

# From the Editor

By Karen V. Beaman

Our first three feature articles in this issue provide perspectives from several of Australia's leading information technology professionals. The first article, "Coaching Fish to Ride Bicycles: Leading Knowledge Adventures Within a Legal Culture" by David Rymer takes a look inside the Minter Ellison law firm. He writes that taking advantage of the opportunities offered by a dynamic knowledge economy is demanding for traditional law firms. Globalisation, economic and competitive pressures are posing new challenges and knowledge management practitioners need a range of tools, techniques and conceptual models that harness the full potential of the firm's resources.

James Robertson's article on, "HR and Intranets" describes how the corporate intranet can play a key role in supporting HR activities and strategies within an organisation. The intranet can deliver effective tools for staff collaboration and knowledge sharing, as well as supporting staff through times of uncertainty and organisational transformation. The intranet also plays an important role in communicating and reinforcing the corporate culture and identity. In return, HR can do much to ensure that the intranet is effective and useful.

In "Beyond HR Self-Service: Empowering Staff while Creating Social Capital in Virtualized Organizations," James Dellow states that HR professionals need to be aware of the impact of HR self-service on the social capital that exists between themselves and the stakeholders of the organizations they serve. He argues that we need to apply what we already know about the general issues of virtualization in organizations – managing distributed teams, remote work groups and online communities of practice – to the context of HR self-service.

"The Collaboration Imperative: De-

livering World-Class Products and Services across Cultural Boundaries" by Steve Thevenin and Michael Martin suggests that to successfully respond to a global marketplace, organizations need to change their organizational cultures to emphasize cross-culture collaboration. Leaders have a key role in this change and they are found throughout an organization's culture, not just at the top of the current hierarchy. A firm belief in the benefits of collaboration, faith in trusting the synergy of diversity and use of key tools to facilitate collaborative efforts are earmarks of the collaborative leader of the future.

Gerald Falkowski and Valdis Krebs, in "Software Test Community Uncovered Using SNA," tell us that a professional network/community, once established, is hard to break up – even with much manipulation of the formal organization. Just as doctor's use CAT scans to diagnose a wide-range of possible medical conditions, the authors describe how they have used social network analysis (SNA) to scan communication networks in a workplace and discover what is really happening inside complex organizations.

In the Visions of the Future department, Bob Stambaugh says that we can no longer support HR or address its strategic needs by following traditional HRIS and information precepts alone. Since the HR systems we have today are built according to those traditional expectations, we can't rely exclusively on our present technology platforms to support us. We need to begin exploring more non-traditional approaches to providing HR technology.

In Out of the Box, John Sullivan writes about how vendors routinely "over-promise," and few in the HR media ever publicly criticize the fact that all too many vendors under-deliver on those promises. He argues that the recent growth and support for outsourcing much or all of HR comes primarily

from the fact that outsource vendors have utilized technology in metrics to prove its business impact much more effectively than have corporate HR leaders.

In the case study, "Avoiding the Pitfalls of Under-Funded HR Change Management Programs," Charles Merrill and Gerald Falkowski discuss how to avoid the painful experience of a failed project because of an under-funded change management program. This is the first part in a series of timely case studies from these two authors.

Dave Duffield, former CEO and chairman of PeopleSoft, has formed a new venture, and you'll enjoy reading his comments to Bob Stambaugh who interviewed him at the IHRIM Conference in Reno. You will gain some insight into his business philosophy pre- and post-PeopleSoft and get his view on what the future holds for HR technology.

We close with another "Dilemma" from David Salyers, as he poses the story of Xanco, a high-flying company that has invested heavily in its ERP system, and whose executive management now wants to replace the old technology platform with a new one. Our three IHRIM thought leaders provide their views on how the company should proceed.

From knowledge management, intranets and self-service to collaborating across cultures, social networks and avoiding the pitfalls of change management, this IHRIM Journal issue has something for everyone. We hope you enjoy the articles and we look forward to hearing your comments.

**Editor-in-Chief**  
Karen V. Beaman  
Vice President and Chief HCM Strategist  
Workday™  
Walnut Creek, CA USA  
karen.beaman@workday.com