HR Edge

Fall 2011

THE MAGAZINE OF LEADING EDGE IDEAS IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

the future is bright

new visions new frontiers

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Fall 2011

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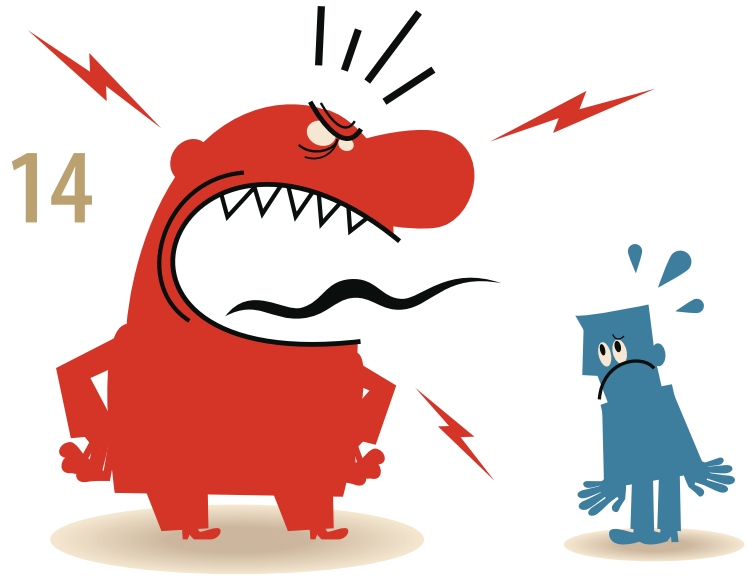

features

HR Edge

HR Edge magazine is published annually by the School of Human Resource Management, York University.

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Building the H.R. profession . . .

Dr. Parbudyal Singh
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The field of human resource management is at a pivotal stage in its development. It has struggled over the past two decades or so with an identity crisis. In academia, it has shared relationships with organizational behaviour, industrial relations, labour economics, and industrial/organizational psychology, among others. While these relationships continue to exist, the field has begun to establish itself in very distinctive terms. At York University, we have taken the lead in catapulting the field to a new frontier, establishing Canada's only programs designed solely for human resource management at the undergraduate, masters and doctoral levels.

In 2009, we launched Canada's first School of Human Resource Management, boasting the largest concentration of academics devoted to the study of HRM in the country. Over the next few years, we plan to make the School the world's leader in HRM education. Obviously, this is a very challenging goal. However, we are confident that we can do it. Towards this end, we have crafted a Strategic Plan that conforms with the strategic thrust of the Faculty and University. We are very pleased with the support from all stakeholders, including the university's administration, especially Dean Martin Singer.

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I am delighted to be part of the leadership of the School of Human Resource Management. My sincere thanks to Dr. Steve McKenna, the Graduate Programs Director, and Dr. Marie-Helene Budworth, the Undergraduate Program Director, for all of their efforts in making my work—and life—much easier. Together with our faculty, who serve on numerous committees, they have continued to implement new ideas that help to keep our school on the innovation edge and at the forefront of HRM education in Canada and beyond.

In the next year or two, we will be re-examining our programs at the graduate level, with a focus on high quality and relevance. We also plan to launch several initiatives at the undergraduate level, including an internship program, more on-line courses, an International Bachelors of Human Resource Management, and an opportunity to earn a minor, while still completing the core requirements for a comprehensive degree. We currently offer the most HRM courses of any Canadian university—and perhaps globally.

I am delighted with the quality of students we nurture through our programs. We are very proud of all of you. I am also grateful for the service of all our staff who continue to display professionalism and courtesy in their interactions with all stakeholders. Our part-time faculty continue to provide an extremely valuable bridge to the practical world of HRM. And I am very pleased that our alumni are becoming actively involved in our efforts to build a world-class institution. My sincere thanks to all of you.

HR Edge has been a flagship communication tool for us and I am delighted that it is now in its third edition. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr. Len Karakowsky for his leadership in producing this magazine since 2008.

Best wishes to all,

Parbudyal Singh

one degree at a time

Dr. Steve McKenna is the Graduate Program Director, School of Human Resource Management, York University, Toronto, Canada

Growing our Masters Program: A global opportunity

The Masters in HRM and PhD programs continue to go from strength to strength.

It is envisaged that over the next two years, the Masters program will develop further, offering more choice to students in the context of a rapidly changing global business environment. The program is attracting increasing attention from candidates outside of Canada and the School will be investigating a diversification of our program to meet the needs of an overseas demand. Such a demand, of course, is evidence itself of the increasing intensity of competition among global talent from all over the world. These are exciting times.

Thirty-three students graduated from our MHRM program in June 2011, our biggest single graduating group, and an indication of the continuing strength of the program. We welcome our incoming Masters cohort (Fall, 2011), and we expect another excellent group of students. The Orientation program in early September provides students with a full overview and an opportunity to meet alumni and faculty from the School of HRM.

Our Masters alumni group continues to be actively involved in mentoring and other activities. We are confident that the alumni group will continue to develop a high profile, with more activities to keep students connected to the School of HRM.

Growing our PhD Program: A flying start

Just over 4 years old, we now have 9 students in our PhD program, with three new candidates joining in the Fall 2011 semester. The small size of our doctoral program, facilitates close contact between students and faculty. The quality of our faculty and indeed our students, ensures that they are a productive group, publishing journal articles and producing conference papers at a high rate. We believe that our graduates will build the reputation of our School and will continue with successful scholarly careers at other institutions.

What drives us

New York Times Best-Selling author Daniel Pink discusses the myths and realities of motivation

HR EDGE: *Why did you write Drive?*

Daniel Pink: After I wrote *A Whole New Mind*—about the shift from "left-brain" abilities to "right-brain" ones—lots of people asked me about how to motivate people to do this sort of work. I didn't have a clue. So I began looking at what turned out to be an absolute treasure trove of research on human motivation. And the answers I found were surprising. Very surprising.

HR EDGE: Drive *has been on the New York Times Bestsellers List for close to a year. What do you think has contributed to this book's enormous and enduring popularity?*

Daniel Pink: First, thanks for the kind acknowledgment. I'm still surprised—and delighted—that anybody reads what I write! In a sense, timing worked to the book's advantage. After the financial crisis, there was a sense that the old verities were failing us—and people were searching for some new rules, especially those that ran with the grain of human nature rather than against it.

HR EDGE: *You cover a lot of ground in* Drive*, making accessible an abundance of academic research. As your title indicates, this book does indeed reveal a lot of surprising truths about what motivates us. What was the biggest surprise to you in terms of the research findings?*

Daniel Pink: I was surprised by how vast the research was—and by how much of it overturned orthodoxies I didn't even realize were orthodoxies.

HR EDGE: *What are the biggest mistakes that organizational leaders make in their attempt to generate a highly motivated workforce?*

Daniel Pink: They're too simplistic. They believe that getting people to do great work requires simply rewarding the behavior you want and punishing the behavior you don't. But it's far more complicated than that. And most leaders know that even they themselves are motivated by forces beyond carrots and sticks.

HR EDGE: *When an employee isn't motivated, how much is the organization to blame? How much of the onus should be on the individual? For example, if all of us could successfully match ourselves with our "perfect-fit" job, wouldn't we be intrinsically motivated?*

Daniel Pink: That's a tough one. It's obviously a mix between individual attributes and the context in which one is operating. But I think in many ways we've undersold both aspects of the equation. We haven't demanded that individuals go through the sometimes painful process of figuring out what they're good at, what they enjoy doing, and what gives them meaning. Yet, we still take a mostly one-size-fits all approach to managing people—which creates cultures that can be alienating at a human level and inefficient at an economic one.

> I defy you to find me a two-year-old who's passive and inert—or a four-year-old who's 'not' active and engaged. That's our natural state. If people are passive and inert—and, of course, millions and millions are—that's learned behavior, which means it might be susceptible to change.

HR EDGE: *It would be great to "enrich" every job but it can't always be done. Perhaps many employees, for better or worse, need extrinsic motivation because they are desperately lacking in intrinsic motivation and we can't necessarily provide that. Do you think that is true?*

Daniel Pink: Maybe. But I think the calculus works slightly differently. Everybody needs baseline rewards—a decent salary, benefits, etc.—so they're not desperate and insecure. Without that, enduring motivation is tough. But once you cross that threshold, these other forces matter more. Of course, there are some people who don't deliver or who don't have good habits. IMHO, that's learned behavior rather than their natural state. But even so, I'm not against firing people who don't perform. I just don't think you'll get them to perform any better by deploying an endless arsenal of carrots.

Drive ▸ P. 8

HR EDGE: *We seem to learn in our childhood education, the same approach to motivation that most organizations use—a focus on achievement or results (grades/pay) rather than on genuine effort or learning. Isn't that what we keep trying to do as adults—"make the grade"? It's not about learning or improving, it's about achievement. How can we ever change that, particularly in today's highly competitive and volatile business environment?*

Daniel Pink: That's another tough one. In some ways, schools are even more rooted in an outdated approach to motivation. Especially here in the US, they're doubling down on external motivators and renewing their emphasis on routines, right answers, and standardization. In a sense, they risk becoming compliance factories. The solutions are difficult, but they begin with understanding. That's why I encourage every parent and policy maker to read the work of (Stanford University psychologist) Carol Dweck. Her work brilliantly shows the difference between performance goals (example: getting a good grade) and learning goals (example: mastering the material.) We mistakenly believe that hitting performance goals means students have learned something—but that's just not true. It's why a nominally "good" student like me could have taken French for 6 years and gotten straight A's—and still not be able to speak French. We ought to be emphasizing—and measuring—learning goals, though that's far less convenient for the adults in charge of education.

HR EDGE: *One of the many insightful observations you make in* Drive *is that, "Most twenty-first century notions of management presume that, in the end, people are pawns rather than players" (p.91). Can you speak to that notion a bit? Do you think that belief will ever really change?*

Daniel Pink: A lot of the decisions we make in business are rooted in our belief about human nature. Some folks believe that people are fundamentally passive and inert—that their natural state is to not do anything worthwhile and that we need sweet or bitter external rewards to get us to move. The other belief is different—that our nature is to be active and engaged. I side—strongly—with the second view. That's not because I'm a dewy-eyed optimistic. It's because I have three children—and I've seen hundreds more. I defy you to find me a two-year-old who's passive and inert—or a four-year-old who's 'not' active and engaged. That's our natural state. If people are passive and inert—and, of course, millions and millions are—that's learned behavior, which means it might be susceptible to change.

