

HRBP Quarterly

A Magazine for HR Business Partners and
Strategic HR Professionals

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Letter from the Editor

It is my pleasure to introduce the inaugural issue of CEB's *HRBP Quarterly*.

We know the HR Business Partner (HRBP), or HR Generalist, role is the position most directly linked to HR's effectiveness at supporting the line. HRBPs often spell the difference between effective and ineffective HR.

For this reason, we continue to hold unlocking HRBP and generalist performance as a core priority, beginning with our [HR Business Partner Portal](#) and other targeted role support. Today, we are thrilled to expand that support for you and your HRBP teams with the new *HRBP Quarterly*.

Each quarter, this publication will bring you the latest and most valuable ideas in the strategic HRBP and generalist communities—via interviews with thought leaders and rising HR professionals, profiles of innovative organizations, and critical talent news and tools—all with the aim of helping you get your jobs done and harness your full potential.

In this inaugural issue, we'll focus on HRBPs' evolving role and what it's **really** like to be an HRBP today. The featured article introduces our most recent research on making change management work and the key implications for HRBPs. We highlight need-to-know talent news and trends in a variety of HR topics, such as engagement, diversity and inclusion, and analytics. Finally, our conversation with Patrice Matejka (director of HRBPs, Corporate Compensation, and Talent Acquisition at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan) shows one organization's approach to help HRBPs understand and improve how they work with their clients.

We welcome your feedback on this issue and our other HRBP support tools and look forward to our continued partnership with you. We invite you to reach out to your account manager or CorporateLeadership.Support@cebglobal.com with suggestions, questions, or comments.



Sincerely,

Brian Kropp
Practice Leader
CEB Corporate Leadership Council™

HRBP Masterclass

CEB's HR Business Partner Masterclass series is an ongoing virtual learning curriculum that brings together HRBPs and strategic HR leaders from around the world. Each session draws on our best practice research, tested member practices, group exercises, and individual reflection to help HRBPs develop and get their jobs done.

Almost **5,700** attendees from the three sessions



1,379 total comments and insights were shared by participants during the series.



67% of attendees were HRBPs (or an equivalent role).

27% of attendees were from a different (non-HRBP) HR role or specialty.

18 HR executives attended.

162 organizations joined the series.

87

73

63

26 industries were represented, with **banking, retail, and insurance** having the most **comments** and **questions**.

The three talent management topics referenced most often:

- **Succession management**
- **Employee engagement**
- **Leadership and leadership development**

“Strategic partnerships” was the most repeated term.

Storytelling with data and **succession management** were the two hottest topics in the three sessions.



Only **one-third** of changes clearly succeed,



and **half** outright fail.

Help Your Leaders Better Manage Change

By Amanda Joseph-Little and Meg Zolner



Change isn't just hard for employees—it's hard for leaders, too. Help them implement change successfully, and earn credibility as a business partner.

Leaders are under increasing pressure to make sure change initiatives succeed. The changes they're charged with implementing (e.g., expansion into new markets, mergers and acquisitions, culture change) are critical to their business's health and growth. Couple these changes' importance with their increasing frequency and the need to complete them more quickly, and you have a recipe for disaster. In fact, only one-third of changes clearly succeed, and half outright fail.

As HRBPs, you focus much of your energy on managing the workforce through change, worrying about questions such as "How do we make sure employees understand the rationale for the change?," "How do we manage resistance to the change?," and "How do we prevent turnover and disengagement?" You know that employees' ability and willingness to support and implement a change are critical to its success.

You expect change to be hard for employees, but you may underestimate how difficult it is for leaders. People assume leaders support change and know what needs to be done to make changes successful, but this is often not the case.

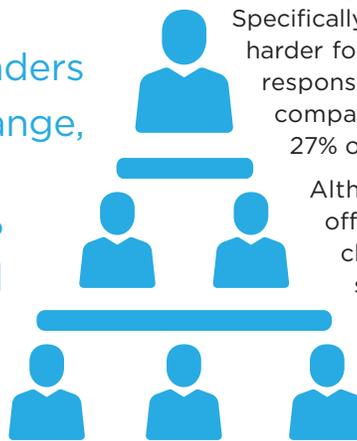


Leaders Resist Change More Than Anyone Else

Our recent research on change management reveals that leaders are more likely to resist change—whether vocally or quietly—than other employees. Surprisingly, more than half of leaders surveyed this year indicated that they did not fully understand the reasoning behind a recent change initiative. Furthermore, leaders are more likely than other employees to describe change as disruptive.

Specifically, 42% of leaders say change makes it harder for them to carry out their day-to-day responsibilities than it did three years ago, compared to only 29% of managers and 27% of individual contributors.

31% of leaders resist change, compared to **19%** of managers and **18%** of individual contributors.



Although your line partners may not offer their personal opinion about the change or the amount of additional stress it's placing on them, certain clues can help you understand their perspective on the change and, importantly, how to partner with them to make the change initiative successful. Consider the

following questions about your line partners when you first become aware of the change:

- Do they agree with and understand the rationale for the change?
- Were they involved in the decision to make the change?
- What will they personally lose or gain from this change?
- How will the change affect their work?
- Do they have the skills and resources needed to implement the change?

By knowing how your line clients feel about the change and the pressures they face, you can empathize with them to form a better partnership during—and long after—the change.

Leaders Don't Know How to Manage Change

Leaders—even those who champion the specific change, have experience managing change, or are adept at people management—need your help managing the workforce through change initiatives. Even with the best intentions, leaders have complicated jobs and heavy workloads that require them to constantly manage numerous priorities, making it that much harder for them to manage change. In fact, one-third of leaders indicate that they don't know what role they are expected to play during change.

Leaders also aren't very familiar with their teams' day-to-day work, so they often don't know how best to implement the change in their business unit or function. With increased spans of control and decreased amount of time spent with their direct reports, it's no surprise that 54% of leaders don't fully understand how change affects the way their teams work.

Fortunately for HRBPs, the change process offers opportunities to help line leaders manage change.

By supporting your line clients during change, you can improve their performance and cement your role as a strategic, trusted advisor.

Opportunity 1: Communicating the Change

Leaders often take an impersonal, top-down approach when communicating change, such as hosting town hall meetings or sending e-mails. These approaches allow leaders to reach a broad audience quickly, but they aren't particularly effective and can actually cause mistrust, confusion, and anxiety in the workforce.

The best way for leaders to communicate change to employees is by facilitating two-way, honest conversations so employees feel they are part of the change and not victims of it.

To help your leaders better communicate change, encourage them to listen to employees as much as they talk to them—if not more. Provide leaders with questions to ask employees about the change, such as “Why is this change important to our organization?” and “How will you be affected by this change?” Finally, help them resist the urge to talk when they should listen by suggesting they get comfortable with periods of silence.

Questions Your Leaders Should Ask Employees When Discussing Change

- Why is this change important to our organization? Why should we make this change now?
 - How will you be affected by this change?
 - What is the most helpful thing you can do to support the change?
 - What will successful change look like? How will we know it's working?
 - What advice do you have for me about how to manage this change? How can I help our business unit/function/team implement this change well?
-

Opportunity 2: Implementing the Change

Most leaders don't know what employees should do differently to implement a change, often because they lack familiarity with employees' day-to-day work. Fortunately, for the most part, leaders don't need to know. Leaders should provide direction and guidance based on the change's goals, but aside from any specific activities required for regulatory or legal compliance, they can leave the specifics to managers and employees.

