagement is another focus.

"How do we keep people engaged and connected during this time period?" Tuttle said. "To do that, we're making sure we're being empathetic going above and beyond."

That point is driven home by the fact that business leaders are experiencing many of the same challenges and frustrations as their employees, she said.

"What's so unique about this is we have to balance the needs of the business with the needs of our own families, which has posed a real challenge for me personally but all of the employees and associates we serve," she said.

As a healthcare company, Novartis serves those who are on the frontlines

of fighting the pandemic, Tuttle said, which is why community investment has emerged as a third pillar of the company's response plan.

Novartis donated 130 million doses of hydroxychloroquine, which is being evaluated as a possible treatment for COVID-19. Tuttle said employees have been clamoring for ways to help, so the organization launched an internal crowdsourcing site through which they can offer ideas about how the company can help those affected by the pandemic.

Employees' willingness to help has surprised executives, Tuttle said, as has their productivity in new workfrom-home arrangements.

"The thought was that working from home may lighten the workload, but it's been the opposite effect: We have employees at their computers 15 hours a day, while also trying to homeschool their kids," she said. Leaders have actually had to intervene to stop employees from *over*working. They set standard meeting hours only during mid-day and asked managers to refrain from having Monday morning meetings so employees could have time to gear up for the week.

Mick Trevey, senior director of communications and corporate engagement at Northwestern Mutual, agreed that flexibility—and understanding-have been key, and can help create an "environment of authenticity" for employees. Leaders have been telling managers to "be tolerant if co-workers' kids, dogs or parents show up on a conference call or the doorbell rings. This is a new environment and we all need to be supportive of one another.'

Northwestern Mutual has created a multipoint messaging strategy for both employees and external stakeholders. A prime component is emphasizing its more than 170-year history to convey its ability to weather this storm.

'We've survived wars, depressions and even the pandemic flu of 1918. We have all these things in our history books," he said. "That history is more than a talking point; it's a meaningful thing that gives us a sense of confidence in saying that we've managed through things like this before and we have compassion for what people are dealing with. But we've seen this play out before and we know it will play out in a positive way over the course of time; the day will come when things rebound."

Until that happens, Tuttle said, it's important for employers to be open to consistently changing course.

"I'm literally learning every day because things are changing every day," she said.

"Moving fast and being agile has been the most important thing. All the best-laid plans could mean nothing tomorrow, so we have to go into each day asking how we can support our stakeholders today."



Why Resilience Should Be Top of Mind

How quickly our world changes.

Just a few months ago, I shared a stage in Dublin, Ireland, with two luminariesproducer and educator

Lord David Puttnam and economist Dr. Linda Yueh. We offered a positive look forward into the future of business, government and work. I was there to talk to C-suite and senior executives specifically about the kind of leadership our workforces need in this new decaderesponsible leadership.

Now, responsible leadership has taken on a far deeper meaning. Our people need it more than ever, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

During this difficult time, it is challenging for even the most experienced CHRO to absorb and think through weighty concepts. All of us are trying to carefully focus our attention and energy, so we can put our best selves to work for our people.

With that in mind, my colleagues and I recently published a guide for C-suite leaders with 10 practical suggestions on how to help their people be resilient during these tough times. In a recent study of more than 15,000 people across 10 countries and 15 industries, we identified the needs of the workforce and the qualities people most want from their leaders. These qualities are always important, but never more so than right now, when people's needs are magnified.

The Overarching Need for Trust: Distilled to one essential message, our workforce is looking to trust us. And our people will trust us if they believe leadership cares for each individual, their community and humanity as a whole. People told us they need a leadership team focused on compassion and the care of our people—and relevant information about the current pandemic.

A recent survey supports this—an Edelman Trust Barometer survey, published in March, indicates that people are looking first to their employers for crucial important information about COVID-19. Further, people turn to their corporate leaders as trusted sources of information before they rely on public-health experts or government officials.

But beyond caring and providing information, leaders can also show that they have a plan. People told us they need to have confidence in their leaders' capability to navigate the future. We don't have to know everything, but we do need to be transparent about what is driving decisions.

