

From the Editor



The growth of global business operations and contingent workers, a more culturally diverse and older workforce, and the plethora of domestic and international privacy and security laws can make managing today's workforce daunting to say the least

Our first article, "The Contingent Workforce: Beyond the Four Walls" is by Row Henson. Henson describes contingent workers as those beyond the customary "four walls" of the organization and how they present unique management and communication challenges. Temporary and part-time employees, interns, consultants, independent contractors, and workers who are outsourced or stationed in offshore locations are managed through direct managers, purchasing, procurement, the chief talent officer or others.

Yet, the use of contingent workers is not a dilemma. It is a reality. Organizations should not be caught by surprise at how the workforce will be shaped going forward. As HR has adjusted to myriad changes in the past, it will also resourcefully embrace the challenges and opportunities presented by the contingent workforce of today and tomorrow.

In our next article by Lynne Morton titled "The Seven Challenges of Global Talent Management," the author tells us about The Conference Board's development of a talent management (TM) model that includes eight categories of HR initiatives: recruitment, retention, professional development, leadership/high potential development, performance management, feedback/measurement, workforce planning and culture. A second Conference Board research study, *Talent Management Value Imperatives*, built upon this framework by determining the requirements for integration. Most notable among them are CEO involvement, shared accountability, and a balanced view of near and long term strategic needs.

This research created a good baseline of understanding from the perspective of HR, which we can build upon to create insight into the global world of TM. We can do this by thinking from a different perspective: that of the business, rather than of HR.

In "Global, Virtual, Extensible Teams" by Gerald Falkowski and Stephen Troutman, the authors explore in a case format the challenges, implications, and recommendations for leaders and team members as they swiftly moved from understanding virtual teaming concepts to implementing and sustaining multiple, extensible virtual teams, employees, and careers in a virtual environment. Virtual means a participant is not only remote (in a different location) but also from a different organization, i.e., with different management chain.

Virtual teams offer the potential of working around the clock, harnessing diverse skills, and bringing many more and varied perspectives to a problem or project. Some progressive human resource organizations are starting to formally engage in virtual teaming. They know how virtual teams can build

trust through a planned team communication strategy and frequent in-process, team-building sessions.

Katherine Jones provides our next article, "New Demographics in the Global Workforce." Dr. Jones tells us that workers are everywhere in some form or another; the ideal workforce for any particular company may be in China or Hungary – or a virtual workforce based not on the largest group of appropriate workers but on the best single talent. Knowledge workers have already been proven to function well in a highly distributed environment – here a company may indeed seek out the single best individual for a position.

Regardless of the strategy for filling positions, some points are irrefutable: labor typically flows to those activities that produce the highest economic return; countries must look at policies and incentives to retain an older population of workers; companies must look worldwide for locations that encourage higher education, attract foreign students, develop scientists, and do not discriminate against any type of worker by gender, ethnicity, social class or other factors that could discourage potential talent from entering the workplace.

Managing the current and future workforce presents some serious issues regarding privacy and security. Dr. Don Harris addresses these issues in his article "Data Privacy and Security." This article describes the major developments in data privacy and security relevant to HR and HR systems over the past five years. It assumes the reader's familiarity with topics addressed in a chapter on data privacy by the author in *Boundaryless HR: Human Capital Management in the Global Economy* (IHRIM Press, 2002).

The key components of a well-designed employee privacy program include identifying personal data repositories, flows and uses; understanding regulatory requirements; assessing risks; creating and implementing privacy and security policies and procedures; providing awareness and training programs; reviewing and strengthening data protection provided by third parties; and reviewing and verifying compliance with policies and laws. Organizations that either have such a program in place or are developing one are well-positioned to manage the privacy challenges associated with new laws, new technologies, new business practices and new social expectations. Those that do not will pay the price in terms of lower employee trust and morale, loss of reputation, costs associated with remedial and compensatory actions, and set-backs in the ability to introduce and leverage the use of new technologies.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue of the *IHRIM Journal*.

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