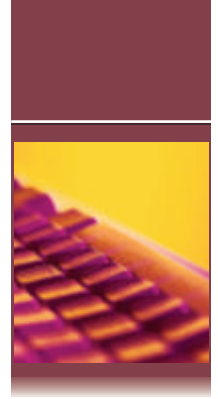

From the Editors

By Karen V. Beaman and Jim Spoor



The thought leading authors who accepted the invitation to contribute to this issue are impressive. Each was invited to select a specific dimension or functional area of HR and/or systems and to share their vision of the future – regardless of the functional or topical focus that the contributing authors had selected to address. As we look at the challenges of the remaining five years of this decade, it is hard to argue that the challenges which organizations of all types face will be anything other than exhilarating and daunting.

I am proud to have had the opportunity to contribute the first feature, “Looking Forward – HR and HR Systems in 2010,” in which I have described five specific factors that I believe are driving HR changes in the future. Additionally, I have addressed challenges to the HR function, the role of productivity and performance management, and the application of technology in HR.

Our second feature, “HR BPO Comes of Age: From Expectation to Reality,” is written by David Rhodes. To learn more about HR’s experience in the BPO world, Towers Perrin completed a survey into the effectiveness of the largest HR outsourcing deals in the world. This survey was the first to examine HR BPO from the clients’ perspective in detail, and explore whether it is meeting its promises. This article provides an overview of the major findings.

In the next article, “Demystifying HR Outsourcing,” Glenn Davidson reports that human resources executives – who were faced with the seemingly conflicting demands of “doing more with less” and addressing the strategic needs of their business partners – realized that HRO could help them achieve both. Not only could HRO reduce their HR-related costs and improve the delivery and quality of HR services to their people, it could also significantly reduce the time and energy-consuming “administrivia” that so often precluded HR executives from fulfilling their strategic “business partner” roles.

John Sullivan, in his article “The Return of the War for Talent...” reminds us that workforce planning requires managers to plan ahead and to consider all eventualities. In short, workforce planning is an integrated talent management system that for years has been under used and under appreciated. The time to plan for the future is now – for as the economy begins to heat up and turnover rates began to rise, can dramatic talent shortages be far away?

April Canik, Chris Crawford and Brent Longnecker provide our next feature, “Combating the Future ‘Retirement Gap’ with Tailored Total Rewards.” The authors tell us that the challenge for companies will be to adequately retain experienced workers while balancing the needs of various age groups. Accomplishing this goal is possible with an integrated multi-departmental approach and tools such as customized compensation that enhances the value proposition between future retirees and their employers.

In our next feature by William Shepherd, Fritz Drasgow, and Jim Beaty, “New Applications of Computerized Employment Testing...” the authors envision that assessment scores will increasingly become an integrated part of human resources applicant tracking and talent management systems. They also predict their use will extend to more traditional financial and marketing planning software. Managers will begin to realize their estimates of the likelihood of success of new product roll-outs, marketing campaigns, and plant startups have a substantial amount of unexplained variance that can only be accounted for by measuring and acting on human capital metrics.

In “What’s the Next Great Pay and Reward Innovation?” authors Patricia K. Zingheim and Jay R. Schuster say that organizations are in dire need of a pay solution that matches the interest businesses have in making skills the foundation of human resource planning – and at the core of it is paying for skills. The next generation of pay and reward inno-

vation will be closer to the business of organizations than prior innovations. And it is likely that a combination of the Internet and paying for the skills that add value to the business may just be how the future will be defined.

To add to your reading enjoyment, we hope you will turn to our regular departments contributed by Bob Stambaugh, John Sullivan, Steve Troutman and Gerry Falkowski, and Synco Jonkeren. As always, we value your comments and suggestions.

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