



12th Petitpas award goes to Latin American

THE WINNER of this year's WFPMA Petitpas award for an outstanding contribution to international HRM is personnel practitioner, lawyer, academic and author Carlos Aldao Zapiola from Argentina.

An employer delegate to the International Labour Organisation since 1992, regularly attending the annual ILO conference in Geneva, he has also played an active role in all relevant professional (HR) associations, having been president successively of the Argentinian Association (ADRHA), the Inter-American Federation (FIDAGH) and from 2002-04 of the World Federation itself.

The Federation's much prized crystal globe will be presented to Carlos Aldao at the World Congress in London this month, just four months short of his sixtieth birthday. This is the 12th such award to be made by the World Federation and the fifth to go to a Latin American.

The Georges Petitpas Memorial Award was established in the mid-1980s in memory of Georges Petitpas, who contributed significantly to the development and activities of the WFPMA and died shortly after his nomination to the WFPMA presidency in 1983. It is presented at the WFPMA World Congress every two years.



Zapiola: passionate about education

The award honours individuals who embody the spirit and dedication to the human resource management profession which Petitpas personified.

In submitting the nomination, then FIDAGH President Paul Rosillon said Carlos Aldao had set the highest standards both for himself and the

profession. His contribution had been recognised not only in Argentina, where he is frequently consulted by the Minister of Labour, but more widely in Latin America and indeed around the world.

Rosillon's successor Horacio Quirós, also a former Argentinian association president, told *WorldLink* that "Working with Carlos both professionally and through the various institutions with which we have both been involved has always been a combination of hard work, demanding thinking, a learning experience and a great pleasure for me.

"They say that, if you want something important done quickly, you should ask a busy person. Carlos is a perfect example of the type of person envisaged – whatever else

he is doing, he will always go that extra mile to help you solve your problem."

For 16 years until its acquisition by a Brazilian group in 2005, Carlos Aldao served as HR and Communications Director on the main board of Loma Negra, Argentina's largest cement company. Before that he worked for US tractor company John Deere as Labour Relations Manager and then as Industrial Relations Director on the board of Revlon – in Brazil, the US and Argentina.

When he parted company with Loma Negra three years ago, he set up his own consultancy, Cazeel, specialising in organisational strategy, labour relations and HR-related issues. He has clients in both the private and public sectors.

Passionate about education and continuing professional development, he is now in his second year of a politics doctorate, having completed a law degree in 1975, and subsequently an MBA, as well as PhDs in social sciences, labour sociology and jurisprudence. He has also attended a number of international courses in Japan, Italy, the USA and Ireland.

Continuing development

But it is not all one-way traffic: a part-time professor for the past quarter century, Carlos Aldao has taught on graduate and

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'Managing talent' is key HR challenge all round the world

FINDING and nurturing the right people is the most critical HR challenge both for fast-growing companies in rapidly developing countries and market leaders in established economies, according to a new survey to be unveiled at the World HR Congress in London this month. Conducted by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) in co-operation with the World Federation of Personnel Management Associations, the study of more than 4,700 executives in 83 countries shows that 'managing talent' is at or near the top of the agenda in every region and every industry.

This issue ranked as the most important HR topic in nine of 17 countries analysed in depth – generally the largest economies in seven different regions around the world, including the United

States, Australia, Singapore, Japan, the United Kingdom and France, and was one of the top three topics in 15 of these countries. Executives from Canada, the US and Europe, for example, claimed they expect their companies to move businesses to new locations to find talent, which, say BCG, is a reflection of more globalisation and competition.

The survey follows on from a Europe-only study of 27 countries conducted last year in association with the European Association for Personnel Management (see article by Michael Leicht *et al* in *WorldLink*, July 2007). The final report, 'Creating people advantage: how to address global challenges in HR through 2015', incorporates the findings from an additional 56 countries and

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WorldLink

welcomes news stories, announcements of events and ideas for articles. These should be accompanied by a telephone number and email address where possible.

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who will succeed

Susanne Lawrence

with effect from the

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Next issue

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provides detailed analysis of the most important HR issues in the 17 'focus' countries and a quick overview of HR conditions in 29 other nations. It also develops profiles of key HR priorities for seven regions. The survey was complemented by over 200 interviews with senior executives.

The three most important HR challenges to emerge from the survey were managing talent, improving leadership development and managing work-life balance. Interviews with executives uncovered a strong connection between these three topics, which the report categorises as 'developing and retaining the best employees'.

