

# HRBP Quarterly

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A Magazine for HR Business Partners and  
Strategic HR Professionals

## **Sustaining Your Development as an HRBP**

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# HRBP Quarterly

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Fourth Quarter 2016

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# Letter from the Editor

The transition from one year to the next is an exciting but busy—and sometimes downright stressful—time of year. While we look ahead to the opportunities that 2017 will bring, we also are focused on making sure 2016 ends successfully for our organizations and the business units and line leaders we partner with. To that end, this issue of *HRBP Quarterly* focuses on energizing ourselves and the employees we support, managing change, and looking ahead to the future.

Our feature article looks at the challenge of burnout in the HRBP and HR Generalist population. Burnout is the second-leading cause of attrition in this community, so we help you understand the common causes and signs of burnout and, most importantly, steps you can take now to prevent yourself and your peers from burning out. We also explore how to energize and engage the workforce in our conversation with Tony Schwartz, author and founder of The Energy Project.

Another theme is change management. We help you understand what—exactly—is the role of an HRBP and HR Generalist during change, as well as how to use change champions to help implement change more effectively.

The final theme is our focus on the year ahead. In our conversation, ABB's Global HR Manager Giovanni Chirichella shares his perspective on where the HRBP role is headed and what the future looks like. We also share data on HRBPs' future career plans; for example, the majority of you—72%—told us you aspire to move into HR management roles next.

We welcome your feedback on this second issue of *HRBP Quarterly*. We are grateful for the feedback you shared with us on last quarter's inaugural issue, and we invite you to continue sharing your comments, suggestions, or questions at [CorporateLeadership.Support@cebglobal.com](mailto:CorporateLeadership.Support@cebglobal.com).



Sincerely,

Brian Kropp  
Practice Leader  
CEB Corporate Leadership Council™

# Getting to Know

Hundreds of HRBPs and HR Generalists recently shared their past experience, current responsibilities, and future aspirations as part of our Future of the HRBP Role 2017 Survey.



## Your Past Experience

Our research finds that the most successful careers today are categorized by growth-based experiences, not necessarily promotions or vertical progression.

HRBPs globally have taken this to heart, with more than half of those surveyed reporting they have past experience in HR policy and strategy, recruiting, learning and development, compensation and benefits, and employee relations. HRBPs also move within and across organizations to pursue valuable development opportunities.

### HRBPs Entered Their Current Roles from...

-  **5%** a non-HR role.
-  **11%** a more-senior HR role.
-  **19%** supporting a new workforce segment.
-  **29%** a similar role at another organization.
-  **33%** a different HR role.



## Your Current Responsibilities

HRBPs globally report they have enjoyed how their roles have evolved over the past 3-5 years. Today, HRBPs increasingly have a seat at the table and have opportunities to build their credibility as strategic partners. Having so many responsibilities puts demands on HRBPs' time, but overall the community is up to the challenge.

 **86%**

are proud to work for their organizations.

 **78%**

feel energized by their jobs.

**8** years working for their current employer

**48%** are managers, with an average of five direct reports.

**30%** currently hold an HR certification or qualification.

# Today's HRBP

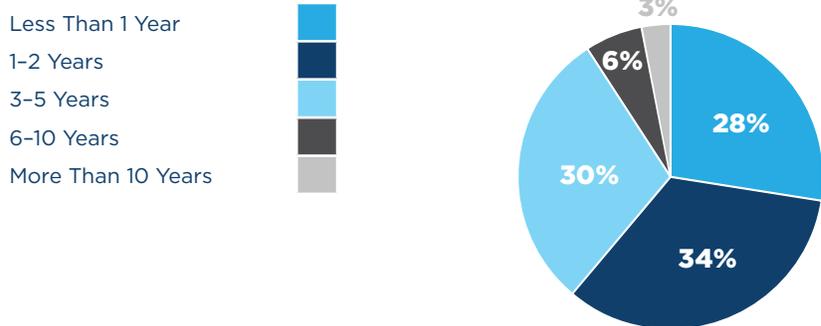


## Your Future Plans

Although the HRBP role is one many HR professionals hope to hold, once in it, most HRBPs intend to stay in their current roles for no more than five years, with 72% aspiring to move to an HR management role.

### HRBPs Are an Aspirational Community

*Length of Time HRBPs Plan to Stay in Their Current Roles*



### HRBPs Target HR Management Roles Most Often

*HR Areas in Which HRBPs Aspire to Work in the Future, Top 8*

HR Management	72%
HR Policy, Strategy, and Organizational Development	43%
Learning and Development	28%
HR Analytics	16%
Compensation and Benefits	15%
Diversity and Inclusion	14%
Employee Relations	14%
Recruiting	10%

## Don't Forget:

Your peers are always accessible to you. Join our HRBP LinkedIn group and participate in the HRBP Discussion Forum to connect.

Have any career pathing or development questions? Don't hesitate to e-mail us!

### HRBPs Are Confident in a Variety of HR Areas

*Percentage of HRBPs Citing This Topic Within Their Top Three Areas of Confidence, Top 9*

Performance Management	35%
Conflict Resolution	30%
Managing Underperformance	26%
HR Policy and Compliance	25%
Employee Engagement	24%
Leadership and Succession Management	24%
Change Management	22%
HR Strategic Planning and Transformation	22%
Conducting Terminations	19%

**9** years working in an HRBP role

**6** years working with their current set of line partners

**81%** believe they are influential or very influential with their paired line leaders.

# Save the Spark

## Preventing Burnout Among HRBPs

By Susannah Schools and Amanda Joseph-Little

HRBPs are typically happy with their jobs.



In fact, more than **three in four** HRBPs and HR Generalists report feeling energized by and proud of the job, and **86%** feel optimistic about the future success of their organizations.



Compare that to the rest of the workforce, where just over half of employees agree with these statements.



However, **62%** of HRBPs plan to leave their current role within two years.



### Burnout

Long-term exhaustion and a steep decline in interest in work, typically caused by chronic occupational stress



These positive experiences deserve to be celebrated, but hidden behind these numbers lies a critical issue. Sixty-two percent of HRBPs plan to leave their current roles within two years. What's to blame for this potential impending turnover? HRBPs like their jobs, but they are burned out. Our recent survey of HRBPs found burnout to be the second-highest cause of HRBP turnover (behind lack of opportunity), with over one in four HRBPs claiming it as a top cause of attrition in the role. Typically, burnout stems from key challenges associated with the job:

-  **1. Separating the professional from the personal**—HRBPs are highly dedicated professionals with heavy workloads; their work lives often bleed into their personal lives in terms of hours spent at work and emotional capacity spent on handling role-related stress.
-  **2. Owning emotionally taxing tasks**—HRBPs are called on to facilitate a variety of emotionally draining tasks, such as conducting separation meetings or addressing employee underperformance or misconduct.
-  **3. Addressing urgent requests**—HRBPs are often on the front lines of handling any emergencies and other issues that occur somewhere in the line at any given time, without notice. These urgent problems typically consume a large amount of time and mental capacity and make it harder to also fit in planning for more strategic issues.
-  **4. Managing an evolving job role**—The HRBP job role continues to shift from a reactive, transactional role to a more strategic one. The continual evolution can make it hard for HRBPs to understand exactly what work they should be performing and how to best support the line.

Possible solutions exist at the functional and organizational level to combat HRBP burnout, such as training programs and the transformation of the HR function, but luckily, you can also advocate for your own happiness and wellbeing at work. Let's explore each of the issues listed above and how you can address them.



## 1. Separating the Professional from the Personal

### The Current Reality

The HRBP role can include long work hours, high stress levels, and tasks that can have a significant impact on individuals. HRBPs are also a highly dedicated group of people. Taken together, the job can take a toll, and HRBPs can struggle to not bring their work home with them.

### Action Steps

Take a step back to assess how well you are separating your professional work from your personal life. Consider: Are you working similar hours compared to other HRBPs? Do you spend a lot of time outside of work thinking about work-related issues? Does work-related stress affect your enjoyment of personal activities?

Although it can be challenging—especially in today’s “always-on” environment—make a concerted effort to distinguish between your work life and your personal life. Set clear boundaries in terms of when or how often you will check your e-mail or

take calls beyond normal business hours and what kinds of responsibilities or requests warrant exceptions. For example, you might make exceptions for emergencies only (but be clear to define what constitutes a true emergency!). You could also choose to dedicate one to two days per week when you’re willing to work beyond normal business hours.

Next, communicate those boundaries to your line clients, manager, and peers. Resist the urge to break your own rules if you want others to follow them, too.

Lastly, when there are no emergencies and you’re outside of your designated working hours, enjoy spending time on yourself and your favorite hobbies. Dedicating time to fun or rewarding activities can help you ease the transition to taking greater advantage of your free time.



## 2. Owning Emotionally Taxing Tasks

### The Current Reality

Few jobs bring people to tears, but the HRBP role can be one of them. Compared to many other roles, an HRBP’s job can include a high degree of emotionally taxing work, including conducting activities that have a negative impact on an employee’s life (e.g., terminations), dealing with organizational or employee emergencies, or delivering messages the workforce may not be happy about (e.g., changes to compensation or benefits). The emotional wear and tear of the job is something HRBPs need to be aware of.

### Action Steps

Some HRBPs find it helpful to focus on how they can make what is generally an unfortunate experience, such as workforce reductions, the

least negative it can be. In this particular scenario, an HRBP’s management of a layoff could include reminding the person of the resources available to them or even something as simple as walking them out to their car. Focusing on how you can, in the midst of a difficult situation, ease the negative impact of someone else’s experience can mitigate some of the emotional exhaustion on your end.

It also helps to step back and remind yourself why the action is being performed in the first place. While it can be hard to remember this in the moment, there is usually a justifiable reason for the action, especially from a long-term perspective. For example, remember that a small reduction in force now might prevent a larger one in the future by helping the business remain viable.



### 3. Addressing Urgent Requests

#### The Current Reality

Everyone has issues come up at work that they can't anticipate or that aren't necessarily in their job descriptions but are important to manage nonetheless. Most job roles, however, don't deal with as broad a range of urgent issues as HRBPs, whose work issues can range from interpersonal conflict to organization-wide problems. One HRBP described a particularly tricky issue when their organization switched to new payroll software, resulting in a weeks-long delay paying plant employees. Although it was technically an IT challenge, HRBPs were the first point of contact for resolving it. Whether you're dealing with a larger challenge like this one or a smaller-scale miscue, resolving these unexpected challenges contributes to feelings of burnout.