HR EDGE: Drive *explores a number of 'best practices' organizations, in terms of motivation. Which company stood out most in your mind as a role model? Do you think these "best practices" will ever spread across industries?*

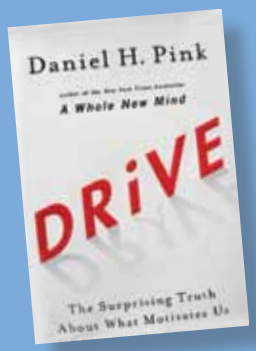
Daniel Pink: I'm a big fan of *Atlassian*, the Australian software company—and of one of their practices in particular. Once a quarter, on a Thursday afternoon, the company says to its software developers: "Go work on anything you want—so long as it's part of your regular job." The only thing the company asks is that people show what they've created to the rest of the company in a fun, freewheeling meeting on Friday afternoon. Altlassian calls these FedEx Days (because people have to deliver something overnight.) It turns out that this one day of intense, undiluted autonomy has led to a whole array of fixes for existing software and lots of ideas for new products that had otherwise never emerged. Now these FedEx Days are spreading to lots of other companies, large and small. Atlassian is also doing some cool things to rethink traditional performance reviews and make them useful exercises in feedback rather than the painful kabuki-theater-style encounters they typically are.

HR EDGE: *You have written four wildly popular books. Each of them takes on very different territory. In broad terms though, each is an effort to help us to better understand and more effectively cope with the changing nature of work. In that regard, what are the biggest changes that you see coming in the next decade of work?*

Daniel Pink: I think it's two simultaneous and somewhat paradoxical trends. On the one hand, individuals have much more power and much more responsibility. Each of us has access to technological firepower at our fingertips that exceeds what many entire large companies had not too long ago. At the same, we're becoming ever more responsible for our work lives—from saving for retirement, to health care (in the US at least), to education and training and so on. Meanwhile, there are some stunning new ways to collaborate—thanks in large part to social media, cheap communication connections, free storage, and so forth.

HR EDGE: *Can you tell us about your next project?*

Daniel Pink: I'm studying the art and science of sales. Sales is something that the smart set usually looks down on. But, if we examine how we actually spend our days at work and at home, a huge portion of it is in sales—trying to persuade people to act, to get them to part with resources, etc. And once you unpack it, you realize that selling is an incredibly sophisticated act—not to mention, one that's fundamentally human.



Daniel H. Pink is the author of several provocative, bestselling books about the changing world of work.

His latest is ***Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us,*** which uses 50 years of behavioral science to overturn the conventional wisdom about human motivation and offer a more effective path to high performance. Drive is a ***New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, Boston Globe, Los Angeles Times, San Francisco Chronicle,*** and ***Publishers Weekly*** bestseller—as well as a national bestseller in Japan and the United Kingdom. The book is being translated into 31 languages.

A Whole New Mind: Why Right-Brainers Will Rule the Future charts the rise of right-brain thinking in modern economies and describes the six abilities individuals and organizations must master in an outsourced, automated age. ***A Whole New Mind*** is a long-running New York Times bestseller that has been translated into 24 languages.

The Adventures of Johnny Bunko: The Last Career Guide You'll Ever Need is the first American business book in the Japanese comic format known as manga and the only graphic novel ever to become a ***BusinessWeek*** bestseller. Illustrated by award-winning artist Rob Ten Pas, ***The Adventures of Johnny Bunko*** has been translated into 14 languages.
Dan's first book, ***Free Agent Nation: The Future of Working for Yourself***, was a ***Washington Post*** bestseller that Publishers Weekly says "has become a cornerstone of employee-management relations."

His articles on business and technology appear in many publications, including the ***New York Times, Harvard Business Review, Fast Company,*** and ***Wired,*** where he is a contributing editor. He also writes a monthly business column for the U.K. newspaper, ***The Sunday Telegraph.*** Dan has provided analysis of business trends on CNN, CNBC, ABC, NPR, and other networks in the U.S. and abroad. And he lectures to corporations, associations, and universities around the world on economic transformation and the new workplace.

by Marie-Helene Budworth, Souha Ezzedeen and Susan Baker

A leadership pipeline?

Generation Y women's attitudes towards career and executive work

Journalists write with great optimism about the future of women in the workplace. For example, recently, the Economist published a feature article arguing that the inequity that women have faced has been largely corrected in Western countries. It is true that women are virtually surpassing men in the professions and in middle management, and due to increasingly liberal social attitudes, they are now widening their career and family options. However, there is an implicit assumption that these advances imply that a pipeline of willing female candidates is being created, meaning a steady stream of women are ready and willing to move into senior leadership roles when the time comes.

There is limited evidence to suggest that women aspire to executive roles and believe that they are capable of achieving these types of outcomes. At a minimum, if women are going to advance to senior management or executive leadership roles, they have to believe that such a path is possible for them in order to begin their careers in ways that support this outcome as an ultimate goal. Additionally, the predication that women will soon become executives in large numbers assumes that the structures are in place to support and encourage them to move into these demanding positions. We sought to examine whether there is any reason for this optimism.

In order to understand whether young women believe that executive work is an option for them in the future, we conducted a study of the perspectives of young women in business programs at York University. Did they aspire to be executives? Is there a pipeline of female talent motivated and waiting for their chance at leadership? Do young women believe that the 'world' will support their advancement? In order to answer these questions, we teamed up with our colleague, Dr. Susan Baker at Morgan State University, and conducted a series of focus groups where we explored perceptions around work, achievement, family, and feminism.

We found that women restricted their ambitions early on. The subjects in our study were very conflicted about leadership roles. Many felt they were capable of aspiring to such goals but worried about the balance between career and family. This in itself is not news. Most women are conflicted about career and family. However, the interesting piece is that many women were already making contingency plans for how family would set them back in their careers. They had observed their own families who tried to 'do it all' and were not interested in living that lifestyle. As one individual observed:

"When I was young, my parents worked all the time. It was very rare to see any of them, and even more rare to see them home at the same time. So, I feel like I want to do the opposite for my family. Home, work a standard job, with not so crazy hours. I think that's why I'm kind of afraid to go to the top cause like, the more responsibilities I have at work, the less I'll be able to take on at home."

A dedication to family is not expressed without some concern or reservations, as one young woman stated:

"I feel if I want to focus on my family then my career will stall. And I've always been worried if I take a year off for mat leave or whatever then I'll be out of the game... the economy is so competitive nowadays, like people are striving to better themselves with every second, I feel like if I sit out for a year or more then I'll just be off speed when I come back."

The minority of women who were interested in an executive career often followed it with "family is not that important to me" or "I do not plan on having kids". Among the sentiments expressed was the following:

"I am not sure if I want a family. I have a very young sister and I know how hard it is to be with a baby. I know it might change...everybody tells me it will change but I really don't want kids."

It is clear from these passages that there is a choice to be made. Regardless of whether they desired career, family, or both, the women referenced being "stuck," "close and yet so far." They also referenced a sense of frustration, unfairness, and that the glass ceiling was "unbreakable."

Women entering the workforce today were raised knowing that there exists a "glass ceiling" on their progress through the ranks and that women frequently "opt out" from high-powered careers. To our surprise, the young women in this study generally prioritized family over career opportunities. With narrowing gaps between men and women's achievements and earnings, one would have expected a greater propensity for career.

A second, unanticipated finding was the rarity of perceptions that challenging careers can co-exist with family. The emotional tenor of our group discussions strongly suggested that the women were extremely skeptical of the possibility of combining a high-flying career with a family life. It appears as though they have observed the generation before them struggle with this balance and have decided it is better to make a choice rather than to 'live life that way.'

Recent research has indicated that successful women often rely on a supportive partner. In our study, there is limited optimism among the young women that they would be fortunate enough to have a spouse who would be willing to support a career wife. There is a clear belief that mothering is intensely at odds with executive careers, and that society, especially its strongly conforming cultural elements, ultimately expected them to be caregivers above all else.

Just at the time that women's increased access to education and professional and middle management positions qualify them for executive careers, their paths are thwarted by the expectations of long work hours and no chance at a balanced life. As a result, women who otherwise aspire to top management positions end up turning down advancement, or forsaking marriage and a family. These choices aren't only problematic for individual women but also for organizations hungry for managerial talent. Our research suggests that bright, capable, and motivated women are giving up on executive work before they even begin their careers.

Despite the fact that there are increasing opportunities for women today, there continue to be structural barriers that lead young women to view these options as coming at too high a cost. The pipeline is still blocked in that there is a clear perception that the path to executive work comes at too high a price.

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Marie-Helene Budworth is Associate Professor and Undergraduate program director at the School of Human Resource Management, York University

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by Tracey Rickaby

Developing your career in HR: **personal reflections**

There are days, I believe, when you have to shake your head to truly believe that the situation you're experiencing is actually happening. This was exactly the way I felt when I stepped off the plane in Albuquerque, New Mexico to start my assignment as HR Lead on the Sales Consolidation project.

If you had told me when I started my career that I would be in a North American HR role, working outside of Canada, in a global company with over 300,000 employees, this person, from a small mining community in Northern Ontario, would have laughed. Travelling on business, engaging with senior level executives, providing HR support in more than one country, would have been the furthest thing from my mind.

To explain, it is probably best to briefly walk you through my career history and how I happened on that plane to New Mexico. I think my HR career evolution might actually have some lessons for others—at least I hope so.

My journey to human resources started when I attended the University of Western Ontario immediately after high school. Granted, those studies in HR were far less strategy-oriented, but rather reflected the more clerical nature of the HR role in those early days (the 1980's). Consequently, upon graduation, I started work in a very modest, clerical position with a small venture capital company, back in my home town. However, with a lot of initiative and keen interest, I progressed quickly up the administrative ranks. Given the small nature of the company, I realized that to further my career, I needed to not only change jobs, but also to change cities.