Executives in Argentina and Chile, Brazil, Canada, India and Japan all said that managing work-life balance would be one of their key future HR challenges. Three quarters of Canadian executives said that they expect their companies to offer both flexible and part-time working by 2015, while India, which has a young workforce, is focused on managing work-life balance for its young professionals, who have many career options. Most executives expected their companies to respond by offering sabbaticals and teleworking options.

Another key strategic category, defined as 'Anticipating change' – encompasses 'managing demographics' – the fourth most important HR challenge, managing change and cultural transformation, and managing globalisation. In North America, and many European countries, say BCG, companies are trying to prepare for the loss of productivity, capacity and knowledge as employees age and retire. In North America or Germany, executives expect to rely on semi-retired and retired employees to close the capacity gap.

One of the surprising findings of the survey, according to BCG, is that executives in Japan and

China do not recognise that their countries will face a major challenge in replacing retiring employees. Japan is already feeling the effects of an aging workforce, while China's day of reckoning, a direct consequence of the one-child policy implemented in 1979, is still in the future.

Other key findings include the following:

- Improving leadership development is critical in China and India, where companies often lack skilled and experienced leaders to match their ambitious growth plans;
- Corporate social responsibility ranks highly in Russia, where companies acquiring assets in Western Europe are using it to reduce scepticism about their motives and create goodwill;
- Becoming a learning organisation is one of the top three issues in Germany, Japan, South Korea and Spain, all countries facing competition from challengers in rapidly developing economies that are moving into their key markets;
- Managing globalisation is the most critical future HR challenge in South Korea, where the country's economy is increasingly buoyed by export-led growth.

As with the earlier European study, one of the key findings of the survey is that non-HR executives are much more likely to approve of the performance of their HR department if they are able to demonstrate mastery of basic, traditional HR processes and activities, restructuring the organisation and not least recruiting and staffing.

The report identifies ways of enhancing capabilities in each of the highlighted areas of challenge. >>N/P? For access to the report, contact marketing.de@bcg.com

>>1 line to add<<

New worldwide network to share best practice in employing disabled people

THE International Day of Persons with Disabilities is a UN-led awareness-raising day which exists to promote the integration of disabled people into every aspect of life, including work. However, the law and employment practice as related to people with disabilities varies widely around the world.

One of the most prominent and influential organisations working to encourage businesses to adopt best practice is the UK-based Employers' Forum on Disability. Building on the strength and success of its network of UK associates, the EFD chose to mark the most recent UN day with the launch of a worldwide associates network.

The eight members to-date are all leading disabled business people and academics, committed to working to the mutual benefit of disabled people and employers. They are based in Australia, Belgium, Ireland, the Lebanon,

South Africa and the United States.

Twice a year they will take part in a conference call with EFD chief executive Susan Scott-Parker to update each other on what is happening in their part of the world. In addition, as honorary EFD members, the worldwide associates will have access to all the EFD's best practice guidance tools enabling them to share the learning from the UK in their home countries. In turn EFD members in the UK are invited to get in touch with any of the worldwide associates and to make introductions to international colleagues.

Although EFD is a strong advocate of laws to protect disabled people in the workplace, it believes that employers should exercise best practice when creating disability policy.

● For further information contact Victoria.darragh@employers-forum.co.uk

Differentiated decision-making in international HRM

In the battle between global and local, new research reveals the balance tipping increasingly towards globalisation. Here Chris Brewster and Paul Sparrow focus on the relative roles played by electronic systems and by networking in helping international HR professionals adapt to the challenge

Some of the most sophisticated multinational corporations are taking a new look at their international human resource management (IHRM) policies and practices. The balance in the tension between globalised and locally adapted practices is swinging towards a higher demand for globalisation, driven by the need for the centre to be aware of and control operations.

New research* identifies the way that organisations are adapting to these challenges. Early results are now available from the first in-depth case study, based on extensive documentary data, interviews with 20 global senior line and HR managers and their counterparts in the UK, Japan, US, India, Australia, and Spain, collecting network data from many of the key players and an e-survey of more than 300 randomly selected employees.

The research has identified five important issues for corporate decision-making in IHRM. These are the design of international HRM structures and strategies; the role of line managers in HRM; diversity: e-enabled HRM; and use of networking, social capital and knowledge transfer. In this article we expand a little on the last two of these.

E-enabled IHRM

Electronic HRM systems are facilitating, but not driving, the globalisation process. But they do change the terms of engagement between the HRM function, line managers and the employees in the organisation.