To provide enough and helpful direction, leaders need to consider the change from their employees' perspectives. As an HRBP, you can help your line partners assess:

- The change's departure from the status quo,
- Their employees' readiness for this particular change, and
- The change's possible effect on employees.

Salesforce, a US-based software company, also guides employees through change with its vision, values, methods, obstacles, and measures (V2MOM) tool, a template employees use to define their goals and how they will achieve them. Employees update their V2MOMs whenever their or the organization's priorities shift, ensuring they stay aligned with the organization as change occurs and allowing them to create personal change implementation plans.

Lighten leaders' burden by helping them understand that their role is to guide employees through the change and that they can effectively do so by both considering the workforce's perspectives on the change and providing straightforward tools and templates.

Opportunity 3: Understanding Employees' Reactions

One of leaders' common fears about change is employees' reactions: Will they react negatively to it? Will they understand it? Will they buy in to it? Will they outright resist it? These fears are important because reactions like confusion and resistance can limit change success.

However, you and your line partners should ensure you interpret employees' reactions correctly. For example, employees commonly do express concern and skepticism about a change when they first learn about it, but then many often take the initiative to find their own ways to implement it, which is productive for both employees and organizations.

One firm, **Liberty Mutual**, encourages employees to express their anxieties to their peers in a Change Reactions Workshop. Liberty Mutual recognizes that encouraging employees to communicate their concerns and fears allows the company to quickly move on to more productive conversations about the change.

Carefully interpreting employee reactions to change is also important for identifying and managing resisters. Organizations aren't particularly effective at identifying resisters. They tend to incorrectly flag skeptics as resisters when that skepticism actually improves change implementation. Companies also tend to miss silent resisters—employees who actively resist the change but do so quietly and unnoticeably. (Correctly identify change resisters with our guide "[Identifying and Managing Employee Resistance to Change](#)."

Lastly, when trying to understand employees' reactions to the change, you have an important role in making sure leaders hear employees' reactions in the first place. Employees' hesitance to communicate their concerns to leaders means leaders likely don't have a clear picture of the change's effects. As an HRBP, you are well positioned to hear and observe employees' reactions, share that information with your line partners, and help them interpret and act on the reactions correctly.

Change can be hard to experience as an employee and to manage as a leader. Change initiatives provide a unique opportunity to make your line clients' job managing change easier. By doing so, you not only increase the likelihood that the change will succeed, but you also prove yourself as an invaluable, trusted partner to the line.

Are you change agile?

Build a new perspective and expectation about personal change agility.

Only 34% of organizational changes are clear successes, but HR is well positioned to respond—HR functions own or influence two-thirds of the differentiators of successful change.

Learn about how the CEB HR Change Agility Workshop can help your HR organization anticipate, adapt, and respond to any change initiative it faces, and boost the rate of change success at your organization.

Learn More

cebur.com/1p09





In the News

Today's Trends HRBPs Need to Know

Each quarter, our “In the News” stories highlight trends impacting the HRBP role.

This quarter, we cover new strategies HRBPs should apply as they take care of and steward the talent in the business unit(s) they support, ranging from preventing attrition, improving diversity and inclusion, and strengthening change communication.



Getting to the Bottom of Attrition Risk

By Susannah Schools

Is there a downside to economic growth and recovery? If organizations feel more stable, doesn't that benefit HR organizations and employees? As HRBPs and HR leaders, you likely recognize that this particular reality doesn't feel as simple. Although growth is good, with growth come more hiring, global expansion, and opportunity—which, from an HR organization's perspective, also bring more talent risks.

How Significant Is Attrition Risk Today?

As attrition risk becomes a greater challenge for HRBPs, organizations are expanding how they hope to predict and preempt employee turnover, including among employees who have “quit in their seats” (even if they haven't left your organization), which is increasingly common. Our *Global Talent Monitor* found that while almost half of workers intend to remain in their jobs for at least another year, only 17% report expending high levels of discretionary effort.

The stakes are still high for solving the challenge, as well. Low attrition and high engagement benefit the bottom line; our research shows employee engagement and alignment with an organization's goals improve financial performance. Engagement also benefits your relationships with your line clients: 68% of line leaders agree engagement is critical to driving business outcomes, but only 33% believe current engagement initiatives are achieving that goal.¹

How Do We Identify Attrition Risk Now?

Formal annual surveys remain an important tool for organizations to identify attrition risk, with four in five organizations rolling out annual engagement surveys. Other more informal and real-time measures, such as pulse surveys and employee mood indicators, are making progress in predicting employee attrition, but they aren't perfect.

Stay interviews, as opposed to exit interviews, are emerging as an important complement to surveys. Stay interviews ask employees about their experiences at various points during their employment, not just once they've decided to leave (like an exit interview). They cover employees' interests, development needs, and current challenges at work and help demonstrate organizations' commitment to keeping each employee. For this reason, stay interviews provide HRBPs and line managers with critical leading—not lagging—sources of attrition risk.

Having a diverse portfolio of surveys, mood indicators, stay interviews, and other methods can only help organizations prevent attrition. However, even with the best engagement and attrition risk data, you are still acutely feeling the pressure to act on engagement data. Over half of heads of Engagement rate helping managers act on engagement data as their greatest hurdle, yet only 20% believe their organizations do this well.



While almost **half** of workers intend to remain in their jobs for at least another year, only **17%** report expending high levels of discretionary effort.

¹ CEB 2015 Head of Engagement Survey.



Where Is Attrition Risk Coming From?

The top cause of employee attrition globally is a lack of future job opportunities.

Historically, leaders have blamed employee turnover on things like manager quality or compensation, which are still important but less so than career and development opportunities. This career dissatisfaction, coupled with the average 15.8% pay raise employees receive when switching jobs,² creates an incentive that could sway even passive job searchers.

HR leaders can improve development opportunities for employees by making changes at the organizational level. For example, internal candidates fill only 31% of organizations' open requisitions. Pushing the right opportunities to employees (via job boards, internal portals, etc.) and improving employee awareness of opportunities can improve career satisfaction by 33%.

Although internal job boards and new job-match technology are important to improve employee engagement, these are larger-scale and longer-term projects. To improve employee satisfaction with career opportunities and reduce attrition day to day, HRBPs need to work with their line managers.

How Can HRBPs Help Managers Act to Prevent Attrition?

The key for HRBPs lies in helping managers target the right employees at the right time in the right way to retain and engage their teams. Line managers already have one-on-one, informal conversations with their direct reports, and having conversations that focus on career opportunities (to prevent attrition) are no different.

Career conversations allow employees to explain the development challenges they're experiencing,

what they think could be done to mitigate these issues, and their ideas for possible solutions. Effective career conversations will cover questions such as:

- What are your current career aspirations?
- What is your current understanding of different careers or industries that align with those aspirations?
- What is your current understanding of available career opportunities at our organization that align with those aspirations? Would it be helpful for me to provide additional details on those opportunities?
- What skills and experiences do your peers have that you want to develop?
- Are there any internal networking connections I can make for you?
- What opportunities have I missed in providing career guidance?