I landed my next job in a full-time administrative role at a telecommunications company in Toronto. It was during that time, where Human Resources found me and I found a career. I was fortunate enough to gain a mentor who encouraged me to work within the human resources department. While working part-time in Human Resources (while maintaining my "day job"), I found a career fit and began to take courses at night to obtain my Certificate in Human Resource Management.

I decided to take the leap from part-time HR to a full time HR role in a public sector organization. While the move was lateral, moving from one administrative role to another, the chance to work full time in an HR capacity was too exciting to turn down and it also provided me with the opportunity to use the education that I had recently received.

I was soon selected for the role of HR systems administrator of the new technology in our human resources department. This was my first move out of the administrative capacity and I spent two years implementing the HRIS to the point where the employee database became the norm at the company. I enhanced my skills in HR, moving from systems administrator, to recruiter, to HR generalist to HR consultant, supporting business leaders with their HR needs. My experience with this organization gave me more than the basics in human resource management. It enabled me to see several sides of the HR function, from the systems side, to recruiting, to learning and development and business partnering. This strong background in HR management made a move to the next company an easy transition.

Knowing that government downsizings were on the horizon, I was happy to be approached for a senior HR consultant opportunity at a financial services company. From my career path, you can see that industry is irrelevant when you have an HR background. I think the heart of the human resources function is the same in every industry. You can practice human resources regardless of the industry segment or sector. I've worked in venture capital, telecommunications, public sector, financial services and high technology. This is one of the advantages provided to us in our career choice. We can literally move or work anywhere!

I stayed with the financial services company for only two years. Not only was the environment challenging, I was trying to juggle the demands of work and family. With two small children, working downtown and being the last Mom to pick up my girls, I needed to find a new role, closer to home, to achieve the elusive "work/life balance".

My (hopefully) last career move is with my current company—the global, 300,000 employee plus organization that I mentioned earlier. I've been with this company for eleven years as a Senior HR business partner. I have collected a wealth of experience during this time, not the least of which was assisting with the planning and integration of one of the largest technology business mergers in recent times.

While I live and work in the Canadian office, given our employee mobility strategy, employees can live and work anywhere. Consequently, while my home base is Canada, I oversee HR work for our US organization. This has provided me with the opportunity to work with employee issues in a different country, rounding out my skill sets in two different legislative environments. This brings me to the fateful flight to Albuquerque and one of the most invigorating work experiences of my career to date.

From a business partnering perspective, I support a large sales organization in the United States (responsible for selling products such as personal computers, desktop computers, workstations and hand held devices). The selling motion is done in two ways, first via an inside sales motion (individuals on the phone calling customers) or by an outside field sales representative, who physically meets with customers in a face to face setting. As the continental US is quite large, several inside sales call centres evolved over time. During a review of employee locations, it was determined to consolidate into one new location, all of the call centres supporting my business—that location being Rio Rancho, New Mexico, a suburb of Albuquerque. This project was a defining moment in my career. I was chosen as the HR lead for the project by the business that I support and took it from inception to closure. All aspects of HR were included in this project—employee engagement, compensation and benefits, recruiting, learning, on-boarding…you name it. The change for employees was enormous. And we also needed to address that issue. I am proud to say, we accomplished our goals.

Looking back, here are a few "take-aways" from my career path. I hope they prove useful for you!

HR is HR in every company. Every organization requires HR. While learning and understanding the business is a critical success factor for any HR professional, the business can be learned. You can practice HR in any industry, field, or segment.

Lateral moves can be good moves. Don't negate the power of moving laterally for long term growth. Moving from one function of HR to another, can provide a perspective which will make you well rounded and provide that extra knowledge that may elevate your personal brand and worth.

Projects or assignments that "stretch you" are available in every company and within every organization. Look for those opportunities for growth. You won't regret it!

People are people everywhere. Don't sacrifice your career because you are afraid to leave your colleagues or friends behind. I am still in touch with individuals from my very first job (my first mentor in fact). The people who matter will stay with you (although you need to take the initiative to keep those individuals close to you). This is also a way to build and expand your personal network.

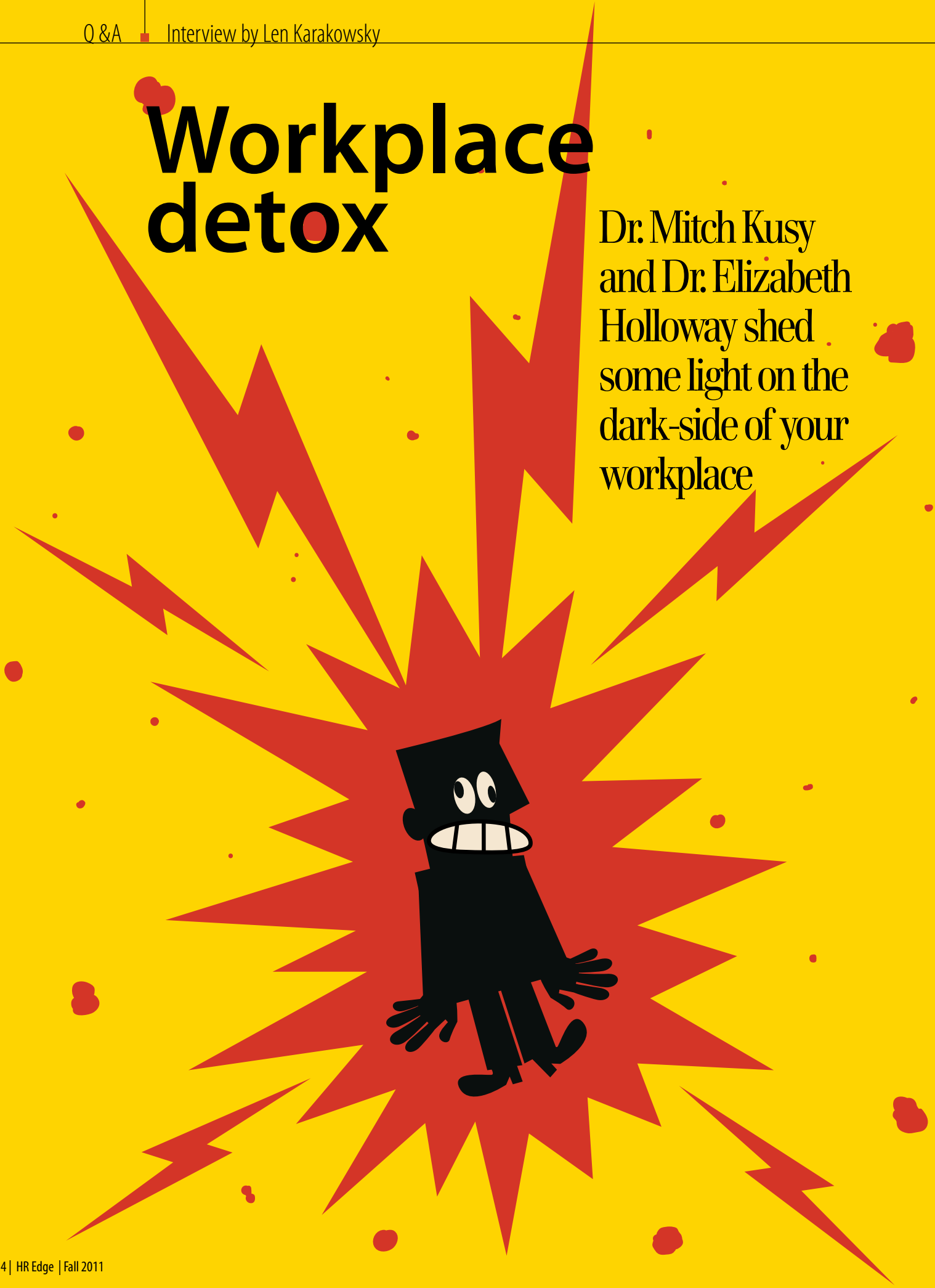
Try to keep a balance in your life. My last career move was primarily due to my family situation and, while difficult at times, it is very important to keep your priorities straight. While your career can be all encompassing at times, remember that you are an individual with your own passions and interests. With our highly technical, "always on", work environment, it is easy to work 24 hours a day. Take time for yourself and your family. That is one thing that you'll never regret.

And don't forget continue to shake your head and marvel at how far you've come.

Tracey Rickaby (MHRM 2008) is a Strategic Human Resources Business Partner for Hewlett-Packard. She is also the president of the MHRM Alumni Group at York University.

Workplace detox

Dr. Mitch Kusy and Dr. Elizabeth Holloway shed some light on the dark-side of your workplace



HR EDGE: *In your extremely insightful book, you expose the dynamics of the toxic workplace and provide practitioners with clear guidance on how to deal with this serious problem. The book's rich observations stem from the exhaustive research you conducted with over 400 business leaders, many from the Fortune 500 List. I am curious as to how you managed to get so many business leaders to "open up" to you about the "dark side" of their workplaces?*

Dr. Holloway: Interestingly, these leaders were more than willing and prepared to share their stories. Many had never talked about it before. For most, I think the interviews we conducted were cathartic. Leaders also are genuinely interested in understanding how to better deal with these kinds of individuals. We know that toxic individuals can cost the company substantially in both human and financial terms. Leaders understandably want solutions.

Dr. Kusy: It came as a complete surprise to us that 94% of the respondents in our research reported they had worked with or were currently working with a toxic person. So far, most solutions have been short-sighted—simply firing the person without attention to the effect the toxicity has had on the team, the culture, and the leaders. The fact is, a toxic personality can infect a whole team and potentially bring down a company.

HR EDGE: *In your experience, how well does the "average" person cope with a toxic colleague or a toxic boss at work?*

Dr. Kusy: Although much has been written about the more serious types of personal impairment, such as alcoholism, mental illness, physical aggression, and sexual harassment, the toxic effects of incivility in the workplace are only now being unveiled. People can't sleep, they get sick, their relationships suffer, and they lose the enjoyment of going to work.

Dr. Holloway: The additional danger is that a toxic personality spreads like a virus. Once you have one person who is toxic, other people start to behave badly because they are in survival mode. And once you have a culture of nastiness, then it isn't automatically going to revert back to everyone feeling good. Incivility—backstabbing, gossip, angry outbursts, condescension, and sabotage—can quickly become the norm of operations and with that come costly losses in reputation and productivity.