#### Action Steps

Two or three times per week, set aside 60–90 minutes to focus on the more strategic aspects of the job, particularly the work with the greatest impact on critical talent or business objectives. You might proactively block time in your work calendar, close out your e-mail, or even hide out in a conference room or local coffee shop where you won't be distracted. Although strategic work has less of an immediate impact and can therefore be crowded out by urgent needs, the results pay off in the long term.

The benefit of setting aside this time is three-fold:

1. It makes you more influential as a strategic partner to the business;
2. It provides a needed break and slower change of pace to prevent you from burning out; and
3. It will cut down on some of the tactical work in the long run.

#### Common Signs of Burnout

There are many indicators of burnout, ranging from obvious ones such as absenteeism or lateness to more subtle indicators such as less active participation in meetings. Keep an eye out for signs of burnout within your team and your peers, but also in yourself. Signs of burnout can include the following:

Curtness

Becoming withdrawn

Nervousness

Becoming disengaged in meetings

A drop in enthusiasm

Absenteeism

Later arrival

Silly mistakes on easy jobs

Looking tired and run down

High turnover



## 4. Managing an Evolving Job Role

### The Current Reality

The HRBP job role has shifted dramatically in its relatively short life span: 56% of organizations adopted this role fewer than 10 years ago, and for almost 30% of organizations, the role has existed for fewer than five years. While the desired shift away from reactive, transactional work to strategic work with greater impact on the business is clear, the path to get there—and what exactly that means for the HRBP role and their support of the line—is less apparent.

### Action Steps

To figure out how best to evolve your role to help the business, first learn as much as you can about the business you support. For example, spend time observing the work of your line clients' function, and learn the data and numbers behind it. When it comes down to it, numbers are a big part of what drives the business and what allows the business to exist.

However, in addition to knowing the numbers, you need to understand them—and that can be hard to do without the proper context. If you're having trouble understanding the data or seeing how the data could be actionable, schedule a couple of informal meetings to get a more precise take on it. The more you know about the unit and its critical metrics, the better able you will be to make strategic recommendations and to build trusting relationships with your line clients. This new partnership will ultimately improve your value to the business and your level of job satisfaction, as well.

### So what are our takeaways? How should HRBPs keep their spark alive?

- 1. Set boundaries.** Setting boundaries, both on your work calendar and mentally, is a proven tactic all professionals should use to mitigate feelings of being overwhelmed at work.
- 2. Keep it all in perspective.** Focusing on what you can do to improve a situation and recognizing that situation's possible long-term benefits will help you feel more even-keeled during tough assignments.
- 3. Set aside time to reflect on where you want to set limits.** Being up front about what you can and cannot do for your stakeholders—and giving yourself time to determine where that line is for you—is critical. By understanding the difference between need-to-have versus nice-to-have contributions, you'll feel more comfortable setting the right limits while maintaining your stakeholder relationships.
- 4. Learn!** Learning as much as you can about the business will help you understand what contributions are most valuable and will put you in a better position to prioritize the guidance you're sharing with your clients.

# Where will you join your HRBP peers soon?

**More Dates and Locations Coming Soon!**

**Chicago 2 March**

**London 8 March**

## **The End of Agility? Designing a HIPO Strategy That Moves at the Speed of Business**

March–June 2017

As leadership needs change faster and in more unpredictable ways, organizations need to adopt a more flexible approach to their HIPO strategy to gather senior talent who can perform in a variety of roles and contexts. HRBPs' unique role in supporting HIPO identification, development, and management means you are a critical part in making this shift.

Join us to discover how HRBPs, their line partners, and organizations can work together to adapt HIPO strategies and processes that effectively address the changing needs of both the organization and its most promising employees. Four participants per organization are able to attend each meeting location at no additional cost as members of CEB Corporate Leadership Council™.

## **How to Attend**

Contact your account manager,  
or e-mail [meetings@cebglobal.com](mailto:meetings@cebglobal.com).





# In the News

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## Today's Trends HRBPs Need to Know

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

This quarter, we cover two specific talent management areas—organizational culture and performance management—that have recently witnessed significant change and attention from senior HR leaders.

Our discussion focuses on how HRBPs can sort through this chatter and identify what matters most as they advise and support their line clients in both of these areas.



# Close the Culture Confidence Gap Among HRBPs

By Katy Connealy Weber

A staggering 93% of HRBPs find themselves responsible for some aspect of corporate culture. Responsibilities vary from assessing the state of culture (92%) to communicating and gaining support for the culture (94%) to embedding the culture in talent management processes (93%). Unfortunately, HRBPs do not, in practice, feel particularly confident advising clients on corporate culture.

Only 5% of HRBPs put employment value proposition (EVP), or one way HR functions think about culture, as a topic on which they feel most

## Employment Value Proposition (EVP)

Typically described by factors such as organizational culture, an EVP represents the set of attributes—such as the people, amount of opportunity, or rewards—that serve to attract and retain employees.

confident advising their line clients. Further, only 22% of HRBPs strongly agree that they understand the culture of the business units they support.

However, by nature of their day-to-day roles (working directly with line leaders, managers, and employees), HRBPs are key internal experts on the cultures of the business units they support. As you look to close your own culture confidence gap and more

effectively support culture initiatives, consider these core takeaways.

## “One Company” Culture Initiatives Are Hard to Get Right

This gap may partially be due to a lack of culture consistency across increasingly global organizations. Establishing a cohesive, consistent, and inclusive organizational culture in a global environment becomes much more challenging.

To overcome this obstacle, many organizations have turned to the “one company” style of corporate culture, where there’s a greater focus on collaborating across and even breaking down silos to bring better solutions to the market, customers, and shareholders.

We found that a whopping 97% of organizational leaders have some variation of a “one company” goal built into their annual objectives, but only 17% of leaders receive top marks in the area.

We hear consistently, “Our leaders are good at running their part of the business, but they struggle to work across the company—which is what we need them to do.”

## HRBPs Can Influence Culture Initiatives

Cultures are typically captured initially on paper; value statements or employees’ performance expectations outline behaviors that fit the organization’s culture. The next step, which is often missed, is actually enabling and rewarding those employees who embody the company culture.

It’s this focus on true behaviors, instead of just words, that differentiates the most successful corporate cultures. As you support culture initiatives at your organization, look for three key opportunities to influence your line partners:

1. Recognize how your culture supports your strategy, and don’t lose the parts that align.
2. Provide employees with incentives to act in a way that supports your culture.
3. Understand what culture changes need to happen both quickly and slowly.

HRBPs who are confident advising line clients on HR strategic planning enjoy greater influence with their line clients and heads of HR.



## 1. Ensure Your Culture and Strategy Are Aligned

Culture is a pervasive part of the employee experience. Organizations would therefore be smart not to make strategic decisions without considering the implications of their cultures on each decision; it's critical to evaluate the extent to which the existing culture aligns with evolving business goals.

One classic example is when John W. Rowe, MD, became CEO of Aetna in 2000. [Row met immediately with employees to understand Aetna's culture, priorities, and values.](#) Those conversations highlighted that employees often felt the business' focus on cost-cutting were at odds with a key value of giving patients and providers the level of service they aspired to deliver.<sup>1</sup> In response, Rowe adjusted the organization's business model with the primary aim of supporting Aetna's mission to provide high-quality care; five years later, Aetna moved from being the least-trusted name in health insurance to the most trusted.<sup>2</sup>

Similarly, Lou Gerstner, former CEO of IBM and RJR Nabisco, saw organizations' frequent claims of "valuing" diversity, but noticed that they still seemed unwilling to invest in strategies to recruit and retain diverse talent. For Gerstner, a key component of delivering on the company's description of its culture was backing up related goals with investment and providing enough budget to make it happen.<sup>3</sup>

Successful organizations preemptively evaluate whether business objectives (e.g., minimizing cost) will feel at odds with or in support of culture. Whether you as an HRBP are supporting a culture change initiative or simply the everyday activities of your line partners, listen for tension among employees as they describe their experiences.

## 2. Reward Behaviors That Fit Your Culture

According to Gerstner, value statements alone do not drive company culture. Rather, the behaviors companies reward and recognize (via financial and nonfinancial rewards) are the behaviors more likely to be demonstrated.<sup>4</sup> He encourages HR leaders to reflect on how employee contributions that make the company money are treated compared to those that support something harder to measure, like values.

As you consider the right ways to recognize employees within the business unit(s) you support, choose those methods wisely. Our research highlights that financial rewards for select, more intrinsic behaviors (e.g., helping close peers and direct colleagues) actually make employees less likely to exhibit those behaviors. However, for cross-functional and enterprise-level work with unfamiliar peers, financial rewards are more effective. Consult your compensation and benefits peers, as well as line managers directly, as you tailor rewards and recognition efforts for employees within the business unit(s) you support.

## 3. Go Slow to Go Fast with Culture Change

Finally, advise line clients and organizational leaders on the reality of culture change initiatives. Three in four HRBPs told us their organizations had undergone a culture change in the past three years. One of your early takeaways from your own experience was likely the (slow) pace at which culture change can successfully happen.

Your perspective on this point in particular is essential; HRBPs' line clients often believe culture change initiatives will be managed and executed like other, different-in-kind organizational changes, such as a new product launch or team restructure.

<sup>1</sup> Jon R. Katzenback, Ilona Steffen, and Caroline Kronley, "Cultural Change That Sticks," *Harvard Business Review*, July–August 2012, <https://hbr.org/2012/07/cultural-change-that-sticks>.

<sup>2</sup> Brian Moriarty and R. Edward Freeman, "Case in Point: To Go from Worst to First, Alter the Business Model," *The Washington Post*, 10 December 2011, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/case-in-point-to-go-from-worst-to-first-alter-the-business-model/2011/12/06/gIQA0qW0IO\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/case-in-point-to-go-from-worst-to-first-alter-the-business-model/2011/12/06/gIQA0qW0IO_story.html).

<sup>3</sup> Lou Gerstner, "The Culture Ate Our Corporate Reputation," *The Wall Street Journal*, 2 October 2016, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/the-culture-ate-our-corporate-reputation-1475445084>.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.



They imagine the timelines and demands will be roughly similar. Given culture is so entrenched within organizations, however, the reality is a lot messier and longer. Considering your familiarity with talent management processes and change, you are a critical partner for your line clients in providing guidance about where the business unit can move quickly and where moving slow (with culture change) will enable you to “go fast” and succeed in the long run.

