



WHAT SEPARATES GREAT HR LEADERS FROM THE REST

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HR seems to have become every manager and employee's favorite corporate punching bag, vying with IT for the dubious title of most-irritating function. We have seen a parade of articles recently calling for HR to be blown up, split in two, or at the very least, redesigned.

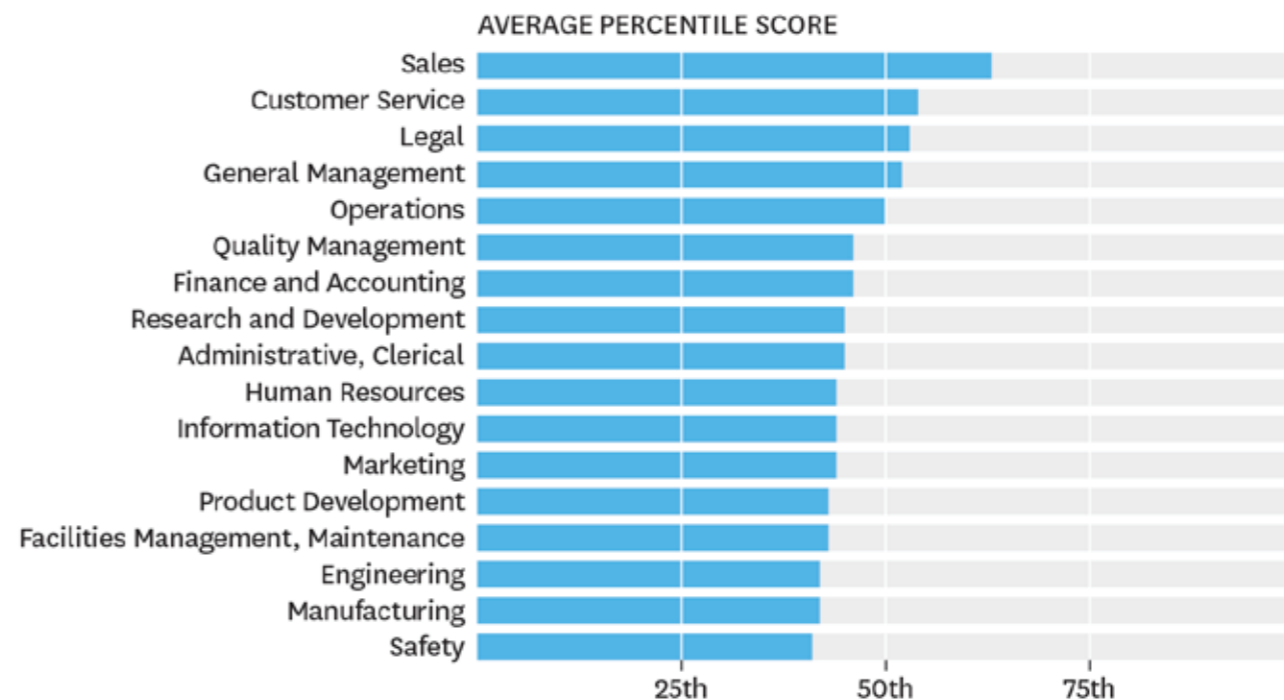
Perhaps this is a good moment to evaluate what it is we really want from our HR leaders—and what we don't.



Over the last five years, Zenger Folkman has collected 360-degree feedback data on 2,187 HR leaders. These leaders are spread across hundreds of different organizations with 68% of those leaders located in the US, 11% in Asia, 8% in Europe, 7% in Latin America, 4% in Canada, and 1% in Africa. Comparing assessments of leaders in the HR function with those of leaders in other functions, our data suggest that the typical HR leader is seen as six percentile points below average.

We analyzed the data in two different ways. First, we contrasted the results for the 2,187 HR leaders in our dataset with those of 29,026 leaders in other functions. We were able to identify a few key skills that were common strengths of those in HR and some that appeared fairly frequently as weaknesses. Second, we rank-ordered 49 leadership behaviors for all those in HR from the most negative to the most positive behaviors.

Leadership Effectiveness by Function



SOURCE ZENGER/FOLKMAN

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STRENGTHS OF HR LEADERS



DEVELOPING AND COACHING OTHERS

One of the most positive areas for HR leaders in general was that they were truly concerned about developing others. This set them apart from leaders in other functions, who did not score highly on this skill. They were also rated positively on providing coaching, acting as a mentor, and giving feedback in a helpful way.

