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**The Future of Human Resources – Trends,  
Reflections and Strategies.**

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## **The Future of Human Resources – Trends, Reflections and Strategies.**

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### **Abstract**

The future of human resource management will be effected by several factors. The basic tasks of a human resource manager have and will remain the same, but the way these tasks are conducted will change. The two key factors which have been the main focus of this research paper are globalization and technological development. Globalization and technological development are stimulating each other and are both necessary for continuous development and economic growth in the world of business. This paper will be looking at the effects of these two factors with regards of human resource management and how it will affect the future. This paper concludes that; to remain competitive in the industry, organizations need to address their HR issues by ensuring the employee's needs are met and streamlining transactions. Reshaping the future of the HR requires organizations to manage change. The HR will provide the business with the needed insights that are actionable and data-driven to enable better decision-making that will drive business to success.

**Key Words:** *Globalization, Technological development, Human Resource Management, Employee's Need, Future, Data Driven, Better decision-making, Organizations.*

## **Section One: Trends and Implications.**

### **Introduction**

A lot has changed in human resource management over the last five to ten years. The world of business isn't what it was, and it is still changing at an incredible pace. We have moved from pencils and papers into the era of computers. Some companies have fallen, while others have thrived in these times of change and grown beyond their borders. The way we do business has changed. Along with it, the way human resource management is conducted has to change too. The future of human resource management is uncertain, and there are two factors that will contribute the most; the effect of globalization and the rapid development in technology (Losey, Meisinger, & Ulrich, 2005).

The main tasks of human resource managers are still the same, but the way they are done has changed completely. Take the hiring process for example, about five to ten years ago no one was hiring new employees over the internet. Except maybe some low-paying, part-time workplaces where the employers were just looking for someone to "fill a spot", but look how the tables have turned! There isn't a single successful company out there who isn't utilizing the internet for hiring purposes of some sort. Many companies are hiring almost exclusively through online application services. The world of business is evolving, and the world of human resource management is evolving alongside with it. Look at where we were ten years ago and imagine where we might be ten years from now.

### **Technological development**

The evolution of HR technology has, over the last decade, helped many companies reduce their overall cost dramatically. The evolution of HR technology has been through four periods. First there was the paper-based systems; when all information was written down and all a company had was physical storage, often without insurance. The second period is the early personal computer era. Where information was written down on computers and stored on in-house servers. In the third period the computers were already well established, but the use of online services beyond emails and fax was nonexistent. The final period, and the period we are in now is the web-based technology period. More and more of HR managers and employees are recorded and store in online services, and at the employees own convenience (Losey *et al.*, 2005).

Technology is one of the most helpful and exciting parts human resource development. The things technology can do is limitless and especially helpful to the many changes we see human resource management today, and probably will see in the future. HR technology is used as a term to define any technology that can be used to hire, retain, attract and maintain human resources as well as supporting HR administration and optimize the overall work of HRM. Technology can be applied to every aspect of an HR manager's job.

The development of technology has made the processes of gathering, retaining, and analyzing data a whole lot faster. It also helps communication between branches and divisions which is essential for HR departments around the world. An HR department can spend more time and money on meaningful activities which can help the company be more successful, rather than doing time-consuming administrative work. Providing managers and executives with information to help them make more effective HR-related decisions. Administrative work is just as important looking at the big picture, but is less helpful on a day-to-day basis and can be very time consuming.

There is no doubt that companies with effective HR technology systems and technology will have an advantage over companies who are not utilizing the full potential of technology. An effective HR system or technology doesn't necessarily mean the newest or most expensive alternative out there. Each company or organization must determine what works best for them. Smaller companies might be just as efficient using a simpler system rather than spending money and other resources on a complicated system which requires costly training and understanding. The same goes to the bigger companies who might not have a good and sophisticated enough system to take on the huge amount of data that they have. It is all about finding the right technology and system for the company to maximize the performance.

### **Globalization**

Globalization is the other main contributor to change in the business world and in human resource management. The term globalization is not easily defined because it is so broad and influences so many areas. Globalization is the establishment of multi-national corporations. Corporations move their business across country borders and begin operation in a new market. Even though the corporation headquarter might stay in the country of origin. There are both positive and negative sides to globalization.

The world is currently moving in a direction where we have fewer, but bigger companies. Larger companies have the option to globalize on a massive scale. When companies or corporations move across national borders one of the first things they must do is to hire employees for their new locations. They can choose to either outsource, hire employees from outside the company or insource which is moving or choosing employees within the company to manage these new locations. Having these two options increases the size of labor pool from which they can choose. This is a good thing, but it makes the work of HR managers even more important. Outsourcing is a great way to obtain a diverse workforce which is naturally integrated in the local community, but it also has the risk of running into some barriers.

Language and cultural barriers are two of the most common challenges a company and their HR department faces when moving to a new country. Human resource managers must adapt to the different customers and cultures when they are hiring new employees in these new countries. The language barriers may require the "mother company" to hire employees with knowledge of both languages in order to get their message across and make sure that their new employees understand their training. It might also be necessary to adapt documentation, such as manuals and training material into different languages so that these new employees fully understand their tasks and responsibility.

In order for a business to be successful it needs good employees. In order to get good employees a company needs to provide them with the proper training. Moving a business to another country, with a different culture and maybe even languages gives the HR managers a few extra difficulties when it comes to training. Some job cultures can be very traditional and set in their ways. It is therefore important for HR managers to spend a good amount of time to ensure that the whole process runs smoothly. Consulting with, or even hire employees from the local population with knowledge of the two languages can be of great help when a training program is put together.