Career Risk Triggers Defined

Work or life events that prompt employees to reflect on and reconsider their careers

To realize the greatest impact, **managers should schedule career conversations around employees' career risk triggers.**

Career risk triggers are work or life events that prompt employees

to reflect on and reconsider their careers. These moments are characterized by decreased career satisfaction and increased job search activity.

Professional events, like a change in manager or job responsibilities, are career risk triggers because change makes employees nervous. Personal events, like birthdays, university reunions, and other large gatherings of friends, are also career risk triggers because hearing about former classmates' interesting roles may make employees yearn for something new and exciting. In addition, tenure in role and organization may cause employees to rethink their careers because as they age, they wonder if it's time to move on.

² CEB 2011-2016 Departure View Exit Surveys.



Career Risk Trigger	Δ Career Satisfaction	Δ Job Search Activity
Birthday	(4%)	+12%
Tenure in organization	(4%)	+6%
Change in manager or responsibilities	(3%)	+17%
Tenure in role	(3%)	+9%
Lack of recent development opportunity	(3%)	+7%
Major gathering of friends or classmates	(2%)	+16%

Source: CEB analysis.

More specifically, in times of change (e.g., a change in job responsibilities), employees might wonder how their prospects for promotion will change or how they will divide their time differently.

These triggers occur at different times for each employee, making it hard to scale responses. The simplest and most scalable way to react is to have managers look out for their direct reports' career risk triggers and schedule a quick check-in conversation to understand how they're feeling and if they're dissatisfied in any areas. This method works for a few reasons:

- 1. Managers Know the Employee's Context—** It takes someone who interacts with employees to know when triggers occur and to schedule check-ins accordingly.
- 2. Personalization Drives Participation—** People are more likely to give more precise responses (and to reply at all) if questions are tailored to their interests and personal context instead of sent to the general employee population.
- 3. Managers Can Support Action Steps—** If employees are ready for a change, managers can point them in the direction of and facilitate their pursuit of particular internal job opportunities.

Takeaways

HR organizations' resources can stretch only so far. Every day, HRBPs and their HR functions experience the real trade-off between scalable engagement measures, such as surveys, and custom, personal interventions for individual employees to prevent attrition. The good news is that the answer doesn't have to be either/or.

As HR organizations continue to focus on building employee engagement at the workforce level, acting at the individual employee level is important to round out the engagement approach. Responding to career risk triggers is a personalized, effective tool to add to your attrition prevention arsenal and, in the process, address the top global attrition driver: lack of career opportunities.

To harness your engagement and retention strategies' full impact, continue to use traditional methods, but advocate for new personalized and real-time ways to make progress. Your work with employees, both directly and through their managers, will go a long way.



Traditional Diversity and Inclusion Strategies Miss the Mark

By Katy Connealy Weber

D&I Defined

The differences and similarities that include values, beliefs, experiences, backgrounds, and more, represented in a work environment in which all individuals are treated fairly and respectfully and can contribute and access support equally and fully

All CHROs we've talked to say they support or plan to support initiatives to mitigate bias, but from 2011 to 2015, the percentage of employees satisfied with diversity and inclusion (D&I) at their organizations improved only 1 percentage point—from 33% to 34%.¹

To truly reduce and prevent unconscious bias, organizations should first understand what diversity is, recognize the flaws in traditional D&I strategies, and then use our five proven tactics to improve diversity and mitigate bias.

What Is Diversity?

HRBPs should encourage line leaders to go beyond the well-known components of a D&I strategy, such as racial and gender diversity, and focus on other forms of diversity, such as age or socioeconomic diversity. The common denominator to remember is having diversity of thought. Having a variety of perspectives improves employee performance (through better problem solving, creativity, and critical thinking) and business outcomes.

Why Traditional D&I Strategies Don't Work

First, line clients may resist status quo changes.

Line clients may balk at D&I initiatives:

- My team is performing great as is. Why do I need to change?
- Are my teams prepared to work in diverse settings with different perspectives?
- Does more diversity mean slower work and more effort?
- How do I know if diversity is working?
- How do we ensure the quality of hire remains high?

¹PwC, *The Female Millennial: A New Era of Talent*, 2015, <http://www.pwc.com/gx/en/about/diversity/women-at-pwc/international-womensday/the-female-millennial.html>

Second, the most progressive D&I solutions might be too good to be true. Applicant tracking technologies and algorithms can automatically filter through résumés and can be programmed to be gender and race blind. Naturally, companies see this as a win-win: simultaneously reduce work hours and eliminate the potential for human bias in the selection process. Unfortunately, these algorithms also present some problems:

- They are still designed by humans and may still be biased or otherwise flawed.
- Their rigid definitions can cut candidates with diverse experience.
- They may discover more diverse applicant pools without increasing diversity of thought. Although diversity of thought tends to correlate with higher gender and racial diversity,

algorithms' specific criteria may eliminate that effect and increase racial but not other types of diversity.

Third, the most popular D&I initiatives often fall short.

Organizations rely heavily on bias training to combat unconscious bias because they're relatively low cost and employees generally enjoy them. Unfortunately, without continued, day-to-day coaching on potential unconscious bias, employees struggle to sustain improvements after the training.

Five Strategies to Reduce Bias and Increase Diversity

The pitfalls of traditional D&I strategies illustrate the need for a new approach. Our conversations with members reveal five core tactics to reduce bias and improve diversity of thought.

- 1. Drop names and genders from internal and external applications.** To reduce bias in high-



“The need for diverse talent is not a tough sell. The challenge is to find the right tactics to support it.”

Director of Executive Search
Health Care Company

potential employee (HIPO) selection, [BBVA dropped the name and gender fields](#) from applicant profiles. The number of female HIPOs jumped 10% in one year.

2. Identify clear role selection criteria, and communicate them to candidates and your line clients. [National Grid builds career maps](#) for critical roles. The career maps detail the ideal set of experiences for the role, reducing guesswork for applicants. This extra detail can reduce biased hiring decisions, as decision makers will depend less on their subjective opinions and interpretations.

3. Coach line managers through talent review and succession planning discussions. Organizations often see the diversity of their HIPO and successor pools decrease over time, as bias can systematically reduce the amount of opportunities available to diverse talent. As you support discussions on leadership development and preparedness, reflect on ways to raise awareness of potential bias in the moment, and use ongoing performance data to track the quality of promotion and selection decisions over time.

4. Meet regularly with D&I and Talent Acquisition. HRBPs, D&I specialists, and talent acquisition partners all affect organizations’ D&I efforts in various ways. Simply scheduling regular conversations to discuss D&I concerns, strategies, and developments can go a long way in raising internal awareness of D&I challenges and progress.

5. Make D&I figures transparent for your hiring managers and line partners. To reaffirm D&I as a priority and begin to establish accountability for D&I progress, publish D&I statistics internally and externally. For example, [Merck’s](#) annual corporate responsibility report includes D&I statistics on gender and racial diversity and establishes D&I initiatives for the coming year, which ensures leaders throughout the organization share responsibility.

What’s Next?

Bias can affect every stage of the talent acquisition, management, development, and succession process, so focusing on bias is an important way to economically prioritize D&I efforts.