The recent experience of Lands’ End and its former CEO Federica Marchionni highlights this point. Earlier this year, Lands’ End announced Marchionni’s resignation after just 19 months in seat as CEO. [Suzanne Kapner and Joann Lublin from \*The Wall Street Journal\*](#) noted the likely cause of her departure as trying to make too many changes too quickly in transforming the brand. Although Marchionni’s desire to transform the brand wasn’t impossible, Kapner and Lublin suggest that a critical missing step was “getting employees to buy into her vision” and taking the time needed for that critical step.

### Confidently Advocate for the Right Culture

HRBPs and other HR leaders can always learn more about culture—how to describe it, assess it, and communicate it—but that shouldn’t diminish the confidence HRBPs have in advising their line clients on the topic. Encourage line clients to consider the cultural implications of their business decisions; sustain your culture by knowing what behaviors to reward and how to reward them; and coach line clients on how to effectively pace culture change. In doing these three things, you’ll be poised to use your position of influence and help your line clients sustain a culture that works.



# What Does Performance Management Change Mean for You?

By Becca Brown

HRBPs are more confident advising their line clients on performance management-related topics than any other HR topic.<sup>1</sup>

The trend of eliminating performance ratings and other performance management changes stems

from organizations recognizing the link between performance management and organizational performance. Specific reasons for changing include keeping employees more engaged, giving managers more time to spend on informal conversations, improving the quality of manager conversations, and helping managers better differentiate pay.

As an HRBP, it's likely you're involved in performance management in some way within your organization. Although you may not be in the boardroom making the decisions about how to change performance management, your role is arguably more important: being able to separate performance management fact from fiction and help your line clients better manage the performance of their employees.

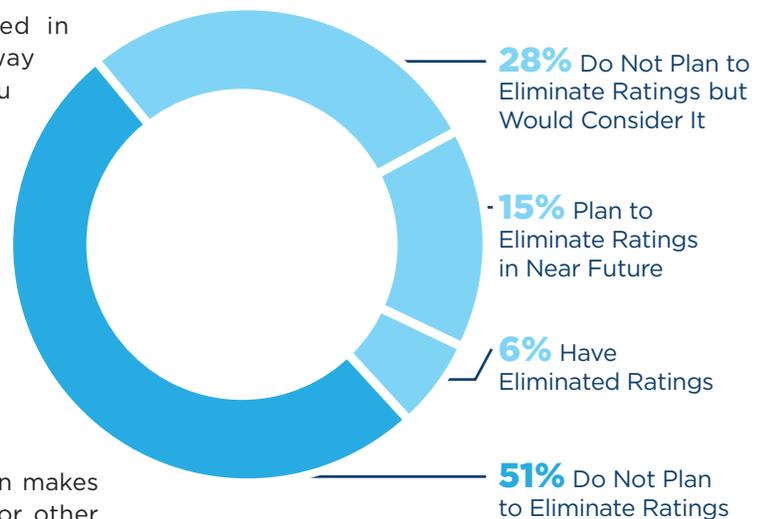
## Know Your Audience: Facilitating Performance Management Change

No matter what choice your organization makes when it comes to performance ratings or other changes to performance management, successful change requires your expertise about the needs of your organization and line clients in the following three areas:

- **The “What”**—What does good performance feedback look like?
- **The “When”**—When should performance feedback be shared?
- **The “Who”**—Whose perspectives should be included within performance feedback?

## A Note on Performance Ratings

One particular recent performance management trend—eliminating performance ratings—has been in the spotlight. But our research finds that more than half of organizations aren't considering eliminating ratings, and those that have often experience performance challenges. Learn more from our research report, *The Real Impact of Eliminating Performance Ratings*.



n = 296.  
Source: CEB 2016 HR Agenda Poll.

With strong answers to these three questions—regardless of the decisions your organization makes about performance management trends and changes—your personal impact on employee performance is significant. Use these three questions to guide your support throughout the performance management process:

<sup>1</sup> CEB 2017 Future of the HRBP Role Survey.



## 1. The “What”

What does good performance feedback look like?

**HRBP Takeaway:** Coach line managers to achieve a balance between past performance and future goals.

By definition, performance reviews allow organizations to review and evaluate individuals’ past performance and provide feedback. Unfortunately, though, the review of past performance comes at the expense of providing employees a vision of their potential contributions to the organization. We know organizations and their environments are changing every day, so a performance review conversation that focuses only on the past is immediately less relevant and misses out on an opportunity to engage employees in the organization’s future vision.

As you support line managers and employees on evaluating performance, encourage them to prioritize discussing the employee’s future—particularly capabilities they’ll need in the future, how they can develop those capabilities, their aspirations, and how those aspirations map to available career paths.

## 2. The “When”

When should performance feedback be shared?

**HRBP Takeaway:** Coach managers to share ongoing, not episodic, performance feedback.

Most managers recognize the value of providing real-time, ongoing feedback, but other constraints, such as a lack of time or urgent priorities, often crowd out the time managers want to spend with their direct reports. Managers also may not feel capable of or comfortable delivering performance feedback (despite most organizations training their managers on this). And then there are the unique challenges faced by managers of organizations that have removed ratings: those managers no longer have the benefit of ratings to help guide their conversations.

As an HRBP, you play an important role in providing tangible guidance for managers on what good—and frequent—performance feedback looks like, including guidance specific to your business unit or function. Suggest occasions when it’s appropriate to provide ongoing feedback, such as:

- During regularly scheduled check-ins,
- At the close of a project (whether short- or long term), and
- Whenever a manager happens to observe an employee doing something well or not so well.

Informal check-ins with managers you have a relationship with can then help serve as a measure of how often performance conversations are occurring and how well-equipped managers feel to provide ongoing feedback.

### Review Strategies That Drive Performance

*Percent Impact on Employee Performance*



*n* = 23,339 (2012); 10,531 (2014).

Source: CEB 2012 High Performance Survey; CEB 2014 Enterprise Contribution Workforce Survey.



### 3. The “Who”

Whose perspectives should be included within performance feedback?

**HRBP Takeaway:** Don’t just rely on direct managers; help managers also include peer feedback when evaluating performance.

HRBPs have a front-row seat on how work gets done within the workforce segments they support. As a result, they recognize that managers may not have full insight on the contributions of those on their teams. Although downward feedback will continue to be a critical part of the performance review process, an overreliance on managers’ perspectives does employees a disservice.

Organizations will have different approaches to incorporating peer feedback (if at all). If your organization has a strong peer feedback system in place, your role often will require more in-the-moment coaching for line managers about identifying the right sources of peer feedback and how to reconcile feedback coming from different sources. If your organization does not have or has a limited peer feedback submission process, you can make progress at the individual level by connecting managers who have worked with individual employees or highlight how peer feedback lightens the individual managers’ loads.

#### Spotlight on a Peer Practice: Cargill’s “Everyday Performance Management”

Cargill’s “Everyday Performance Management” philosophy and process is a great example of these three questions in action. Instead of having the performance management process feel overly formal

or artificial, Cargill’s approach kept one guiding light in mind: having productive conversations.

With that in mind, Cargill looked at the time that HR and line managers were spending on performance management. For example, it evaluated which performance management activities actually enabled execution of organizational priorities, as opposed to being burdensome and low value. It also reflected on whether the process aligned with the organization’s culture and values, such as collaboration and valuing employees.

In the end, Cargill recognized that productive performance conversations made all the difference. HR shared a select number of questions as guidance for structuring high-quality conversations, including:

- What did you accomplish this quarter?
- What do you plan to accomplish next quarter?
- What do you feel most proud of across your contributions?
- What was your biggest challenge?
- What did you learn?
- What will you do differently next time?
- How can I help you?

Additional changes, such as training managers on how to listen (not just talk and tell) and creating accountability measures for managers that set standards for performance conversation outcomes, helped ensure those conversations were happening. However, at the center of the process was the conversation.



## Cargill's One-on-One Discussion Agenda for Managers

**1** Initially structure the conversation around personal and organizational goals so that employees are encouraged to reflect on how they fit and why they matter.

**2** As you go, focus on giving and seeking feedback, as well as actively listening, to encourage reflection and meaningful dialogue.

### Step 1:

Review current work; discuss what is working well and where the employee needs additional support. (Remember to discuss Cargill Leadership Model behaviors.)

### Step 2:

Discuss goal accomplishment, and ensure the link to business strategy is understood. (Remember to discuss both the **what** and the **how**.)

### Step 3:

Discuss barriers.

- What is getting in the way of doing your job?
- What is the most frustrating barrier?
- How can I help remove barriers?

### Step 4:

Discuss the progress being made against development goals.

### Step 5:

Document comments or updates in online tool or paper form.

### Check-In Questions

- What did you accomplish this quarter?
- What do you plan to accomplish next quarter?
- What do you feel most proud of?
- What was your biggest challenge?
- What did you learn?
- What will you do differently next time?
- How can I help you?

## How You Can Help Performance Management Succeed

It's easy to find examples of different performance management-related trends and get caught up. Anticipating your organization's decisions on performance management change can feel like you're waiting in limbo, but don't let that detract from your potential impact across many components of the process. Ultimately, focus on those parts of the process you can control, and your influence will follow.

Source: Cargill; CEB analysis.

# HRBPs' Role in Change Management

By Amanda Joseph-Little

Ensuring your business unit's employees implement change successfully is one of your most important jobs as an HRBP.

## Are you ready to deliver?

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HRBPs spend more time helping their line clients implement change than on any activity but managing their business unit's strategic HR plan.<sup>2</sup>

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Managing change is difficult yet critical to businesses' success. As the frequency and speed of change accelerates, so too does the need for HR to lead it. In fact, HRBPs expect change management to be the talent management topic that receives the most attention from their heads of HR in 2017.<sup>1</sup>

As the link between HR and the line, HRBPs are the key to implementing change and supporting the workforce through change, and they spend a large portion of their time advising clients on change management.

However, HRBPs' confidence advising the line on change management doesn't match the amount of time they spend on it or the importance that heads of HR place on it. In fact, HRBPs rank change management seventh among topics on which they feel most confident advising line clients (after

topics such as performance management, conflict resolution, managing underperformance, and HR policy and compliance).

How can you increase the success rate of change and their ability to lead change? Take the following steps to implement all types of change across all phases—from assessing the need for a change in the first place to sustaining the change over the long term.

### Assess the Need for Change

**1. Diagnose the need for change.** Leaders often suggest change initiatives to solve a business problem or take advantage of a business opportunity without fully understanding the problem's cause or the specifics of the opportunity to determine whether it warrants a change.