Lastly, companies need to apply and understand the laws of many different jurisdictions to the particular business. There may also be legal issues with moving a business to a different county. Labor laws can be very different from one country to another. With increasing



globalization HR managers must be familiar with these laws so that the company doesn't get in trouble with the law when they hire and write contracts with local employees. More often than not a company will not be able to use the same contracts and the same matrix for hiring in different countries and it is the HR manager's responsibility to know these things in order for the company to make the right decisions.

There are several positive effects of globalization. The corporation will encounter a more diverse workforce as well as economic growth in the country they move their business to. However, there is a backside, if a company only moves jobs from one country to another rather than creating new ones, the job growth in one country will equal the job loss in another. Human resource managers must be aware of the negative effects downsizing or job moving can have on the employee morale. A decrease in job moral leads to a decrease in production which is bad for the overall output of the company. It is an HR manager's job to be on top of issues like this. They have to be prepared for them and have a plan on how to tackle moral issues. A company's "out of the country branch" are often the first to get cut in the event of a major decrease in company value or if the company must reduce costs. HR managers will therefore have to have a plan for such situation, and have the knowledge of how to handle them in a legal and ethical way.

Nowadays, the future of the activities, departments and professionals of human resources are much less clear. Many professionals argue that HR issues take more importance in business activities, such as key competence, intellectual capital, and organizational capacity, high performance work systems, process management, management based on the value, task assignment, participation, productivity, cultural change and high performance teams. As we can see, here is where the administration and management of human resources influences in the thinking and action of the business managers, and therefore the functioning of an organization. The people who are part of the companies and the HR department, who administer these people, are the main asset of any company and normally, the successful companies are those where HR management has been effective.

As HR issues become important, traditional departments of HR are under increasing pressure to rethink, redefine and reevaluate their functions. HR professionals face increasing pressure and expectations for regular HR to deliver better results. They are being asked to do more with less, to do a different job, and to do it better. The departments will only be able to achieve it if they have a clear outline of the current and future state of the business strategy, the organizational capacity and the practice of the HR. The HR professionals who live only for the present they won't be able to transfer strategy, organization and HR to the future. In addition, it is probably that the future will involve a change that influences HR practices, departments and professionals.

## **Section Two –Personal Succession Planning Reflections**

Organizations need to plan for talent management to assume key leadership or back up positions either on a temporary or permanent basis. A comprehensive succession planning strategy and process within the departmental units of an organization should adopt the practices of internal promotion and individual development plans (IDP) such as job posting, mentoring programs, in-house training programs and job rotation programs.(Rothwell, 2010).

Sometimes, an organization could utilize bench strength to meet its succession plans to reduce employee turnover. A succession planning & management program is that deliberate and systematic effort made by organizations to ensure leadership continuity in key positions,

retain and develop intellectual and knowledge capital for the future and encourages individual advancement (Rothwell, 2010). Every successful organization should embrace a proactive succession plan that is different from a mere replacement plan that is very risky and reactive. A seamless succession plan should resemble that of the ambassadorial departure style where leaders leave their positions feeling accomplished by planning and grooming a good successor (Sonnenfeld, 1988). Although, the succession plan in many organization leaves no room for outsiders but rather adopt a simple career planning approach which is essential for a personal growth (Rothwell,2010). The organization can also embrace the traditional management approach of succession planning that involves getting people ready for promotion up within the organization's chart and then preparing them to assume higher level of management responsibility that focuses on promotions (Rothwell, 2010).

Succession planning is another vital part of the HR planning process that refers to the way in which a company forms policies for replacing key members of its organization, shifting transfer of authority and responsibility carefully from a leaving member to a new member. Often, this means making sure that an arriving employee has the necessary training and experience to fulfil their functions. Succession planning is a systematic approach to building a leadership pipeline/talent pool to ensure leadership continuity, developing potential successors in ways that best fit their strengths, identifying the best candidates for categories of positions and concentrating resources on the talent development process yielding a greater return on investment. So, succession planning recognizes that some jobs are the lifeblood of the organization and too critical to be left vacant or filled by any but the best qualified persons.

### **Components of Career Pathing**

Career path is the sequencing of work experiences, usually different job assignments, in order to provide employees with the opportunity to participate in many aspects of a professional area. It involves career planning and career awareness. Rothwell (2010) said that when training on succession planning is tied to training on career planning, individuals are furnished with information about work requirements at different levels and in different functions or locations. They also learn about performance requirements in various job categories and about future success factors. With this information, they can establish their own career goals and take active steps to prepare them for advancement by seeking the appropriate training, education and development experiences. One of the key component of a career pathing is what the individual development plan is. The components are the planned training, education, development and work experiences in order to develop gaps and meet succession needs. So, the ultimate goal for someone's career and calling are:

1. Self-assessment: The first step in developing career goals is to assess your own personal characteristics--your skills and interests, your likes and dislikes, and your strengths and weaknesses
2. Career Exploration: Once you have determined your skills, strengths, and interests, you can use various tools to explore and identify the career areas that "fit" your profile.
3. Career Growth Plan: This includes setting one's career goal, developing a plan of action, obtaining approvals and pursuing your plans.

So, an ultimate career goal varies and lies with the individual's decision.

