

The background is a collage of three images. On the left, a woman with long brown hair is looking at a laptop. In the center, a person is holding a smartphone. On the right, a man in a suit is talking on a mobile phone. The entire image has a dark, semi-transparent overlay.

# #strongerHR

**VOLUME ONE**

# ABOUT #strongerHR

HR is stronger, *together*.

That's what I've seen in the last 10-plus years and it's never been more true than in the last few months. We've seen some amazing HR talent, those who do the tough work of finding and acquiring organizational talent, end up on the job seeker side recently through no fault of their own. The goal of this #strongerHR initiative is to showcase some of their capabilities, insights, and perspectives.

If you are looking for qualified HR talent with a position—a stance on the things that matter in the workplace—then we are hoping to share their stories with the broader world. There is one that aligns with your culture, values, and business needs. We'd love to help you find them.

Each page in this eBook highlights a different professional and an HR topic they are passionate about. Thank you to each participant for sharing their time and expertise with us.

*Ben Eubanks*



# HOLLY PENNEBAKER

**in** hollypennebaker

## EMPLOYER BRANDING REQUIRES NEW THINKING

As businesses tackle the uncertainty of a global pandemic, leaders must modernize their employer brands to attract job seekers who now find culture as important as pay.

During a crisis environment, it takes a culture of wellbeing, purpose and belonging to draw top candidates. Disruption sounds like an understatement these days, which means companies must innovate and make evident to potential talent that their culture will align with candidates' renewed values of safety, and mental and emotional health.

Pandemic or not, we're living in a candidate's market and they demand strategic action, rich

communication, and a caring company to call home in the face of life-changing crises. Companies failing to deliver on their commitment to a culture of wellbeing are those most likely to face retention troubles.

Plus, employees who've kept their jobs despite the impacts of COVID-19 are a company's most ideal, in-house loudspeakers. Living out the promise of an employer brand is even more important than the messaging itself, so tap into current employees to tell real stories of satisfaction with and success at work.

Leaders must confidently try new ideas for their employer brand to

recruit and keep valuable talent, as the priorities of that talent are changing. Don't fear revamping an employer brand message to reach candidates based on their career stage and path, industry and job history, and talent profile. This is a time to grip the emotional aspects of candidates, going above and beyond the traditional, outdated checklist of salary, benefits and advancement opportunities. Today it's deeper than that—an employer brand must promise support, a mission that candidates can align with, and a forward-looking strategy in the new world of work

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**KRISIE  
TURNER**

**in** krisieturner1208

## TRAINING CAN BOND OR BREAK US

Are we hiring the right people? This is paramount to training and making sure that you have a good fit for your company and its culture. Make sure that they have the background you are looking for that will benefit both the company and the new employee. There is nothing worse than hiring a good person and putting them in the wrong job; which may confuse, overwhelm, and frustrate them. That person more than likely will quit shortly after being hired, and will cost you more time, money, and stress.

Do you have a comprehensive training program? This is the most vicious part of the cycle. This is where the metal meets the flesh, and where we have the greatest opportunity to bond and build a strong relationship with this new person who we are hoping will be an asset to our team, to help us as a company grow and succeed.

Think back to when you got hired at your last job. Did they throw you to the wolves or did they go step by step and make sure you were prepared for your new job? This is where you

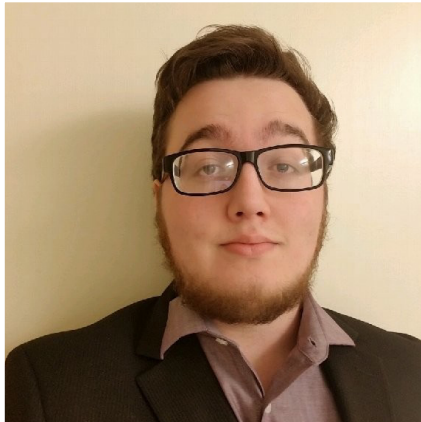
will lose or gain their confidence and their loyalty.

