

EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES

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VISIONS OF THE FUTURE: HACKERPROOF SYSTEMS, UNICORNS AND OTHER MYTHICAL BEASTS

By Robert H. Stambaugh

Two trends are increasingly in the forefront of business consciousness, though their future convergence hasn't been examined in any detail. When these trends collide, there'll be a significant rethinking of many of the underpinnings of HR and IT that exist today. The two trends are: (1) increasing acceptance by companies of a rationale for controlling, limiting, and even censoring employee communications over the Internet and the World Wide Web; and (2) the alarming increase in serious system hacking and the inept efforts of authorities to make their systems tamper-proof. Hackers will exist as long as systems exist to challenge them — especially systems trumpeted as tamper-proof. Really serious hackers will stay ahead of any regulations and mechanisms developed to control their behavior. This article suggests that threats posed by hackers can usefully be dealt with by a scenario planning approach and illustrates the sort of events that HRIS and IT managers should consider.

ON THE KNOWLEDGE FRONTIER: TIPS FOR DEVELOPING A SUCCESSFUL PERFORMANCE SUPPORT SYSTEM

By George M. Alliger and Scott I. Tannenbaum

Performance Support Systems (PSS) can represent a moderate-sized but potentially powerful step on a company's road to total Knowledge Management (KM). This article reviews several issues to consider when planning for a PSS, including the choice of job and aspect of job to be supported, the choice of the type of PSS, feasibility of development, the PSS development team, and piloting and deployment. Special attention is paid to the persons and roles of the PSS project team — project leader, implementation group, content experts — because the nature of the team will determine the success of the project. Development of a PSS can be a relatively quick, timely "hit." If you can improve job performance with a PSS, then

ROI should follow automatically. A PSS addresses, in a local way, the KM needs of a company, and can provide a useful impetus to the company's overall KM strategy.

HUMAN RESOURCES' MOST EFFECTIVE PRACTICES ACROSS BEST COMPANIES . . .

By Joseph H. Boyett, Ph.D. And Jimmie T. Boyett
With Introduction By Row Henson

This article looks at eight of the most important workplace trends and HR practices: 1) Organizing organizations. "Hand work is out. Brain work is in, and brain work requires a different way of organizing." 2) Proactive recruiting. "The best companies are resorting to a wide range of proactive recruiting practices, including hiring bonuses, employee referral programs, long-term relationships with universities and colleges and electronic candidate searching." 3) Creating a culture where people want to work. "How do organizations make their company the 'employer of choice?'" 4) Self-led teams. "How to make the flat organization work." 5) Just-in-time/just-where-needed training. "How to get the most out of employee developmental activities." 6) Harnessing technology to enable HR self-service at a distance. "Face-to-face HR cannot support the global, mobile, virtual employee — self-service allows the "knowledge" worker to get what they need, when they need it from anywhere at anytime. 7) Value-added compensation. "The Generation X, Y and N worker will require more flexibility in compensation than any in our past." 8) Global HR. "Every organization today is affected by the 'distance is dead' theory. Knowledge workers will be recruited based on value, not location!"

THE BUSINESS CASE FOR AN EFFECTIVE HUMAN RESOURCES FUNCTION (OR YES, VIRGINIA, HR DOES ADD VALUE)

By John Johnston

The human resources function can add a significant amount of value to the organization. To prove its value, HR must first provide solid evidence of a return on investment in HR activities and then continue to measure its ability to improve business competitiveness. Recent studies have provided greater insight into the value of HR in achieving business success. This article summarizes the findings of selected studies and comments on the limitations of HR departments in measuring their contributions. The implications on

HRMS technology are considered, and the author makes recommendations for future research studies in this field.

ELICITING OPAQUE OPINIONS: A VISION THROUGH MULTINATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

By John Kidd and Xue Li

The Western "eliciting models" such as Checklands' SSM (Soft System Modelling), Linstone's TOP (Technical, Organizational and Personal) and the Chinese WSR (*Wuli, Shili, Renli*) approaches have become more common in the academic press. This paper discusses the similarities and differences in the modelling of uncertain situations that developers or clients and consultants must consider if they are to proceed with confidence on a multinational project. Western management literature tends to be prescriptive, and while we might critique the theories of process change in organisations and individuals, often we state simply that Oriental firms face the same fundamental issues. We understand each side approaches these changes quite differently, thus the task for the international team managing change is to first learn about their own perceptual differences and then to learn to speak and listen to each other so collectively they are better able to interact with their client's own fuzzy perceptions. Our conclusions suggest that the real key to success will be through the development of the awareness of each person for the other. Individuals in the firm will learn how to be supportive of each other even when the other seems to be clumsy and missing the point. This will be achieved though the use of models common to and understood by all. These will act as open depots of knowledge.