HRM departments have been slow to 'get' e-HRM, in many cases going down a route previously trodden by other functions. Typically, the first stage involves centralisation - one system for all - in order to be cost-effective and fair across all countries. This

affects the work of line managers through the controls exercised from the centre. For example, it is now possible for organisations to enforce a 'no increase in salary' policy for employees who have not completed the annual online appraisal forms (and for managers whose staff have not done so).

The impact of decisions about e-enablement can only be seen alongside parallel decisions about optimisation or standardisation of HR processes, the sourcing strategy, how far up the value chain offshore operations might be allowed to advance, and the organisational designs adopted for the residual business.

HR operations are proving more difficult to standardise than finance or information systems. The e-enablement agenda favours standardisation of HR but the need to nurture offshore activities or new business models may paradoxically require local flexibilities. Organisations are learning how to make differentiated decisions across all these elements.

And they make these decisions using different logics. To assess return on investment the shared service community use financial, risk and sensitivity analysis models, factoring in judgements about the complexity of technology, capability, scale and cost of offshore locations, and level of desire for local services. The HR community, however, may be driven by concerns for organisational simplification, the potential to leverage collaborative working and engagement, or equalise learning and understanding, the opportunities for decentralisation of data analysis but also faster conduct of key HR processes. The competing logics need to be communicated across global operations.

If not, centralisation looks like 'headquarters-isation': very few MNCs centralise on the good practice of one of their smaller subsidiaries! It is only later that the potential flexibility of the systems is realised and action taken to tailor the capacity to local requirements.

Networking

What is also clear in our research is that in the continual duality between wanting global integration and being locally responsive, a key bridging mechanism involves networking. HR leadership through networks can facilitate more collaborative solutions,

but this depends on the strategic capability of the function, board-level support and strength of international HR networks. Network and project-based structures have had an impact on the conduct and quality of international HR interventions and the career trajectories of HR professionals.

To provide clarity about the extent to which networks can or need to be local as well as global, or external as well as internal, we have developed tools to assess a range of functions served by the network members, including policy development and implementation, information capture, exploitation of knowledge, sharing of best practice, achieving political buy-in and the socialisation of network members. Face-to-face contact is important in all these cases and is often supplemented by virtual working as a way of signalling more global cultures.

By tracking the actual networks, the validity of existing centres of excellence, regional hubs and strategic project groups can be assessed. Our data show that networking develops both social and political capital.

Social capital leads to trust, ensuring, amongst other things, that the centre knows and trusts the people in the subsidiaries and vice versa. It is very valuable in building on and melding the many cultural norms that exist in a foreign subsidiary.

Political capital leads to legitimacy, so that the actions of people at both ends of the HQ-subsidiary connection will allow the people at the other end a degree of latitude and responsibility. Arguably, this is a crucial step, too, in the development of the much sought-after 'global mindsets'.

Further case studies are under way and anyone interested in being part of the project, with the ability to compare their IHRM with these other organisations, should contact us.

Chris Brewster is Professor of International HRM at the University of Reading and winner of the WFPMA Petipapas Award in 2002. Paul Sparrow is Professor of International HRM and Director of the Centre for Performance-Led HR at the University of Lancaster. They will be speaking on international HRM based on the research referred to here on the morning of 17th April 2008 at the World HR Congress in London

'Networking develops both social and political capital'

*Funded by the CIPD to identify new developments in IHRM since the 2002 CIPD research (see Sparrow, P, Brewster, C. and Harris, H. [2004] *Globalizing Human Resource Management*, Routledge, London)

12th WFPMA World HR Congress

14-17 APRIL 2008 EXCEL LONDON UNITED KINGDOM
Monday 14 April 2008
08:30 Congress registration
09:30 Opening keynote address


Florent Francoeur (above L), President, WFPMA, and Geoff Armstrong (above R), Congress Chairman, Director General, CIPD and Past President, WFPMA

10:30 Panel discussion
The future of global HR

Working together, the WFPMA and Boston Consulting Group have sought to understand the HR issues facing global organisations today and more importantly in the future. What will HR look like in 10 years' time? What roles will HR practitioners have and what skills will they need? How vital will HR be to organisations in 2018? The panel

discussion will focus on the key findings of this new research and explore the strategic implications for organisations. In addition, leading practitioners from around the world will share their views on the changes and challenges that HR faces in the future.