Who doesn't appreciate the feeling of accomplishing a new task successfully? As HR, it is our job to ensure that we are training correctly for their success and for our staff's happiness. Staff's happiness? Yes! Our teams want to be successful and want a cohesive working team.

This leads me to my final point and question. How much follow up did you do during their training? It is our job to ensure that they are learning their job correctly and are able to do their tasks successfully. The most important part of this is that you and the new employee are bonding, and they see that you (the company) care about them which builds fidelity with them. This will make for a more unified team who works well together and trusts you.

*Training does work when you put the time and effort into it.*

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# STEPHEN MAGLIARO

**in** [stephen-magliaro-69129213b](#)

## THE HR MYSTERY BOX

Human Resources is akin to a mystery box. You know, those things you can sign up for in the mail? Basically, a company will send you a box with undisclosed contents from a theme of your choosing. This is the way I feel most individuals not familiar with the industry view a company's HR department before meaningfully interacting with them for the first time.

They know the theme of the box they are signing up for (benefits, training, talent, policy, work environment, etc.) and perhaps the capability they are interacting with the box in (asking for a raise, developing a department

onboarding, checking to see if their work relationship is against policy, etc.) but they may not be quite certain of how that interaction will go or what the result will be.

Will they open the box and receive an all-expenses paid trip to their dream vacation spot, or a picture of it on a postcard?

The combination of hope and worry is a common thing for some contacting their HR department. It doesn't have to be common though. That is why I love HR. The ability to create a box that gets people excited when they think about it or open it instead

of making them anxious; letting the people who work within your organization focus on developing themselves and their team instead of worrying over the things that prevent them from doing so.

The ability to create an environment where individuals are more than content, and performance increase stems from a sense of safety and willingness; where they know they will receive proper training, they will be taken care of if they are injured, their team will be competent, and their drive will be rewarded.

*HR done right is a mystery box of positive possibilities*



NINA  
XUE

in nxue123

## CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE MATTERS

As an in-house recruiter for a global education startup company, the first lesson I learned is that candidate experience matters. Having been on both sides of the table as the interviewer and as the candidate, I've witnessed practices that should be applauded and methods that have led me to raise an eyebrow.

Let's start with the good.

A great candidate experience is when both parties, regardless of the outcome, feel excited to have connected. Conversations are naturally flowing, both parties are respectful to each other, response times and/or polite rejections are sent out in a timely manner, and the door is left open for exploration of future opportunities.

However, nowadays, due to the volume of recruiting and the skyrocketing unemployment rate, job seekers are getting ghosted left and right, hiring managers are unsure as to whether they have the budget to bring on full-time

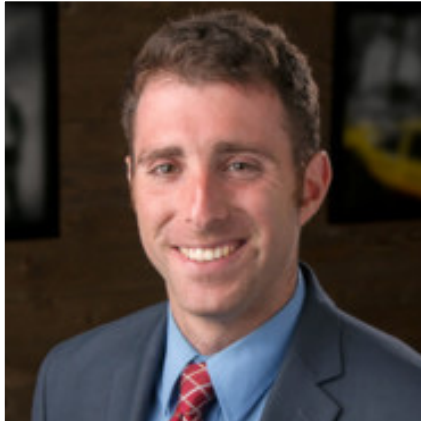
employees, and frankly, interview methods of a select few up-and-coming corporations who think they're the next Google leave much to be desired.

To employers: Be more conscious in your hiring needs. Make sure you have the budget to bring someone on board and know exactly what type of candidate you are looking for before the job description gets posted. Keep track of your talent pool. Send out automated rejection letters to candidates who don't make it to the phone screen round. Call finalists and your final pick to provide them with updates and/or soft rejections.

Let's put the "human touch" back in recruiting and do our best to give each job seeker a great experience.

It's as simple as *treating others the way you want to be treated* when you're the candidate yourself.

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# ADAM ROSENFELD

 adamjrosenfield

## FIVE ATTRIBUTES OF NEXT GEN HR LEADERS

The next wave of HR leaders is not going to be like the current leaders, and company leadership must understand that. While many companies still view HR in an “HR” sense, the next wave of human resources leaders are truly going to be “People Operations” leaders.