NETWORKING EMPLOYEES FOR SUCCESS IN GLOBAL TEAMS: A CASE STUDY I

By Aparna Joshi

Successful interpersonal communication in global teams presents challenges for human resources professionals despite advances in communication technology. From an HR perspective, interpersonal interaction in global teams is complicated by the different national, cultural and linguistic backgrounds of team members. In an attempt to address these concerns, a study explored the nature of interpersonal interaction among the

members of a global HR team. This article discusses the characteristics of formal and informal communication patterns within this global team, the outcomes of team members' interaction with each other, and the experiences of team members based on geographic location.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF HR INFORMATION SYSTEMS TO THE STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES: A SOUTH AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE

By Paul Krige

This article investigates the extent to which human resource information systems (HRIS) support the latest trends in strategic human resource management from the perspective of HR professionals. A framework of strategic HR management is developed and used to measure the current position of HRIS in South Africa. The components of an ideal HRIS are also measured to eliminate those factors of strategic HR that are not compatible with information technology. The article identifies significant gaps between the actual utilization of HRIS and what HR professionals require. It also finds that many of the functions required by HR professionals are present in modern HRIS. This suggests that there are issues of understanding and implementation of systems that are not mutually understood by the parties involved. The article makes some suggestions as to how these can be resolved so that businesses can obtain greater value from their investment in HRIS.

RECRUITING AT THE SPEED OF LIGHT: ONLINE RECRUITING AND THE IMPACT OF GLOBAL ELECTRONIC MARKETS FOR HUMAN RESOURCES

By Nancy Paule Melone, Ph.D. and Kathleen S. Hartzel, Ph.D.

Many corporate notables, Intel's Andy Grove among them, have declared that the labor market has undergone a fundamental shift brought on by online recruiting and related digital technologies. But Melone and Hartzel note that this is only the latest in a long series of such "fundamental shifts" in the labor market. In the article, the authors consider the strategic implications of global electronic labor markets for corporate recruiting and employee retention practices. They identify six areas in which global electronic markets for human resources are likely to influence corporate recruiting and corporate

competitiveness. Using a framework borrowed from economics, they explore how online recruiting: (1) creates opportunities for recruiters looking to buy skills and job seekers looking to sell them; (2) amplifies the competitive relationship among companies; and (3) generates intense internal pressure for human resources to align its activities for maximum strategic impact.

THE SECOND INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION: HRIS AND HUMAN CAPITAL AUTOMATION

By James W. Candler

Traditional roles are changing more rapidly in this new world than most of us can fathom. It's time for an HRIS professional's vision so that we can capitalize on the changes to help ourselves, our companies and the very worlds we must change.

We are entering a fourth generation of human resource information systems (HRIS). This fourth generation is that of Human Capital Automation (HCA). It represents a significant departure from the traditional "productivity enhancements" of previous generations. Those wise enough to recognize this generational shift from traditional productivity to new opportunities will reap rewards far greater than any before.

POST-MODERN HR SYSTEMS (PART 4)

By Robert H. Stambaugh

The first three installments of this series about "post-modern" systems have suggested a framework for looking at the patchwork of systems, processes, technologies and ideas that an HRIS manager confronts and must make sense of everyday. But, technology has, in some areas, moved even faster than this series of articles. A year ago, there was no meaningful dialogue about what has since emerged as "e-HR": Web-based HR and HRIS. E-HRIS is here now. Even though it is still not fully formed, it's already changing everything about how HR manages on a day-to-day basis. It has the potential for changing the HRIS ecosystem as dramatically as giant meteorites colliding with the earth changed our planet's ecosystem in times gone by. The current article addresses modifications that can be made to the post-modern model — extensions that make use of scenario planning techniques along with our post-modern concepts and create a way of managing strategically in an environment where strategy is missing.

**International Perspective — North America
STRATEGIC HR, E-BIZ AND THE DATA**

JANITOR

By Dr. Carl C. Hoffmann

E-biz is clearly the trend of the day with organizations embracing the Web to streamline internal processes and provide better service to their customers, business partners and employees. At the same time, many companies are harnessing powerful analytical tools to their databases to understand how to manage their customer, supplier and employee relationships better and more effectively meet the needs of the business. Both of these trends are being hampered by bad data. This article provides a fictional, yet representative case study to illustrate how the implementation of a tiered, shared-service model never achieved its projected cost savings due to bad data. It then concludes with specific steps and guidelines as to how this situation can be avoided.