A leadership team that looks ahead proactively, and responds rather than reacts, goes a long way toward helping people in volatile times.

Three Levels of Need: Physical, Mental, Relational

Most of us are familiar with Maslow's Hierarchy, a psychological construct that shows human needs in ascending order in a pyramid. Basic needs at the bottom of the pyramid must be fulfilled before higher needs.

Research shows that workforces have needs in a similar construct. If we can meet our people's main physical, mental and relational needs, we can help them develop the individual and collective resilience so necessary to make it through this crisis and new reality.

Physical: At a time when many usual freedoms are being restricted, people need help feeling they are empowered to do what is necessary to keep themselves and their families safe and well. Each organization will

have its own nuances. In a company with people mainly in physical locations, specific concerns might include no-contact service and wearing protective equipment, with others being worried broadly about the future in this time of uncertainty.

Asking early and often what people need or are concerned about will help our leadership teams determine best actions. It comes down to feeling safe while working, the most basic of human needs. And beyond safety, to leaders supporting their teams' wellbeing.

Mental: Right now, teams need flexibility and permission to work differently. Consecutive hours of uninterrupted work may not be feasible, as many people deal with disrupted elder care and childcare, difficulties securing essential supplies at home and potential healthcare issues. Managers have to evolve work rules for more flexibility, based on emotional intelligence and people's individual needs. Educating managers on this sooner rather than later can help them empower their

People are asking for consistent, transparent and clear communication from leadership at all levels for productivity and mental health. In a vacuum, employees will create their own versions of the story, which can cause fear and confusion. And these are times for leaders to gain hearts, minds and engagement.

Relational: Many people join companies because they share values and a larger purpose. In times of crisis, shared values and purpose need to shine through brighter than ever. Why? Because they are the basis for people's sense of connection, of belonging to something bigger than themselves.

As citizens of the world realize our shared humanity in new ways during this pandemic, our people will look for the same. And as companies emphasize concern not just for their own people, but also for the community, and humanity as a whole, workers are provided a stable connection to something bigger than the turbulence they're experiencing.

In addition, as a new reality is playing out in the broader world, people want to understand their new work experience. Instead of letting this happen organically, let's be proactive. Let's ask people to co-create with us. Let's work together to design a workplace reality that better fits the new world we're in. Leaders who can practice followership, elevating their most digitally savvy workers to lead the way, set a wonderful example.

What We Can Do Now: The 10 actions that will help our people immediately, based on the needs I just detailed, include everything from putting our most compassionate leaders front and center to flattening the hierarchy.

As overwhelming and challenging as this time can be, there has never been a better time for CHROs and our teams to bring our best selves to work. The human side of change is our wheelhouse and our strength. We can help lead our companies—and our people—to the other side of this with grace, courage and resilience.

I wish you health and the energy to help our teams find their own human resilience.

Eva Sage-Gavin is a former CHRO with more than three decades of experience in Fortune 500 corporations. She currently serves as the senior managing director for Accenture's global talent and organization consulting practice and as a technology board director. Send questions or comments to hreletters@lrp.com.

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People

Health-services firm Seniorlink Inc. appointed Mary Schafer as senior vice president of people and culture. She joined the company in 2016 as director of HR and, two years later, was promoted to vice president of people and culture. Her new role will be focused on creating tech-focused leadership-development

Schafer spent 20 years at Harvard Pilgrim Health Care in various HR leadership roles.

She earned an associate's degree in business administration and management from Dean College.

Susan Tohyama has been named executive vice president and CHRO



at Ceridian HCM Holding Inc.

Previously, she was the HR chief at VICE Media and has also held HR leadership positions for the National

Basketball Association, both in the U.S. and Asia. Also in Asia, she was an HR leader at Starbucks, Disneyland and Walt Disney Attractions.

Tohyama earned a bachelor's degree from Western University.

Julie Turpin will become chief people officer at Brown & Brown Inc.