But is this skill valued by HR leaders' colleagues? We asked raters to indicate the importance of each competency we measured, and they rated this skill eleventh of 16 for HR leaders. Perhaps the message here is, "We know you do this well already" or even "This is just table-stakes." Or, it could be that developing others takes a back seat to other competencies that are highly valued by the other functional leaders.



BUILDING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

This was another skill where HR scored much more highly than other functions. That makes sense; in most organizations HR is responsible for diversity and inclusion initiatives and for labor relations. HR leaders were rated well on being able to "balance results with a concern for the needs of others." Another of their more positive items

was being trusted and staying in touch with the issues and concerns of others. This competency was also more valued by our raters, who chose it as third in importance.



ROLE MODELING

Some of the most positively rated items for HR leaders focus on their willingness to “walk the talk,” to be role models and to honor commitments and promises. HR leaders are frequently put into the position of ensuring that others in the organization do the right thing and follow established procedures. For those in the HR function, this competency is rated as second in importance. It’s also a skill that seems to be fairly common across all functions.



HAVING FUNCTIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE

Many HR leaders were rated positively on their functional knowledge and expertise. Most employees in organizations are unaware of labor laws, hiring rules, benefits and compensation issues. HR leaders were viewed as knowledgeable and helpful in these areas. This was another common skill across functions, and was rated as ninth in importance for HR leaders.

WEAKNESS OF HR LEADERS



FOCUSING INTERNALLY RATHER THAN EXTERNALLY

When comparing HR leaders to all other leaders in our database, they were rated significantly more negatively on their ability to understand the needs and concerns of customers. In many ways the function of HR is focused on internal problems, but the lack of understanding of the external environment often caused others to view some HR leaders as not in touch with the issues facing the organization. HR leaders were also rated more negatively on their ability to represent the organization to key groups.



LACKING STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVE

In general, HR leaders were rated significantly less positively on their ability to have a clear perspective between the big picture strategy and the details. Many were viewed as so focused on the “day-to-day” work that they lost perspective on the longer term broader business issues. HR leaders often complain that they “want a seat at the table” to engage more fully with other executives, but without clear strategy and focus they will never have that seat.



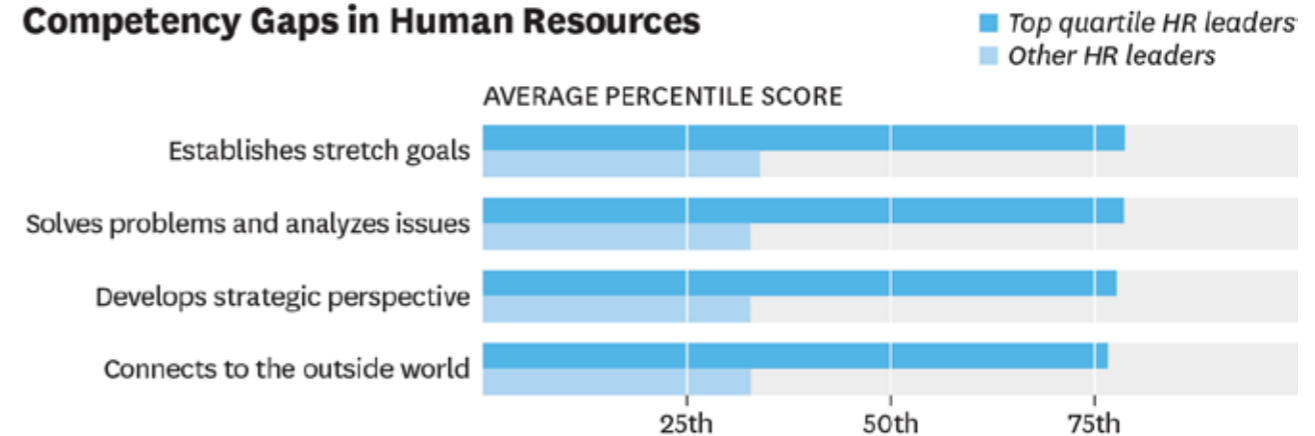
NOT ANTICIPATING AND RESPONDING QUICKLY TO PROBLEMS

HR leaders were rated significantly more negatively on their ability to anticipate and respond quickly to problems. A number of items noted a general lack of speed and urgency to respond and react quickly.

WHAT THE BEST HR LEADERS DO

We also found in our database that some of the best leaders in the world were part of the HR function. The graph below shows the four competencies that most consistently separate the top quartile leaders from the other HR leaders. It is worth noting that what separated the best HR leaders from the rest was their performance on the key competencies that were often weaknesses in HR, in addition to performing extremely well on HR’s traditional strengths.