**International Perspective —Canada
THE CANADIAN SCENE**

By Ian Turnbull, CHRP

Canada is the neighbor and largest trading partner of the United States. Both countries have enjoyed dynamic growth through the 90s, with Canada being named by the United Nations four times in a row as the best country in the world in which to live. The HRMS market in Canada has thrived on a parallel trend with the USA. But, the underpinnings of both the USA and Canada may be less solid than we suspect, and Canada, with its considerably smaller size, has much less cushion on which to fall back. Despite a reputation for being a pro-technology country, Canada lags USA growth in e-commerce and in computer-oriented industries, indications of an uncertain future.

What is the reality of Canada? Is it an economic power in its own right? Is it merely riding the coat tails of the USA or is it a country that is a player in world affairs? What are the implications of Canada's status with respect to human resources management systems of today or tomorrow?

**International Perspective — Western Europe
THE IMPACT OF THE EMU ON HR
AND PAYROLL SYSTEMS**

By Thomas Otter

While U.S. organizations have been preoccupied with the Y2K problem, many European organizations have to face the

double challenge of the Y2K problem and euro adoption. The euro places some considerable demands upon HR systems. It's reasonable to expect that the euro will accelerate cross border mobility amongst employees and increase transparency in comparing earnings between countries. This will lend an impetus towards greater uniformity in pay practices between countries. It may also encourage the adoption of multi-country company medical and pension plans. The euro changeover demands a massive educational input from the HR function. HR needs to be at the forefront of explaining to employees how their payslip, benefits and other deductions will change and how the euro will impact day-to-day business practices. This article shows that the euro is more than another entry in the currency table, and that it's an issue even for countries not in the first wave of euro adoption.

**International Perspectives - Asia/Pacific
AUSTRALIA'S PORTAL MARKET**

By John Macy

Portals are emerging as the right business solution to access the massive amount of information available now within an enterprise and throughout the Internet. Businesses have recognised the importance of such a facility to provide a solution to the most critical computing problems facing them today. In particular, portals are popular because of the growth in popularity of Enterprise Resource Planning for corporate data and applications, the acceptance of electronic commerce as a way of doing business, the growing information requirements of knowledge workers, and the need to tailor information access according to the role an employee plays within an organisation. However, in spite of all the apparent benefits, Australia is falling behind in embracing the portal concept for business application. This article defines portals and describes their benefits while also explaining some of the advantages and disadvantages of the technology. The article then focuses on why Australia will be slow to adopt the portal concept.

**International Perspectives - Africa
BALANCING ACCESS TO INFORMATION
WITH SECURITY**

By Phillip Booth

Access to information within companies is today seen by employees as a right

rather than a privilege. As organisations look to broaden access to information within their companies, they run the risk of losing control, and issues regarding security are raised. Within Africa, the problem is exacerbated by the lack of legislation regarding the control of information and the use of the Internet as a means of enabling information freedom in countries where the media is state-controlled.

**International Perspective - Latin America
FORMS OF AGREEMENT, SEVERANCE PAY
SYSTEMS AND WORK CONTRIBUTIONS
IN CRISIS**

By Julián Arturo de Diego

This article reviews common social and labor problems in Latin American countries. This review is followed by an analysis of the system of contracts of employment, stability and dismissal issues, and work taxes or contributions in Chile, Brazil and Argentina. This review identifies the existence of common patterns and includes the problem of a clandestine economy (evasion), a certain rigidity in the forms of agreements and the incidence of taxes that quite uniformly affect organizational competitiveness. The need for change is clear, as is the urgency for improving administrative controls and preserving and strengthening the administration of justice.

**Working in the Connected World
HOW THE INTERNET CHANGED
MY LIFE**

By Valdis Krebs

In this article, the author describes the impact that the Internet has had on his personal business experience. It has, for example, changed the groups with whom business is conducted, including business suppliers and intermediaries. It has lowered the barrier for collaboration across time zones, making possible a sharper interaction between customer and supplier. The article discusses how the Internet reduces the need for electronic printers, for the accessories they require, as well as eliminates the need to physically transport documents. Businesses currently providing these support services are thus effectively — if somewhat surprisingly — in competition with Internet Service Providers (ISPs). The author goes on to argue that Web *.html formats will eventually become the standard for all electronic documents, replacing myriad variants

such as *.doc, *.xls and *.doc in use today. The author concludes that the Internet is facilitating the emergence of a new human resource — the free agent.

**HRIS Legal Update: United States
THE SALARY BASIS TEST REQUIREMENT
OF THE FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT**

By Edward Lee Isler, Esq.