HR EDGE: *It's a potentially devastating issue—both to the organization and to the individual—and yet we all know that toxic workplaces persist. For organizations seeking to take action, how difficult is it to identify toxic behavior? It seems like a very broad concept. Does it include things like harassment and bullying?*

Dr. Holloway: In general, toxic individuals are those who exhibit counterproductive work behaviors that can debilitate individuals, teams, and even entire organizations. Our research indicates that toxic behaviour can fall below the threshold of bullying or harassing. Toxic behaviors are actually harder for an employer to address formally through a disciplinary process. In fact, one of the key challenges of dealing with toxic behavior is that, ironically, it can slip under the "radar" even though it often exacts a huge toll on employees and corporate profits.

Dr. Kusy: In our research, we discovered three primary categories of toxic behaviors that often fall outside of any written corporate policy. The first is what we refer to as "shaming". This includes the use of humiliation, sarcasm, potshots, or mistake-pointing with the intent of reducing another's self-worth. The second kind of toxic behavior is "passive hostility" which involves the use of passive-aggressive behavior with the intent of directing one's anger inappropriately. The third kind is "team sabotage" or meddling with the intent of either establishing a negative power base or making the team less productive.

Dr. Holloway: Surprisingly, while these three behaviors can make work life intolerable, only about 1 percent to 6 percent of victims ever report these behaviors. Toxic employees can gnaw away at their colleagues on an ongoing basis. Yet the target(s) can rarely point a finger to exactly what happened in any particular instance. And when bad behavior stems from the boss, finger pointing may be even less likely. The reality is that toxic people have a predilection toward behaving badly, and when you have people in authority, who work in a team, and they are allowed to be condescending—and they get away with it—their colleagues often feel silenced.

HR EDGE: *Your research points out that most organizations have gone about battling toxic behaviour in the "wrong way"? How so?*

Dr. Kusy: In our research, we were interested in how leaders and their teams reacted to the presence of toxic behaviors. Often leaders try to minimize team interactions with the toxic individual, restructure the environment, or remove responsibilities from the toxic individual. In the cases we examined, none of these strategies proved very effective; each was time-consuming, reactive, and left a fragmented team in its wake.

Dr. Holloway: Yes, the typical organizational responses were short-sighted and ineffective. In most situations, we found that everything was directed toward avoiding

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the influence of the toxic individual. Much of the team's energies may be drained in efforts to manage this person. You can see the damaging effects such reactions have on a fully functioning and efficient team. Not only are good team members leaving but the functional communication or decision-making path also breaks down.

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HR EDGE: *Your book was among the first to identify the underlying systems issues that enable toxic individuals to persist. You identify important supporters of the toxic individual—can you tell us about them?*

Dr. Kusy: Toxic systems are particularly resistant to change and are often tolerated for years. In our research, we discovered two roles that create such a toxic system: the "toxic protector" and the "toxic buffer." The toxic protector is the person who unwittingly permits the toxic behaviour to continue. Toxic protectors feel compelled to protect the toxic person from negative reviews or termination because they have a special interest in keeping them as a part of their team, often because the toxic person is highly productive or has a special expertise. Toxic protectors typically don't realize that they are putting the team in jeopardy.

Dr. Holloway: Unlike toxic protectors, the "toxic buffer" seems to have a different motivation. Buffers actually recognize that the toxic employee's behavior is detrimental to team functioning. However, they feel that the solution is to serve as a shield or buffer between the toxic person and team members. Unfortunately, despite their good intentions, the buffer is actually enabling the toxic employee to get away with bad behavior. While trying to absorb the toxicity, the buffer will often become emotionally damaged in the process and unwittingly assists in a downward team spiral—a dysfunctional pattern of communication and authority in the team. In this way, both toxic protectors and toxic buffers actually facilitate the enactment of a culture of incivility.

HR EDGE: *You identify three levels of strategy to combat toxic behaviour. Can you briefly tell us about the aim of this approach and how it succeeds where traditional approaches have failed?*

Dr. Kusy: Our view is that to effectively address this problem, actions need to occur on three levels: the organization, the team, and the individual. We refer to this as the Toxic Organization Change System (TOCS). For example, at the organizational level we need to understand what values exist and are being practiced. Most organizations have stated values. But how pronounced are they in your organization? Is one of these values about respect? If not, you have some work to do. First, you'll need to make sure the value of respect (or however you term this value) gets incorporated into a code of professional conduct. Ultimately, this code gets rolled into an organizational policy. It becomes your mantra in creating a culture of respectful engagement. It's not just a nice-to-do; it turns out to have important impacts on the human and financial bottom line.

Dr. Holloway: Part of the large-scale design of the professional conduct code is the establishment of a zero tolerance policy. This policy is important because it provides the context not only for how we live by these values but also for what happens when they are breached. Certainly, due process procedures must be followed when the situation is serious enough to warrant dismissal. However, there are many intermediary actions that can be taken by leaders to turn a culture of disrespect around.

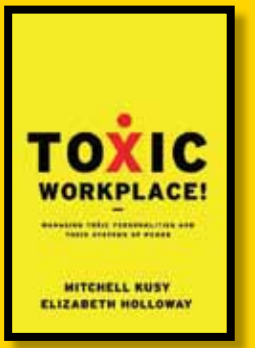
HR EDGE: *In your experience, how common is it for organizations to integrate a values-based approach with management processes?*

Dr. Kusy: What we have found is that most organizations do not have values integrated into their management process. So that is another reason why toxic cultures won't get better quickly. For example, we favour a situation where there is a 60-40 split when it comes to performance reviews. This means 60 per cent of the reward is based on task work, and 40 per cent on the values work. But in most organizations, it is 90 to 100 per cent based on task work. If the values really mean so much within an organization then they need to put their money where their mouths are.

Dr. Holloway: If you change the culture by changing the criteria for the performance appraisal to include things such as interpersonal behaviour, then you can start to change some of those unwanted behaviours. Performance management processes are not simply a mandate to monitor and reprimand but a real opportunity to reward interpersonally effective behaviors that uphold your values.

Dr. Mitchell Kusy has had 25 years experience in leadership and organization development. A full professor and international consultant, he has also worked in the leadership trenches at such venerable organizations as American Express Financial Advisors as head of leadership development. He is now a full professor in the Ph.D. Program in Leadership & Change at Antioch University. He was a 2005 Fulbright Scholar in International Organization Development. He has written several books with one of them—***Fast Forward Leadership***—being the #3 best-selling business book in April, 2000. His other recent book is ***Manager's Desktop Consultant: Just-in-Time Solutions to the Top People Problems that Keep You Up at Night.*** Based on this book, he has been interviewed by such publications as the ***New York Times*** and ***Fortune*** for his advice.

Dr. Elizabeth Holloway is a full professor and psychologist with over 25 years experience as a practitioner, trainer, and consultant in relational practice with leaders worldwide. She has held faculty appointments at the Universities of California, Utah, Oregon, Wisconsin, and currently at Antioch University. She is a ***Fellow*** of the American Psychological Association and was one of five faculty chosen for the prestigious ***Leadership Fellow*** program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She has achieved the highest practitioner distinction for psychologists—***Diplomate of the American Board of Professional Psychology.*** She has written several books, numerous research articles, and consults internationally on systemic interventions that intersect mentoring, communities of practice, and organizational learning.



Toxic Workplace! is the first book to tackle the underlying systems issues that enable a toxic person to create a path of destruction in an organization, pervading others' thoughts and energies, even undermining their very sense of well-being. Dr. Kusy and Dr. Holloway's research reveals the warning signs that indicate a serious behavioral problem and identifies how this toxicity spreads in systems with long-term effects on organizational climate, even after the person has left. Their two-year, cutting-edge research study provides very specific actions that leaders need to take to reduce both the intensity and frequency of toxic personalities at work.

by Althea Gordon

Employment ageism

The time is ripe to fight

Over the next 30 years, the number of people over the age of 60 years will grow by 50% and the number of adults between the ages of 20-59 years will fall by 6%. In particular, the numbers of those aged 20-29 years will fall by nine million, resulting in a constant decrease of the working population and a continuous ageing of the workforce. In 2006, Statistics Canada reported that the median age of the workforce surpassed the 40-year mark for the first time with approximately two million workers between the ages of 55 and 64.

As the population ages, a serious shortage of workers is expected. Accordingly, employers will require older employees in their 50's and 60's to stay longer in their jobs or to return to the workplace. A recent report by American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) revealed that two thirds of older workers plan to keep working part-time or full-time. This trend will likely be further propelled by shifts in retirement policies and the abolition of mandatory retirement in many industrialized countries.

While scholars and proponents of demographic changes have argued the many virtues of having an integrated highly diverse team of workers in terms of age in the workplace, employers have remained reluctant to hire older workers. Similarly, workplaces have been slow to identify and respond to age discrimination among employees. Despite the fact that advancements in science and health care have extended our expectations for longevity, society has yet to embrace the possibilities that come with those extra years. According to research by AARP, discrimination against older people in the workplace is not only pervasive but also more difficult to prove than other forms of discrimination—after all, most people think the normal process in the workplace is for younger people to replace older ones. For those under 50 years of age, it has been said that experience is the stepping stone to a promotion, but experience beyond the age of 50, it's viewed as excess baggage.

Given the aging population and pending employee crisis, HR professionals must play a leadership role in breaking down age barriers at work. Although there are laws prohibiting discrimination based on age, it is more difficult for workers to determine why they fail to receive an interview than it is for them to determine why they have been fired.

Despite the fact that advancements in science and health care have extended our expectations for longevity, society has yet to embrace the possibilities that come with those extra years.

As pre-employment discrimination is more difficult to prove, firms that wish to retain only a certain type of worker, often discriminate in the hiring stage rather than at any other point in the employment process. Studies conducted to evaluate the potential employment barriers for older employees found that employers discriminate based on the following sample of assumptions:

- older workers will 'cost' more in terms of absences and benefits (such as higher health insurance).
- older workers lack reliable transportation and may be tardy or absent for this reason.
- older workers will not be as productive as younger workers.
- older workers' skills are obsolete.
- older workers lack energy.