11:20 Coffee
11:50 An audience with Charles Handy
Social philosopher and best-selling author

Charles Handy's books such as *The Age of Unreason, The Elephant and the Flea* and *The New Philanthropists* have sold over a million copies worldwide and fundamentally altered the way individuals and organisations view the world of work and beyond. Recognised as one of the most influential management thinkers, Charles will discuss the impact of people's changing motivations on how they view the work they do and the organisations that employ them.


12:45 Welcome lunch
14:00 Leading clever people

Rob Goffee, Professor of Organisational Behaviour, London Business School and Gareth Jones, Visiting Professor at INSEAD and a Fellow of the Centre for Management Development at London Business School

What Goffee and Jones learned from more than 100 interviews with leaders and their cleverest employees at major organisations such as PricewaterhouseCoopers, Cisco Systems, Novartis and Roche is that the psychological relationships effective leaders have with their clever people are very different from the ones they have with traditional followers. Those relationships can be shaped by seven characteristics that clever people share. By understanding these characteristics and developing the right psychological relationships, you can create a crop of creative minds that will enrich your entire organisation.

See WorldLink, January 2008, page 3 and 4

15:15 Tea
15:45 Beyond HR:
the new science of human capital

John Boudreau, Professor and Research Director, Marshall School of Business and Centre for Effective Organisations, University of Southern California

Is your talent management strategy a unique competitive advantage? John Boudreau will discuss how organisations can uncover distinctive talent contributions, strategically differentiate their HR practices and allocate talent more effectively to create value. He will explore a new decision science called 'talentship' that reveals opportunities by identifying strategy pivot points and help you identify these distinctive pivot points in your organisation.

16:45 Presentation of the WFPMA's Georges Petitpas Award

To recognise exemplary contributors to international human resource management and the achievement of the aims of the World Federation.

17:00 Reception
Tuesday 15 April 2008
SEMINARS 09:30-10:45
A1 M Transformational leadership: discovering the human source

Chair Leatham Green, Assistant Director: Personnel and Training, E Sussex Co Council
Speaker Debashis Chatterjee, Professor, Organisation Behaviour, Indian Institute of Management and Dean, Leadership Center, SP Jain Center of Management, Singapore

A2 CS Coaching with impact

Facilitator Myles Downey, Managing Director, The School of Coaching
Speakers Rick Woodward, Learning and Development Director, Kimberly-Clark, Manus Fullerton, Director of Corporate and Commercial Banking, Lloyds TSB Scotland and Steve McDonald, Head of HR, Lloyds TSB Scotland

A3 CS Applying OD to build organisational capability

Chair Bob Morton, Head of People Development Competence Centre, EMEA and Global Head of OD, Ciba Specialty Chemicals
Speakers Sylvia Baumgartner, Principal Consultant OD, Roffey Park and Marion Fanthorpe, Head of HR Development, London Borough of Camden

A4 H HR's toolkit for the 21st century

Chair John Stone, Chief Executive, The Learning and Skills Network
Speaker Shaun Lincoln, Programme Director of Coaching and Mentoring, Centre for Excellence in Leadership

10:45 Coffee in the exhibition
SEMINARS 11:15-12:30
A5 M Towards positive HRM: views from positive psychology

Chair Alastair Ham, Group Organisational Development Director, Aviva
Speaker Alex Linley, Director, Centre for Applied Positive Psychology

A6 R Coaching: building organisational capability

Chair Victoria Winkler, Learning, Training and Development Adviser, Research and Policy, CIPD
Speakers Ann Knights, Business Director, Ashridge Centre for Excellence in Coaching, Jacqueline Hughes, Head of Training and Development, Human Resources, M&G, Gareth Jones, HR Director, M&G and Jackie Keddy, Lead Consultant Coaching and Action Learning, DCI, Metropolitan Police Service

A7 CS Developing talent

Facilitator Janice Caplan, Partner, The Scala Group and CIPD Vice President, Learning, Training and Development
Speakers David Reay, Learning and Development Manager, Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and Sally Jacobson, Group Director, Human Resources, London and Quadrant Housing Trust

A8 CS Transformational change

Chair Sara Bruck, Vice President Organisational Development, Visa Europe, Visa International

Speakers Lucy Adams, Group HR Director, Serco and Andrew Miller, People, Planning and Development Manager, Services for Communities Department, City of Edinburgh Council

12:30 Lunch and exhibition
SEMINARS 13:45-15:00
A9 M Creating thinking environments

Chair Steve Millbank, Personnel Manager, Learning and Development, John Lewis
Speaker Nancy Kline (right), President, Time to Think