**HRBP Action:** Challenge your line clients to revisit the need for a change initiative when you first become aware of it by asking, "What does

success look like in addressing this challenge/opportunity? How will this change initiative achieve success as you've defined it? What will this change initiative (in its current form) not accomplish?"

- 2. Collect input from employees about the need for change.** Employees are often closest to the customer or the challenge at hand, so they have valuable input about what changes are needed and how to plan for them.

**HRBP Action:** Partner with your line leader, and potentially line managers directly, to get early feedback from employees in your business unit. Specifically, work together to determine what employee feedback would be most valuable, and design simple employee opinion surveys or run brief focus groups. Using culture change as an example, ask "How strong is the culture of our organization? If you were the leader for a day, what solutions would you implement to improve our culture? What activities do we perform in support of culture that don't work and that you would eliminate?"

- 3. Identify the right employees to involve in change decisions.** Changes are more likely to succeed when the right employees—not just the most-senior employees—are involved in making decisions about the change.

**HRBP Action:** Brainstorm with your line leader to identify which employees in your business unit should be involved in change decisions, as well as how to involve them. For example, discuss the following: Who will experience this change firsthand? Who might this change affect indirectly whose input you need? Who normally participates in decision making but doesn't need to be included? When should you bring these employees on board?

## Define and Set Change Objectives

- 4. Select a change project team.** Organizations often create central change project teams (of change management specialists, business leaders, select affected employees, etc.) to manage a specific change initiative.

**HRBP Action:** Encourage your line leader to work with the change project team's leader and potentially any selected employees from the business unit you support to 1) ensure your business unit is represented; 2) set expectations for what the change project team versus the business unit will own; and 3) establish communication between the change project team and the business unit.

- 5. Understand the effects of change on different workforce segments.** One common pitfall in planning change is the difference in how leaders think the change will affect the workforce and how employees, who are implementing the change's day-to-day implications, think it will affect them.

**HRBP Action:** Partner with your line leader to consider how the change will affect different teams or roles within the business unit, including the nature and severity of the impact. Be an advocate for the workforce, paying close attention to teams or roles that may be affected more severely by the change and, therefore, may need more support implementing the change.

- 6. Define the purpose of the change.** Employees typically have a less-clear understanding of the rationale for a change as leaders do, limiting the effectiveness of workforce communications about change.

**HRBP Action:** Partner with your line leader and internal communications colleagues to craft a simple statement about the purpose of the change initiative and the case for the change. Can the leader explain the purpose to the average employee in 30 seconds? Also help them prepare a simple business case relevant to employees in the business unit, including background information, the risk of not making the change, their vision of the future state, and potential obstacles.

- 7. Select change outcomes to determine success (including interim and final measures).** All changes are implemented with an end goal in mind and need a simple set of metrics to determine whether the change was successful. What most organizations miss, though, is choosing interim success measures to help them understand whether the change is being implemented well along the way.

**HRBP Action:** Work with your line leader to review the outcome measures the organization has identified and, specifically, how those outcomes apply to the business unit. Also identify interim measures to track by asking, "What do we need to see happening in the business unit to know if we're implementing the change well? What behavior changes or process changes will we look for and track?" Consider partnering with select talent analytics or finance colleagues to ensure you are identifying, collecting, and analyzing the right set of metrics.

## Plan Change Communication

**8. Plan formal, central communication.** Every change initiative includes a communication campaign when the change is announced to the workforce. This is an important step because organizations must make sure the workforce is aware of the change and, at a minimum, has a basic understanding about what the change is and why it's happening.

**HRBP Action:** If you can, review organization-wide communications before they are rolled out to the workforce so you and your line leader can provide feedback to the central change team and plan additional information you may need to share with your business unit. If you cannot review each communication ahead of time, identify additional information you may need to communicate and potential employee questions with your line leader immediately after the change is announced.

**9. Provide opportunities for employees to share their reactions to change.** The workforce will have a range of reactions when the change is announced—confusion, fear, anger, indifference, support, excitement. Give them an opportunity to share their initial reactions so they can move on to more productive work implementing the change.

**HRBP Action:** Encourage employees to come to you to discuss their reactions in a comfortable setting. Make yourself available by, for example, holding office hours when employees can stop by your office or can call you to discuss the change. Initial reactions are often just that—initial—and they may change or subside over time. You likely won't need to share employees' initial reactions with your line leader unless they will pose problems in the future.

## Prepare the Workforce to Implement Change

**10. Prepare leaders and managers to support employees through change.** Although the organization or central change team may share guidance or requirements for the workforce about how to implement change, the specific actions employees must take will vary by level, function, job type, and even from one role to the next. Leaders and managers throughout the organization may all have to do something different to help their teams implement the change, and they need guidance on how to help their teams interpret and apply change to their jobs.

**HRBP Action:** Partner with your line leader to specify what they personally must do to help their business units—including their direct

reports and the broader team—implement the change. This includes discussing ideas for how to implement the change with their teams, encouraging their teams to create their own change implementation plans, and reviewing and discussing each individual's change implementation plans. Next, work with your line leader to communicate these responsibilities to all managers in the business unit, and provide training or guides managers might need to help their own teams implement the change.

**11. Help employees create personal implementation plans.** Changes are most successful when employees implement the change in a way that's relevant to their specific job. All employees should develop their own unique implementation plans indicating what they personally will do to implement the change.

**HRBP Action:** Create a change implementation plan template and guidance to help employees create their own implementation plans, covering details such as methods for adjusting day-to-day work, potential obstacles, and personal measures of success. Review the template and guidance with your line leader for their feedback, and make a plan for introducing the template to the business unit. *See how Salesforce uses its [V2MOM tool](#) to help employees create their own plans.*

**12. Help employees experiment with ways to implement the change.** It's hard to know exactly how to implement a change, even with a well-thought-out plan. Employees need the freedom to experiment to see what works and what doesn't, and to adjust the way they implement the change as it evolves.

**HRBP Action:** Partner with your line leader to determine what acceptable experimentation looks like and how you will create an environment that supports experimentation. For example, DIRECTV and Tata Sons have created failure-sharing platforms that offer a supportive culture within which employees can honestly share lessons learned as they experiment at work. Work together, in partnership with line managers, to create and share guidelines for how to experiment safely, and share examples of successful change experiments.

## Implement and Sustain Change

**13. Identify and manage employee resistance.** Employee resistance to change is a common concern because resistance can hurt the likelihood of success. However, leaders and managers often misunderstand employee

resistance, incorrectly identifying resistors and misunderstanding how to prevent resistance.

**HRBP Action:** Educate your line leader on the best ways to identify and manage employee resistance to change. In particular, clarify the difference between skepticism and true resistance, as well as the difference between vocal resistors of change and silent resistors (who are easy to overlook). Then, partner with your line leader to educate managers on how to identify resistors and manage resistance to change. *Identifying and Managing Employee Resistance to Change: A Guide for HR* provides guidance and tools you can share directly with managers.

**14. Encourage managers and leaders to regularly discuss change with employees.** Change takes time and can include long periods of uncertainty for employees. Leaders and managers should discuss the change regularly with an informal, authentic approach to maintain trust and minimize uncertainty.

**HRBP Action:** Remind your line leader and managers to periodically discuss the change with their direct reports and the broader workforce, especially when you hear concerns or questions from employees. Encourage them to set aside talking points unless absolutely necessary, to share their own perspectives of the change, and to ask open-ended questions instead. Your work with your line leader and managers also ensures that all managers will know what and when to share informal updates with their own teams.

**15. Sustain leaders' attention through change.** Change can take a long time to be fully implemented, but leaders often shift their attention to other priorities after a change is initially deployed.

**HRBP Action:** Partner with your line leader to assess the sustainability risk of the change by considering 1) the major risks to the change being sustained over time, 2) the stakeholders most vulnerable to these risks, and 3) how you will address sustainability risks. You can share ongoing workforce feedback about the change to update the leader on the change process and discuss progress to date.

**16. Continually assess and adjust the change implementation strategy.** To ensure the success of a change initiative, assess the change process throughout instead of waiting until the end of the change. The change implementation strategy often needs updating as business needs evolve and as unexpected barriers arise.

**HRBP Action:** Bring your line leader proposals about how to better implement the change when you observe things that aren't going well or teams that are struggling to implement the change. If they are organization-wide challenges, encourage your line leader to bring the proposals to the central change team. Also, be sure that workforce feedback (from employees and line managers) is reflected within your feedback.

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Access our [Change Management Toolkit](#) for tools and templates for all 16 steps to help you and your HR peers implement change.

<sup>1</sup> Change management was ranked as the top talent management topic of concern for heads of HR in 2017 out of 13 topics, including employee engagement, leadership, succession management, HR transformation, HR strategy, diversity and inclusion, performance management, workforce planning, high-potential employees, organization design, talent analytics, and employment value proposition. (Source: CEB 2017 Future of the HRBP Role Survey.)

<sup>2</sup> HRBPs ranked change management as the activity they spend the second-most amount of time on out of 26 activities. (Source: CEB 2017 Future of the HRBP Role Survey.)



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Change champions are employees who volunteer or are selected to liaise between management and the larger employee population during a change. Champions typically assist in facilitating the change throughout all phases of a change initiative.

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By Katy Connealy Weber

# How to Choose Change Champions Who Will Help You Win

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Organizations are changing faster than ever, and leaders struggle to customize information and guidance for their diverse employee populations at the same pace. Fifty-six percent of organizations respond to this challenge by appointing change champions to aid the change process and help get change messages out faster. However, few organizations use change champions effectively.

Considering that only 34% of organizational change initiatives succeed, HR functions and HRBPs know there's room to improve. As you guide your line partners, managers, and employees during change, use these seven core tactics to select and train effective change champions and, in the process, increase your probability of change success.

## Identify and Select Successful Change Champions

**1** Select change champions who are trusted, not just senior. Most organizations select change champions based on their reputations and relationships with management, such as senior managers or high-potential employees. But organizations with successful change champion programs instead focus on individuals who are trusted by their peers. The relationship between change champions and the greater employee population is most productive when based on trust and rapport rather than formal authority or persuasion.

**2** Encourage employees to nominate change champions themselves. Allow employees to choose their own champions. One Australian organization asked employees to nominate colleagues they could comfortably turn to for advice and used those individuals as the core group of champions. Being able to nominate their own champions gave employees a sense of ownership and held them more accountable for actually leaning on those peers during change initiatives.