Some argue that greater societal and legal attention has driven overt bias underground, turning it into a hidden bias that's tougher to recognize and rectify. According to a Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) Director, hidden bias will affect turnover and, "at the end of the day people who are hurting inside will inevitably hurt someone else—they will hurt your business, impact your customers and drain your productivity".

HR professionals should also know that ageism is potentially much more salient for women than for men. Among the over 40s, women are more likely than men to experience unequal access to promotion. In terms of negative attitudes towards older workers, the brunt of such attitudes appears to fall more heavily on women than on men. For example, older women in some clerical occupations report that they often face negative stereotypes concerning their appearance and lack of 'team fit'. In one case, a 61 year-old former secretary was told by a female acquaintance that she was unsuitable for a secretarial position because the manager was a young man and she would remind him of his mother.

In general, HR professionals must guard against prejudice or bias becoming an insidious part of policy, and seek to introduce tailored work roles for older, experienced employees—a strategy to solve current ageing problems in companies. The creation and implementation of 'age suitable' working conditions that are adapted to the health and safety needs of older employees, with an appreciation of experienced-based knowledge plays an important role in fulfilling tasks. In addition, this enhances the value that older employees can contribute to the workplace. Such a combination can create a win-win scenario, with advantages to all sides.

HR policies should provide an environment in which each individual is able to achieve his or her potential without being disadvantaged by age or gender. Such policies should be designed to encompass a wide range of measures for age and gender-neutral processes for recruitment, selection, promotion, training, progression and career development opportunities. Retention practices should be preventative in their approach and based on long-term HR policies rather than on ad hoc solutions.

To reduce the hidden age bias, experts recommend two primary weapons—inclusiveness and training. Creating diverse HR teams such as task forces that include selection committees may help prevent hidden bias—or at least reduce the effect of any one person's bias. For performance appraisals, HR can use systems and methodologies such as multi-rater, 360-degree feedback that make it less likely that any individual or group's biases may have an undue influence on the evaluation of anyone in the organization.

There is no doubt that there exists a culture of employment ageism, and more champions are needed. HR can help lead the way to a more inclusive workplace and on that can maximize the opportunities available from this dynamic group of 'grey power'.

Althea Gordon (MHRM 2010) is the Associate Director of Faculty Affairs in the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies, York University.

by Jennifer Hubbard

From awareness to action

a journey toward workplace wellness

When approached in a strategic manner with specific measurable outcomes in mind, wellness programs have the potential to yield a significant return on investment.

Canadian employers are increasingly focusing attention and resources on wellness programs. Given that smoking and obesity are top causes of illness and death, wellness programs that focus on overcoming these risk factors can dramatically reduce health care costs, cut health insurance premiums, decrease absenteeism and enhance productivity.

Approaches are emerging that are strategic and targeted at addressing health risks. Companies are starting to: 1) use health risk assessments to identify risk areas; 2) implement health clinics, education programs, health and disease management coaching to build awareness; and 3) use incentives to motivate behaviour changes.

While approaches vary, best practices develop awareness and knowledge, offer health appraisals and screening, use complete and effective communications, demonstrate senior management support, reinforce a "culture of health" and an environment of trust, seek and use participant feedback, and continue to measure and enhance the program.

Building a successful wellness program: one company's experience

My company's medical plan costs had been increasing at a rate of 8% to 12% annually and this caused members of the Human Resources (HR) department to look for creative solutions.

They set objectives focused on: 1) building employee awareness of individual health; 2) enhancing employee engagement; 3) rewarding employees for a broad range of wellness behaviours; 4) enhancing organizational health; 5) developing a program designed to evolve; and 6) producing measureable results in group benefits experience, absenteeism, etc. in three to five years.

HR turned to their benefits consultant and benefits carrier for guidance and ideas about how to leverage their flexible benefit plan. Our executive team approved the required funding and its corporate communications group assisted in delivering the message.

The journey toward workplace wellness has been a multi-year effort starting with a focus on enhancing awareness of individual employee and overall organizational health. A wellness campaign was designed, including biometric clinics, wellness assessments, and a new personal wellness account through the flexible benefit plan.

Biometric clinics

The biometric screening clinics involved voluntary, confidential 15-minute appointments with registered nurses during which employees were measured for six heart disease risk factors (waist circumference, body fat, body mass index, blood pressure, random blood glucose, total cholesterol, and smoking status). Employees were provided with wallet cards documenting their measures so they could monitor change, speak with their physicians, and enter the information into their wellness assessments. The nurses provided high level health coaching to those who demonstrated significant risk factors. On a number of occasions employees were counseled to visit their physicians at their first opportunity. In the first year, 48% of employees participated in the biometric screening clinics and this increased to approximately 60% in subsequent years. Employees find these clinics and the explanation and benchmarking of their individual health scores extremely valuable.

Wellness assessments

The confidential wellness assessment was housed on the benefit carrier's website and contained 32 questions assessing ten health risks (such as health habits, readiness to change, culture, productivity, etc.). Each employee received an individualized report summarizing the results of their assessment, providing tips to improve areas needing attention. Employees who completed the assessment within the promoted time frame were provided with wellness credits deposited into a personal wellness account through their flexible benefit plan. In year one, 54% of employees participated in the wellness assessments. This jumped to over 60% in years two and three. Now that a baseline of data has been set, we will be encouraging wellness assessments every two years.

Through the biometric clinics and wellness assessments employees became more aware of their overall health and health risk areas. So too did our company. We received aggregate reports of biometric clinic and wellness assessment information in order to focus future wellness initiatives on specific risk areas. The results pinpointed organizational health risks.

Wellness challenges

The second year of the wellness campaign continued to enhance employee awareness and also required employees to take action by participating in a team fall wellness challenge focused on the particular risk areas identified in the aggregate report. The challenge required co-workers to form teams and work toward common health goals. Team members logged activities using an on-line journal, individual scores combined to make team scores, and the team with the most points won. The challenge continues to focus on strategies such as physical activity and balanced nutrition that will address health risks.

There is growing evidence to suggest that building incentives into wellness programs assists in increasing employee participation. In the first year, incentives were provided for building awareness, in the subsequent years, incentives were focused on action.

To more effectively support the wellness strategy throughout the organization (we have 18 offices across Canada) we created a committee with representatives from each location. These individuals have volunteered to take on the role that champions wellness activities, addresses wellness related inquiries and participates in quarterly meetings to feed information to the HR department. To ensure wellness is top of mind, this group also taps into free or low cost local resources, coordinates lunch and learn sessions, arranges before and after work yoga or stretch classes, and hosts wellness fairs.

The next stop on the wellness journey

Reviewing results against objectives has proven gratifying for us. Employees are learning more about their individual health. 92% of biometric screening clinic participants said it helped them learn more about cardiovascular health; and 71% said they will be making changes to their lifestyle in the upcoming months. The wellness program is evolving each year. In the first year it focused on enhancing awareness; in the second year the learning continued and employees were encouraged to take action. In the third year employees were further challenged to sustain their behaviour change. Finally, within another two years we believe we will see measurable improvements in our group benefits experience, absenteeism, and engagement.

The wellness campaign builds on the momentum created in the previous years. Our organization is now in a position to create a holistic wellness strategy, encompassing all components of employee health and wellbeing, including the wellness program, employee assistance program, the Occupational Health and Safety program, and medical absence management. Once this foundational wellness approach is engrained, the organization hopes to evolve to a higher model of a healthy organization that includes "…a positive culture, an inclusive approach to leadership, and vibrant workplaces that inspire employees."

Jennifer Hubbard (MHRM 2009) is Assistant Vice-President, Corporate Human Resources Services at The Economical Insurance Group. She has led the design, development, and delivery of rewards programs for the past eleven years.

updates from our Undergraduate program

Dr. Marie-Helene Budworth
is the Undergraduate Program Director, School of Human Resource Management, York University

Our Bachelor's program in HRM continues to evolve. We are planning many exciting changes in the coming months.

As an interdisciplinary school composed of HRM researchers, sociologists, psychologists, economists, and employment law experts, we have an opportunity to expose students to issues in HRM through a variety of lenses and perspectives. Our program revisions will ensure that students have a chance to share in the classroom with instructors who are actively involved in exciting, timely, and creative research.

At the same time, we will continue to invite seasoned practitioners to lead some of our classrooms and provide their vast experience as a complement to the theoretical learning. As a school, we have expertise in areas of HRM including international HRM and critical management. These ideas have informed the types of classes we have developed and will continue to inform the curriculum.

A significant program enhancement will be launched in the fall of 2011. As of September, students will have the opportunity to enroll in an HRM internship program. This program is only possible due to a generous donation from the Royal Bank of Canada. We are fortunate to have this opportunity for our students and believe it will attract a great deal of interest from current and future cohorts.

As part of our goal to help students with their career development, we have partnered with the Master's of Human Resource Management Alumni Association on a mentoring program. Through this initiative, current students will be able to build relationships with MHRM graduates. This is an excellent opportunity for our undergraduates to gain skills, build a network, and develop meaningful contacts. Thank you to the Alumni group for generously supporting the undergraduate program.

The BHRM will continue to grow and develop as the field, the research, and the students continue to challenge existing frameworks, ideas, and understandings. It is a great time to be working on this program. Thanks to all who have made our recent successes and innovations possible.

Finally, I want to congratulate our most recent award winning students. Anita Garratt received the Human Resources Management Professionals of West Toronto Scholarship of Excellence. This award is given to the student with the highest academic average in their fourth year of study. Rana Khalil received the KWA Partners Scholarship; a second award based entirely on academic merit.

Finally, Ann Tsunakawa won the Toronto HR Professionals Association Award; a scholarship based on the combination of academic average, community involvement, and overcoming personal challenge. Congratulations to all three of our major award winners. We are proud of your accomplishments and wish you every success as you complete your studies. Thank you to our donors who made these awards possible. Your support of SHRM is greatly appreciated.

York U's School of HRM welcomes visiting professors

Dr. Swee C Goh

Professor of Organizational Behaviour and Human Resource Management and the Interis Research Fellow at the Telfer School of Management, University of Ottawa.

Dr. Swee's research interests include an understanding of the impact of organizational learning capacity on firm performance, identifying the barriers and facilitators of knowledge transfer and exploring effective approaches to organizational transformations and change. His extensive research has been published in scholarly and applied management journals such as, *Academy of Management Journal, Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences, Journal of Educational Change, SAM-Advanced Management Journal,* and *European Management Journal*.