Competency Gaps in Human Resources



SOURCE ZENGER/FOLKMAN

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According to data, HR has the highest percentage of female leaders (66%). Overall, female leaders were rated at the 45th percentile while male leaders were at the 43rd percentile, but at the very top levels it flipped, and the senior-most men in HR were rated more highly—male senior leaders were rated at the 52nd percentile, and female senior leaders at the 47th. These differences, while small, are statistically significant. When we look at the overall data for male versus female senior managers in the other functions, males are at the 48th percentile and females at the 53rd. Only in HR, Engineering, and Safety do male senior leaders score higher than their female counterparts.

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COURSE LEADER



Robert J. (Bob) Ryan is a partner and Executive Advisor at Shields Meneley Partners. Bob's career has included key leadership roles with companies ranging from \$500M to \$84B that include Procter & Gamble, Tate & Lyle, Bombardier Recreation Products, Kimball Hill Homes and Griffith Laboratories. Born in Montreal, Canada, Bob began his career as a manufacturing engineer after graduating from Carleton University in Ottawa, and McGill University in Montreal with a degree in mechanical / aeronautical engineering. He quickly developed a reputation for bringing the right people together to address issues, guiding creative problem solving, and ensuring successful outcomes. When approached by his CEO, he "jumped at the chance" to lead strategic human capital initiatives that directly impacted the bottom line. His career progressed rapidly as he took on - and resolved - complex problems in global organizations.

Bob has served on the Boards of the British American Business Council, the Northwest Cultural Council, and the Human Resource Management Association of Chicago. He has also been on boards representing economic development, education, and the arts. Bob is also a graduate of the Hudson Institute Coaching Program and a member of the International Coach Federation. Bob has led highly rated public seminars & in-house programs in various countries across the world, which includes a highly successful Quest Masterclass in Asia Pacific in 2016.



Emma Rees has significant global HR and Talent experience from Commercial and Talent Management roles at P&G, Diageo and Tate & Lyle. Over the course of her career Emma has supported teams through significant transitions, leading the talent agenda for a number of global and national change programmes as well as introducing standards, tools and processes to enhance recruitment, development, performance management and engagement in multiple markets across Europe, America and Asia Pacific.

At Diageo Emma was responsible for globalising the Diageo Academy and at Tate & Lyle introduced a global approach to resourcing and talent planning. Emma now specialises in assessment based talent management works with a number of Fortune 500 and FTSE 100 businesses to create innovative talent solutions, and identify and develop talent from middle management to board level. At the 2015

Association for Business Psychology awards Emma was recognised for excellence in assessment. She is a member of the British Psychological Society and the Association for Business Psychology and is completing her Masters in Occupational Psychology at Kingston University. Emma has led highly rated public seminars & in-house programs in various countries across the world, which includes a highly successful Quest Masterclass in Asia Pacific in 2016.

2nd Annual HR Leadership Management Excellence 2017

4 Day Master Class

Radisson Blu Hotel Waterfront, Cape Town 14th - 17th March 2017

OVERVIEW

In order to thrive in increasingly challenging circumstances, organisations are having to become more adaptive, resilient and customer centric. In this complex and volatile environment, an organisation's competitiveness increasingly depends on its employees, and the business function responsible for acquiring, developing and retaining the people that provide this competitive advantage is HR.

Today's HR professionals require a strong functional acumen coupled with a strategic skillset and mindset set that allows them a seat at the business table in order to create workplaces that attract and retain great talent. Setting and implementing the people agenda successfully involves partnering with business leaders to guide change, drive employee engagement and create environments that stretch and develop talent with more diverse backgrounds and expectations than ever before.

This four-day Master Class will take participants through the key models that underpin strategic HR, and are critical in the development of future HR leaders. Over the four days we will build the critical capabilities required of today's HR professionals and through a stimulating case study and organisational visit, bring to life the opportunities and challenges facing HR Leaders. You will learn about how other global and local organisations have risen to this challenge and build your skills and confidence to set an organisation's talent strategy, identify and assess potential and build employee engagement. Together we will prepare you for a career journey to HR leadership - you are the future.

Quest Masterclass

Founded in 2002 in Singapore and with 8 offices in Asia, Quest Masterclass is a leading consulting and training company helping organizations and individuals achieve their goals by sharing knowledge and insights gained by experienced Quest professionals and other industry experts. Our Master Class training sessions combine the best in research; expert trainer and excellent delivery thus providing attendees opportunity learn from the practitioners and develop lasting networks with fellow successful professionals.



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