"Gaining Competitive Advantage through Human Resource Management"

Thought Leadership Summit on Digital Strategies
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Discussion Guide

The benefit an organization realizes from human capital investment is directly proportional to the quality of its human resource strategy, processes and overall management. For our purposes, *human capital* is defined as individual, as well as collective, skills, talents, and capabilities. The outcomes of an organization's HR processes are critical capabilities, like enhanced leadership, managerial competency, employee efficiency and proficiency, and workforce collaboration. HR management can be a major change agent, but must have a strategic vision and an understanding of how technology can transform the HR function. HR's challenge, shared with the CIO, is to develop and implement a technology strategy linked tightly to the business strategy. An efficient HR organization empowers employees, managers, suppliers, and partners and leverages technology to accomplish strategic business goals.

Session 1: The Strategic Role of HR – The Tie to Business Results *(please come prepared to discuss what "strategic HR" means to your company and give a concrete example of how your company is implementing/achieving it.)* What is the vision of HR in your company? How strategic is it? How does technology enable the vision of HR? How are HR investments viewed in your company?

- What does "strategic HR" mean to you? What is necessary to get there?
- What are the greatest impediments that you face when aligning HR strategies & functions to the strategic goals of the business? What do you need to overcome these impediments? Is technology an important part of the solution?
- Some executives today find themselves at a loss to demonstrate that investments in people lead to improved business results. How does your organization show the linkage between investments in HR processes and improvements in the business (e.g., increases in productivity, customer satisfaction, innovation, etc.)?
- It seems the biggest impediment to effective intervention in the domain of human performance is the lack of meaningful measurements and convincing evidence that human capital investments improve an organization's performance. How can your company determine the effectiveness of its human resources?
- Can your organization collect the data on operational performance, which includes productivity, quality, or customer satisfaction, and use it to assess the effect of human capital variables on the factors that create business/shareholder value? If not, how can HR and IT to make that happen? Is IT reaching out to HR or are both two peas in the same pod – two services organizations trying to make a stronger connection to the business?
- What are the practices for an efficient human resources organization? Is it processes more aligned to the business strategy? Is the practice a more empowered employee and more self-service capabilities?
- What have you experienced to be the most immediate and visible people-related qualities, including employee attitudes and abilities, that enable your organization to achieve critical business outcomes?

Session 2: The Outsourcing Crossroads: Now and the Future *(please come prepared to share what HR functions your company is outsourcing now and what you are considering outsourcing in the future, Please also come prepared to tell a specific "lessons learned" story from HR outsourcing).* As part of moving HR from the administrative to the strategic, outsourcing is a clear possibility. How important is it to achieving strategic focus in the HR function? What parts of HR can you outsource? What are the best practices in outsourcing in HR? What role can the CIO play in helping make this determination and enabling the execution?

- What functions or processes are currently outsourced? Which should be in the future? Which functions have you considered outsourcing and decided not to?
- There seems to be a "common" divide between HR functions outsourced and those not. Assessment, recruiting, employee communications and HRIS seem to head the list of least likely to be outsourced at present. Do you agree with this?
- Which components of HRIS (IT) could be outsourced?
- How are the targets of outsourcing likely to change over time?
- What are the best practices in outsourcing in HR?
- Outsourcing often means letting some employees go. What is the effect of outsourcing on those employees who stay, and what are the best practices for keeping them fully "on board"?

Breakout:
Employee Self-Service in HR
What HR services are offered on a self-service basis in your company? What level of self-service is optimal? How do you offer the self-service services? What is the role of identity management in determining what you offer as self-service? How do you calculate ROI on self-service?

Session 3: Talent Management in a Global Setting *(please come prepared to share a best practice in global talent management)* Talent management is perhaps the key to truly strategic human resources management. How does your company approach the acquisition and retention of talent? What are the complexities of doing this on a global scale?

- What are the best practices you've developed to attract and retain your most talented people at all levels?
- Do you measure the impact of HR decisions on retention?
- Do you tailor retention programs to specific positions, skills or even people?
- What's the value of having global capability/information in HR?
    - What purpose should this global capability serve? What information is therefore most critical and who should it serve / who should have access?
    - How do you deal with employee protection rules that vary by country?
- If you accept that one of the keys to retention is offering employees varied and challenging assignments and that the deepest pools of knowledge don't always reside with the person with the most likely title, how do you ensure that you can tap that knowledge and marry the right talent with a given project?

- Since we have CIOs and HR execs in the room, what are the specific current challenges regarding retention of skilled IT people? What is the impact of the trend towards top IT people coming up less through the technical ranks? In an era of cost containment in IT and focus on ROI, how do you still retain/recruit the IT folks who will make a real difference?
- If you're in growth mode, how do you put a holistic view in place in HR/talent management given the different needs of different parts of the enterprise?

Summary & Opportunities for Further Discussions
- What are your key take-aways? What are the 2-3 things that you are going to think the most about when you leave here?
- What did you hear today that you absolutely said, "Amen, that's the God honest truth," and what did you hear today that you thought "They're wrong about this?"
- What areas would you like to see more research focused on?