**3** Skeptical, not deferential, employees are more effective champions. Organizations often avoid selecting champions who express skepticism because they fear skeptical champions will undermine the change effort. In doing so, though, organizations miss the opportunity to quickly understand and respond to honest employee concerns. From the pool of employee-selected nominees, identify the candidates most willing to critique plans and to suggest new ways of implementing change. Employees who question the strategy and offer constructive feedback may ultimately be great contributors to the change effort.

### Prepare Change Champions for Success

**4** Enable change champions to have honest change conversations. Don't just require change champions to speak from a list of positive talking points; the most effective champions engage employees in debate to help them navigate the change. When change champions focus on honesty and clarity rather than unchecked positivity, employees come to better understand the changes. One organization prepared its change champions to debate and discuss change by holding one-on-one phone conversations to brief champions on strategy decision making and show them how senior leaders approached the situation and decision. This conversation prepared the champions to more honestly share the rationale behind the changes when speaking with individual employees.

**5** Coach champions to focus on helping employees adapt to the change. Effective change champions prepare their colleagues for shifts in their jobs. For example, they may show colleagues how to acquire the contacts, skills, and resources they need to succeed in the post-change environment. In this way, change champions help organizations minimize employees' resistance to change, as employees feel like they own the change and are empowered to provide constructive feedback at every stage of the change process.

**6** Highlight where change champions may need to evolve their approach over time. Appoint change champions who will closely observe employee opinion and can flex their approach accordingly. Change resistance is highest (38%) when a change has just been announced. And, unsurprisingly, resistance will be heaviest in teams that must restructure (26%) or change how they work (30%). Organizations should consider how and when a change will affect different teams and concentrate champion support accordingly.

### Listen to Your Change Champions

**7** Prepare to adapt your change strategy based on employee feedback shared via change champions and other employees. It's important not to just "talk the talk" by appointing change champions but also "walk the walk" by making material changes based on feedback from change champions and other employees. To give employees a sense of ownership, organizations must provide them with an avenue for voicing feedback; effective change champions offer employees an ideal opportunity to safely share their opinions. One South African organization arranges monthly meetings in which change champions discuss what they've been hearing from frontline employees, which prompts meaningful adjustments to the change rollout.

### What's Next?

As you consider your organization's next change, rethink your approach to using change champions. Select employees who are respected and trusted by their peers. Encourage them to engage employees in open conversations about the change—not recite a standardized, positive message. Finally, ensure change champions and leaders remain flexible in their approach, adapting strategies based on valid employee feedback. By supporting change champions in this way, you'll prepare both yourself and your organization to win.

By Adrian Samson



# The HR Heart Line

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## Dear HR Heart Line:

### How do you approach senior leaders to change telework policies and assure them it won't increase attrition or decrease productivity?

Submitted by: HR Director, Federal Government

Thanks for your question! Working from home, or “teleworking,” has become increasingly popular for our members in both the private and public sectors. Organizations that have incorporated more flexible telework opportunities have seen good results; many have reported both financial and productivity gains.

And we know telework is important to employees, too: in our most recent [Global Talent Monitor](#) report, we saw that work-life balance, which telework helps enable, was the second attraction driver for employees globally. But, just as you mentioned, even if we know telework helps employees and organizations, HRBPs often face opposition and barriers to implementing it.

As telework is relatively new, there's more uncertainty about how to manage it. We wonder: how do we track employee productivity while teleworking? How can we correct our line clients' misconceptions about the value and impact of telework?

Whether with telework or another HR solution, gaining approval from senior leaders and line partners for initiatives is a common HR challenge.

It is especially difficult to shift the perspectives, behaviors, and opinions of your internal stakeholders when they already have a bias about the proposal, as is often the case with telework.



To successfully gain buy-in for any HR proposal, focus on showing the connection between the solution and the benefit to the organization. In other words, you have to build an effective business case.



### Easier said than done? It doesn't have to be!

Building a business case involves several stages, and you have to begin with the end in mind. What problem will the solution you're proposing solve? How do you know what success looks like? In the case of telework, the root of the problem you're trying to solve may actually be linked to declining employee engagement, attraction challenges, or reduced productivity in the actual workplace. All of these have hard costs to the business, which any business leader readily admits.

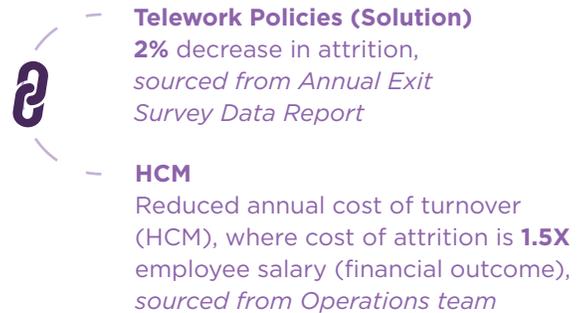
As an HRBP, you could solve these problems many ways, so decide which one of the solutions you'd like to recommend before you start building your business case. Narrowing down the list to the most promising ideas (e.g., introducing or expanding telework policies) will increase the likelihood that your solution meets your stakeholders' needs. You will also have already done the up-front work to disqualify other solutions, which will help you clearly articulate why you favor the selected solution over the alternatives.



Once you identify a single solution to pursue, the next step is: show me the money! You will need to show the predicted (likely financial) value of the selected solution to your stakeholder. You may be thinking, “Hold it! This solution is not meant to boost our top-line results.” Most of the time, HR solutions may be multiple degrees of separation from business results, but you can connect the solution to human capital metrics (HCMs) such as engagement or attrition rates, which, in turn, do affect business financials.

The process to link HR solutions to financials involves three distinct steps:

often that feedback is coming up, you have a direct link between telework and the cost of attrition for your business unit. In practice, that calculation could look something like this:



- 1 **Brainstorm and identify the HCMs that the solution affects and the type of impact they have (e.g., increase, decrease, maintain).**
- 2 **Use solid judgment, and determine the degree of impact your solution likely will have on each HCM.** Of course, this needs to be based on credible data collected from internal or external sources.
- 3 **Quantify the impact each HCM has on financial outcomes.** You should show the ROI and net present value of the solution. Consult your internal HR Analytics team, Finance partner, or other data owner to help you gather this information.

Also, remember: Quantifying the benefits is not always possible. In those cases, capture the intangible benefits, such as high fit with strategic priorities, synergy with other solutions, or ease of design and implementation. There is a lot of value in those benefits, too!

**For example:** If you're focused on building a case for a telework policy, you could cite ongoing exit survey data where departing employees highlight a lack of work-life balance or flexibility as a reason for leaving. Even better, if you can report on how

There are, of course, many ways to approach building a full case for an HR solution, but these steps are practical and effective regardless of the proposal you're working on. Don't forget: trying to gain support for HR solutions is really challenging, especially when the effects are difficult to quantify. We often revert to using more qualitative HR terminology because it feels easy or because we may not be comfortable discussing financial terms or financial implications.

This is one area, though, where it's worth pushing yourself out of your comfort zone. We—and it's likely you do, too—hear from business leaders that without seeing the tangible, financial benefit of solutions, it's rare they'd sign off on them. So dig in and focus on building an effective business case. In the shorter term, you'll demonstrate the value of HR to the business; and, selfishly, in the longer term, you'll also strengthen your own credibility and influence with your senior line partners.

**Keep us posted on your progress!**



## Have a question to submit to HR Heart Line?

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E-mail your question to [mzolner@cebglobal.com](mailto:mzolner@cebglobal.com), and we'll share our perspective and your peers' perspectives with you soon, maybe even in the next edition of *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.



# Turn Attrition into Opportunity: Maximize the Impact of Your Exit Surveys

By Aman Kidwai

## Using data is no longer an aspiration for HRBPs, but an expectation.

For HRBPs and their HR functions, the movement from several years ago—which shepherded in the increased availability of talent data—has already settled in. The opportunity to match anecdotal perspectives with quantitative proof places new demands on HRBPs when identifying, sourcing, and interpreting data.

We also know, though, that HRBPs recognize room to improve in this area: just 10% of HRBPs in our annual survey reported high confidence in advising their line clients about HR metrics and analytics.

Regardless of where you are on your data judgment journey, the most successful HRBPs don't just look to use data for the sake of using data. Instead, they look to infuse talent data within the initiatives they're already charged with managing. One highly effective, common opportunity for HRBPs in this area is deploying an exit survey.

The case for focusing on exit surveys is strong. In a given year, organizations experience 10%-20% workforce attrition. And, with average employee tenures trending downward in an era where talent is more willing to move than ever before, understanding why people are leaving is crucial.

As you advocate for better managing, or even introducing, exit surveys within the business units you support or in your organization more broadly, keep these four considerations in mind to ensure you take full advantage of the places where attrition can actually lead to improvements for you and your organization.

**Initially, you can quickly identify potential, smaller-scale attrition causes.**

The primary goal of an exit survey is understanding and identifying ways to reduce turnover, typically by validating or shifting your hypotheses about the main drivers of attrition.

Exit survey data helps you focus in on the greatest causes of employee dissatisfaction and where potential dissatisfaction is coming from. You can also determine if this dissatisfaction is widespread or contained within certain employee segments.

For example, following the deployment of an exit survey, perhaps manager quality, a common attrition driver, seems to be the main source of dissatisfaction. While your first thought may be to look into company-wide manager training programs, viewing the data by specific segments



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## Exit Survey

A survey completed by an individual who is leaving his or her employer (primarily voluntarily) about reasons for departure; can often be complemented by exit interviews conducted by a manager or HR representative with the departing employee to discuss their employment experience and potential reasons for their departure

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may reveal, hypothetically, that poor manager quality is only a cause of attrition for employees reporting to new managers. So instead of implementing an enterprise-wide manager improvement initiative, you can concentrate efforts on just those employees transitioning into manager roles.

Armed with the information from an exit survey, you will avoid generic, ineffective engagement strategies and instead be able to address different constituent populations with customized solutions that you know will be effective, saving you and the organization time and money.

Finally, in addition to looking at results across different employee segments, don't forget the effect an environmental event or organizational change (e.g., recent merger or acquisition, executive leadership transition) may have on turnover. Having "before," "during," and "after" data can help you understand how perceptions are shifting as the organization experiences rapid change. This can also be helpful if you experience unexpectedly high turnover without an obvious trigger.

As you work with your exit survey data, keep those types of events in mind; you can also always

compare results over varying time periods, identify an inflection point (the big event or change), and test whether that actually did affect employee sentiment.