Dr. Goh is currently on the Editorial Board of *SAM-Advanced Management Journal, The Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation* and *Research and Practice in Human Resource Management*. He was awarded the MBA Professor Award by his graduate students in 1999 for excellence in teaching. In 2004 he was awarded the University of Ottawa, Excellence in Education Prize for having both an outstanding research program and teaching excellence. Swee was recently selected as the first Interis Research Fellow (2009-2011) at the Telfer School of Management.

Dr. Uma Jogulu

Associate Professor of Management at the School of Management and Marketing, Deakin University, Melbourne Australia.

A recent doctorial graduate (2008), Dr. Jogulu is a young scholar with a very bright future. She has already managed to garner much attention for her outstanding research and teaching skills. Last year, she was awarded the Early Career Researcher Award by the Faculty of Business and Law at Deakin University for excellence in research. In 2009, she earned an award for excellence in teaching at the School of Management and Marketing.

Dr. Jogulu's main areas of research include the impact of cultural foundations on career management particularly the careers of immigrants; and cross-cultural influences on workplace behaviours including employee performance. She has drawn on her work to demonstrate the theoretical and practical limitations of applying Western theories in non-Western contexts. Her research has been published in scholarly and applied management journals such as *Leadership and Organizational Development Journal, Equal Opportunities International,* and *Management Research Review*. In 2010, Dr. Jogulu was awarded an Australian Research Council Discovery Project to help assist in her active program of research.

Mining for gold in HR

Eric McCallum (MHRM 2010) is VP, Talent Management & Organization Effectiveness for Kinross Gold Corporation.

Eric earned the Academic Achievement Award and the Ambassador Award in the MHRM program at York University

Over a very successful 20 year career, Eric has worked in diverse industries from banking to manufacturing to mining. His responsibilities have stretched across 22 countries, on 5 continents, with 13 different languages. He has held HR leadership positions in such notable companies as Celestica, First National Bank and currently Kinross Gold Corporation. It's no surprise then, that Eric is more than able to share some nuggets (pun intended) of wisdom for carving a career niche in HR.

HR Edge: *Before we ask for some 'career advice', can you tell us a bit about your current work?*

Eric: I have a fascinating and rewarding role (VP, Talent Management & Organization Effectiveness) in an equally interesting industry. I get to help craft the company's HR strategy and am accountable for designing an integrated HR system that engages our employees and delivers business results and shareholder value. I have responsibility for a broad portfolio of HR disciplines including performance management, talent and succession management, leadership and employee development, HRIS, change management, OD, HRIS, employee survey, HR business processes, etc. The role allows me to travel to some amazing and challenging places (political, geographic, social environmental, climate, community relations, etc).

We face constant and unique HR challenges like how to train 2–3000 new employees to be competent miners in countries that have never had mining, have low literacy rates, high poverty, low employable populations, remote locations, etc. The company will double in size over the next 3–5 years. This extreme growth curve also provides fantastic HR challenges and growth opportunities where we push our personal and organizational boundaries regularly.

HR Edge: *What defines a statisfying career in HR?*

Eric: That is likely very personal and each individual defines satisfaction differently. For me, knowing that I've been able to make a difference for the employees, the company, the environment, the countries and communities we live and work in is very satisfying. It is also very satisfying to be able to continuously learn and have new experiences. I've been blessed to have a wide variety of experiences and growth opportunities in HR. I started in the financial services industry in a local bank that grew to a midsize regional bank. It was a small department which allowed me to be involved in/lead a broad spectrum of responsibilities. Throughout my career, I've proactively created opportunities. At the bank, I held positions as HR Officer, Training Manager, OD Manager. When I switched industries to contract manufacturing, it brought a whole new set of challenges including labour relations, regional and global roles and an international relocation from USA to Canada. I held 7 different roles in 8 years and was given a rich variety of work and leadership experiences. The complexity of a global company offers so many learning opportunities that domestic companies can't provide (e.g., language, culture, geopolitical, international travel, community relations, etc).

HR Edge: *What is the best advice you can offer for aspiring HR professionals?*

Eric: Many HR professionals grow out of tactical roles (e.g., payroll, benefits) and into HR business partner roles. Some make the leap, others don't. The best HR professionals are those who build trusting relationships with business leaders and take the time to deeply understand the industry and business they are in. How the company makes money, who are the customers, who are the people who will be successful in this company, what are our shareholder expectations, etc. They then design programs to deliver those results. It doesn't have to be fancy; it just has to be effective.

It is also critical to be a systems thinker, meaning taking an integrated view and approach to HR. You can't make a change to one component of HR (e.g., a performance management process) without impacting other components (e.g., total rewards, leadership development, employee development, etc). Good HR practitioners must be able to see the forest through the trees.

I believe strongly in an integrated approach to HR. It is important that you find what you like and are good at and leverage it. There are a variety of roles within the HR umbrella and all can lead to rewarding and successful careers. Some find a specialist route suits them (e.g., compensation specialist), others find the generalist route more appealing. You need to understand yourself and what your preferences are. Do you like a lot of variety, close relationships with business leaders, constantly switching gears and many daily challenges? Do you prefer project work where you work alone or in a small team designing and delivering a best in class solution to a specific business challenge and having someone else deploy it?

HR Edge: *What personal habits do you think helped you to facilitate your career growth?*

Eric: My passions are continuous learning and to make a difference. I've been successful by working hard, taking advantage of opportunities to continually challenge myself and push my boundaries. I believe it is more important to have directional aspirations ("what do I want to achieve?") than to have a specific goal ("I want to be V.P. by 40"). This reduces disappointment and allows you to be able to take advantage of the inevitable twists and turns of careers and life. The more the variety of experiences, the more effective you will be as an HR professional and the more career opportunities you will open up.

HR Edge: *What should we all know about the future of this profession?*

Eric: I am very bullish on the future of the HR profession. The challenges we face as HR professionals are increasing daily and are becoming synonymous with business strategy.

Business leaders intuitively know that people are their most important asset, but don't always understand exactly what that means or how to best engage their employees. It is critical that HR professionals help company leaders answer those questions and provide quality solutions. Only then will they be considered a strategic asset for the company.

One of the big strategic challenges facing companies is the pace and rate of organizational change. It is a cliché to say that "the only constant is change", but this is certainly true for most organizations today, particularly given the impact of globalization on business. The notion of "think global, act local" is more important now than ever and HR professionals need to be able to take their business knowledge and savvy and combine it with organization change tools to ensure business survival and success going forward.

HR Edge: *On a more personal note, after so many years as a highly successful HR practitioner, why did you return to school to pursue a master's degree in HR?*

"Business leaders intuitively know that people are their most important asset, but don't always understand exactly what that means or how to best engage their employees. It is critical that HR professionals help company leaders answer those questions and provide quality solutions. Only then will they be considered a strategic asset for the company."

Eric: I find that my fast-paced and demanding work environment rarely provides the opportunity to slow down to reflect, think and get different perspectives and new solutions to the HR challenges I face. It is difficult to find time to network with colleagues in other companies. I was also looking to validate the knowledge I had gained through experience and enhance my confidence in the work I was doing. This program was the perfect opportunity to achieve all these objectives. It allowed me to advance my knowledge of HR and increased my confidence in making a material difference in my company.

What you get out of the MHRM program, like anything in life, is directly proportional to what you put in. The program is challenging, but rewarding. Both the faculty and the students reflect a great diversity of cultures, interests, and experiences. This offers exposure to a wealth of ideas that ultimately will enhance your ability to work with others, explore different career possibilities, develop a professional network and enhance your career credibility.

Strategic HR in the non-profit sector

Melanie Laflamme (MHRM 2009) is Vice-President, Human Resources, YMCA of Greater Toronto

Melanie Laflamme has dedicated her 33 year career to leading HR in the nonprofit sector, including organizations such as Canada's National Ballet School, the Ontario Arts Council, and most recently within her role as Vice President Human Resources of the YMCA of Greater Toronto. Her career has been marked with praise and recognition. In 2010, Melanie earned the award of *Top Human Resources Leader* for organizations with 500 or more employees at an event organized by the Toronto Human Resources Professionals Association.

In 2001, when Melanie joined her current employer, the YMCA of Greater Toronto, she shared the HR "department" with only one other individual. Within a few years, Melanie was able to increase the organization's understanding of the critical role that a formalized human resources function could play. This resulted in a commitment to expand the HR staff complement to ten, and with it, the mandate to develop all functional areas of human resources. The HR Department now supports 334 supervisors across 200 geographic areas of the GTA in an organization that has approximately 3,000 employees.

Those familiar with the YMCA, will know that it covers an impressive range of services far beyond fitness and recreation to include immigrant programs, youth outreach and intervention, education and employment programs, family support, child care and social services. This is an organization whose success is built largely on the motivation of its staff as well as its volunteers. Knowing what motivates the staff is therefore of crucial importance. According to Melanie, "This is an organization like many others where people search for opportunities to make a difference—to feel valued and appreciated. I think that the YMCA provides that opportunity to staff every day- with children, with youth, with people making life transitions—school to work, for individuals who are experiencing barriers to employment and who are not fully included in society."

Melanie's focus on building a more cohesive, valued workforce culminated in recent recognition of the YMCA as one of the *Top Employers of the GTA* (for the past three years) and one of the *Top Employers in Canada for Young People* of last year.

Given the importance of the staff, Melanie has focused her initiatives on building a trusting and inclusive work environment. In Melanie's view, the goal of her company's HR strategy is to "create a culture that supports personal growth, job satisfaction and quality of work life". This is achieved through a "deliberate, focused Human Resources strategy" which Melanie has led over the last 10 years and which has resulted in enhancements to human resource policies, such as upgrades in leaves of absence, compassionate care leave; a company pension plan; benefits for part time staff and Employee Assistance Program to name a few.

Melanie has played a key role in strategic human resources planning as well as the development of the organization's vision, with a focus on human capabilities. Among her seemingly endless list of responsibilities, Melanie oversees the Diversity and Social Inclusion Strategy; and she leads a cross functional team of individuals reviewing the implications of the Accessibility legislation and the Volunteer Development Strategy. Her initiatives have resulted in employee morale dramatically increasing in a five year period, as well as achieving a turnover rate far below that of the nonprofit industry's norm.