Even with global recognition about the importance of diversity, the extent and scope of D&I’s impact can surprise even the fiercest D&I advocates. Follow the five strategies and keep the common challenges in mind to see significant benefits:

- **D&I helps with candidate attraction**—80% of millennials say highly diverse employers are more desirable.²
- **D&I helps with customer engagement**—55% of consumers say they would pay more for the products and services of a diverse company.³
- **D&I helps with employee performance**—Compared to members of homogeneous groups, members of diverse groups make fewer errors when recalling facts,⁴ come to conclusions that are 58% more accurate,⁵ and are 158% better at using innovation to meet client needs.⁶

As you scale your personal impact as an HRBP, start with D&I. Championing D&I and combatting bias will not only grant you significant professional exposure but also make you a more educated colleague and person.

Learn more:

- Review peer strategies with our white paper [Empowering HRBPs to Combat Bias](#).
- Watch a replay of our expert webinar [Breaking Bias](#) to learn more about the science underlying workplace bias.
- Access the additional D&I support available through [CEB Diversity & Inclusion Leadership Council](#).

² Nielsen, “Global Consumers Are Willing to Put Their Money Where Their Heart Is When It Comes to Goods and Services from Companies Committed to Social Responsibility,” 17 June 2014, <http://www.nielsen.com/us/en/press-room/2014/global-consumers-are-willing-to-put-their-money-where-their-heart-is.html>.

³ Katherine W. Phillips, “How Diversity Makes Us Smarter,” 1 October 2014, <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-diversity-makes-us-smarter/>.

⁴ Sheen S. Levine and David Stark, “Diversity Makes You Brighter,” *New York Times*, http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/09/opinion/diversity-makes-you-brighter.html?_r=2.

⁵ Sylvia Ann Hewlett, Melinda Marshall, Laura Sherbin, and Tara Gonsalves, *Innovation, Diversity, and Market Growth*, 2013, <http://www.talentinnovation.org/assets/IDMG-ExecSummFINAL-CTI.pdf>.

⁶ CEB 2011–2015 Global Labor Market Surveys.



Talk, Don't Tell: How to Use Communication for Good During Change

By Bethany Horstmann

Has your organization recently gone through a change? Are you experiencing a change right now or about to experience one? Our data tells us it's likely. The average organization has experienced five major, or "enterprise," changes in the past three years. An enterprise change is defined as an intentional change that organizations undertake to improve financial or operational metrics, and it typically affects a significant part of the workforce (e.g., market expansion, merger or acquisition, culture change).

Unfortunately, it's also likely a recent change initiative you, a colleague, or a friend experienced didn't go well. Heads of HR told us that only 34% of recent changes were clear successes and achieved the goals leaders had set for them. These less-than-successful outcomes are largely a result of organizations' (including their HR teams and business leaders) approach to managing change initiatives.

Typically, organizations deal with change by leading it from the top of the organization. Senior leaders will set change strategy, control plans for how the change will be implemented throughout

the organization, and then use communication to inform and tell employees about what they see as the benefits of the change. It's this approach that has contributed to only one-third of changes succeeding.

What's the good news about this? **The change management approach with the highest success rate, Open Source change, largely rests on your influence and contributions as HRBPs.**

Open Source change has three components:

1. Employees cocreate change strategy instead of leaders setting change strategy.
2. Employees, instead of leaders, own implementation planning.
3. Employees talk openly about change instead of organizational communication campaigns just telling employees about change.

The third component of Open Source change addresses one of the most common challenges organizations, and especially HRBPs, face during change—communicating with employees and gaining their buy-in.

The Unintended Effects of Top-Down Communication

 Conventional Communication Principle	 Intended Effect	 Actual, Unintended Consequence
Communicate, Communicate, Communicate	Tell employees frequently about a change to drive their understanding.	Employees are overwhelmed, ignore change communication, and don't understand the real meaning of the change.
Be Positive	Build employee commitment to change by downplaying its negative effects.	Employees build resentment and hide or bottle any negative emotions about change.
Deliver Clear, Consistent Messages	Tell employees how to change their job to get them to act fast.	Employees fail to see how the change actually applies to them, as messages aren't tailored for their work.

Source: CEB analysis.



Line leaders and managers, in partnership with HRBPs, often rely on frequent live meetings and cascading encouraging and consistent messages. Importantly, leaders aim to tell employees about upcoming changes. Sharing information about change is critical, but not all change communication is created equal, and the wrong communication can have negative side effects

Messages that follow “tell,” or top-down, principles (as illustrated in the chart on p. 18) cause anger and anxiety and reduce hope and pride among employees, who attempt to interpret what the change may mean for them.

As HRBPs support their organizations’ shift to Open Source change, an important first step is moving from “tell” to “talk” communication, where leaders and managers start a dialogue that allows employees to talk openly about change instead of just telling them what to do and how to feel. Contrary to tell communication, talk communication increases employees’ capability and understanding and makes them feel more positive about a change—ultimately boosting the likelihood of change success by up to 8 percentage points.

“[In the past] people felt that the change was being done to them....That sort of sparked this idea of doing these kinds of workshops, and rethinking how we handle change management for individual contributors in a way that makes them feel like they’re actually part of the process.”

Precillia Redmond
VP of Organizational Effectiveness and
Strategic Project Management
Liberty Mutual

Tell Communication Causes Negative Emotions

Mistrust	64% of employees don't trust what leaders tell them about change.
Confusion	63% of employees don't fully understand the change.
Anxiety	51% of employees are anxious when they receive top-down change communication.

Source: CEB analysis.



So, how can HRBPs help their line clients and organizations implement talk communication?

Talk communication is characterized by three components:

- 1. Supporting peer-to-peer interactions—**Encourage employees to share insights about the change with their peers.
- 2. Addressing negative emotions openly—**Allow employees to openly share negative reactions to ensure they feel more in control of the change’s implications.
- 3. Building dialogue—**Give employees questions to use in peer and manager conversations to help them create an action plan for change.

To support talk communication, HRBPs should prioritize particular strategies with their common internal stakeholders: internal communications partners, leaders, managers, and employees. HRBPs should focus on partnering and assisting stakeholders to prepare and execute the right communication.

Any change, even Open Source change, requires central, formal communication about change. HRBPs are important influencers in using the goals and recommended actions in the chart below to diagnose when different types of communication are best. Don’t fall into the trap of overcommunicating—focus your energy on cutting through the noise and allowing employees to have meaningful, not necessarily frequent, conversations with their peers.

One of the most common roadblocks to using change communication effectively is apprehension about managing employees’ fears or concerns about change. Often, line leaders and managers want to get their employees excited instead of address potentially negative, though important, emotions.

Liberty Mutual’s change conversations productively encourage and facilitate discussions on employees’ questions or concerns about a change. Liberty Mutual introduced workshops and support tools to help employees reflect about how changes would affect them personally.

How to Partner with Stakeholders on Talk Communication

 Your Stakeholder	 Your Goal	 Your Actions
Internal Communications	Partner with your internal communications function to cut through, not add to, the noise of messages and enable peer-to-peer communication.	Reduce the frequency of change communication. Refocus your employee sharing platform on how to succeed during change.
Leaders	Help leaders align their messages with how employees perceive change and speak with an authentic voice.	Help leaders create change stories with their team. Persuade leaders to admit uncertainty and negative implications.
Managers	Help managers gain confidence in dealing with employee reactions to change.	Coach managers to prioritize having authentic, not standard, conversations.
Employees	Help employees take control over their reactions to change.	Address employee fears and anxieties. Give employees questions to help them build personal change actions.