**Then make sure to share those trends to inform longer-term initiatives.**

An exit survey allows you to identify the most prevalent reasons employees are leaving the business unit(s) you support. As you spend time with the data initially, you'll be able to tie those reasons to specific components of the employee experience and what employees expect to receive as they work at your organization, or an employment value proposition (EVP).

While the earlier section highlights shorter-term implications, there are much larger, longer-term implications to keep in mind as well.

If, for example, turnover among employees with new managers continues as you track exit survey data, it could tell you that the problem is much larger and deserving of more time, attention, and budget. Perhaps the organization needs to reevaluate available career paths to allow employees to opt out of manager roles; maybe we are promoting employees too early in their careers

and are expecting too much too quickly; or, when we're communicating our EVP to prospective candidates, we may put too much of an emphasis on peer coaching and should adapt that message.

These types of challenges are engrained more fully within the employee experience and are more strategic in nature. By offering suggestions on these larger challenges, you'll gain credibility and position yourself as more of a strategic advisor.

### As you're working, partner with your line clients to develop solutions.

Preventing attrition and improving employee engagement is a cause that the vast majority of line leaders and managers need support in. It's also strategic in nature. As a result, it presents a great opportunity to establish yourself as a strategic partner to your line clients.

HRBPs at Sears Holding Company create business-aligned talent dashboards for their line clients, of which exit survey and turnover data is a key part. They ensure feedback from exit and engagement surveys are included, as well as additional data on turnover, internal movement, and promotions rates to provide a clear picture of the levels of engagement within their business units.

Populating the dashboard with data is important, but the key is the conversation that occurs based on it. The dashboard serves as a tool that can be used with business unit leaders to make sure you both have the same goals and priorities so that they can now be managed actively. Right away, you'll make progress in your line client relationship.

### And, while you're working, remember to reflect on how you're building data judgment capabilities.

Exit survey data doesn't require familiarity with regression analysis, other statistical analyses, or Excel wizardry to analyze. There is a pretty direct route from the results of an exit survey to uncovering salient data points and better understanding and reducing attrition.

This is why exit surveys represent a great opportunity to dip your toe into data analysis and start building your data judgment capabilities. Departures are obviously a key portion of the employee life cycle, so it should be intuitive to use your experience as the underpinning for your interpretation of the exit survey's results and recommendations for taking action.

### View attrition as an opportunity.

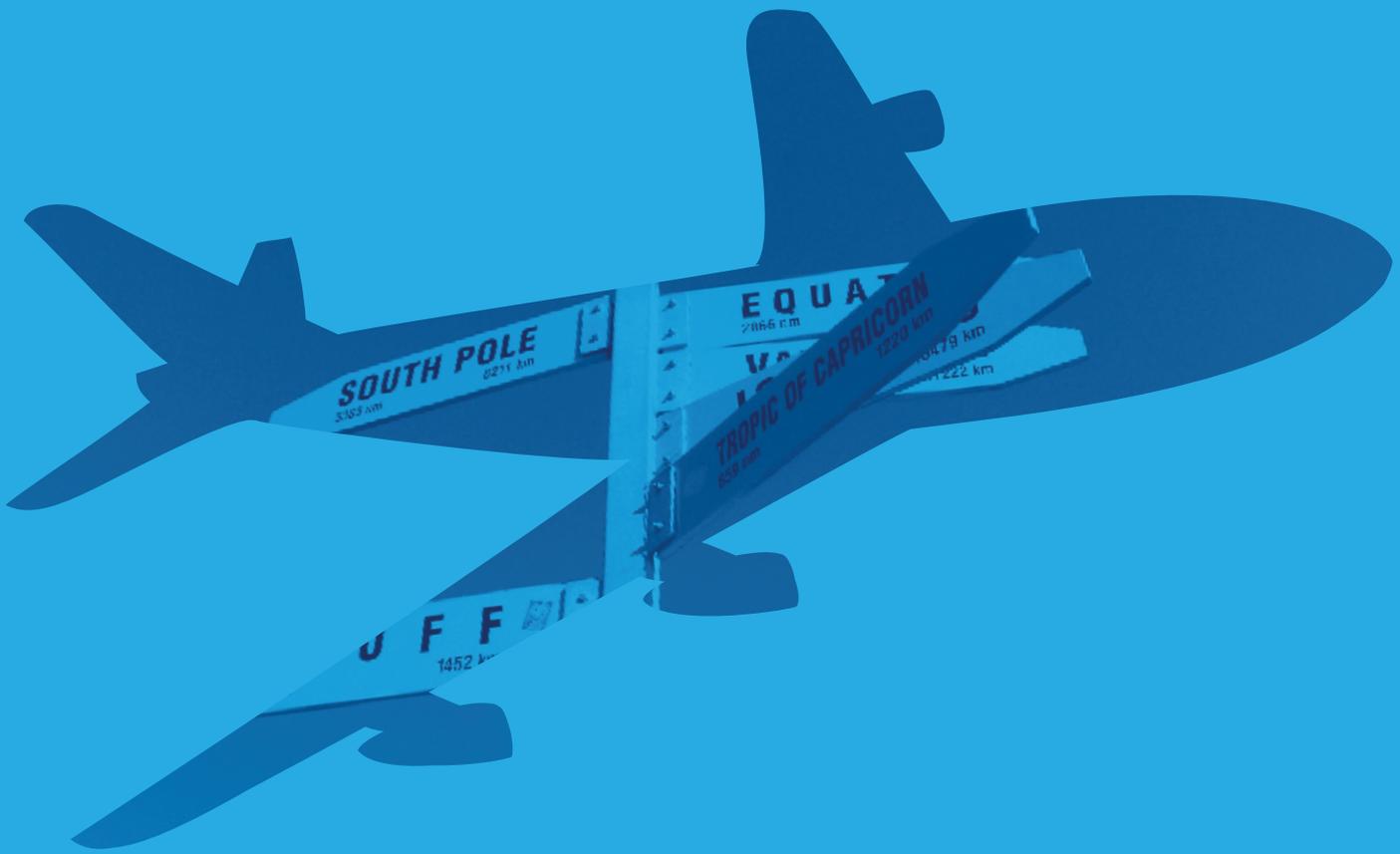
Exit surveys are an important tool for you as HRBPs, both professionally, as you help your organization curb attrition and ensure employees are happy and engaged at work, and personally, as you gain credibility and development experience through your work with line clients. Although no organization wants turnover to happen, remembering these four takeaways will help you turn past turnover into future progress.

#### Get started with these resources from us:

- Deploy our [Departure View Exit Survey](#) within the business unit(s) you support.
- Use the [Turnover Benchmarking Database](#) to compare your business unit's turnover with that of your peer organizations.
- Ensure you know how to enable employee engagement initiatives with [this HRBP Guide](#).

# Prepared for Departure?

Learn directly from departing talent  
what's working—and what's not.



Deploy the **Departure View Exit Survey**, free for CEB Corporate Leadership Council™ members, to gather honest feedback from departing employees and craft a strategy to retain key talent in the business unit(s) you support.

Learn more: [ceburl.com/1qd1](http://ceburl.com/1qd1)

# To Unlock Great Performance, Energy Is Key

## A Conversation About Employee Engagement with Author Tony Schwartz

By Andrew Karr

We recently spoke with Tony Schwartz, CEO and founder of The Energy Project, about how companies can fuel high performance by better meeting their employees' needs.

Tony's most recent book, *The Way We're Working Isn't Working: The Four Forgotten Needs That Energize Great Performance*, was a *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* bestseller. His previous book, *The Power of Full Engagement: Managing Energy Not Time*, co-authored with Jim Loehr, spent four months on *The New York Times'* bestseller list and has been translated into 28 languages. Tony has been a reporter for *The New York Times*, an editor at *Newsweek*, a staff writer at *Esquire*, and a columnist for *Fast Company*.

Engagement is often seen as peoples' willingness to expend effort on the job, but willingness to expend time and energy on work is not the same thing as actually being able to expend time and energy on work. As demands on our energy grow, even the most willing and engaged employees are running out of fuel.

Our conversation with Tony—summarized here and available in full on our website—addresses a unique and compelling view on energy and engagement.



Engagement is a huge concern for organizations. What are we getting wrong about peoples' needs and wants that has us so concerned about engagement?

We need a shift in the way organizations view performance, and especially how they fuel performance. The common attitude toward driving performance—finding more ways to squeeze more productivity and output from workers—is driving the workforce toward disengagement and burnout.

Since the Industrial Revolution 200 years ago, corporations have operated on the mantra that “more, bigger, and faster” is better. The problem is that you reach a natural limit, and the moment you reach capacity, “more, bigger, faster” isn't better—it's a killer.

There is only so much time in a day, and there are limits on the amount of time people can remain productive. The problem is not that organizations are wrong about investing in making the most of peoples' time spent at work. We do need to invest our time to be productive, but we also need to balance the investment of time with investment in energy.

We need to stop treating people as if they are widgets and as if they operate the same way that machines do. We need to recognize that if you want the best from a human being, you need to treat that person like a human being.

Instead of just thinking about how we can get more out of people, we need to shift our thinking toward how we can be investing more in them by addressing their core energy needs. By investing in their energy needs, we can unburden them and inspire them to bring the best of themselves to work every day.

People need more energy, so what do we do? Free energy drinks and coffee machines in the break rooms?

No, not that kind of energy! Energy, as defined in physics, is the capacity to do work. So, if you have more energy, you have more capacity. Capacity is simply the fuel in your tank. It's what makes it possible to bring your skill and talent to life. Like machines, people need fuel to expend their energy on their work. But unlike machines, humans' energy needs are more complex.

A human being needs four different kinds of fuel:

1. Physical, which is the quantity of your energy;
2. Emotional, which is the quality of your energy (how you feel profoundly influences how you perform);
3. Mental, which is the focus of your energy; and finally,
4. Spiritual, which is the purpose to which you direct your energy.

Investing in energy means making sure workers' physical, emotional, and mental needs are met while also providing them a meaningful purpose to focus their energy on. How people perform is a product of how people feel. If the expectation is that employees sacrifice their individual needs to get their work done, chances are they will get a lot less work done and become disengaged in the process.

It turns out that the key to performance is not to work continuously. What's more efficient is relatively short periods of intense, uninterrupted work offset by brief periods of deep renewal so that you're constantly refilling the tank. That way your capacity to perform high-level work efficiently is as good at 4:00 p.m. as it was at 9:00 a.m.

Organizations make a grave mistake if they value people for what they can produce, but don't value what it takes for them to be productive. People are at their best when they cycle between spending and renewing their energy. So encourage people to take a break, go on a walk, have a good lunch, or go home and get a full night's sleep.

