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# From the Editor

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By Karen V. Beaman



**W**ith this issue of the *IHRIM Journal*, we bring you the proceedings from IHRIM's annual conference held in Boston, Massachusetts in June 2000. We begin with visions from some of IHRIM's most distinguished thought leaders and scholars. Al Walker, Dr. Scott Tannenbaum, Row Henson, Jim Candler and Vinnie Mirchandani present their "Visions of the Future for HRIS", with topics ranging from the workforce and technology of the future to how HR can survive — and add value — in a dot-com world.

In "Globalizing HRIS — Best Practices in Transnational Solutions," Karen Beaman and Al Walker discuss traditional models for implementing and managing a "global" HRIS, presenting an entirely new model — the transnational HRIS. The new HRIS exploits global efficiency, local responsiveness, as well as international learning, sharing and innovation. They also present the results of a survey conducted with 35 global companies, designed to analyze how current companies may or may not be conforming to these models and to look for best practices in HR service delivery among leading global corporations.

Charles Armstrong and Valdis Krebs in "Knowledge Networks: We are our Artefacts," discuss the importance of extending organizational capability to meet dynamic market demands. The strands of "organizational fabric" must be elastic to respond with agility, and elasticity can only come from improving the learning capability and learning capacity of an organization. The authors show how learning within the enclosed confines of a static organization only begets cloned mindsets rather than extending organizational capabilities fully and quickly.

In "Organizational Knowledge Mapping: Building a Knowledge-Based Organization," authors Gerald Falkowski and Robert Ray describe an organizational knowledge mapping assessment tool, which can be used to determine if an or-

ganization is sharing and reusing information and knowledge optimally. With this tool, organizations can pinpoint gaps in knowledge sharing and reuse and ultimately develop actions for improving knowledge sharing. Organizations that establish learning as a priority have a greater potential to realize sustainable competitive advantage.

In "Strategies for Managing the Consultant Relationship in Midsize Enterprise HR Projects," Pat Phelan and Jason Pitou examine the company-consultant relationship in mid-size enterprises, including the use of consultants for package selection and implementation, rating consultant teams and negotiating well-planned systems integrator agreements. The best results are achieved when both the enterprise and the vendor approach the project as a part of a long-term relationship with common goals and realistic expectations.

In "After the Volcano ... or Life in the New HR Village," authors Sally Grande and Civi Jacobsen discuss the co-dependence of the traditional "work-life" model and HR's new strategic partner focus as an important aspect of the new HR. They envision the internal HR professional becoming more of a negotiator, compliance governor and vendor manager. HR staff will have both the traditional skills of the past, as well as the knowledge worker's information savvy and analytical abilities of the future.

Tim Bean and Bernard Schweizer, in "Aligning People to Strategy," describe how HR practitioners need to embrace human capital management (HCM) to communicate, enforce, model, and measure the human contribution and thus become strategic advisors for all people-related processes. They stress that a system that links all elements of strategy definition, communication, and execution, as well as simulation, both top-down and bottom-up, is crucial for success.

Bruce Johnson and Robert Rupar, "A Successful Worldwide Decision Support

Solution — A Case Study," provide an inside look at how two large, global organizations combined their HR systems into a successful solution for one of the largest companies in the world. One of the most significant challenges the company had to overcome was improving its human resources data collection and management process to efficiently support senior executives from seven distinct lines of business along with other decision makers within the organization.

In addition to these feature articles, we have our regular quarterly columns and international perspectives. The *Journal* has grown rapidly since its inception three years ago. Therefore, in order to streamline our editorial and publication cycle, we have moved to a calendar quarter basis. You will still be receiving four issues per year based on the four calendar quarters. Subscription cycles have been adjusted so that your renewal only comes due after receiving four issues.

The upcoming issues of the *Journal* will bring you even more exciting and thought-provoking material in the field of human capital management and technology. Be sure to look for our special double issue in April-June, guest edited by Bob Stambaugh, focusing on the theme "HR Systems: Outside of the Box" or "How others see us and what we must do in response." I'm very excited about the progress we've made in these three short years. But, our success wouldn't have been possible without our great readership. We now have close to 1000 subscribers. So keep your subscriptions coming, tell your friends and colleagues about us and let me hear your comments.

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