Source: CEB analysis.

You're Invited

HRBP Masterclass Series

Discussion questions in these workshops, facilitated by neutral staff (i.e., HRBPs or other non-line leader colleagues), include the following:

- Name a time when you felt excited, apprehensive, anxious, or frustrated about a change at work.
- Based on your discussion in pairs, what tips would you offer on handling a change? What traps would you warn your peers about?
- For this initiative to progress more effectively, what do you think could be done differently or better? By the company? By your department? By you?

For Liberty Mutual, the result was a workforce that felt in control of change instead of victims of change, ultimately enabling them to better manage their emotional response to organizational changes.

It's not surprising that communication during change is important. Even the best action plans can fall apart if they aren't communicated well, and organizational change is no exception. As an HRBP, spend time unpacking what talk communication feels like to you and your line clients and implementing those principles during change communication. During your next change initiative, you'll feel it was time well spent.

Register for our upcoming HRBP Masterclass series on making change management work, and join the discussion.

Session 1: An Introduction to Open Source Change for HRBPs

25 October 2016, 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. ET

Session 2: How HRBPs Can Use Communication for Good During Change

7 December 2016, 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. ET

Session 3: Strategies for HRBPs to Manage Common Change Roadblocks

11 January 2017, 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. ET

Join each session live (and come back to the replays at any time) to learn more about the most effective change management strategies and position yourself as an influencer and change champion with your line clients.

Learn More
<http://ceburl.com/1qnj>



WHAT THE BEST COMPANIES DO

By Adrian Samson



The HR Heart Line





Dear HR Heart Line:

HR isn't what it was when I started my career.
Do I still want to do it? Is this the new normal for HR?

Sincerely,
HR in Distress

Dear HR in Distress,

You are certainly not alone in asking yourself that question! HR used to be much more straightforward and obvious; now we feel lucky just to describe our jobs to someone. In addition, the average organization has undertaken five firm-wide changes in the past three years alone. And the pace of that change is accelerating: nearly 75% of companies expect change initiatives to actually increase in the next three years.

Changing organizational needs offer unique opportunities for you to play a bigger role in overall talent and business outcomes. You're moving from one-and-done tasks to crafting and implementing enterprise-wide strategies to chronic challenges. Now, responsibilities like creating a talent strategy for a business unit, leading talent reviews and succession planning conversations, and creating a talent dashboard lie with you as an HRBP. While these responsibilities may seem overwhelming at first, your immediate exposure to the business will help you in the long run to build your skills and expertise much faster.

As you learn these skills and expand your role, focus on [being a true "strategic partner"](#)—an HRBP who can speak the line's language, challenge business assumptions, and proactively support talent outcomes, such as higher performance or lower turnover. Of course, this strategic partner role looks unique for each HRBP based on his or her clients' priorities, business goals, and market environment; an important step for you is translating what "strategic partnership" means to your role.

That time you take to put together your strategic partner plan will be well spent. Many of you have told us—and we've seen in our research—that working on those strategic partner activities are often where you feel you're having the greatest impact. Our research finds that effective HRBPs can improve employee performance by 22% and employee retention by 24% in the business units they support.

The work you need to do as a strategic partner also extends to the longer term in managing your next role or two as part of your development. As an HRBP, you likely manage the careers of others in your business unit and organization, but that shouldn't come at the expense of managing your own career. Take the time to reflect on what skills you'd like to learn and what stretch roles you may want to pursue, and design a career path that feels flexible and interesting to you. Your managers will be excited to [have that conversation with you](#).

For help getting started:

- Listen to the replays of our [HRBP Masterclass webinar series](#) on keys to success as an HRBP;
- Download our [HRBP individual development plans](#) to develop the strategic competencies that will help you perform; and
- Register for our upcoming [HRBP Masterclass webinar series](#) on how you as an HRBP can make change management work, both in your own experience and the experiences of your line clients.

Good luck blazing your strategic partner trail, and keep us posted on all your terrific results!



Dear HR Heart Line,

I have one senior line partner who allows me to only execute on his ideas—even when I think they are wrong. When I do present an alternate idea, he just dismisses it without hesitation. How can I get this to be more of a two-way street?

Sincerely,
Making No Progress

Dear Making No Progress,

I think we have all had to face that at some point in our careers!

This is a complex challenge, and just one shift in your interaction is likely not going to be enough to turn this line partner around. To solve this problem, you need to take into account several things—your line partner’s communication style, the ideas that are best given organizational goals, and the HR processes that will enable execution on those ideas. Given your challenge at hand, exercising your influence is a great place to start.

Every day, you’re sharing strategic guidance throughout the organization, and importantly, you’re often doing so in situations where you lack formal authority over decision making. Add in the fact that you have to exercise influence differently with the expanded set of stakeholders you’re working with, and trying to influence stakeholder decisions starts feeling like a huge uphill battle.

So what’s the best way to influence as an HRBP? Well, there are countless influencing methods and ideas out there. One common theme you’ll find, though, is that you need to diagnose and flex your approach to your audience’s backgrounds and interests.

This is definitely a lot easier said than done. To start, try these two quick fixes to influence your stakeholders and get buy-in for your recommendations, which should also help you build credibility with them.

1. Know what’s in it for them.

Too often we focus on our proposed solution’s features, which forces our stakeholders to figure

out on their own how it benefits them. Don’t make them work that hard. Link your solution’s benefits to what your stakeholders care about to get their attention. Also, make sure your explanations don’t rely on HR jargon; use basic terms that everyone can understand.

Let’s take buying a computer as an example. I am not a tech-savvy individual, so when I go to the computer store, I don’t want to hear about the RAM, CPU, and other acronyms that mean virtually nothing to me. I do want to hear how that RAM will help me save more pictures, surf the Internet faster, watch movies, etc.

To use an HR example, consider making the case to enhance a software developer onboarding program in the business unit you support. You know the program will include establishing peer mentors and job shadowing opportunities, but don’t start there.

Instead, try: “I know one of your key objectives is to reduce SG&A costs by 5%. After our analysis, we identified that newly hired developers’ increased turnover rate impedes your cost reduction targets because of lost productivity and recruiting expenses. So I would like to propose enhancing the developer onboarding program. This program will address the top drivers of attrition for new developers—lack of peer connections and limited understanding of career paths.”

Think through your stakeholders’ personal interests and intentions (What’s in it for them? What value will they get out of it? What is motivating them?), and then shift how you present your recommendation to the features and benefits that



Have a question to submit to HR Heart Line?

E-mail your question to mzolner@cebglobal.com, and we'll share our perspective and your peers' perspectives with you soon, maybe even in the next edition of the *HRBP Quarterly*. And in the meantime, don't forget to visit the CEB Corporate Leadership Council™ website to find research and insight, proven best practices, and decision and diagnostic tools to help you tackle your next project.

will drive stakeholders to immediately act—or at least start a productive conversation.

2. Don't forget your “high-gain” questions.

When you're working with others, particularly line clients, things get lost in translation. Communication challenges increase pressure on your time, create unclear project requirements, and make your team environment tense, but active listening and the right questioning techniques are great tools to help you overcome those challenges.

