

# From the Publisher's Desk



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**D**omestically and globally there is economic and political turmoil in business, government and non-profit organizations making the role of HR more complex. The articles in this issue of IHRIM Journal discuss predictive analytics, business intelligence, globally distributed work and the challenges of the plethora of data privacy laws. By a thorough understanding of these issues and methodologies and how they should be managed, HR is placed in a strong advisory position within the organization it supports.

In our first article by Dr. Jac Fitz-enz, “Why Analytics is HR’s New Big Idea,” the author writes that analytics is Human Resources’ new great idea because it helps management understand what has occurred in the recent past, how trends are moving or changing, and which investments will pay off in the future. It also helps HR develop consultative skills and more in-depth knowledge of the data residing in its databases. This is HR’s great opportunity, maybe its last chance, to play a valued advisory role – to be top executives’ intelligence officer.

“Beyond Numbers: Making Metrics Matter to Your Business” by Dr. Katherine Jones is our next article. Dr. Jones tells us that HR’s ability to analyze information is indeed important, but the application of the results to business improvement is more compelling to upper management. It is not the metric in itself, but the thoughtful application of metrics to your business or organizational goals that matters. Think about what data you really need, and to whom the analysis of that data will matter.

In “The Future of Globally Distributed Work,” Robert Anderson, Kathleen Curley and John Henderson see that the emergence of open source software development practices within companies, crowd-sourcing among customers for new product development, and mash-ups such as iPhone’s application store are forcing us to rethink what innovation means, what is the definition of a product or service, what are the economics of the business model, what is the role of talent management in this environment, and what are the management practices that will best help to develop and sustain this new structure.

In “Putting ‘Business’ Back in BI,” authors Brian Kelly and Mark van Meurs believe that the reality is that the enablement of BI through software applications has blurred and diminished the ultimate end-goal: answering business questions. In response, organizations are going back to basics, realizing that while technology can enable, it is just one aspect of BI and, frankly, no longer the reason why it succeeds or fails. Business intelligence starts and ends with the “business,” but needs help from the people who know how to architect, build, and service your new knowledge repository. Think carefully about who you can trust to do the right job, internally and externally, before you begin.

Dr. Donald Harris brings us our final article, “Global Data Privacy Developments.” He writes that as a new decade unfolds amidst hopes that the worst of the Great Recession is over, companies that are, or would like to become, multinational employers need to engage or re-engage with the challenges posed by data privacy laws. He says that the summary of key global developments in this article, while far from exhaustive, illustrates the churn of events and regulations that have proceeded in the background while business and HR projects have slowed in the foreground.

We trust you will enjoy reading these timely articles.