It's no surprise how Melanie feels about her current employer. "I feel totally blessed to be working at the YMCA. The YMCA is made up of incredible human beings and does such tremendous work that touches the lives of so many people. I am very excited every day. My challenge is that there is so much that I want to do at the YMCA, to impact our Human Resources practices and Diversity and Social Inclusion and it's challenging to find the time to do it all. I am particularly excited about the new portfolio for diversity and social inclusion and also accessibility."

Three years ago, Melanie celebrated her 30'th anniversary working in the field of HR in a very unique way. She decided to go back to school. As Melanie says. " I could find no better way to mark the occasion than diving more deeply into the field that I love. And so I entered York's MHRM program to pursue advanced studies in my chosen field."

Why did she choose to go back to school after amassing a wealth of real world experience?

Melanie offers a thoughtful response. "You know there has been a flood of management books and articles over the last several years proposing a management model filled with heart and soul–a new altruism, a spirituality of work. The ideas of "mind" and 'spirit" in the workplace resonate with me . I think we can do a lot help people maximize their capabilities. going back to school allowed me to explore a diverse range of ideas toward that end. The opportunity to formalize my learning has rounded out my knowledge and has allowed me to make a further contribution to the profession that I hold so dear".

Melanie feels that expectations of HR professionals are changing as its responsibilities evolve. According to Melanie, "We are being called upon to be more systematic in our approach. We must use technology effectively and use evidence based research and metrics to demonstrate how human resource initiatives contribute to the organization's productivity and effectiveness. We must establish credibility and trust in order to advance human resource practices in our organizations. It is critical that we are not working in isolation but that our strategies are aligned with the organization's business strategy".

> "We are being called upon to be more systematic in our approach. We must use technology effectively and use evidence based research and metrics to demonstrate how human resource initiatives contribute to the organization's productivity and effectiveness..."

alumni connections

The MHRM Alumni was established in 2008 and became recognized by York University and the York Alumni Association.

Our objectives are:

- To establish and maintain a vital network for MHRM alumni, as a means to remain connected after graduation.
- To share best practices and research by fostering engagement between academia and business.
- To bridge Alumni concerns and interests with the University MHRM Program and faculty members.

The MHRM Alumni is launching a mentoring program for current MHRM students and other advanced HR students at York University. Some benefits of this program include:

- Giving students and prospective members of the profession insights into how HR practitioners function.
- Helping students make career choices, socializing with (and perhaps recruiting) graduating students, and generating mutual learning.
- Creating and enhancing a network of contacts in the field for both the mentor and protégé.

The program details and timelines are provided on the MHRM Alumni website. You can also register on our website to receive direct communication regarding the mentoring program, networking events and other activities to expand your HR knowledge and network. We also welcome ideas and suggestions. We are at **http://www.yorku.ca/mhralum/** and via email at **mhralum@yorku.ca**.

Pictured below are the inaugural members of Executive Committee at our first social event. Back row, L – R: Parbudyal Singh, Neisha Bacchus, Dwayne Conrad, Silvia Marabeti, Tracey Rickaby, Virya Hour, Marie-Helene Budworth. Front row, L – R: Andrea Walker, Prabha Packiam. Missing from photo: Nidhi Malik

Dr. David Doorey, School of Human Resource Management, York University

David Doorey joined the School of HRM in 2006. He holds a Ph.D and LL.B in law from Osgoode Hall Law School, as well as a Masters of Law from the London School of Economics and a Masters of Industrial Relations from the University of Toronto.

Before entering academic life, Professor Doorey was a practicing labour lawyer in both British Columbia and Ontario. Until 2001, he was Canadian Legal Counsel to the United Steelworkers of America, where he presented cases before arbitrators, tribunals, and courts. He was part of the legal team that represented Walmart workers at a store in Windsor Ontario that became the first unionized Walmart in the world.

David's unique mix of professional experience and academic training in workplace law and policy guides his approach to teaching in the SHRM. "I work hard to relate real-life issues and stories into the course materials. For me, the field of workplace law and policy is full of fascinating tensions, debates, and issues. I'm excited about introducing my students to the field."

David Doorey is one of Canada's leading voices in the media on matters relating to workplace law and industrial relations.

Q & A with David Doorey

HR Edge: *Are the legal issues surrounding employment undergoing any kind of change? What should HR professionals be particularly aware of?*

David: I do see a trend towards judges holding employers to a higher standard of decency towards workers. It takes many forms. For example, in the last decade, courts have been developing an "implied" contract term that requires employers to treat their employees with decency and civility. This means judges will scrutinize employer treatment of workers throughout the employment relationship. In several recent cases, courts have ordered hefty damages awards against employers who were insensitive to employees as they dismissed them. In one recent case, an employer was ordered to pay a $15,000 penalty when it provided an employee with the minimum amount of notice required by the Employment Standards Act instead of the contractually required "reasonable notice", which was considerably more. The HR professionals are the front line generals at the workplace who are expected to know these legal developments, and also to ensure that they, and the employees they manage, stay within the boundaries of what the law believes constitutes respectful and professional treatment of workers.

HR Edge: *What does the future hold for labour relations in Canada? Are unions dying?*

David: I don't believe that unions in Canada are "dying". But the labour movement is undergoing change and is in crisis mode. Surveys of Canadian workers show that there is still a high demand for collective representation amongst nonunion workers, but there is less support for the strike route in collective bargaining. We may be seeing this reflected in public support for interest arbitration as a means of resolving bargaining disputes, for example, a process that is being used more in both the public and private sector. Today, women are more likely than men to be unionized, most union organizing is happening in the service and administrative services sectors, and fewer workers are employed in the sort of full-time jobs that

Dr. Doorey's Workplace Law Blog is a multiple winner of the Canadian Law Blog Award for Best Law Blog by an academic. The blog began in 2008 as a tool to draw the attention of students to current Canadian media stories dealing with workplace law and industrial relations and to encourage them to consider real-world examples of the concepts he would be discussing in his classes. Over 300,000 hits later, Professor Doorey's blog is now a regular stop for many legal and HR practitioners in Canada and abroad.

David is a multiple recipient of research grants from the Social Science and Humanities Research Council, and is widely published in leading North American law journals. He is presently the Academic Director of the Masters of Labour and Employment Law program at Osgoode Hall Law School. He is also *Articles Review Editor* for Canada's leading law journal in workplace law, the *Canadian Labour and Employment Law Journal*.

"Two key goals of mine when teaching law to HR students are to help my students recognize where the legal issues are most likely to arise, and then where to look for answers. HR professionals need to learn when they can deal with legal issues themselves, and when it is time to consult a lawyer."

unions are used to. These sorts of changes will alter how unions market themselves and what services they offer to attract new members in the future. Unions are still sorting this out. But my sense is that workers, especially those who are not treated fairly by the employers, will always have a demand for some form of collective representation in this country.

HR Edge: *How informed are HR professionals with regard to the legal context of management? What do you try to accomplish in teaching labour relations to professionals in the masters program?*

David: The MHRM course I teach covers all three "regimes" of workplace law: the common law, employment statutes, and collective bargaining law. Students on the whole are most unfamiliar with the latter regime, although I've found that many also lack knowledge of fundamentals of employment law. This is problematic, because workplace law is a minefield for HR professionals. I've been pretty critical of HR professional organizations for their lack of emphasis on HR law. For example, I'm amazed that HRPA does not require a single course in law as a requirement for the CHRP designation. Two key goals of mine when teaching law to HR students are to help my students recognize where the legal issues are most likely to arise, and then where to look for answers. HR professionals need to learn when they can deal with legal issues themselves, and when it is time to consult a lawyer. Mistakes can be very, costly to both the business and the HR professional's reputation.

You can follow Professor Doorey's legal insights on his award-winning Law Blog at **http://www.yorku.ca/ddoorey/lawblog/**, as well as on twitter **http://twitter.com/#!/dooreyblog**, and through his Apple App for I-Phones, I-pods, and I-Pads **http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/doorey/id432941099?mt=8/**.

faculty achievements

The breadth, quality, and quantity of publications produced by the Faculty of the School of Human Resources is what places SHRM among the world's leaders in the field. This is just a sampling of recent faculty publications and conference presentations.

Belcourt, M. and McBey, K. (2010). *Strategic Human Resources Planning*, 4rd edition. Thomson Nelson, Toronto.

Belcourt, M. (2010). *Managing Human Resources*, 6th edition, Thomson Nelson, Toronto. (with G. Bohlander and S. Snell).

Budworth, M. (2011). Individual learning and group performance: The role of collective efficacy. J*ournal of Workplace Learning*.

Budworth, M. and Mann, S. (2011). Performance management: Where do we go from here? *Human Resource Management Review*, 21, 81-84.

Bassett, M. L., Ramsey, W. and **Chan, C. C. A.** (2011). Improving the Selection and Appointment of Medical Personnel in Health Care Organizations. *International Journal of Health Care Quality Assurance*.

Chan, C. C. A., McBey, K. and Scott-Ladd, B. (2011). Ethical Leadership in Modern Employment Relationship: Lessons from St. Benedict. 100(2) *Journal of Business Ethics.*

Deutsch Salamon, S. and Maitlis, S. (2010). How Group Members "Gang Up": An Empirically Grounded Model. 7th International Conference on Workplace Bullying and Harassment, Cardiff, UK, June 2010. Recipient of Best Conference Paper.

Deutsch Salamon, S., and Maitlis S. (2009). The Conceptualisation of Victimisation as a Group Phenomenon: A Longitudinal Study", The Centre for Work, Organisation and Wellbeing, Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia.

Doorey, D. (2011). The Transparent Supply Chain: From Resistance to Implementation at Nike and Levi-Strauss. *Journal of Business Ethics*.

Doorey, D. (2011). Book Chapter, Industrial Conflict, *Labour and Employment Law: Cases, Materials, and Commentary, 8th Ed.* (Irwin Law).

Doorey, D. (2011). In Defense of Transnational Domestic Labor Regulation, 42 Vanderbilt Journal Transnational Law.

Ezzedeen, S.R. and Ritchey, K.G. (2009). Career and family strategies of executive women: Revisiting the quest to "have it all." Organizational Dynamics, 38(4), 270-280.