A10 CS Managing self-directed and informal learning

Chair Horacio Eduardo Quirós, Corporate Human Resources Director, Grupo Clarin and President, FIDAGH (InterAmerican Federation of People Management Associations)
Speakers Nick Shackleton-Jones, Manager, Online and Informal Learning, BBC Training and Development and Erland Joergensen, Head of Knowledge, Innovation and Design, Shell Learning

A11 CS Equipping people and organisations for change

Chair Paolo Gallo, Director of Human Resources, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
Speakers Ann Pickering, Head of HR, O2 (UK) and Kenneth Kristensen, Director, Municipality of Halsnæs, Denmark

WORKSHOP 13:45 - 16:45
A12 W Helping people learn

Facilitators Martyn Sloman, Adviser, Learning, Training and Development, CIPD and Carmel Kostos, Leading Learning Consultant and Leadership Coach, Zest for Learning

15:00 Tea in the exhibition
SEMINARS 15:30-16:45
A13 M Bringing creativity and innovation to life

Chair Kate King, Development Consultant
Speaker Tim Smit, Chief Executive and co-founder of the Eden Project

A14 CS Creative change: ways of learning to inspire lasting change

Chair Steven Foulston, HR Manager, The Royal Opera House
Speakers Andres Roberts, Managing Director, Eudemonic and Linda Griffiths, Senior Account Manager, Arts in Business

A15 CS Developing coaching skills for line managers

Facilitator Julie Starr, Starr Consulting
Speaker Caroline Darker, Learning and Development Manager, Selfridges

16:45 Drinks reception
17:00 Exhibition closes

Key

- M** Masterclass
- CS** Case study
- R** CIPD research
- H** 'How to' session
- W** Workshop

Wednesday 16 April 2008

SEMINARS 09:30–10:45

B1 M Creating a culture of engaging leadership



Chair Linda Holbeche, Director of Research and Policy, CIPD
Speaker Beverly Alimo-Metcalfe, Professor of Leadership, School of Management, University of Bradford and Real World Group

B2 CS Right here, right now: high impact training for line managers

Facilitator Sukhwant Bal, Managing Director, Tools for Leading Change
Speaker Rose Hewitt, Learning and Development Manager, EDF Energy

B3 CS Supporting career development

Facilitator/Speaker Wendy Hirsh, Principal Associate, Institute for Employment Studies
Speakers Peter Ganczakowski, Senior HR Business Partner, and Lorna Pringle, HR Development Adviser, Bank of England

B4 CS The secret of our success

Chair Judy Ryder, Director of Organisational Development, Whitefriars Housing Group
Speakers Damian Hughes, Director, LiquidThinker and James Timpson, Managing Director, Timpson

10:45 Coffee in the exhibition

SEMINARS 11:15–12:30

B5 M Mind and brain in the 21st century

Chair Martin Ferber, Executive Director International HR, Pfizer
Speaker Guy Sutton, Director and Honorary Lecturer, Medical Biology Interactive and University of Nottingham Medical School

B6 CS Creating leadership cultures

Chair Siobhan Sheridan, Head of HR, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Speakers Martin Tiplady, Director of Human Resources, Metropolitan Police Service and CIPD Vice President, Diversity and Bill Griffiths, Director of Leadership Development, Metropolitan Police Service

B7 R Ten years of changing trends in learning and development

Chair Jimmy Naudi, Global Head of Learning and Development, Christian Aid
Speakers Daniel Wain, Founder/Director, Daniel Wain Consulting Ltd and Graham O'Connell, Head of Organisational Learning and Standards, National School of Government

B8 CS The talent crunch

Chair Debbie Hunter, Head of Learning and Development, Oxfam

Speakers David Arkliss, Senior Vice President – Global Corporate Affairs, Manpower and Tracy Gu, Staffing Director, Lenovo Group

12:30 Lunch and exhibition

SEMINARS 13:45–15:00

B9 M Re-energising the organisation: how to make change happen

Chair Geoff Armstrong, Director General, CIPD
Speakers Jonas Ridderstråle (left), Visiting Professor, Ashridge Business School and Mark Wilcox, Director and Founder, RedThread Consulting



B10 CS Management innovation

Chair Alan Matcham, Executive Director, Management Lab, London Business School
Speakers Mike Lloyd, President, Gas Turbine Operations, Rolls-Royce and Liane Hornsey, HR and Staffing Director, EMEA, Google