Recruiting and retaining a talented workforce is an ongoing struggle for many employers in today's world, especially as younger individuals enter the workforce. Companies recognize that turnover is extremely expensive when lost productivity and replacement costs

are taken into account. According to the Society for Human Resources Management, it costs on average six to nine months' salary to replace a salaried employee, highlighting the importance of retention.

Employees consistently rank career advancement opportunities as an important factor in accepting and keeping a job. One strategy that is gaining traction as a way to increase employee retention and grow talent organically, is career pathing. In the MRINetwork 2017 Millennial Hiring Trends Study, more than half of Millennials (53%) said that career pathing has the most impact on their decision to stay with their employer. Career pathing is a comprehensive process offered by employers that asks employees to take an honest look at their career goals, skills, education, experience and personal characteristics. Employees are then asked to make a plan for achieving what is necessary in each of these areas in order for them to advance within the company, providing both employees and employers with a clear understanding of what it takes for workers to move from their current position to where they want to be. Employees are empowered to take ownership of their career performance and to align their career goals with the strategic goals of the organization.

Taking a career pathing approach requires rethinking traditional career ladders, which typically involve a progression of jobs within a certain field based on increasing levels of responsibility and pay. Millennials want to see that they have clear and defined opportunities for advancement, and if they feel stuck or bored with their jobs, they tend to seek other employment after they have gained a few years of experience. With career pathing, they have the means to sharpen their skills and earn promotions within their current organizations, and this serves as a deterrent to leaving a job in order to advance.

### **Implementing a Career Pathing Program**

As a first step, it is critical that you fully grasp your company's needs and what you want to accomplish from a career pathing program, whether it's reducing turnover or boosting employee engagement. Once you have determined the direction you want to take, you can begin to formulate your program:

#### **Identify the goals of your employees.**

Meet with them to evaluate their skills, experience and education and to create a career roadmap. The object is to compare their current abilities and qualifications to their short- and long-term career paths and determine what additional experience and skills are needed. Be honest and transparent in your feedback to avoid future employee dissatisfaction.

#### **Establish a clear communication plan.**

Ensure that your employees know that career pathing exists, how it will benefit them and how they can access the program. Remind them about opportunities for growth such as mentoring and training on a regular basis. Use ongoing performance reviews and not just an annual review to keep track of career path progress and to determine if further steps are needed to help employees reach their goals.

#### **Use data analytics to adjust your program.**

Analyzing external data on salaries and benefit offerings in your marketplace can help you determine whether your compensation package is competitive. Even a good career pathing program won't prevent turnover if you fall significantly below your competitors. Internal data derived from employee surveys, management feedback and exit interview should also be

factored into career pathing planning. Since career pathing attracts and fosters retention of talented candidates, it simply makes sense to incorporate career pathing into your talent management strategy. Your end goal is to make sure that a valued employee never tells you during an exit interview: "I'm leaving the company to advance my career and take on new challenges."

### **Individual Development Plans (IDP)**

Individual development plan results from a comparison of individual strengths and weaknesses on the current job and individual potential for possible advancement to future key positions. An IDP is a hybrid of a learning contract, a performance contract and a career planning form. While a learning contract is an agreement to learn, a performance contract represent an agreement to achieve an identifiable, measurable level of performance while a career planning form is a tool for helping individuals identify their career goals and establish effective strategies for realizing them in the future (Rothwell,2010). A career planning form is typically linked to an organizational career planning program which can enforce and support succession planning & management program. An Individual Development Plan (IDP) is a tool to assist employees in career and personal development. Creating and maintaining your IDP is a critical first step in taking ownership over your career. To achieve a successful career path, we propose the processes into three forms which are:

#### a) Personal Development Plan

Personal development plan is the process of creating an action plan based on awareness, values, reflection, goal-setting and planning for personal development within the context of a career, education, relationship or for self-improvement (Caligiuri, 2012). Personal development plan means creating opportunities to think in a structured way to answer questions such as:

- What do I really want to achieve in life?
- What kind of person do I want to be?
- Am I clear about my personal goals and ambitions?
- Am I making the right decisions to get me where I really want to be?
- Am I in charge of my life and my studies - or am I just hoping it all will work out somehow?

It has been recognized that students need structured opportunities to think about, and plan towards, their future. The exact content really depends on you. However, in the work place, the personal development process may be linked to your annual appraisal or supervision as:

#### i) A Process of Personal Development

Development planning can be a very personal process or it can be a process required by your employer or tutor. As the word "development" suggests, it is something that happens over time. It isn't a last minute thing. A personal development plan works best when you:

- Think deeply and in structured ways about your life and ambitions. What does success mean to you personally?
- Have the right information to make good choices.
- Have people you can trust to share your reflections.



- Have opportunities to experiment and test yourself in new areas so that you have a better understanding of your abilities and limits.
- Have opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills to achieve your ambitions.

ii) Personal Records of Learning and Achievement

These are your own personal records rather than those provided by the university. For more advice, see personal records.

iii) A Formal Transcript Provided by an Institution

A formal transcript will be provided by the university, usually in addition to a degree certificate, it records more information about your learning and achievement than the national degree certificate.

