

# From the Editor

By Karen V. Beaman



This issue begins our yearlong tribute to Bob Stambaugh, co-founder of IHRIM and the *IHRIM Journal*, who passed away December 1, 2005. The primary theme in this issue is Organizations of the Future, what strategies they will pursue and what operational initiatives might they take as we move forward into the knowledge economy.

Paradoxically, we begin this issue about the future with an article written by Bob Stambaugh in the past titled: "Patterns of Use: Mapping Human Resources Information Delivery for the Modern Corporation." He wrote the article in 1994 and even then, he was advocating that HR information management could be vastly improved through mapping, collaboration and social networks. It is a testament to his forward thinking that these concepts are now a key part of the strategy of many major corporations.

Our next feature by Valdis Krebs, "Bob Stambaugh: Consultant, Collector and Colleague," pays tribute to Stambaugh by pointing out that he not only advocated the use of social networking, but did so himself. Krebs illustrates some of Stambaugh's network, which included friends and colleagues, and describes Stambaugh as a "network weaver...someone who connects others – not just to "network" them, but also to start them off on a productive path together, like a project, an employment opportunity or a learning experience."

In his article, "Contemporary Organizations: Emergence, Forms and Functions," Dr. Daniel Sullivan says that how a company organizes its operations is one of the most provocative issues in business today. He states that although there are defenders of the 80-year-old hierarchical management model, there is growing support that the 21st century has ushered in a fundamental shift that ap-

pears to give greater rewards to those companies that forsake predictability and control for the challenge of developing organizations that support effective knowledge-generating and decision-making relationships among workers.

Next, we shift to an article that describes how benchmarking can play a key role in the performance of a shared services organization. "Benchmarking to Improve Performance," by Omar Aguilar, Rick Ferraro and Beth Thiebault, explains why *metrics* and *practice* benchmarking are powerful tools that can help a shared services organization evaluate its current strengths and weaknesses, suggest opportunities for improvement, and provide insight on leading practices that can help affect those improvements.

Karen Beaman and Dr. Gregory Guy in their article, "Globalization: The Payoffs and Tradeoffs," write that global shared services offer potentially great rewards and improvements in ROI, but also brings the organization face-to-face with issues that are unprecedented in a single-country operation. Their conclusion is that effective implementation and use of a shared services center across national borders requires *Transnational* leadership: maximizing global efficiency, facilitating local responsiveness, and leveraging innovation and best practices across the world.

In his Out of the Box department, Dr. John Sullivan provides a comprehensive "Checklist of Engagement and Solution Elements in a Performance Culture" as he writes about establishing a consulting team within an organization. He notes that such a team creates new challenges, most of which can be mitigated by establishing a standardized engagement process and control system to govern the development of solutions.

A new department, "Trends in HR

Technology," written by Aileen MacMillan and Jeff Chad, presents the authors' view of organizations of the future, and impacts on those organizations such as: increased outsourcing of areas deemed not crucial to the core business, including some or all of the HR functions; baby boomers will replace their full-time jobs with part-time roles as consultants, which will allow their organizations to retain their expertise and allow the boomers to save more for retirement.

Yves Lermusiaux authors another new department "Facts & Research," and writes about "Organization Delivery Models for the Future." He says that as you conceive your organization of the future using talent management strategy and technology, you invariably arrive at three key decision points: 1) how to deliver software to your organization; 2) selecting the platform; and 3) your competency framework. Long-term success depends on your understanding of the three key decisions to be made and the ability to make them.

In International Perspectives, Phil Jones presents "Legal Update Europe: Pregnancy – An Equal Opportunity Issue." In September 2005, the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg issued a judgement relating to the treatment of female employees who become ill during their pregnancy. It was one of a series of judgements relating to the treatment of pregnant employees that the Court has been called upon to make over the years, and it is unlikely to be the last. If you have employees in the European Union, be sure to read this article.

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