B11 R The value of learning

Facilitator/Speaker Martyn Sloman, Adviser, Learning, Training and Development, CIPD
Speakers John Castledine, Director, Global Lead for Learning and Development, Pfizer Global Research and Development and Ian Tegerdine, Associate Director, Education and Research, Birmingham Children's Hospital, NHS Foundation Trust

B12 CS Intelligent leadership

Chair Jackie Orme, Chief Executive, CIPD
Speakers Pentti Sydänmaanlakka, Author and Managing Director, Pertec Consulting Oy and Karsten Hetland, Vice President, HR, Nokia

15:00 Tea in the exhibition

SEMINARS 15:30–16:45

B13 M Killercultures: from indifference to making a difference

Chair Steve Crabb, Editor, People Management magazine
Speaker Max McKeown, Leadership, Strategy and Innovation Consultant

B14 CS E-learning: will blogs, wikis, social networks and virtual worlds change the future of learning?

Chair Karen Ver, e-learning Manager, CIPD
Speakers Clive Shepherd, e-learning Director, the Training Foundation, Richard Jordan, Head of Employer Brand, Ernst and Young LLP and Kate Day, Director, European Market Sales Enablement, Cisco

B15 CS Aligning learning and development with business objectives

Chair Martin Howe, Group Training and Development Manager, Cega Group
Speakers John Love, Director Governance and Strategy, City of Wanneroo, Western Australia and Antony Thomas, Regional HR Head – Middle East, Bovis Lend Lease International

17:00 Exhibition closes

19:30 Gala dinner

Thursday 17 April 2008

SEMINARS 09:30–10:45

C1 M How to give your organisation a new brain

Chair Florent Francoeur, WFPMA President and chief executive of the Quebec HR Association, a member of the Canadian Council of Human Resources Associations
Speaker Daniel Pink, Columnist and author of A Whole New Mind

C2 R Managing change during mergers and acquisitions

Chair Michael McDonnell, Director, CIPD in Ireland
Speakers Tony Edwards, Reader in Comparative HRM, King's College London and Satish Pradhan, Executive Vice President – Group HR, Tata Sons

C3 H Cultural differences in learning and development



Chair Siobhan Cummins, Managing Director Europe, ORC Worldwide and CIPD Vice President International
Speaker Fernando Sánchez-Arias (left), President and CEO, Odinamica

WORKSHOP 09.30 – 12.30

C4 W Training design

Facilitator Don Greenwood, Learning and Development Consultant, Metice Development Solutions

10:45 Coffee in the exhibition

SEMINARS 11:15–12:30

C5 M The impact of China on the world and UK economy

Chair Duncan Brown, Director, PricewaterhouseCoopers
Speaker Linda Yueh (right), Fellow in Economics, University of Oxford



C6 CS Improving organisational performance

Chair Tiisetso Tsukudu (below left), Tsukudu Associates and President, African Federation of Human Resource Management Associations (AFHRMA)



Speakers Kamal Birdi, Lecturer in Occupational Psychology, Institute of Work Psychology, University of Sheffield and Vikki Matthews, Global Director, Talent Development, Nike

C7 R International HRM

Chair Frances Wilson, International Research Manager, CIPD
Speakers Paul Sparrow, Professor of International HRM, Director, Centre for Performance-led HR, University of Lancaster, Chris Brewster, Professor of International HRM, University of Reading and Mark Sandham, Global Head of HR Operations, Reuters

12:30 Lunch and exhibition

SEMINARS 13:45–15:00



C8 M In conversation with Alastair Campbell

Interviewer Francine Stock, Presenter, Head to Head, BBC News 24
Interviewee Alastair Campbell (pictured), Prime Minister's Director of Communications and Strategy 1997–2003

C9 H What CEOs want from HR

Chair Mike Hutter, Managing Director, The British School of Motoring
Speaker Stephen Harrison, Chairman, Lee Hecht Harrison

C10 CS Building a learning culture

Chair Kim Birnie, Managing Director, Leap Ahead Limited
Speakers Caroline Prendergast, Head of Training and Development, BBC and Geraldine Grainger, Head of Learning and Development, John Lewis

C11 H Maximising employee engagement through learning and development

Chair Mike Emmott, Employee Relations Adviser, CIPD
Speaker David MacLeod, Visiting Professor of the Cass Business School, City University

15:00 Visit the exhibition

16:00 Event close



Using recruitment and selection as an example, Professor John Boudreau explains how a 'decision science' approach to international HR policy can render the 'consistency' versus 'flexibility' debate relatively redundant



The power of a good framework in global talent management

To what degree should employment practices vary across different contexts, countries, regions, etc? Should one have a different staffing policy in places where it is the custom for supervisors to provide jobs for their own family and friends? Should an organisation set remuneration levels for jobs globally at a certain percentile or should they allow remuneration levels to vary by country? To what extent should the best talent in one country or division be made available to other countries or divisions in the interest of developing global leaders, even if that means that those supplying the talent may suffer lower performance by giving up their best people?