We can create a personal development plan by:

- Identifying priorities for personal development
- Identifying personal development opportunities
- Creating an action plan
- Monitoring your progress
- Evaluating your personal performance

The other seven main categories of a personal development plan are:

- Goal
- Success criteria (How will you know when you have succeeded?)
- Action outline (What will I do to achieve those goals?)
- Implementation (How will I practice what I learn?)
- Timeline (or deadline)
- Goal category/Skill
- Goal priority (Weighting system)

b) Professional Development Plan

A professional development plan is a set of guidelines used to improve or redirect a career or business. Leadership development programs are quite important to succession planning. It could be a professional development plan which is a banner under which potential successors are developed in a systematic, and even visible way. Leadership programs may also develop groups of people so as to create talent pools. Once the professional development plan is completed, it is typically time to start implementing the goals and activities. At the completion of a unit, course, or school year, instructors are sometimes required to give a portfolio to their administrators to see how effective their plan was. Portfolios might include selected lesson plans, photographs, videos, and examples of student work. You review, plan and take necessary action on a professional development plan. Below are some of steps to creating a professional development plan:

- Conduct a Self- Assessment: decide what you want to change or improve.

- Identify Support: make a list of resources that will help you to make those changes: Books, online courses, continued education, informational interviews and people.
- Create Goals and Action Steps: schedule a specific amount of time each day towards using those resources to achieve your individual development goals.
- Monitor Your Progress: track your progress by taking notes or journaling. This will keep you focused and encouraged. Take time to celebrate all successes, big and small.

This plan is a more formal document, typically involving HR, along with conversations and input from your direct manager. And as an employee, there may be development opportunities provided by the employer.

- Training: If there are areas that require improvement, training is a great option. Some employers may offer tuition assistance and/or paid time off to pursue learning opportunities.
- Employee Mentoring: Employee mentoring programs are a major factor in employee retention and increased profitability and productivity within a company.
- Change in Job Design: Aspects of your job are reviewed and suggestions are made as to how the job might be redesigned to increase efficiency.
- Delegation of Special Projects: Assigning a critical task to an employee is a definite sign of respect and value. The more important a project is deemed, the greater the implied confidence, because of its impact if it succeeds or fails. In the past, we thought career development was something that ended when we graduated from high school or college. Now we know that is far from the truth. There is an ever-increasing need for us to keep learning to keep up with the rapid growth in information and the rate of change of our workplace environments. Whether your plan is to prepare for another job or to develop skills to be used in your current job, be proactive and take personal responsibility for your own growth and development. New skills and knowledge will keep you motivated and help you to remain competitive in the job market.

The following types of leadership development programs should be vigorously pursued by individuals and organizations:

- Coaching: Coaching is a means to the end of building talent and it is very important to succession planning process because it can be a key tool in grooming prospective successors for the future. Generally speaking, training is planned and focused while coaching tends to be more spur-of-the-moment but it is driven by moment-to-moment efforts to help others perform (Rothwell, 2010). However, coaching is not just a fix-it strategy for poor performers rather it is very useful in preparing promising people for the future.
- Executive Coaching: Its significance in succession planning process cannot be understated.
- This strategy is used in organizations where the leaders fell asleep on succession matters until it was too late. Executive coaching involves the job content coach that provides guidance to individuals who are not up to snuff on the job content and the process coach that focuses on the image that the executive projects entail as no

knowledge of the job content is needed. So, executive coaching process should be clearly focused and thoroughly implemented.

- **Mentoring:** A mentor is simply a teacher. Mentoring is the process of teaching others and mentoring like coaching and executive coaching can therefore help to build bench strength. A mentor helps someone succeed and mentoring programs should be established by organizations.
- **Action Learning:** This helps organization to build competencies by learning through actions where participants are assembled to work on a practical, real-world problems. To use action learning appropriately, organizational leaders must select the right people for the right teams (Rothwell, 2010).
- **Acceleration Pools:** Recall that a talent pool is a group of employees being prepared for promotion while acceleration pool is a group of employees who are being quickly and systematically prepared for possible promotion (Rothwell, 2010).

c) **Spiritual Development Plan**

Spiritual development refers to the process in which the spiritual aspects of life and individuals are fostered and enhanced. Spiritual development encompasses the insights, beliefs, attitudes, principles and values that guides and motivates human beings. Religion is not a spiritual development, it is just a part of it. Witherington (2011) explains how as human beings, we live in an age of artifice and the artificial-artificial light, artificial means of transportation because we are prisoners, captives of our gadgets, growing spiritually is more relevant than our professional plans because it has to do with our ethical standing and morality about our work and the world. The spiritual development plan and the issue of succession plan entails delegation strategies which Christ demonstrated in both Matthew 10:5-15 and Mark 6:7-8 when he sent out the twelve disciples to perform various miracles and solve people's problems. The real spiritual development plan is innate and internal because Jesus explained in Mark 7:1-23 about the need to grow our character from within by cultivating the fruit of the spirit because defilement comes from within. This is where delegation or the allocation of tasks to subordinates in the workplace comes to being and our best bet is to pay attention to those areas that really need our attention. Caesar got it right when he said "divide and conquer". So, by delegating work, we are multiplying ourselves, creating extensions of ourselves, allowing employees to take on some of the responsibility for handling tasks during our absence and that is pretty what Jesus Christ did.

The spiritual development plan helps individual to delegate in order to maximize employee potential, help companies to grow, create hierarchy, and allow one's enough time to focus on available tasks. Some reflections about the personal succession planning links us to the area of personal spiritual growth plan where we must self-evaluate, set goals and attain resources by abiding in Christ through personal study of the bible and praying regularly (Rothwell,2010). For example, according to the bible, the transition of Moses to Joshua in Joshua 1:1-18 explains the significance of a spiritual development plan on a personal basis. The summary of the succession principles that guided the transition from Moses to Joshua occurred when Moses realized that he would need a successor, he asked God to provide one. God directed him to Joshua, whom God had already prepared for the task.

