



*Ed Colby, senior work force management consultant for Kronos Incorporated, is a self-professed HCM technology evangelist who has held director level positions in professional services, strategic solutions consulting, and marketing for several leading-edge HCM technology providers. He holds a M.B.A. degree from Northeastern University and a B.S. degree from Tufts University. In addition to his current role on the Editorial Committee of IHRIM.link magazine, his previous leadership roles with IHRIM have included Content Chairperson – Annual Conference, Professional Development Committee, and New England Chapter board of directors.*

**T**alent Management (TM) or Integrated Talent Management (ITM) is the hottest topic in our space in the past several years. *Work force planning, talent acquisition, talent development, and talent retention* have been hotter than a halogen light bulb. But are we any further ahead in having attained the nirvana state of the promised land of a wholly integrated TM system with its vaunted impact of boosting organizational performance? It seems only fitting and timely that this Annual Conference issue of *IHRIM.link* take a serious look at the state of talent management. And what better place to discuss talent management than at Walt Disney World – owned and operated by an organization renowned for its leadership in the area of managing and nourishing talent to help drive world-class customer service and bottom-line operating results!

We set the tone for this issue with a provocative article from Heidi Spirgi of Knowledge Infusion. In her article “The State of Talent Management – A Call to Arms” Heidi queries “*Is talent management simply the latest wave in a series of management fads that eventually find their way into the graveyard...?*” Whether your answer to this question is “yes” or “no,” you’ll want to read Heidi’s insightful piece as she explains how talent management is different from previous management fads, and provides an overview of the new people, process, and technology models that are critically necessary to keep talent management from becoming yet another unrealized business dream.

Leighanne Levensaler of Bersin & Associates resurrects the critical element of competencies and competency management that appear to have fallen into the proverbial black hole in her article, “Can the Talent Management Suite Finally Fix Competency Management?” Leighanne provides a very comprehensive overview of Competency Management, and describes why it has failed to realize its full potential. She highlights its critical importance to talent management – “*Competencies serve as the common language to align disparate talent processes and are at the very core of any talent management strategy.*” If you’ve struggled with competencies and competency management, this article is a must read for you.

Ed Newman of The Newman Group then takes us on a historical talent management technology ride. In his article, “Unicorns, the Tooth Fairy, and the Complete Talent Management Suite,” Ed provides a great review of how technology and vendors have reacted to the vision of an ITM technology suite and ponders the question “*Will the apparent trend toward broad and deep functionality ever lead to a complete talent suite that is everything to everyone?*” You’ll need to read Ed’s article to get

the answer, and maybe even discover that “the journey is more important than the destination.”

If you’d like to know how one large organization has taken the challenge of talent management and work force planning head-on, IBM shares its approach to global work force planning and management. In their article, “Work Force Planning as a Competitive Advantage: Enabling Success in a Services Business,” Eric Lesser and Tom Stachura reveal the secrets behind IBM’s ability to continually ensure a sufficient supply of top talent across its global reach... “*the right skill to the right location at the right time and at the right price point.*” Can you match the \$1 billion in realized benefits from their “Adaptive Workforce” initiative?

In our last feature article, Ron Hanscome of HRchitect shows us how to build the strong foundation necessary to support an ITM technology house. In his article “Creating an Integrated Talent Management Technology Strategy,” Ron provides a strategic and tactical roadmap on how to build an ITM technology strategy. He helps remove the anxiety and hesitation of not knowing where to begin.

Thanks to Department Editor Sherry Green for assembling a complementary array of articles rounding out our theme of talent management.

- If you are looking for talent in Asia you’ll need to read Shelly Shmoker’s article “Battle for Talent in Asia Could Threaten Business Growth” in the Global Perspective column.
- In our Executive Corner, Michael Torto, president and CEO of Centive in his article titled “On-Demand Sales Compensation/Sales Performance Management,” provides his views on incentive compensation and the enterprise incentive management (EIM) software market.
- If you’re involved in recruiting and hiring you’ll want to check out the Functional Focus column and read “Employee Selection: Maximizing Performance And Minimizing Legal Exposure” by Fumiko Kondo to help find the right talent the right way...and avoid creating legal challenges along the way.
- Finally, in our New in the Market column Robert Farina, CEO of CyberShift, discusses availability of work force planning and travel expense applications via the Blackberry.

To those of you joining us at the annual IHRIM conference in Orlando at the fabulous Disney World Contemporary Resort this June, Sherry and I wish you a big Mickey WELCOME! Look us up! We hope you take full advantage of the multitude of networking opportunities and educational sessions that help make IHRIM *THE* professional association for HCM professionals.