

# From the Editors

By Karen V. Beaman and Bob Stambaugh

**Strategy** – a plan, method, or series of maneuvers or stratagems for obtaining a specific goal or result: one of many definitions in Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary.

Our first feature "Strategy: Do You Know It When You See It?" by Karen Beaman and Bob Stambaugh, describes the authors' challenge in putting together this *Journal* issue about strategy. They reviewed articles, books, e-mails and discussed it with colleagues, and determined that both the definition of strategy and what we decide to do to be "strategic" vary according to context. So they polled a random selection of *Journal* Editorial Board members, industry leaders and business executives. They invited these thought leaders to supply their definitions of strategy. The definitions are diverse, but perhaps you will find one that fits your particular situation.

"Strategic Imperatives for HR Shared Services: Laying the Foundation for Success" by Mark Hodges and Bob Cecil, describes the evolution of shared services, presents the strategic imperatives, explains how shared services can be integrated into an HR strategy, and defines the governance issues. Although shared services can deliver significant value and competitive advantage to companies that have sufficient scale, numbers of employees, financial resources and diversity of HR processes; transforming delivery of HR processes via shared services requires a highly strategic and methodical approach for both near-term and long-term success.

In our next feature by Gregory R. Guy and Karen Beaman, "Effecting Change in Business Enterprises: Current Trends in Change Management," the authors say that change management is increasingly perceived not as a focused response to an occasional need for reorganization, but rather as an ongoing business function. Change management is a collective enterprise

with distributed responsibilities and competencies; to make it work, all components of the organization – individual, department/group and organization – have to work together, collaborating on a common goal and aligning efforts. The article concludes with a list of recommendations to help you deal with this new and complex business function.

Did you ever read George Orwell's book, *1984*? If so, the term "Big Brother" will come to mind as you read "GPS Tracking: Monitoring Outside Traditional Workplace Settings" by Jeremy Gruber. Global positioning systems technology has been in use by the military for many years, but in the last few years it has come into wider use in the civilian workplace. As pervasive as electronic monitoring of employees has become, until recently it was restricted – for the most part – to traditional workplace settings such as the office or factory. But some employers are now monitoring employees outside the workplace. As abuses of GPS technology by employers mount, it is likely that plaintiff's lawyers and legislators will respond.

In the Visions of the Future department, Bob Stambaugh draws an interesting parallel between our educational institutions and students and how HR plans, operates and views technology. He calls it "Dumbing It Down," and states that what's coming to the surface in schools is an appreciation of partnership, community and technology. Technology, planned and implemented intelligently and with an eye for long-term value, becomes the connector for all the things that happen in a school – but instructors (leaders) cannot abdicate their roles as coaches, mentors, catalysts, exemplars and guides. A similar level of technological awareness and appreciation must penetrate IT, HR, and HR information management. It is incumbent on the corporation to remember

that technology only matters after the human element is energized.

In "HR Must Eliminate 'Innovation Killers' Within Their Firm," Dr. John Sullivan says that CEOs constantly rant about the need for innovation within their organizations, but few HR leaders have accepted a role in driving innovation. No department or function actually "owns" corporate-wide innovation, so there is no one to fight with over who should run innovation initiatives. HR should step up to the plate now and become the manager of innovation. The best place to start is by minimizing or eliminating some of the existing barriers that discourage innovation and risk-taking.

Charles Merrill and Gerald Falkowski provide another case study regarding change management, "Developing an HR/IT Organization Change Management Program to Move to a Shared Services Organization in HR." It involves the development of a change management program to fit the situation/requirements revealed by an organization change risk assessment. Presented in a dialog format between Megan, the change management team leader, and Charlie, her friend and mentor, their discussion centers on her analysis of the risk assessment findings, shaping the recommendations and preparing for the presentation to her steering committee.

Your thoughts and comments are always appreciated, and we hope you enjoy this issue.

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