It is important to note that Moses did not choose his own successor, nor was he chosen by popular vote. Rather, God's choice of Joshua was revealed in Joshua's ordination. Joshua was not an unknown at that point. Moses had long before recognized Joshua's abilities and potential. Moses became Joshua's mentor and had given him various leadership tasks to further

his development. Prior to his death, Moses formally ordained Joshua to leadership in front of the priest and the people. Following Moses' death, the Lord reconfirmed the succession of Joshua to leadership. That explains the spiritual development plan during a personal succession plan.

The summary of my personal reflections on succession planning is that it is a systematic approach to building a leadership pipeline or talent pool to ensure leadership continuity, developing potential successors in ways that best fit their strengths, identifying the best candidates for categories of positions and concentrating resources on the talent development process yielding a greater return on investment (Rothwell, 2010). Succession planning recognizes that some jobs are the lifeblood of the organization and are too crucial to be left vacant or filled by any but the best qualified persons. Effectively done, succession planning is critical to mission success and that creates an effective process for recognizing, developing, and retaining top leadership talent either through a personal, professional or a spiritual development plan. Rothwell (2010) also identifies essential characteristics of an effective succession plan and captures areas such as top management participation, focused attention, a systematic approach, and the obligation to identify and prepare successors during career pathing.

### **Section Three –A Biblical View of Human Resources**

The biblical view of HR is like a community of talent which is a gift of God from birth with the responsibility to develop others like Apostle Paul did during his plea to Philemon on behalf of Onesimus in the book of Philemon 1:8-21. HR is about cultivating the instinct of valuing people and planning well for the future. The biblical view of human resources is further explained in the book of Ephesians 6:5-9 by Apostle Paul when he explained the roles of bondservants and masters without eye service but with obedience and fear of God. So employee management and engagement works with the belief that employee engagement doesn't mean employee satisfaction. The core truth about managing employees according to God's way is explained further in Ephesians 6:9 that says " And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with him." Masters should give up threatening and do same to their subordinates and emphasis should be on building trust to earn employee's motivation and retention (Witherington, 2011).

### **Biblical View of HR and Work**

Work is never a curse but a blessing. According to the book of Genesis 1, our biblical God works and it is not about God working but it is about his people working and their participation in the work that he sees as good, endorses and indeed participates in. Perhaps, part of the problem that we have never bothered to ask or answer about relating work and human resource lies in its biblical perspectives where people live to work, rather than work to live (Witherington,2011). The book of Genesis 1:28 takes us from just working to live and survive to rather be a blessing. However, Isaiah 65:20-25 opined that paradise involves a war stoppage rather than a work stoppage, so that crops can be sown and their fruits enjoyed in peace. Work apparently is not the human dilemma, war and other sorts of fallen human behaviours but the dilemma is that work is not a curse as a result of man's fall. It was meant to be in our DNA from the outset when God called humanity to fill and subdue the earth as stated in the book of Genesis 1:28 (Witherington, 2011). The real definition of work is found in Genesis 2:15 where human work is shown to have worth and dignity as a service to God and it is a creation ordinance, a God-appointed necessity for human life. However, man was meant

to be a gardener but by reason of sin, he became a farmer. Because work is good, Isaiah 64:8 says that “but now, o lord, you are our father, we are the clay and you our potter and all we are the work of your hand”. So, as God’s chosen vessels, we are fashioned for work, worship, rest and play. Our God is indeed the inspirer and equipper of all the good works (Witherington, 2011). Our vision of work must be eschatological, theological, teleological and ethical where work and HR from a biblical point of view involves calling, charism, gifting, vocation and ministry in the new order of God.

Work is what weaves together the very fabric of a called person’s identity and fulfils it. In both Romans 14:20 and 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 3:9, Apostle Paul said “do not for the sake of food, destroy the work of God because we are God’s fellow-workers”. Our work’s worth in our culture should not be based only on its exchange value but on the basis of its actual usefulness in the eyes of God. To avoid ethical problems that are associated with work and HR, all workers are created in the image of God and as such must be treated as persons not merely as means to an end. The two basic elements to be considered is that we must engage in good, honest work by being a steward of God’s resources and we must rest by avoiding burnouts because burnout is not just a physical or emotional matter, but is spiritual as rest and sabbatical times are good things (Witherington,2011). It is clear that what we need in our lives is not merely a more biblical sense and understanding of work but a biblical understanding of self as well. We are not merely what we do for we were created in the image of God as beings of sacred worth and renewed in Christ’s image by grace through faith and neither of these truths has anything to do with our work. As Christians, we must recognize that what we do is part of who we are as our character must reflect the fruit of the spirit as stated in the book of Galatians 5:22-23. (Witherington, 2011).

### **Biblical Themes about HR and Work**

As the industrial age is moving forward, it is not surprise that we have lost sense of connection between work and the world in which we work between earthling and earth. It is not just that we work on the earth, it is that we work with the earth (Witherington, 2011). So, work is not a secular activity but a sacred one originally ordained by God that must be undertaken in holy ways. Work is doxological in character because a clear sense of Christian vocation is to our skills, experience, abilities and vocation for the good of others and for God who taught us to love our neighbours in practical ways. That is the real meaning of human resources which indicate talent management (Witherington, 2011). Thus, how far we have come from the biblical ethic of work that we admire the person who obtains the ends but sidesteps the means or blows off the ends altogether and find contentment in pleasing ourselves?