We can't always take a stakeholder's wants and needs at face value. Asking high-gain questions (questions that are open ended, targeted, thought provoking, and visual) will help you get beyond surface-level responses and uncover assumptions, biases, motivations, and expectations that weren't clear before.

Examples

- Low Gain: What talent needs exist for the business unit?
- High Gain: If you discovered an additional \$500,000 in your budget tomorrow, what one problem would you address and why?
- Low Gain: What type of change do you want to see in the business unit?
- High Gain: What are the one or two key metrics that this initiative has to affect in order to succeed?

It's amazing what you can uncover with the right question. This simple shift in questioning can drastically change your conversation—and will allow you to build greater rapport and engagement with your stakeholder at the same time.

How Netflix Uses “Grown-Up HR” to Engage Leaders and Managers

A Conversation with Netflix’s Barbie Graver

By Andrew Karr

NETFLIX

What Does Netflix Mean by “Grown-Up” HR?

As its name suggests, Netflix’s grown-up, nontraditional approach to HR focuses on treating employees like grown-ups and allowing them to make the choices that will be best for them personally and professionally. This approach rests on trust in line leaders and managers to steward Netflix’s values as they help their teams navigate their day-to-day work experiences.

A few components of this grown-up HR approach include:

- Encouraging open and honest feedback, both in the moment and during everyday performance management activities;
- Focusing on fit with organizational culture when hiring talent, especially senior leadership;
- Allowing employees to take unlimited leave; and
- Delivering performance feedback without traditional rating scales.

In a recent edition of the [CEB Talent Angle podcast](#), we spoke with Netflix’s head of HR, Barbie Graver, to learn about what she describes as Netflix’s “grown-up” approach to HR. It’s this HR philosophy—and some nontraditional policies, such as lack of budgets for salaries, no written performance appraisals, and an unlimited leave policy—that has garnered many press mentions and perspectives for Netflix on what makes HR really work.

While Graver is first to share that not every organization will (or should) be like Netflix, she does highlight that at its core, Netflix’s HR mantra is actually fairly simple in its focus on freedom and responsibility.

To deliver freedom and responsibility while maintaining employee performance, Graver points to the importance of having the right line leaders and managers. In this type of culture, leaders and managers need to be prepared to advocate for talent management priorities and participate in talent management processes, which represent a clear opportunity for HRBPs.

Our summary here, as well as a full transcript of our conversation with Graver, will address how HRBPs can take full advantage of this opportunity.

Start at the Top: How Leaders Can Lead by Example

At Netflix, each person who is hired into a leadership role is interviewed by the relevant HRBP, not just the recruiter, because HRBPs are on the front lines every day. They know how a particular business unit's culture differs from the organizational culture, how people make decisions in that business unit, how leaders have succeeded in the past, and more. If you choose the right leader, high performance will follow:

“You don't drive performance through an HR department, you drive performance through managers and leaders who set amazing context, hire the right people, promote the right people for the right reasons, and exit the right people for the right reasons.”

By openly acknowledging that the HR department alone can't drive performance, Graver and her HR team share responsibility with line leaders and managers for helping sustain performance. And the strong relationship between HRBPs and existing line partners ensures Netflix is bringing leaders on board who will be prepared to lead by example.

More About Barbie Graver

Graver has worked in or managed most HR functions, including having talent acquisition, compliance, employee relations, and business partnership or generalist roles. More recently, she served as the head of HR for Sportvision and Tiburon before joining Netflix in 2011. Graver holds a BA from Santa Clara University and a master's in HR Management.

“[Grown-up HR] is the shorthand we use to describe the culture of freedom and responsibility. So, we like to give employees the freedom to do what is right and the responsibility to know it's their job to do so. We want our leaders to empower their employees but also employees to feel accountable.”

Deliver Performance: Enable Middle Managers

Netflix believes providing accurate, timely, and honest feedback is the main way to improve performance. Graver shares that Netflix's "feedback as needed, when needed" principle affords line leaders, managers, and peers the license to provide feedback in the moment, and it employs a variety of methods to ensure the feedback gets through, including team dinners with roundtable feedback sessions and speed dating-style one-on-ones (so people can rotate among their team members and give them feedback).

This approach means that feedback is sometimes public and perhaps more constructive than positive, but Netflix prepares its employees for receiving all types of feedback and has seen positive results:

"Every employee who works here should expect to hear what they're doing great, but they should also expect to hear what they could do better. They shouldn't be afraid of hearing that, and they shouldn't be afraid of telling people that. We really do view feedback as a gift."

Although Graver acknowledges that there won't be one right answer for all organizations, she encourages organizations to not let fear of employees' potential responses to feedback prevent managers from being brave enough to deliver it:

"Have the courage to empower your employees, assume that they're capable to absorb the honesty of your feedback, and expect to be amazed."

Recognize Performance: Getting Compensation and Recognition Right

Netflix is unique in its compensation and recognition processes because it doesn't have set formulas for compensation, pay ranges, pay bands, or pay grade levels. Instead, the company aims to pay each individual what he or she is worth on the market. Graver summarizes:

"We don't strive for internal equity. We strive for paying each individual what they're worth on the market. If they could get an offer for something somewhere else, we should be paying them that amount. There are no salary budgets."

This strategy contrasts with many organizations' approaches to compensation and pay increases. Whereas most would prioritize market data at the point of hire and then shift to relying on general benchmarking surveys for directional guidance, Netflix treats every compensation decision like an offer extension, even if the individual is simply getting promoted or moving internally.

In considering the person's role, past performance, and potential, Netflix can evaluate what the current "going rate" is for someone with those attributes. Netflix also considers employees' experiences with employment offers when evaluating compensation and prepares managers to communicate compensation information:

"We get data from employees. We like employees to be transparent if they're interviewing elsewhere or they're getting approached from other companies and what comp[ensation] they're being offered, so that can serve as a data point."

Innovate Effectively: Let Organizational Culture Be Your Guide

At the end of the day, an innovative approach like Netflix's is governed by an organization's culture. The guiding principle Graver keeps in mind is that HR practices should be used because they work with the culture, not necessarily because they've worked for other, different organizations.

It's important to keep abreast of innovations in HR, but apply your judgment when thinking about how they could apply to your line clients and organization:

"You want each company to figure out what their values are, what culture they want to have, and then they should be true to it. The most important thing is being able to identify what your values are and then not compromising on them. That is the mistake that companies make—they compromise on their values. I'm not saying the Netflix values are right for other companies, but they're right for us, and so we don't compromise on them."

For more information on engaging line leaders and managers in talent management, listen to the full Barbie Graver podcast episode on CEB Talent Angle.

Everything You Need in One Place

HR leaders globally use the HR Business Partner Portal to build their skills and get their jobs done.

Visit the portal today and get started with these three tools.

Subscribe to the HRBP E-Briefing Newsletter

Join tens of thousands of your peers in receiving the HRBP E-Briefing newsletter, and have new resources, trends, and need-to-know information delivered directly to your inbox each month.

Plan and Execute Your Projects

Use our CEB Ignition™ Guides and HRBP Guides for Delivering Critical HR Initiatives to learn about your important role in talent initiatives, and get ready-made tools to make progress today.