Most organisations are awash with inventive HR practices. There are always a variety of possible practices that might be applied to solve talent issues, and new variations that might best serve the needs of a particular country or region, considered in isolation. The implementation of variations is often resisted by the home country and by centralised organisations on grounds of cost or the need for control through consistency. HR leaders supporting the regions argue that they must have the ability to customise for their particular situation, while those at headquarters argue that variations will cost too much and make it harder to manage talent across borders.

It was because of the profusion of practices and relative paucity of guiding logic that in

our book 'Beyond HR' Pete Ramstad and I proposed the need for what we call a 'decision science' for talent.¹

A decision science approach suggests that 'Should our HR practices be consistent or different across business units and regions' may actually be the wrong question. International HR has often focused on variation in HR practices, but a decision science approach would argue for something different.

To see the power of a decision science approach to the question of global HR practices, consider how other professional functions, such as finance, marketing and operations approach these issues. To be sure, these disciplines have not fully solved the question, but they offer

tantalising clues to a different approach.

The key is that these functions often develop *frameworks* and decision models that span business units, regions and divisions, even if the practices are different. All business units use return-on-investment to help optimise decisions about money. All business units use market-segmentation to help optimise decisions about customers and offerings. All business units use principles of process constraints to help optimise decisions about the supply chain.

This does not mean rigidly adhering to standardised practices, but it does mean adopting a shared decision model. If the return-on-investment is sufficient, a given country may well make a case for investing

money in improved manufacturing equipment, while overall the organisation is not investing heavily in manufacturing. If the market-segmentation analysis reveals a sufficiently promising regional customer base, that region may be allowed to implement advertising practices that are different from others. The key is that each country uses a similar decision-making model, so that the decisions can be discussed, compared and ultimately made with greater understanding. The practices vary where it is appropriate, based on a common decision-making model used to diagnose the situations.

What if we took this approach to decisions about talent and HR?

It would mean that HR leaders would develop general frameworks to guide decisions – frameworks based on grounded scientific principles of human behaviour, just as financial and marketing decision frameworks are grounded in principles of economics and consumer behaviour.

How do such frameworks or decision principles differ from broad HR policy guidelines or even so-called HR strategy? Well, in most of my experience and reading, HR decision principles are often practice-specific and based on compliance rules, such as 'pay at the 50th percentile' or 'the following are approved selection tests' or 'employees are eligible for up to 10 hours of training after one year'.

These are general guidelines to be sure, but they do not really operate in the same way as decision frameworks in other disciplines. Finance expects leaders in all units to use 'internal rate of return', even if specific financing activities may vary. In the world of talent, such more advanced decision models might include something like, 'analyse the payoff from above-market pay by considering the response of the target talent pool, the ability to identify and land the

HR decision principles are often practice-specific and based on compliance rules, such as 'pay at the 50th percentile'

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better candidates, and the impact of performance on the role they will play.

Moreover, it is not always necessary to invent these models from scratch and, as an added bonus, the use of existing models creates collaboration between leaders inside and outside the HR function.

For example, the supply-chain model applies to talent management decisions just as it does to raw materials, unfinished goods or technology (for details, see ² and 'Beyond HR', Chapter 7).

Supply-chain analysis optimises supply chain elements to achieve desired outcomes with the minimum of resources. If the quality of raw materials drops, supply chain logic compares the value of things like switching suppliers, more careful screening of deliveries or adjusting manufacturing processes to handle lower quality materials. Supply-chain analysis isn't about one-size-fits-all but about making the right decision. Every country and region may have

a somewhat different emphasis in their supply-chain practices, depending on where their bottlenecks are, but they can all use the same decision framework to achieve that optimisation.

Consider the talent sourcing process. In the book we describe the talent supply chain as a series of labour pools: (1) a 'potential labour pool' of individuals who might amass the right qualifications; (2) a 'labour pool' of individuals who have actually achieved the right qualifications; (3) an 'applicant pool' of individuals from the labour pool, who apply to your organization; (4) a 'candidate pool' of those applicants you have screened and selected to receive offers; (5) a 'new-hire pool' of those that accept your offers; and (6) a 'productive employee pool' of those who accept your offer and develop into fully productive employees.