We must engage to give up work without giving up happiness as we live in a very pragmatic culture where the biblical view of work describes rest as good but detest laziness. Laziness is an attitude about work, followed by a pattern of behaviour that often leads one to try to avoid work, sometimes at all cost. Proverbs 6:6-11 explains how God hates the folly of indolence or laziness as it is often referred to as Sloth. Among those vices considered since the early days of the church are gluttony, greed, wrath, envy, pride, lost and sloth or being lazy (Witherington, 2011). However, both Proverbs 10:26 and Proverbs 26:13-16 spoke about the behaviours of a lazy man with his negative consequences. So, as Christians, we must engage in good honest labour by being a steward of God’s resources.



Working in God's kingdom describes a slothful man as a sluggard that is characterised by laziness as stated in Proverbs 20:4 and being a lazy man is not merely a procrastinator but it is contrasted with the man who operates with due diligence and foresight in Proverbs 12:27. However, there is no teleological character to work in the book of Ecclesiastes as the bible's critique of laziness and slothfulness is that it does not merely assume that hard work is the norm, but work is inherently forward looking and it is a good thing by God. The book of Ecclesiastes 9:9-10 gave another view about work where as Christians, we must cultivate the below certain elements about discovering and practicing a biblical perspectives of work and HR:

- i) We must repent and recognize that the whole yoke does not fall on our shoulders as we are burdens sharers not burden bearers.
- ii) We must realize the necessity of taking times of rest and sabbatical from our primary vocation precisely in order that we may do it well.
- iii) We must recognize that our work has a goal and a purpose that is kingdom based, a purpose we do not undertake alone but rather through the whole body of Christ (Witherington, 2011).

As Christians, we should not model ourselves on the slacker, the sluggard or the sloth but at the same time neither is the workaholic our paradigm-Jesus Christ is. Trust and having rest are two essential elements that must be considered if we are to discover and practice a biblical, Christian perspective of work, human resources and vocation. (Witherington, 2011).

### **Biblical Management of Employees**

The Holy Bible is an album of casual photographs of labourers. A book by workers, about workers and for workers (Witherington, 2011). According to the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30, talent refers to some native ability a person possesses. A talent should not be mistaken for ability but rather something given to a person to do with his or her abilities. A talent is also a two-sided coin of ability and responsibility (Rothwell, 2010). God does not want what he has given us to go on deposit, he wants it used for kingdom purpose as he expects us to be industrious. So, our rewards for doing well with the investment is being put in charge of more work and more investment. Reward for good stewardship. God is delighted when we do our work well and to his glory and in his service and for his purposes. Work and investing ourselves in it, is seen as a good thing by Jesus. So, work is an offering to God, a response to grace and salvation. We should not evaluate our work by how much we are paid to do it but whether we have done it well to the best of our ability honestly and in good time to the glory of God whatever the human responses to the work may be (Witherington, 2011).

Work and vocation should be seen as a calling, not merely a job and as a ministry done in service of the king and his kingdom, not merely a task. Another biblical theme about watering, working and warning can be found in 1st Corinthians 3:6-17 that says that we are co-labourers with God as we planted, Apollo watered but God gave the increase. We are called in our work to be culture builders or ethos creators. Another important elements to be considered is culture that shapes and reshapes the mere material world that exists because culture is what we make of the world that God has created. Our work and vocation changes the world and imposes a new culture on what previously existed because of the Christ transforming culture where human nature is seen as fallen but capable of redemption as explained further in the books of Romans 12:2 where Christ shapes it through the renewing of our minds (Witherington, 2011). Culture is not just about thinking but it is about our work, vocation and

ministry (Hofstede, 2010). We must engage in creative work using our intelligence, skills and imagination to create culture well. So, any Christian work, calling, vocation or ministry that is oblivious to cultural change and is clueless about being a culture maker may not be labour done in vain but it is certainly labour that is not maximizing what can be accomplished for the lord (Witherington, 2011).

### **Outcomes of the Biblical View of Human Resources and Work**

God values work through honesty and obedience. Christians often measure the significance of a job by its perceived value from the eternal perspective. Will the work last or will it really count for eternity? The implication is that God approves of work for eternity, but places little value on work for the here and now (Witherington, 2011). But this way of thinking overlooks several important truths about some outcomes of the biblical view of human resources and work that says:

- a) God himself has created a world that is time-bound and temporary as stated in 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:10-13, yet we value our work, declaring it to be very good by its very nature. It is explained further in the books of Genesis 1:31 and Acts 14:17.
- b) God promises reward to people in everyday jobs, based on their attitude and conduct as stated in Ephesians 6:8 and Colossians 3:23.
- c) God cares about the everyday needs of people as well as their spiritual needs. He cares whether people have food, clothing, and shelter.
- d) God cares about people who will enter eternity. To the extent that a job serves the needs of people, God values it, because he values people.

As Christians, we should step back for a moment and remind ourselves again that each of us is called to a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ, first and foremost. From this position, all else comes. The fruit of our relationship with Christ moves us to the level of our calling in work. That work – whether serving on the mission field or delivering mail is a holy calling of God or vocation. By segmenting the secular work part of our life, we cut off the expression of his life to the world. The Lord has called each of us to be excellent in what we do. In the beginning, God created work and one of the first things we learn about how God made us is that he designed us for work as stated in Genesis 1:28 that we should be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it. The biblical prophets also describe the future paradise being prepared for God's people as a time when people turn their weapons of war into farming tools as explained in both Isaiah 2:1-5 and Micah 4:1-5. So, the Bible begins with humans working in paradise and it ends with humans working in paradise!!