Join the HRBP Advisory Council

Join this growing community of HRBPs in the CEB Corporate Leadership Council™ member network to influence our ongoing research initiatives and work through day-to-day challenges with your peers.

Learn More
<http://ceburl.com/1qnk>



WHAT THE BEST COMPANIES DO



Voice Within the HRBP Community

An Interview with
Patrice Matejka



**BlueCross BlueShield
Association**



About Blue Cross Blue Shield and Patrice Matejka

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan is a corporation with over 8,100 employees that provides or administers health care benefits to more than 4.5 million members.

Patrice Matejka is an HRBP and a Director of HRBPs. In fact, she helped establish the HRBP function at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan. She also oversees the organization's corporate compensation and talent acquisition functions. She has had a 30-year career in HR with roles that span health care, pharmaceutical, and automotive industries.

1. How would you describe how HRBPs at Blue Cross Blue Shield work today?

PATRICE: Our goal for the HRBP position is to reach a high level of collaboration with and support of our two main stakeholder groups: our HR peers and our line clients.

We've focused on a particular philosophy to help us get there over the last few years: our access, credibility, and trust (ACT) philosophy. This philosophy was based on the work of Dana Gaines Robinson who helped us develop and refine our model. Ultimately, we are striving to align HR activities and consulting with the business objectives. Our philosophy helps us do that in three steps.

First, as an HRBP, we work to gain access to the client. The question could be as simple as "Would you mind if we sat in on that meeting so that we can better understand what you're doing?" By gaining access, we are better positioned to provide the type of support we'd like to.

Next, our HRBPs focus on gaining credibility, most often by identifying and handling an issue that is quick to resolve. This is a simple way to establish a relationship between HRBPs and clients by demonstrating a commitment to problem solving.

Finally, we coach our HRBPs to get to the trusted advisor state. This is an evolutionary process that may take months and, in some isolated cases, years to develop deep relationships

with clients, but it's so exciting to see that relationship grow. Some HRBPs who have attained a high level of partnership with clients are then more interested in continuing with the same clients because of their established bond. ACT is the foundation for our nine Rules of the Road that I've developed for HRBPs over the years.

HRBP Rules of the Road

- Listen actively more than we talk.
- Look and listen for the true business need.
- We don't have all the answers—we don't win by knowing it all.
- We start from a solution-neutral point of view.
- Question everything with a fresh eye, but ask powerful questions (first question should be "What's the impact to the business?").
- Provide value; help the business deliver results—not just solutions.
- Recognize we don't drive the business forward; we help enable the leader to achieve success.
- Be customer driven; our success is their success.
- Work first to gain access, then build credibility and trust will come.

2. How do HRBPs apply these principles in their ongoing work with their clients?

PATRICE: In line with the ACT philosophy, our HRBPs look to gain exposure to the business in any

way they can. They often will attend strategic planning off-sites or are involved in annual budget planning for their business units. Even if the activity isn't core to their objectives, the team is ready to look for opportunities that will help them develop better relationships. I think that's an important way we see these principles working in action.

These principles also apply when extending and growing these relationships over time. To make sure our HRBPs' goals are aligned with those of their clients, we meet regularly with our line clients and use some specific tools from Dana Gaines Robinson that guide those check-ins.

For example, we come prepared to develop project-specific "gaps maps" to get to the true root cause of the gap. We think of "root causing" as the exercise that will allow us to both identify all potential causes of a particular problem as well as prioritize the solutions.

I know these tools are driving successful outcomes, as we see our HRBP community begin to share best practices and conversation guides with other HR colleagues.

I think this practice is especially valuable as HRBPs look to demonstrate their strategic expertise and capabilities. Let's use an example of an underperforming employee within a business unit.



What Would You Do?

A line manager comes to her HRBP and shares that due to one of her direct report's underperformance challenges, she would like the HRBP's help in terminating the employment of one of her employees.

A line manager comes to her HRBP and shares that due to one of her direct report's underperformance challenges, she would like the HRBP's help in terminating the employment of one of her employees.

At face value, this seems like a more reactive, tactical activity. While one HRBP may quickly share that he'll take care of it, we, however, ask our HRBPs to dig deeper and "root cause" this, which may uncover more strategic challenges from seemingly tactical ones.

The HRBP may provide additional feedback to the business unit because of a totally different root cause. For example:

- There could be higher turnover in this particular business unit, and the employee is struggling to cover all of her former colleagues' work;
- Perhaps we just introduced new project management technology that is slowing how quickly the employee is able to process her work; or
- Maybe the employee is dealing with a personal (and temporary) issue outside of work that requires more support from our well-being and health internal partners; and
- Many other potential causes.

At the end of the day, the result may be termination of employment, but the business has received additional perspective from an HRBP to help make the right decision. And that perspective doesn't have to include

significant detail or be a long report about the issue; most line clients may not actually want that type of support. Instead, HRBPs' guidance should be meaningful and concise, drawing from their in-depth knowledge, awareness of talent trends, and a reflection of that specific business's complexities. We also empower our HRBPs to determine when to triage projects to their shared services or centers of excellence partners, but effectively "root causing" situations allows our HRBPs to effectively facilitate through a variety of HR issues.

3. How do "journey maps" also help your HRBPs provide support, and how do you create them?

PATRICE: Another tool to help us gain ACT with our internal clients is "journey maps." A "customer journey map" tells the story of a customer's experience with an organization's HRBPs and other internal support partners, whether they focus on a specific type of internal support or a broader overview of an entire experience or strategic initiative at your organization. Each map gives teams a structured way to look at products and processes from the customer's perspective because an outcome that works for a business partner may not always have been as positive an experience for the customer.

Mapping their journey helps us understand their current experience, identify opportunities for improvement, and even consider new ways to design the journey. A completed customer journey map can be a powerful tool. It

focuses on the customers' perspective and can help identify opportunities to improve their experience. It also helps drive brainstorming solutions to pain points that may have been identified in the mapping process.

Common Journey Mapping Steps

- Discuss goals for the project or initiative.
 - Identify stakeholders involved in the project or initiative, and clarify who the relevant stakeholders are for the project and how each stakeholder likes to communicate.
 - Identify the core activities to perform with each stakeholder.
 - Establish strategies to use at each project step with each stakeholder.
-

4. From your perspective, what has separated the most effective HRBPs from less effective HRBPs?

PATRICE: The most successful HRBPs know the business, think about the needs of the business, and identify where there are opportunities for HR to offer strategic value. They also are willing to say—and are smart about saying—yes.

One of our most memorable team training opportunities was led by a stand-up comedian and facilitator. During that session, we learned to say "yes and" instead of "no but." You could imagine translating this to a regular project in sharing that, "Yes, I'd be happy to manage that project, and I'll need this person to do it." This "yes and" response opens up your perspective (not to mention helps get



I love to see former HRBPs “going native,” or moving to work within the business they had previously partnered with, as it’s reflective of the value we have provided to the business.

you more access and credibility) and supports your on-the-job learning.

A related skill I’ve found to be important is risk taking. While saying “yes and” could often feel like you’re exposing yourself to a professional risk, it is so crucial in order to continue learning and growing in your role. I’ve experienced that personally and see that also occur within my team. People need to be willing to take calculated risks to gain exposure and contemplate different opportunities in their careers. Taking a risk may be the greatest challenge that people face throughout their careers.