She was CEO at Advocator Group and previously held leadership roles at

Compiled by Jen Colletta

GCG Risk Management Consultants and Marsh USA.

Turpin earned a bachelor of science degree in business and management from Cardinal Stritch University.

Balbix Inc. hired Shelly Morales as vice president of people. She comes



to the company after HR leadership positions at tech companies including Quantenna Communications, Atlassian and LinkedIn.

Stuart Crabb joined WorkBoard as chief people officer.

The multidisciplinary HR officer has more than 30 years in the tech industry,

including as partner and founder of Oxygen Consulting LLC. He spent several years with Facebook, as global head of learning and later director



of leader and development. He also held HR leadership positions at Yahoo!, Siemens Research and BAE Systems.

He earned a law degree from the University of Westminster and a master of arts from University of Portsmouth.

Spire Hospitality hired Barbara Doucet as vice president of HR.

Most recently, she was an HR leader at Omni Hotels & Resorts and spent more than two decades at Target.

She earned a bachelor's degree in business from St. Edward's University.

John Reid-Dodick recently joined *AlphaSense* as chief people officer.

He most recently was senior vice president of culture at WeWork, where he previously was chief people officer. He has also held HR leadership roles at Dun & Bradstreet, Thomson Reuters Markets and AOL.

Reid-Dodick earned a bachelor's degree in politics from the University of Manitoba, a master's in politics from NYU and a law degree from Harvard Law School.

Holly Tyson recently joined Zebra Technologies Corp. as its chief human resource officer.

Tyson was CHRO at DICK's Sporting Goods. Before that, she held senior HR roles at Brink's Co., Bristol-Myers Squibb, CIGNA and Accenture.

Tyson earned a bachelor's degree from William & Mary and a master's degree from Columbia University.

Cloud communications platform Twilio hired Christy Lake as its chief people officer.

Previously, Lake served as CPO at Box and also held HR leadership positions at the Home Depot, HP Software and Medallia.

She has a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Connecticut.

Heather Ace was named executive vice president of HR at wirelesstechnology company

Qualcomm Inc. Ace joins the company from Dexcom, where she served as CHRO.

Previously, she was an HR leader at Orexigen Therapeutics, Volcano Corp. and Life Technologies. Ace earned a bachelor's degree in law from the University of California and a law

degree from Santa Clara University.



McDonald's Corp. recently hired Heidi Capozzi as its next executive vice president and global chief people officer.

Capozzi has worked at the Boeing

Co. since 2009 and held several HR leadership roles, most recently as senior vice president of HR. Prior to Boeing, she was an HR leader at start-up Insitu, as well as at Northrop Grumman and TRW.

She earned a bachelor's degree in political science and East Asian studies from Oberlin College and a master's degree in HR and industrial relations from the University of Minnesota.

77%

Percentage of Americans surveyed who believe coronavirus poses a threat to their personal finances.

Source: Pew Research Center

87%

Percentage of employers that said they would continue to pay workers who test positive for COVID-19 at 100% of their regular pay.

Source: Willis Towers Watson

Percentage-point drop in the funded status of corporate pension plans during the first quarter of 2020. Funding levels fell from 87% at the end of 2019 to 79%, the lowest level since 2012, when they were funded at

Source: Willis Towers Watson



11%

Percentage of corporations surveyed that are allowing employees to donate PTO to colleagues directly affected by COVID-19 pandemic.

Source: Institute for Corporate Productivity (i4cp)



80%

The increase in the percentage of companies that restricted work travel between March 3 and 19, when 97% of surveyed companies had canceled work-related trips.

Source: Gartner



Percentage points separating the average accessibility to paid sick leave from the lowestwage American workers to the highest—30% vs. 93%—an issue that has come front and center with coronavirus.

Source: U.S. Bureau & Labor Statistics

34%

Percentage of companies that, by March 26, had already put in place or considered restructuring or organizational change.

Source: Korn Ferry

60%



Percentage of surveyed American employees who said they expect their employer to respond to the coronavirus outbreak effectively and responsibly.

Source: Axios



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