When a line leader in a particular region complains that they have inferior or insufficient talent, regional HR departments often too quickly search for a practice-based solution, without the full insight of supply chain principles. HR often responds by enhancing interviews or tests and presenting evidence about the improved validity, even when a more effective solution would be to keep the same testing practice but recruit from sources where average talent quality is higher. GE does this when it recruits military officers, allowing the military selection and

development system to build a candidate pool that matches GE's needs.

Or, consider what happens when business leaders end up with too few filled requisitions and instruct HR to increase recruitment. HR is often too eager to answer with more recruiting activities, when in fact the number of candidates presented to business leaders is already sufficient. The problem is that the leaders too few filled requisitions might be poor at getting good candidates to accept offers. The better answer may be to improve the performance of the leaders who cause candidates to reject offers! This may be a difficult message for leaders to hear and for HR to deliver. Too often, the relative power of the HR leader and business leader lead

to regional or divisional differences that are not rational responses to a supply issue, but simply reflect tradition or power.

Measuring the costs and returns to staffing activities can provide a more rational basis for discussion (for staffing

measurement formulae, see chapter 10 of 'Investing in People'³).

An overly-customised approach that lacks a guiding model can result in many different HR practices across regions that may not actually address the right talent supply-chain elements. Or, if centralised HR organisations too eagerly require conformity to one preferred set of practices, they risk imposing practices that fail to address the specific regional talent supply-chain elements. Without a shared guiding framework, such decisions revert to copying best practices, granting exceptions where there is the greatest persuasive power, or imposing rigid rules.

There is great credibility in the supply-chain logic, consistently applied to talent sourcing dilemmas across regions and units. The logic that one should avoid additional recruiting until one has the capability to get good candidates to accept job offers is no different from the logic that one should not try to fix a manufacturing operation that produces too much waste by blaming the supplier!

Leaders are accustomed to applying this kind of consistent logic to optimise the supply chain, when it comes to raw materials, unfinished goods and technology, regardless of the region or business unit. Why not adopt the same approach to talent sourcing? Moreover, if models like the supply-chain

approach are applied uniformly across divisions, countries and regions, they have the potential to reveal logical reasons for standardising versus customising the particular practices.

Now consider your own global talent analysis and measurement systems. Can those systems tell you which stages in your talent supply chain hold the best opportunities to enhance end-state talent quality or quantity? Can you map the talent supply-chain stages described above? Can you tell whether better recruiting would have a bigger effect than improved testing? Can you tell which of your leaders do a great job landing top talent and which could improve? Are these systems applied consistently across regions, countries and business units?

If so, you're ahead of most organisations, competing for and with talent. If not, you may be guilty of diligently applying good individual talent sourcing practices, but missing the opportunity to optimise them.

By extending the talent management paradigm towards a decision science, the HR profession is better able to provide frameworks that usefully guide decisions about practices rather than become trapped in perennial arguments about whether particular practices should be customised or standardised.

The better answer may be to improve the performance of the leaders who cause candidates to reject offers!

► PETIPAS AWARD continued from page 1

undergraduate courses at several universities and business schools and is currently a professor in both strategic HRM and labour negotiation, as well as being director of the Masters in HRM at the Escuela de Direccion de Empresas in his home town of Buenos Aires. He has also recently been a consultant to an Argentinian national commission on university course design.

He has written two and co-authored a further three books, predominantly in the industrial and labour relations field, and had more than 80 papers published in professional and specialist magazines in Argentina and elsewhere.

WFPMA Past President and Chair of the Petipas judging panel Geoff Armstrong told *WorldLink*: "Carlos has played a leading role on behalf of the HR profession both in Latin America and internationally. His work through the World Federation and for the International Labour Organisation has been widely acclaimed. We are delighted to honour him with the WFPMA Petipas Award."

at present, 5 lines short>>

References and further reading:

¹ John W. Boudreau and Peter M. Ramstad. *Beyond HR: the new science of human capital*, Boston: Harvard Business School Publishing, 2007.

² John W. Boudreau and Peter M. Ramstad. *Beyond cost-per-hire and time-to-fill: supply-chain measurement for staffing*. Center for Advanced Human Resource Studies, Working Paper 01-16. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University, 2001. Also available as Center for Effective Organizations working paper #G04-16. www.marshall.usc.edu/web/CEO.cfm?doc_id=7056

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Tel: +353 1 653 0400
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