### **Section Four –Guiding Insights**

Global leaders must understand the significance of bringing out the best in people regardless of where they sit or which language they speak by adopting teamwork across cultures in bringing together people, resources and ideas to pursue new solutions. In fact they should strive to develop a global mindset (Cabrera & Unruh, 2012). Possessing a global mindset as leaders can help reduce the chances of missing important cues because it is critical for leaders newly entrenched in a non-native culture as it is for those who regularly engage with multiple cultures (Cabrera & Unruh, 2012). The three components of a global mindset capital are both complementary and mutually supportive when as a global leader, we possess the capacity to suspend judgement and bias by accepting that there might be an alternative ways to interpret reality (psychological capital) which help to build trusting relationships and connections (social capital) and then to be a source of new insights about a specific

environment (intellectual capital). So, having the knowledge of important facts and dynamics in a given market (intellectual capital) can guide our efforts to expand our network of relationships (social capital) thereby making it easier to accept alternative interpretations of a set of circumstances (psychological capital) (Cabrera & Unruh, 2012).

Maintaining global and local balance in HR leadership is very critical because globalization has natural effects on everything we do. As an organization, HR leaders should develop a passion for talent with the credibility to embed that passion in order to achieve local and global balance through trends like cultural diversity and globalization (Losey, 2005). So, whether we operate in a religious or secular settings, leaders should develop a global mindset that will allow them to connect with others across boundaries, entrepreneurship skills that will enable them to create value through established connections and citizenship competencies that will motivate them to seek a positive contribution and prosperity for all (Cabrera & Unruh, 2012). However, (Losey, Meisinger & Ulrich, 2005) explains some guiding insights as to how leaders could change their world either through localization or globalization of talent management by:

- a) Developing global mind-sets.
- b) Developing global capabilities.
- c) Balancing global and local approaches.
- d) Supporting cultural diversity.
- e) Learning locally but acting globally by tapping global capabilities and skills to satisfy customer needs.

Sometimes, Christian leaders regardless of their cultural backgrounds carry their personal histories and cultural biases with them wherever they serve but the complexity of leading cross-culturally often lies in the challenge of building a community of trust among people of diverse cultural origins. So, the critical factors associated with Christian leaders to be able to think, act and live globally while learning locally are the Christ-centered learning and a trustworthy covenant-centered leadership (Lingenfelter, 2008). Christian leaders should possess a global mindset with the ability to interpret, analyze and decode situations from a variety of perspectives to identify the best route towards successful collaboration within a multi-cultural environment (Cabrera & Unruh, 2012). Nevertheless, a Christian leader from the biblical point of view of work and HR is best equipped to determine the best route when led by the holy spirit to seek the father's will in a turbulent global environment as stated in Ephesians 4:23-24. Apostle Paul's message in Philippians 4:9 admonishes us to live, think and act globally from what we have learned locally. Christian leaders that will operate well in this secular world must not only possess a global mindset but must develop enough global capabilities that are based on learning and doing as a result of certain trends like globalization and culture. So, we must learn locally in order to think, act and live globally by being a changed agents to our world through Christ (Losey, 2005).

Global businesses should have a global HR function. At the same time, in order to compete successfully in diverse markets, companies should recruit, train, and manage people locally—reflecting local culture, local labor markets, and the needs of diverse local business units. Creating global standards, platforms, and service centers addresses only part of the challenge. Leading companies are developing HR operating models that are flexible enough to allow for local implementation and agile enough to adapt to local markets and business needs.

The ultimate goal: to combine scale and agility to optimize talent management in every market where the company does business.

### **The global side of the equation**

For many organizations, one of the key drivers of a globally integrated HR strategy is the need for talent mobility within the company. Leading companies often move talent from region to region to address key talent gaps. Consider a business unit in California with a strong need for engineering skills. The company may have a team in Moscow with precisely the right skills that has just finished a similar project. Unless the company's talent practices are globally integrated, this match between business need and existing skills may never take place. Companies operating on a global basis often offer high-potential employees global developmental assignments as one of their "tours of duty." They also face the need to move specialists to global assignments rapidly. Globally integrated HR is critical to this process, but many companies do not have the systems in place to accomplish these increasingly common HR responsibilities.

### **Adapting global HR to local talent marketplaces**

While businesses today operate in a pervasively global environment when it comes to customers, talent, and supply chains, each local labor market has vastly different dynamics. To balance strong global HR strategies and platforms, companies should build flexibility and agility into HR so it can be customized for local markets. The talent markets in Asia, for example, are far different from those in Western Europe and North America. Critical skills are in short supply; top candidates change jobs every nine to twelve months; salaries are increasing nearly 10 percent annually. To adapt to these conditions, talent strategies should focus on recruiting, rapid talent mobility, onboarding, and accelerated leadership development. Of course, these variances are not limited to Asia. Localized challenges drive demand for local talent solutions in every region where a company does business. Labor regulations, compensation expectations, workplace culture, and many other factors vary significantly among regions. While global consistency and standards drive efficiency and scale, local flexibility powers growth and employee engagement. To achieve both, companies should move toward a new HR operating model.