Even if employees start feeling more energized, it's important they have something meaningful to expend that energy toward.

The most fundamental need is to feel valued. The Energy Project conducted a study to understand how people felt their needs were being met. Feeling valued at work was an element in the two most important drivers of energy and engagement: purpose and having a supervisor who genuinely cared about their wellbeing. Feeling that you have something purposeful to accomplish at work drives individual motivation, but it also drives a sense that the organization values you enough to entrust you with meaningful work. Having a manager that cares about your wellbeing is the most visible and direct way people can feel valued by an organization.

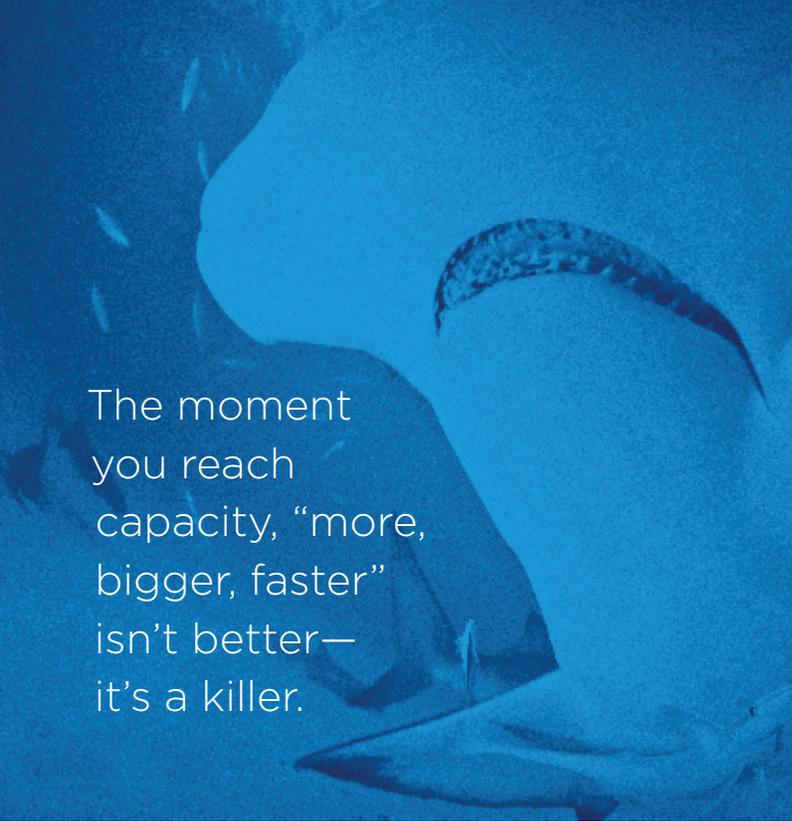
For HRBPs, this means coaching managers to be better mentors and teaching them how to invest in the wellbeing of their employees, in particular by helping them connect their employees' work to the greater business purpose.

Any time you fall short of having a sense of purpose at work—any time you fall short of having the sense that you're valued—you have an energy deficit.

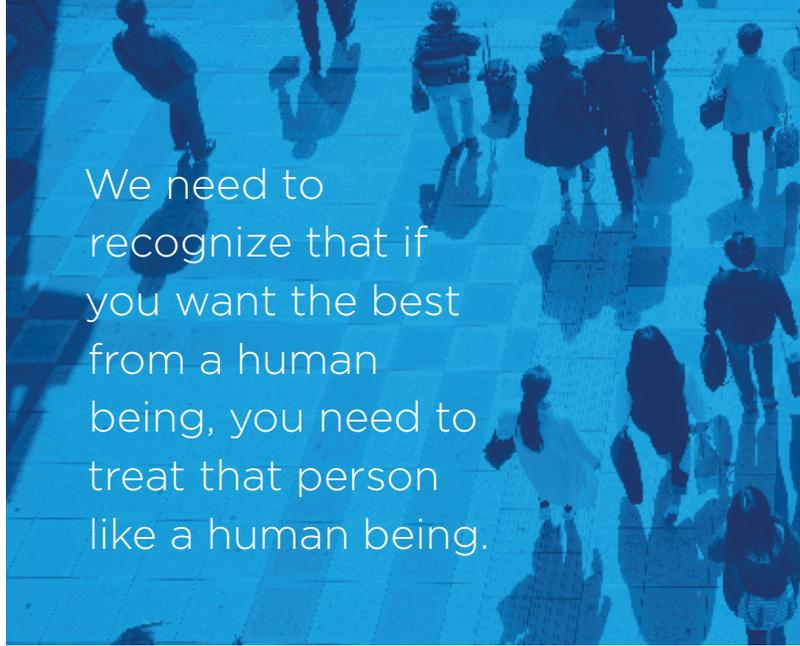
For HRBPs concerned about employee energy and engagement, the lessons are clear: focus on the manager-employee relationship, look out for overwork and burnout, and encourage employees to renew their energy.

*Tony's paper for The Energy Project, "The Human Era at Work," sums it up best: "The better people's needs are met, the more healthy, happy, engaged, productive, and loyal they become. Take care of them, and they'll take care of business."*

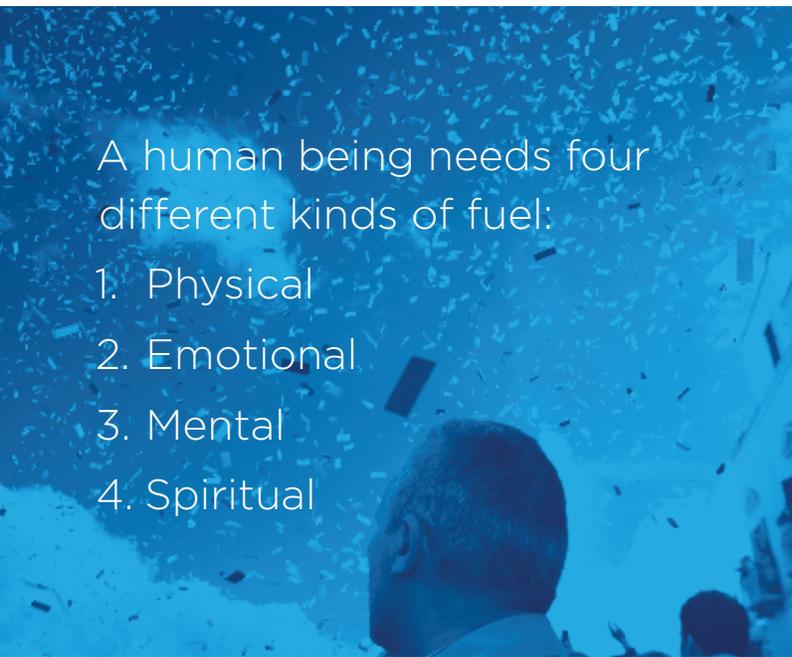
*For more information on engaging and energizing employees, listen to the [full podcast](#) on CEB Talent Angle.*



The moment you reach capacity, “more, bigger, faster” isn’t better—it’s a killer.

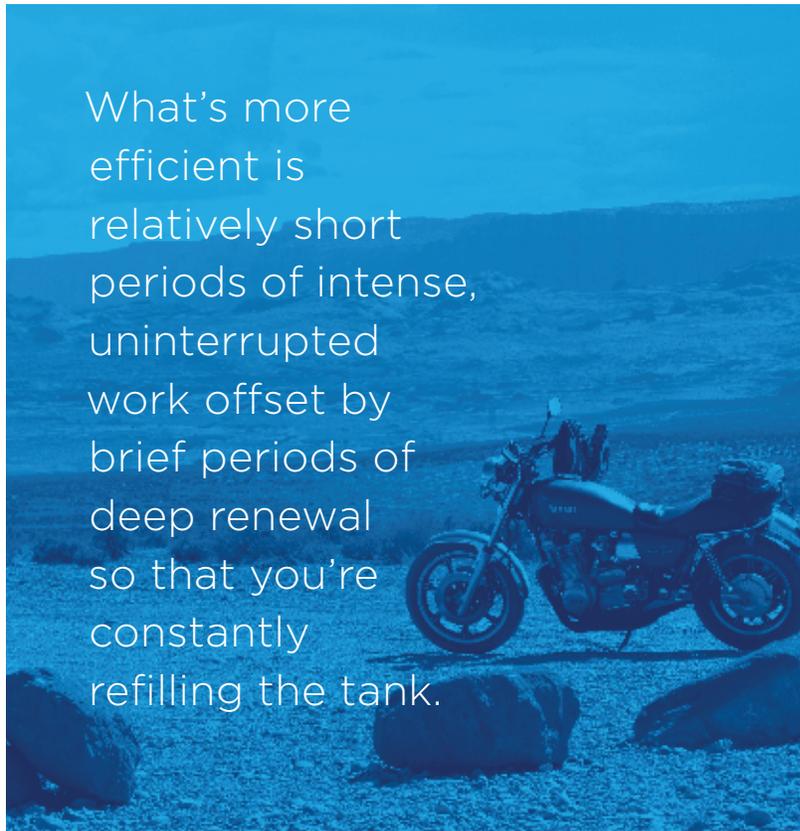


We need to recognize that if you want the best from a human being, you need to treat that person like a human being.



A human being needs four different kinds of fuel:

1. Physical
2. Emotional
3. Mental
4. Spiritual



What’s more efficient is relatively short periods of intense, uninterrupted work offset by brief periods of deep renewal so that you’re constantly refilling the tank.

Any time you fall short of having a sense of purpose or value at work, you have an energy deficit.



# Voice Within the HRBP Community

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An Interview with  
Giovanni Chirichella



### About ABB and Giovanni Chirichella

ABB is a Swedish–Swiss multinational corporation headquartered in Zurich with about 150,000 employees. It operates mostly in the robotics and power and automation technology areas. Giovanni Chirichella is a Global HR Manager responsible for one of the business units of ABB. He has a functional team of 27 HRBPs for a unit of 10,000 people operating in more than 70 countries.

#### Tell us a little bit about your career and how you ended up as an HRBP.

**GIOVANNI:** I think my path has been nontraditional, but it’s a core reason why I feel so motivated and prepared in my HRBP role today.

Very early in my career, I was a pianist, an orchestra conductor, and a composer. I worked in Sales and Marketing and then moved into HR. In 2002, I completed a master’s degree with a focus on HR and organizational development and then started with IBM, before moving to GE Commercial Finance and then Philip Morris.