Ezzedeen, S.R. and Ritchey, K.G. (2009). Career advancement and family balance strategies of executive women. Gender in Management: An International Journal, 24(6), 388-411.

Fang, Tony (with Novicevic, MM, Bynum, L., and Hayek, M). (2011). Integrating Barnard's and Contemporary Views of Industrial Relations and HRM, *Journal of Management History* vol. 17, no.1, pp. 126-38.

Fang, T. and Heywood, J. (2010). Immigration, Ethnic Wage Differentials and Performance Pay in Canada, *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, vol. 48, no. 1, pp. 109-130.

Campolieti, M., **Fang, T.**, and Gunderson, M. (2010). Skill Acquisition of Dropouts and Subsequent Labour Market Behaviour, *Journal of Labor Research*, vol. 31, no. 1, pp. 39-52.

Joseph, R.C. and **Ezzedeen, S.R.** (2009). E-government and e-HRM in the public sector. In *Encyclopedia of Human Resources Information Systems: Challenges in e-HRM*. Teresa Torres-Coronas & Mario Arias-Oliva, (eds.) Hershey, PA: Information Science Reference, pp. 272-277.

Kotlyar, I., **Karakowsky, L.,** & Ng, P. (2011). The Impact of Leadership Behaviors on Member Commitment to Team-Generated Decisions. *Leadership Quarterly*.

Karakowsky, L., DeGama, N. and **McBey, K.** (2011) Unraveling the Role of Gender in the Pygmalion Effect: Toward a Conceptual Framework, accepted for the 2011 Annual Meetings of the Academy of Management, San Antonio, Texas.

Karakowsky, L., Mann, S. and **McBey, K.** (2010). Feeling (and Acting) like a Fish out of Water: Numerical Minority Status, Gendered Work and Citizenship Behavior in Mixed Gender Work Teams, *Team Performance Management*.

Lim, L. L. K., **Chan, C. C. A.** and Dallimore, P. (2010). Perceptions of Human Capital Measures: From Corporate Executives and Investors. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 25 (4), 673-688.

Latham, S.D. (2011). Leadership development: Learning through visual inquiry. In S. D. Latham and J. G. Knowles (Eds) The arts in organizational research: *Creative explorations of the workplace*, Nova Scotia, Backalong Books.

Latham, S.D. (2011). Organizational research and the arts. In S. D. Latham and J. G. Knowles (Eds) The arts in organizational research: *Creative explorations of the workplace*, Nova Scotia, Backalong Books.

Latham, S. D. (2010).The Multicultural Leader: Life stories of influence and achievement, Nova Scotia, Backalong Books

Mann, S. and **Budworth, M.** (2011). Ratings of counterproductive performance: The effect of rating source. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*.

McKenna, S. (2011). A critical analysis of North American business leaders' neocolonial discourse: global fears and local consequences, *Organization*.

McKenna, S. (2010). Negotiating and Resisting HRM: A Chinese Case Study, *International Journal of Human Resources Management*, 21 (6) May 2010, pp 851-872 (with Richardson, J., Singh, P. & Xu, J.J)

McKenna, S., Ducharme, M.J. and Budworth, M.H. (2009). What happens on tour stays on tour: Teams on international short term assignment. *Research and Practice in Human Resources Management*, 17(1).

Ophir, R. (2011). Taking sides: The interactive influences of institutional mechanisms on the adoption of same-sex partner health benefits by Fortune 500 corporations, 1990-2003. *Organization Science*, 22(1), 190-209 (with **You-Ta Chuang** & Robin Church)

Ophir, R. (2011). Transactive memory and its application in IS research (with Dorit Nevo). In Y. K. Dwivedi, M. R. Wade & S. L. Schneberger (eds.), *Information Systems Theory: Explaining and Predicting Our Digital Society*, Vol. 2, Chapter 25. New York: Springer.

Ophir, R. (2010). LGBTQ Teaching Incubator: Care, Dare, Share. Professional development workshop accepted for the 2010 Annual Meetings of the Academy of Management, Montreal (with C. Robyn Berkeley).

Kelliher, C. and **Richardson, J.** (Eds), *New Ways of Working: Development, Perspectives and Experiences*, Routledge, 2011.

Kelliher, C. and **Richardson, J.** (Eds) (2011). Flexwork in Canada: Coping with Disease, published in *New Ways of Working: Development, Perspectives and Experiences*, Routledge.

Richardson, J. (2010). 'Managing Flexworkers: Holding on and Letting Go', *Journal of Management Development*, 29 (2) February 2010, pp137-147

Manroop, L. and **Singh, P.** (2011), The Role of the AFL-CIO in Regime Change: The Case of Guyana, *British Journal of Industrial Relations.*

Celani, A. and **Singh, P.** (2011), Signalling theory and applicant reaction outcomes. *Personnel Review*. 40(2), 222-238

Singh, P. and Peng, P. (2010). Canada's bold experiment with pay equity. *Women in Management – An International Journal*, 25(7), 570-585.

Klehe, U.-C., **Zikic, J.,** VanVianan, A. E. M., and DePater, I. E. (2011), Career adaptability, turnover, and loyalty during organizational downsizing. *Journal of Vocational Behavior.*

Zikic, J., Bonache, J. and Cerdin J-L. (2010), Crossing national boundaries: A typology of qualified immigrants? career orientations, *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 31, 667-686.

Zikic, J. and Franklin, M. (2010). Enriching careers & lives: Introducing a positive, holistic, and narrative career counselling method that bridges theory and practice. *Journal of Employment Counseling*, 74, 180-189

doctorial student achievements

Boekhorst, J, (2011). Impression Management: The Motivation to Respond to Employee Mistreatment. Paper presentation at the Doctoral Consortium, Saint Mary's University, Halifax.

deGama, N. (with L. Karakowsky, & K. McBey) (2011). Facilitating the Pygmalion Effect. Why Gender Leader Matters. Paper presentation at the Academy of Management Conference, San Antonio, Texas.

deGama, N. (with S. McKenna) (2011). The Sociology of the Stranger and Global Mobility and Movement. Symposium presentation at the Academy of Management Conference, San Antonio, Texas.

deGama, N. (2011). Where is Home?: A Close Look at Second-Generation Expatriates. Paper presentation at the European Academy of Management Conference, Tallinn, Estonia.

Duff, A. J. (2011). Team Coaching: Process, Servant Leadership Style, and Gender Implications. Paper presentation at the Administrative Sciences Association of Canada Conference, Quebec.

Duff, A.J. (with Singh, P.) (2011). The role of teamwork and the HR System as the "black box" between SHRM and firm performance: A structural contingency theory approach. Paper presentation at INGRoup Conference, Minneapolis, MN.

Duff, A. J. (2010). Absence as a Learned Behavior: a Study of the Impact of Leader and Team Absence Behavior. Paper presentation at the Academy of Management Conference, Quebec.

Harrison, J. (2011). Testing Emotional Intelligence as a Moderator of the Relationship Between Illegitimate Tasks and Counterproductive Work Behavior. Paper presentation at the Institute for Emotional Intelligence Annual Conference, San Antonio.

Harrison, J. (2011). Adjusting Proactivity to Fit: The role of self-regulatory focus and gender roles in performance. Paper presentation at the Doctoral Consortium, Saint Mary's University, Halifax.

Manroop, L., & Singh, P. (2011). The role of the AFL-CIO in regime change: The case of Guyana. British Journal of Industrial Relations. DOI:10.1111/j.1467.

Manroop, L. (with S. McKenna, & J. Richardson) (2011). Alternative paradigms and the study and practice of performance management and evaluation. Human Resource Management Review, 21(2): 148 – 157.

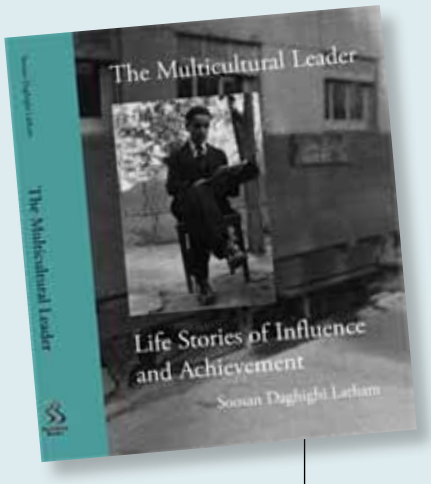
Riggi, C. (2011). Organizational Citizenship Behaviour or Organizations' Controlling Behaviours?, Paper presentation at the Critical HRM Symposium, Saint Mary's University, Halifax.

Samnani, A., Boekhorst, J., & Harrison, J. (2011). Fitting In or Standing Out?: Understanding Minority Patterns of Assimilation or Distinctiveness. Paper presentation at the Southern Management Association Conference, Savannah, Georgia.

Samnani, A. (with P. Singh) (2011). Antecedents and consequences of workplace bullying: A multi-level analysis. In Craig, W., Pepler, D., & Cummings, J. (Eds.), Creating a world without bullying. PREVNet Series (Vol. 3).

Samnani, A. (with P. Singh) (2011). Workplace Bullying: Calling for an Interactionist Approach. Paper presentation at the 2011 Academy of Management Conference, San Antonio, Texas.

Samnani, A. (with P. Singh) (2011). Practicing a Coherent HRM Strategy: Exploring the Fit Perspective. Paper presentation at the Academy of Management Conference, San Antonio, Texas.



Congratulations to Dr. Soosan Latham (School of HRM, York University) on her recently published book, *The Multicultural Leader: Life Stories of Influence and Achievement*

(published by Backalong Books, 2011)

The Multicultural Leader offers a fresh perspective on how leaders in the 21st century think, live and lead. By profiling four of Canada's top leaders—Chair of the Toronto Police Services Board Alok Mukherjee, former Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities Mary Anne Chambers, award-winning architect Siamak Hariri, and designer-turned-Senator Vivienne Poy—Dr. Latham examines what it means to be a multicultural leader today. Along the way, the book delves into the multitude of issues and challenges that leaders face every day and the ways personal history and professional experience combine to create effective leadership that makes a difference in the world. Dr. Latham offers readers an insightful, in-depth look at how leadership grows from a variety of diverse sources to shape cultures and communities today.

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