### **Moving from globally rationalized to globally optimized**

For the past decade, many companies have been implementing a shared services model for HR to reduce global costs and improve service delivery. In most large companies, this "rationalized" model delivers tremendous benefits. It saves money, increases service to managers and employees, and provides global scale. But for companies trying to recruit and optimize their teams in disparate markets, this shared services model is neither robust enough nor flexible enough to address the widely differing challenges that come from operating in dozens of individual markets. How can companies aggressively recruit and build leaders in fast-growing Asian markets? How should organizations reskill and retain employees in Western Europe or the United States? What is the most effective strategy for developing talent in India? These and many other issues demand a balance of global standards that can be customized to fit local needs. Addressing issues like these requires a shift from global rationalization to global optimization.

Another key guiding insights is that Christian leaders should endeavor to cultivate and imbibe the concept of the employee engagement using its key drivers of commitment, motivation, trust and integrity by viewing HR and work as a calling, vocation and ministry

from God because God has authorized, empowered and purposed them to do good works as stated by Apostle Paul in 1st Corinthians 3:5-17 as being a fellow workers with God (Witherington, 2011). Knowing that not all tasks are vocations and not all gainful employment is a calling but the Christian perspective on work does not involve meddling but rather getting on with doing our own tasks based on sound ethical standing. Leadership is all about results and God's highest priority is that we live as the people of God that works in one body of Christ to accomplish kingdom's results (Witherington, 2011). Also, HR is referred to as one of the most significant keepers and analysts of the organization's culture where culture change has become a central theme of the enlightened HR practice where leaders need to be the guardians of their organization's ethical and moral integrity (Losey, 2005). However, focus should be on talent management as one of the major HR leadership processes that will impact the organization's global or local capabilities.

Rothwell (2010) asserted that organizations today need competencies, values and ethics for an effective succession planning programs and the biblical view of work explains how the vision of work should be eschatological, ethical, theological and theological because work involves vocation and if done right, it's a ministry (Witherington, 2011). From the biblical point in 1st Corinthians 9, Apostle Paul said that work deserves fair remuneration and it is most directly linked to the fulfilment of the great commission which is our primary task as a Christian. So, our Christian work, calling, vocation or ministry is oblivious to cultural change in recognizing that work is what we do based on our character (Witherington,2011). There is also the concept of succession planning regarding HR and work whereas Christian leaders, we should remember that our central task of leadership is influencing God's people towards achieving God's purpose on earth. Other insights is that HR professionals should lead by finding, growing, deploying, motivating and rewarding talent through creating cultures, learning environments, psychological contracts, systems, processes and the feedback loop that measures how successfully the job is (Losey,2005). So, any successive transition should go with the trio of competencies, values and ethics as ethics is a moral dimension to leadership. So, cultivating and imbibing the ambassadorial departure style of succession planning process is also germane (Sonnenfeld, 1988).

Finally, another important insights is about building global HR that creates a competitive advantage in developing talent of those who learn locally and act globally (Losey, 2005). The lessons about how the concept of succession planning & management differs from replacement or workforce planning that involves a proactive approach towards leadership continuity within organizations through talent management, internal promotion and leadership development programs must be learned (Rothwell,2010). Often times, the whole essence of human resource is about people and the most important deliverable of the HR function is the workforce not just any workforce. There is a belief that firms don't change but people do and it is the people that changes organization. The concepts of talent management, succession planning and the biblical view of work are some of the powerful guiding insights gained from this course.

## **Conclusion**

Globalization is now as common as sliced bread. The only way to shift an organization's systemic culture from being homogeneous to being diverse is by encountering various experiences and cultural activities. Building cross-cultural agility and intelligence takes a lot of hard work and, at times, obtaining assistance from coaches and consultants. This is one of the reasons why many leaders and executives fail to make the transition from domestic



to international—it takes effort. Yet, in this globalized world in which we live, it is an imperative. Cultural agility is the ability to be effective in many cultures and environments, but this type of leadership effectiveness only comes to leaders through direct exposure of diverse circumstances and life experiences. It is a lifelong process and not a onetime event. We can become culturally intelligent by desiring versatility in our thinking, living, and actions. Leaders have to put forth the effort of thinking, living, and acting outside of the box. This does not come natural to most of us; therefore, we have to put ourselves in various situations that will help us, and stretch us. Examples for how we can accomplish this include joining different groups, going to various culture and diversity events, and building relationships with people who are not like us. This will definitely help us to break down our cultural paradigms so that we may grow to become cross-cultural leaders.

The most significant insights is that as Christian leaders, we should always remember that our central task of leadership is influencing God’s people towards achieving God’s purpose here on earth. We are also called to our vocations by emulating Christ when he told his disciples to follow up in Mark 1:17 which says “ Then Jesus said to them, Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men” and Apostle Paul’s charge in 1st Thessalonians 4:11-12 to work with our hands based on God’s will on earth. Whether, it is the concept of talent management, succession planning or the biblical view of work and human resources, it is pertinent that we work for God’s kingdom (Witherington, 2011). Over the last decade, organizations are working hard to meet the demands of the constantly changing business environment. In order for the organization to remain sustainable in a constantly changing business environment, they have to be efficient in all organizational processes. To remain competitive in the industry, organizations need to address their HR issues by ensuring the employee’s needs are met and streamlining transactions. Reshaping the future of the HR requires organizations to manage change. The HR will provide the business with the needed insights that are actionable and data-driven to enable better decision-making that will drive business to success.

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