I rejoined GE through the Human Resources Leadership Program, mostly in its energy businesses, and was able to start getting international experience, which has been a key engagement driver for me. I started in Italy, in oil and gas, and then moved into Finance as part of a rotational program to help me develop my finance expertise and become a more effective business partner. I worked in France, London, various cities in the United States, and then Toronto, where I was the Head of HR for GE Energy Canada. Eventually, I returned to Europe as the European HR Simplification Leader.

Finally, in July 2015, I left GE to join ABB and am now the Global HR Manager responsible for supporting one of the business units, and I am looking forward to the next stage of my career.

#### Across your diverse career, what experiences have benefitted you most as an HRBP?

**GIOVANNI:** I’d mention three things in particular:

**1. Having a cross-functional background**—Coming from Sales and Marketing, as well as even being a composer (or having diverse experiences, whatever those may be for you) is really valuable because it helps you clarify and adapt your partnership style, as well as understand the business more easily.

**2. Spending a year in Finance**—Getting experience as an auditor gave me exposure to a diverse set of business systems. Each audit cycle was three months, and we had about two weeks to learn as much as we could about the new business, identify improvement opportunities, and offer recommendations to very senior leaders. Relatively, I was no one—a very junior person without a formal background in Finance—but I had to be competent and have the confidence to communicate those opportunities and influence key stakeholders. That year in Finance ended up being one of the best learning experiences of my career.

**3. Getting international experience**—Moving around so much geographically and working in a variety of businesses has allowed me to see the big picture of how different industries and

operating models work, to network with many different people, and to learn how to make an impact in the short term. Having such a broad range of experiences in a lot of different places has really been tremendous and has allowed me to advance a lot faster.

#### How have you seen the HRBP role evolve?

**GIOVANNI:** Line leaders and managers are more aware of the strategic impact HRBPs can have. This creates lots of opportunities for the role but also some challenges. Although the role is generally moving toward a strategic partnership, the definition of “partnership” varies by line manager and depends on the manager’s background and whether he or she has had a positive experience with more strategic HR roles. Being a strategic partner is easier for those with more strategic-minded managers because then the business partner is a step ahead and does not have to convince the manager of the value of strategic contributions. Of course, the recognition of senior leadership, both within and outside of HR, about the value of being strategic also makes the job easier.

#### Where do you see the HRBP role going in the future?

**GIOVANNI:** I see the HRBP role continuing to become more strategic and more of a business leader and an



“Being able to connect people and show the broader organization the strengths and potential of everyone in the room gives you a tremendous responsibility.”

organization capability agent, and for this to happen, you need effective, standardized processes and strong centers of excellence (COEs) and Shared Services. Line managers and HRBPs should have experts available to them via these other HR groups so that they can spend more time figuring out how to use information and less time tracking it down. Similarly, the goal should also be fully automated and intuitive HR processes so that line managers may not even have to ask HRBPs for their support on certain questions and can instead coordinate and monitor their own requests. That is the right, longer-term answer for both HR and the business.

With improvements like these, HRBPs will be able to spend their time thinking about how to create value for the business through people and organization capability, which is really more business thinking than HR thinking. As HRBPs get closer to the business and COEs become stronger, I expect the HRBP role to become more open to people who have more of a business background and less of an HR background, as long as they still have some experience and the right amount of sensitivity and knowledge of how to fully leverage the potential of your people to contribute to the business strategy. And, as we are seeing with HRBPs today, the move to being more strategic opens the door to more HR leadership roles for you, given the role is such great preparation. In total, the intersection between business metrics, business strategy, and how you can impact that through people is the core focus area of the HRBP of the future.

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Finally, the role will continue to need high emotional intelligence. As a HRBP, you are also supposed to be a facilitator and understand different people dynamics at play, and this combination puts you in a very sensitive position. I see more and more HRBPs enabling key business decisions because they can influence people, leverage their potential, coach managers, manage conflict resolution, and channel the communication flow to ensure the right outcome with the highest impact. Being able to connect people and show the broader organization the strengths and potential of everyone in the room gives you a tremendous responsibility.

**What advice do you have for people new to the HRBP role?**

**GIOVANNI:** Drawing from my own experience and the experiences of the many HRBP colleagues I've had, four things come to mind:

- 1. Deliver on the basics**—If you do not deliver on the basics, you will not gain the necessary level of trust and credibility to be offered a seat at the strategic table with the business leader.
- 2. Get an automatic invitation**—Once you have a seat at the table, making it onto the distribution list for strategic

business meetings, whether they have HR implications or not, is a sign of success, as that validates that you are considered a business partner.

**3. Contribute to strategic capability and workforce planning**—Once you are in these meetings, remind yourself to contribute. Remember that business success is typically measured in financial indicators, so orient your guidance from a business perspective and then build your HR strategy around that, not the other way around. Aim to put the business strategy above everything else, including being able to define your own people strategy within the context of the business strategy, and, then, eventually those two separate things become the same thing as you and your organization get more practice.

**4. Show senior leaders something new**—Senior leaders are used to dealing with a lot of old-school, traditional HR people talking about the same topics year after year. Talking about something new (using unconventional, nontraditional business topics to inspire people) gives you a huge opportunity to influence the business. Every change out there affects the business, and it's your job to coach the organization on how to fully leverage the talents of all kinds of people, make them feel welcome, and eventually make them happily productive.

# 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.

## **Register for Ongoing HRBP Masterclass Webinars**

Join thousands of your peers during these interactive virtual workshops that combine peer polling, research presentation, and individual reflection to discuss a variety of topics, including foundations for HRBP performance, change management, and high-potential employee initiatives.

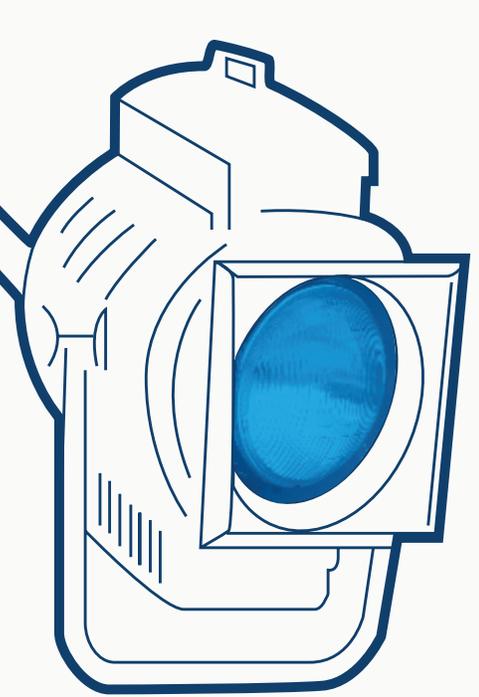
Learn More  
<http://ceburl.com/1qnk>



# HRBPs' Top 5 CEB Resources from Last Quarter

Your HRBP peers shared, favorited, and viewed these resources the most!

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



by Katy Connealy Weber

## 1. HRBP Guide for Delivering Talent Analytics Initiatives

Only 10% of HRBPs share they're very confident advising their line clients on HR metrics and analytics questions and challenges.

Use our [Talent Analytics Guide](#) to help you explore best practices and learn to apply them.

## 2. HRBP Career Diagnostic

This online development planning tool is "always on" and available to you. In 15-20 minutes, you can complete the survey, which encourages you to reflect on your mastery of and the importance of activities core to your role as an HRBP.

Upon completion, you'll receive an instantaneous, personal feedback report; highlighted strengths and development opportunities; and relevant tools from us to guide your ongoing development.

## 3. Amazon's 30-Hour Workweek

Last quarter, HRBPs were very interested in Amazon's new 30-hour workweek pilot program. Pilot participants will receive [full benefits](#) but only 75% of full-time pay.

Get more details about the pilot and learn the logic behind the decision [here](#). For more news and stories like this, you can always visit our member [blog site](#) and [Talent Daily](#).

## 4. HRBP Guide for Change Communication

Traditional change strategies emphasize top-down communication of a consistent, positive message. The best communication strategies, however, focus on honest, two-way communication throughout all levels of the organization.

As an HRBP, you can facilitate—both independently and via line managers—these conversations and help lead your organization through a successful change.

## 5. The Coming Age of Employee-Monitoring Tech

We continue to track up-and-coming developments in HR technology and analytics. Employee analytics company Humanyze has developed "sociometric badges," which track employee behavior to identify patterns between behavior and productivity. Interesting findings hint at the positive effects of larger team lunches and coffee breaks. You can learn more about trends in talent analytics by visiting our new [Talent Analytics Portal](#).



### Spotlight Event

#### Early–Mid 2017 Staff Briefings: The End of Agility: Designing a HIPO Strategy That Moves at the Speed of the Business

Most organizations hedge against an uncertain future by investing in highly agile employees. Unfortunately, the search for agile talent often does not pay off. Our research will show you how to use your influence to move your organizations toward a more agile HIPO strategy.

Beginning in March, we will hold in-person meetings in multiple locations worldwide. There is no additional cost for you to attend, and up to four members of your organization can attend each meeting location. The dates and locations include:

2 March 2017—Chicago

8 March 2017—London

*More Dates and Locations Coming Soon!*



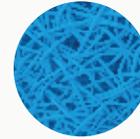
### Spotlight Topic Center

#### Performance Management

The vast majority of HRBPs are involved in facilitating their organizations' performance management processes. As we enter the season of annual performance evaluations for many, now is a great time to revisit our Performance Management Topic Center and ensure you're able to gain credibility through your sharp performance management support.

Get a quick introduction with our [HRBP Guide for Delivering Performance Management Initiatives](#), and our resources can always help you:

- [Design your performance management strategy](#),
- [Conduct performance reviews](#),
- [Reward and recognize employees](#), and
- [Provide ongoing feedback and support](#).



### Spotlight CEB Ignition™ Guide

#### CEB Ignition™ Guide to Conducting Performance Reviews

Use this step-by-step guide as you prepare line managers to deliver performance evaluations at your organization. This guide will help you:

- Align performance reviews with business strategy,
- Capture and deliver feedback effectively,
- Prepare managers to conduct performance conversations, and
- Evaluate performance reviews against employee talent outcomes.



### What's Next?

When you apply our resources 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 tools 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 *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.

### **Feedback on what you see?**

Which articles in this publication did you find most helpful? Is there a topic or type of content you would like to see in future editions? Send your feedback on *HRBP Quarterly* to [mzolner@cebglobal.com](mailto:mzolner@cebglobal.com) today.