5. In the longer term, what recommendations do you share with your team as they make decisions about new roles and career moves, whether into or out of the HRBP role?

PATRICE: I’d call out a few recommendations based on my own experience as an HRBP as well as from other strategic HR experiences I’ve had.

First, I take care to make sure HRBPs recognize the reality of what the professional experience as an HRBP will feel like. The HRBP role is about listening carefully, offering options to the leaders, and enabling those leaders to move the business forward. We know as HRBPs that we play a large part in many of our organization’s most successful initiatives. However, in order for our HRBPs to be successful, that work is often happening behind the scenes as we help facilitate the achievement of those goals. We need people who know and are okay with the fact that the HRBP function is not

one that gets broad attention, but it plays a key role in facilitating positive changes for the company.

Second, as I evaluate potential HRBPs for my team, we look for breadth of experience. That doesn’t necessarily mean you need to have held a generalist role, but we make sure that our HRBP candidates have been through some of the key strategic areas like talent acquisition, compensation, and employer relations, or potentially labor relations if interfacing with our union staff. We also look for creative, out-of-the-box thinking demonstrated throughout their careers.

Finally, we look for people who have had the experience of managing others, ideally in an HR role, but it could be in another capacity, too. It’s hard to advise a leader if you haven’t walked in their shoes at some point in your career.

If candidates meet these criteria and have had these experiences, we’re confident they’ll succeed as HRBPs. By understanding what we as HRBP leaders look for when we hire HRBPs, I often find other HR team members have a clearer development path in knowing how to become an effective HR partner.

I love to see former HRBPs “going native,” or moving to work within the business they had previously partnered with, as it’s reflective of the value we have provided to the business. We have also had people make lateral moves, or even take a small step back to build a specific skill or gain a specific experience, which

can be really important before making another move forward. Others have left to be directors or VPs of HR for smaller organizations, but we establish bonds that aren’t broken, so we have an active and long-term friendship.

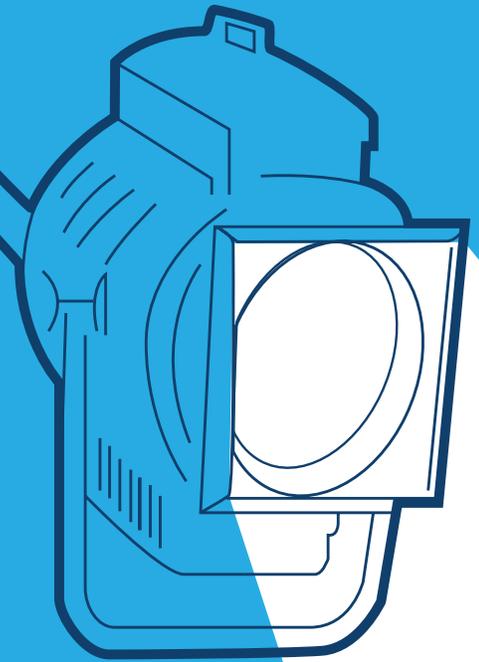
6. What’s next for you and your HRBP team?

PATRICE: I think the short answer is that we continue to evolve. We continue to increase our delivery of value, especially more directly toward the organizational strategy and goals. One thing I reflect on often is connecting more directly with subject matter experts (SMEs) within our various HR disciplines. This will result in stronger HRBP connections with SMEs so that HR becomes even more streamlined and aligned.

What I’m focusing on most, though, is my strong desire to develop our internal talent. Like many of CEB’s member organizations, we don’t have unlimited staff or resources to take HRBPs off for long periods of time for training or as part of rotational programs. Those resource constraints are important as we think about developing the team and improving the quality of the support we’re providing. These two things go hand-in-hand but can look different in practice.

And to quote from our Rules of the Road: we don’t have all the answers, so we’ll approach the future with optimism.

HRBPs' Top 5 CEB Resources from Last Quarter



These were the most shared, favorited, and viewed resources by you and your HRBP peers from last quarter.

Below, don't miss our spotlight on new hot topics. Check them out and see how they can help you in your role in the coming months!

by Katy
Connealy
Weber



Spotlight Event

HRBP Masterclass Series

Over 8,000 HR professionals participated in the inaugural HRBP Masterclass series. View the replays now:

- **Learning and Mastering the HRBP Role** (Part 1)
- **Elevating Talent Management in Your Daily Work** (Part 2)
- **Using Data to Make an Impact** (Part 3)
- **Growing Your HR Perspective and Career** (Part 4)

Join us for our next HRBP **Masterclass series**, beginning in late 2016, which will focus on opportunities for HRBPs to strengthen their performance as agents of change.



Spotlight Topic Center

Change Management

As HRBPs, you are in a unique position to effect change. With 73% of organizations expecting more change in the next three years and a whopping 50% of all organizational change initiatives failing, the ability to better execute change is top of mind for many.

Use this dedicated topic center to help make important decisions about organizational change.



Spotlight Emerging Issue

Brexit Response Center

All organizations will in some way feel the effects of Brexit. Use this resource, which contains blogs, webinars, and original research, to learn about Brexit's far-reaching implications.

For an overview on how Brexit will affect you and other HRBPs, read the blog post "**The Talent Ramifications of Brexit,**" which is our most popular post about the topic.



1 The Real Impact of Eliminating Performance Ratings

With 84% of organizations considering big performance management changes, the performance implications of ratings (or the lack of ratings) are a major topic of interest. For more in-depth content on this topic, check out our [webinar](#), [research report](#), and [executive summary](#) on the effects of eliminating performance ratings.



2 CEB Ignition™ Guide to Designing Career Paths

Use this [CEB Ignition™ Guide](#) in your role as a steward for employees' careers. This guide provides specific steps and tools to use in each phase of the career pathing process. Continue your management of the career pathing process with the [CEB Ignition™ Guide to Implementing and Managing Career Paths](#).



3 HR Business Partner Portal

Visit the [portal](#) to [learn your role](#), [improve the way you execute projects](#), [plan your development](#), and [grow your career](#).



4 The Ratings Debate: How GE Is Reshaping Performance Management

Replay this [webinar](#) to learn more about how GE's experimental approach to performance development is changing the game and improving collaboration, agility, and customer focus.



5 Four Imperatives to Increase the Representation of Women in Leadership Positions

Read this [report](#) to learn how to translate a priority on increasing female leader representation to real results. Also check out [Advancing D&I Metrics: Telling a Compelling D&I Story](#).



What's Next?

When you apply our content to your organization, the following questions may help you strategize:

- Are these resources new to me?
- What opportunities can I expect to arise when I share these resources with my colleagues?
- To what extent do my current projects and priorities compare to those of my peers based on this list?
- Might any of the content on this list represent an opportunity for me to enrich or grow my role?
- What will my bigger projects be in the coming two to three months, and to what extent do I feel I've used CEB's resources to prepare to execute them?

About *HRBP Quarterly*

Supporting and enabling HR Business Partners and strategic HR professionals is a continued priority for us. As a result, we are excited to introduce the *HRBP Quarterly*, a new quarterly publication featuring trends, research insights, and peer support for the global HRBP community, designed to help you develop your capabilities and get your jobs done.

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