For an employee to be exempt from the overtime pay requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the employee must satisfy two tests: first, the employee's duties must consist primarily of exempt work, and, second, the employee must be paid on a salary basis. This article discusses the salary basis test and explains some of its nuances. While FLSA allows corrective action to be taken by an employer who inadvertently makes improper deductions from an exempt employee's pay, employers wishing to maintain the exempt status of an employees should have a working understanding of FLSA's intricacies regarding the salary basis test and apply that understanding to their day-to-day activities. As a general rule, deductions from the pay of an exempt employee should be made with informed caution and never in increments of less than one day. Specific questions regarding proper deductions should be discussed with legal counsel.

**Legal Update: Europe
EUROPE ON THE MOVE**

By Phil Jones

This article considers issues arising from the free movement principle of Article 48 of the 1957 EEC Treaty. The principle allows European Union (EU) nationals the right — subject to certain exceptions — to take up employment anywhere within the EU, on the same terms and conditions as those enjoyed by nationals of the host state. In the context of globalisation of work and changing employment patterns, the need to give fresh impetus to the free movement objective has led the European Commission to launch a communications programme aimed at informing individuals and business of the rights and opportunities which a single European market will provide. The main points of this programme are highlighted, and some of the factors which individuals and businesses need to consider are discussed. It is suggested that, when combined with the imminent use of a common European cur-

rency, the free movement principle could set the stage for a sea change in European employment practices.

Executive Views on HR Technology:

TOBI D'ANDREA OF GENERAL AMERICAN TRANSPORTATION CORPORATION

By Jay R. Stright

As the focus on human capital increases opportunities to apply information technology to the portfolio of human resource products and services, the natural tie between the functions will continue to strengthen. The combination of HR executive roles with other previously "silo" executive positions are becoming more common as the connection of IT, HR and communication to achieving success in the knowledge marketplace becomes better understood. This is the first of a series of interviews with leading edge human resource executives. The interviews will stimulate dialog on policy issues generated by the emergence of knowledge workers and the resulting increase in the importance of human capital management. The need for non-transaction-oriented HRMS applications will be explored to gain insight on long-term direction technology requirements for the human resource function. This interview is with Tobi D'Andrea, Senior Vice President of General American Transportation Corporation, the railcar leasing and management subsidiary of GATX Corporation. Ms. D'Andrea is responsible for the HR, IT and communications functions at General American.

HRIS Case Study :

OUT OF THE BLOCKS ... THE NEW RACE BEGINS

By David A. Link

This is the second case study segment in a series focusing on issues HRIS professionals face in the post-Y2K era. (The first segment, "Welcome to the Starting Line...Just When We Were Finished" appeared in the September 1999 issue of IHRIM Journal.) This case study is presented in a dialogue format, representative of the initiatives underway in many organizations. The scenario is that of a meeting between the Executive VP of HR and members of the Post-Y2K HRIS Strategic Planning Committee. Discussions revolve around the need to match HRIS initiatives with business objectives. Central to this is the requirement to support business growth and to deliver im-

proved HR services at lower cost. A Web-based approach, bringing together previous initiatives such as self-service, workflow and knowledgebases in the form of an Enterprise Information Portal is agreed. But, how might the required partnership with IT best be taken forward?

BOOK REVIEWS

By Sharon Lampton

This issue of IHRIM Journal features two books that are quite diverse in content. Following a review of Peter Senge's previous book *The Learning Organization* (in the June 1998 IHRIM Journal), this issue includes a review of his latest publication, *The Dance of Change*. The book aims to help companies meet the various challenges which often accompany the transition into a learning culture. After making your way through all 570+ pages of this interesting — but sometimes intellectually challenging — tome, you may want to enjoy a little "business lite" reading with *Direct from Dell* by Michael Dell. This fascinating account of the history and probable future of a remarkable company offers many lessons that can be applied to other organizations. In particular, the author advocates specific metrics for the measurement of success and the forging of strong links between customer and supplier.

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FOOTNOTES:

Books

1 Robert K. Wysocki, Robert Beck, Jr., and David B. Crane, *Effective Project Management* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1995), p. 10.

Magazine Articles

2 John Kelly, "Distance Education: Closer Than You Think!," *IHRIM.link*, February/March 1999, pp. 14-22.

Journal Articles

3 Robert H. Stambaugh, "Cones of Silence: The HR Systems 'Body of Knowledge' and the Real HRIS Ecosystem," *IHRIM Journal*, vol. 2, no. 2, 1998, pp. 22-29.

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Wysocki, Robert K., Robert Beck, Jr., and David B. Crane. *Effective Project Management*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1995.

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Kelly, John. "Distance Education: Closer Than You Think!" *IHRIM.link*, February/March 1999, pp. 14-22.

Journal Articles

Stambaugh, Robert H. "Cones of Silence: The HR Systems 'Body of Knowledge' and the Real HRIS Ecosystem." *IHRIM Journal*, vol. 2, no. 2, 1998, pp. 22-29.

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