1. Compliance won’t be their main strength, but they’ll know the resources they need in order to master those concepts.

2. Communication is key for this new leader, but more importantly, the cultural nuances are critical.

3. The new HR leaders have a greater focus on culture and what employees add to an organization,

rather than how they “fit”, figuring out how they can customize and maximize an employee’s time at a company. These employees will truly be “resources for humans”, more employee advocates than anything. That may scare executives, but the forward-thinking ones know that those who do well by their employees will always win the retention game.

4. These new leaders are a different breed of HR. While HR is traditionally about withholding information, these new leaders believe in transparency - they feel that open source is truly the way to create and exchange information, including using pay equity as a way to create an inclusive organization.

5. These leaders are going to take a stand. Equity is most important to these leaders, but equality is important too. While they are forward-thinking when it comes to Black Lives Matter, Pride, corporate social responsibility, other world issues, and creating inclusive spaces, they know not to ostracize people based on their beliefs... Unless it negatively affects the work of others or the business. They are truly barrier breakers. You will find these HR leaders out protesting and taking a stand on issues they believe in, because they know it not only may impact them, but also the business and the workforce.





# RADHIKA KRISHNAN



radhika-krishnan-549741a9

## EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE IN THE AGE OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Employee experience (EX) is emerging as one of the top trends to look out for in the 2020 digital transformation. EX is not about any one thing; it is the sum of all work-related experiences that employees undergo over a period of time. It includes employee perceptions about their workplace, relationships developed, recognition given, milestones achieved and other environmental factors.

Traditionally the focus has always been on creating the best customer experience (CX) to achieve organizational success, and EX was given a back seat. Researchers such as Gallup have proven the correlation

between higher employee engagement and positive customer ratings. It is time for companies to realize this relationship and create a compelling employee experience.

Employees define the future of work, so it is important for employers to commit to a long-term investment in the workforce. Investments in the form of flexible work arrangements, enabling them digitally with the latest tools and technology, providing them with meaningful work, etc., can be key to greater employee engagement and business performance.





**JOVONNA  
PALMER**

**in** jovonna-palmer

## WHAT DOES GREAT HR LEADERSHIP LOOK LIKE?

### *Communication is Key:*

HR Leaders need to communicate well with senior leadership and employees and encourage communication and transparency throughout the organization. Providing open lines of communication between all parties is an essential best practice for any organization. An HR leader needs to effectively work with other leaders within the organization from entry-level employees to senior executives. Having this soft skill, an HR leader can provide guidance on a range of HR issues and influence new ways of doing things to improve the organization's operations.

### *Having a Forward-Thinking/Strategic Mindset:*

Planning for the future of the workforce and aligning HR goals with the business goals/objectives is exhibiting a forward-thinking/strategic mindset. HR Leaders can identify opportunities for attracting and retaining top talent, as well as make positive changes to the organization's culture. HR leaders have become strategic business partners with a seat at the leadership table. Possessing skills in business acumen and strategic thinking are key competencies when transitioning towards a forward-thinking mindset.

### *Ethical Behavior/Being Trustworthy:*

HR leaders must have a character that is of honesty, integrity, and high ethical standards. Having these qualities will build trust with the employees and leaders within the organization. Ethical businesses have a high moral code and expect honest and trustworthy behavior from everyone within the business. Being an ethical HR leader means being confident in your decisions and effectively communicating them to employees. Understanding where the organization stands on this issue is critical. Once this has been defined, the HR leader can respond properly and maintain their employees' trust and respect.



# SHELLY WOODS

**in** shellywoods

## HARNESSING THE POWER OF AI FOR COMPENSATION MATTERS

Some people may be wondering why would they want to extract the power of AI (artificial intelligence) from their HRMS system for compensation management? And the short answer quite simply is, to make better decisions that are unbiased by utilizing and integrating the right data points when setting up your HRMS platform.

When HR analytics became a thing, most of us thought of it in terms of keeping all the people data in one place to track necessary compliance items. Yet, your HR system gives you the ability to produce people and talent analytics which can be gathered from the data points specified to make unbiased decisions.

