



Cathy Vilaga

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I admit it. I was among the millions of Americans who tuned in to see the first season of NBC's *Celebrity Apprentice*. You can't stop superstars from being superstars and this season's roster of fringe celebs flaunting their oversized egos was going to be, well – a train wreck. For what it's worth, *Celebrity Apprentice* does provide insight into the mistakes people make when they manage projects and people. So if you work on a project and have at least some responsibility for its outcome, the following reads may be of interest.

"Charting a New Course for Your Human Capital Management Journey," by Heidi Spirgi of Knowledge Infusion, explores the strategies and tactics organizations can deploy to create an effective, yet nimble, program management methodology. Spirgi outlines how to develop an extended governance structure to optimize the decision-making and prioritization processes; manage key stakeholders to ensure inclusion of executive sponsors, the voice of the customer, and internal change agents, all of which are critical; execute internal readiness strategies – throughout the implementation plan – to drive user acceptance adoption; and, construct measurement techniques that let you effectively assess and validate key milestones while evaluating necessary course adjustments for continuous improvement.

According to IAG Consulting in 2008, as many as 68 percent of projects in IT failed in terms of delivering expected functionality, on-time completion, and/or meeting budget. So what makes a project successful? It's the project manager (PM), says Fumiko Kondo of Intellink Solutions. In her article, "What Makes a Successful Project Manager Successful," she cites the skills and competencies of the organization's PMs as the most important elements that HR professionals can directly impact and control.

Kathy Mosgrove of HRRPM Consulting believes in effective communications. Her article, "Project Success – It's All about Communications," outlines the elements behind it and provides exercises that consider the "Four C's" to make it effective. She introduces a Project Management for Human Resources (PM4HR) framework to provide a simplified and scalable project management and communications model for HR to apply to any project. It also identifies the key project activities and the tools to support project management and communication.

"Project Management and Web 2.0" by Jeffrey Hill of Cherry-Road Technologies identifies a whole new era in collaborative

tools that have evolved with the advent of Web 2.0. Hill believes that as the need for virtual collaboration and teamwork increases, these collaborative tools will make it possible for cross-cultural, multi-time zone, multi-lingual teams with diverse skill sets to thrive and succeed while allowing leaders to communicate with their teams and foster the critical elements of team cohesion: acceptance, accountability and trust.

In "Achieving Organizational Readiness" by Susan E. Leszczewicz of ADP, the author tells us that today's executives are expecting an extended period of negative growth and have been working on adapting strategies to the present economic conditions. Setting the right foundation and carrying it through with specific business plans – heavily taking into account the human capital impact – are critical success factors in achieving organizational readiness.

I would like to extend special kudos to my department editor, Scott Bolman, for his array of complementary articles. Scott reprises his editorial skills having just completed his role as the guest editor for the February/March 2009 issue.

If you manage global projects, you won't want to miss "Effective Communications Within a Virtual Team," in the Global Perspectives column authored by Jim Pettit, Jeitosa Group International.

Is there a tool that will help control a complex HR project? Tracy Walker of Verizon Wireless answers that question in her article, "New Tools for HR Project Management."

How can technology enable an organization to plan, track, and measure learning effectiveness and accomplishments for employees, customers and partners? In her Tech Notes column, Marilyn Hoare of HRsmart writes "Corporate Learning: The Perfect Solution for Corporate Growth," providing a unique insight.

And Julie Ogilvie of SkillSoft outlines how to position learning as an investment that can further strategic results in her article, "Best Practices for Targeting, Measuring and Aligning Learning Solutions."

I hope you find this issue helpful in turning you onto useful tools you can apply to your projects. Executing successful human resources strategies are the result of effective project management tools and methodologies. My sincerest thanks to the *IHRIM.link* editorial committee. My time with you has been insightful and invaluable, the culmination of one of the most rewarding opportunities to serve IHRIM members.