What most companies overlook when setting up the system is tying the data received to the strategic goals of the company. It is the strategic goals and initiatives that are linked to each department and employee by specific data points. Those data points can include:

1. Engagement analysis
2. 360 reviews
3. Learning initiatives
4. Project status
5. Current real time market rates
6. Skills needed for the future

Utilizing these data points or any other data points needed can provide a company with an accurate compensation recommendation for the employee that is unbiased by other outside influences.

Can those recommendations be overridden? Why yes, yes, they can.

Yet with most companies wanting to be transparent, most managers will go with the recommendation produced. At the same time the employee also has the ability to see what the current market value is for their position along with the minimum, mid-point, and maximum pay for their position and where their salary fits into the model. Thus, giving both the company and the employee real-time true ownership of how their role played a part in the company either achieving or missing the strategic goals outlined.

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MOLLY  
SHELTON

**in** molly-shelton

## EIGHT TIPS FOR MAINTAINING COMPANY CULTURE IN THE REMOTE WORK ERA

In March 2020, millions of employees were suddenly thrust into working from home as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. HR professionals everywhere activated their superpowers, helping organizations prepare for massive changes and helping employees and managers deal with the disruption to their normal working lives.

Among many critically important questions on the minds of leaders was, "How will we maintain our great company culture when we aren't in the same physical space anymore?"

As HR leaders, we know that culture doesn't just happen. It's deliberate and based on the organization's values and leadership, among many other things. HR has an important role in shepherding it throughout the organization. Without the benefit of in-person interactions, how do we now foster that culture in a remote work environment? This process also must be deliberate; here are a few ideas to consider:

1. **Communicate** – loads more than when everyone was together. This includes regular all-hands, team, and individual check-ins.
2. Definitely **use video** – after in person, it's the next best thing.

3. Make sure **everyone is included** and has a voice in team calls.

4. Determine what **office perks** can be altered for remote work. Ship company swag to homes? Or favorite coffee, snacks, etc?

5. **Train managers** on leading teams remotely; they're on the front lines and can make or break your culture.

6. Transform your **recruiting and onboarding** processes to be remote friendly.

7. **Trust** your employees; focus on results, not the clock. Trust will go a long way toward happier, more productive employees.

8. **Have fun!** Provide employees with the tools and opportunities to engage in virtual social activities to help them stay engaged with their colleagues and maintain their sense of team.

Whether a company decides to safely return to the office or continue remote work indefinitely, it is possible to maintain your culture as long as there's a deliberate plan to support it. HR can lead the way!

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# KAYLA MONCAYO

**in** kaylamoncayo

## HANDLING THE DARK SIDE OF HR

Voices raised, pulses pounding, sweat pooling, gasping as embarrassment or accountability or trauma suffocates them – that’s where my career has found itself with employees every single day. We label it Employee Relations, or the dark side of HR; I call it the biggest honor of my life.

Let me present this humble opinion—there is only one right way to handle Employee Relations. I do not believe in a multi-faceted approach, nor have I seen other strategies work in my career. The only approach I have ever seen that generates light out of the darkest places in HR is an approach where **dignity**

and **justice** are the ultimate goals. Tactical strategies will never work or produce remarkable companies if dignity and justice aren’t the focus of it all.

Dignity is that essential human part of “human resources” which ethically mandates us to give these humans respect in all processes, every time, no matter that human’s state. Justice is that required dedication to pushing out our own bias, refusing to be pressured by the bias of others (including the C-Suite), and doing our jobs as legally and morally just as possible. Both dignity and justice are compulsory for Employee Relations victories.

The dark side of HR holds these treasures of life that few of us get to witness. It holds these nuggets of gold where scared employees come forward, where deficiencies are improved, and communication is prioritized. These messy, awfully human parts are the parts that fuel powerful legislation that improve working conditions for the children I’m going to raise one day: the children you may be raising now. The battles of consistently providing dignity while maintaining a fair and just HR practice are the battles where heroes are forged. These are the spaces where impact is felt, and HR is truly, humanly powerful.

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