

HR Academy: Elevate Your Workforce!

Thursday, April 3rd, Rivers Club, 301 Grant Street, 6th Floor, Pittsburgh, PA. 15219
Approved for 6 SHRM-CP/SCP Credits & 6 HRCI General/Business Credits

8:15 – 8:35	Registration, Breakfast and Networking	
8:35 – 8:45	Welcome	
8:45 – 9:45 1 credit hour	Opening Keynote: John Bernatovicz, Willory, <i>Accelerate (Not Manage) Performance (Three Rivers Ballroom)</i> <i>Session Pre Approved for Business Credits (HRCI)</i> <i>Sponsored by Human Capital Advisors, LLC</i> True success in a competitive business landscape comes from accelerating employee performance rather than merely managing it. Traditional performance management methodologies cannot profoundly improve employee productivity. This session explores three critical drivers of employee performance acceleration: fostering continuous learning and development, achieving individual and organizational alignment, and prioritizing leadership development. By focusing on these areas, attendees will gain actionable strategies to build a high-performing workforce, drive innovation, and achieve sustainable success for their employees and organization.	
9:45 – 10:15	Networking with our Business Partners	
10:15 – 11:15 1 credit hour	Valerie Y. Nance, Penn Hills Charter School of Entrepreneurship <i>Employees in Dusty Boxes: Is Your Organization Driving Culture, Opportunity, & Engagement? (Allegheny Room)</i> <i>Session Pre Approved for Business Credits (HRCI)</i> <i>Sponsored by Gallagher</i> In Radical Candor, Kim Scott says, "Care personally; don't put people in boxes and leave them there". Drawing from nearly two decades of human resources experience, I'll speak to personal experience and other case studies demonstrating the varying impact on organizations when employees are placed in boxes and left there. I'll draw upon best practices as recommended by the Society for Human Resource Management, the Congressional Black Caucus's 2024 report, What Good Looks Like; and more to make the business case for a well-defined workplace culture; commitment to employee engagement; talent management to diversify talent pools and support professional development, skillbuilding, and knowledge; succession planning; and stakeholder interaction. More than ever, employees demand a workplace in which they aren't required to compartmentalize parts of themselves in order to succeed, and where their gifts are acknowledged and developed. This talk will provide future-oriented employers with the tools to invest in employees.	Peter Gabriel, Key Leadership LLC <i>The Intersection between Personality & Leadership (Monongahela Room)</i> <i>Sponsored by Paylocity</i> Personality traits are an important aspect to leadership. Successful leaders have self-awareness for how their personality traits can help/hinder their performance. This presentation will help Human Resource leaders bridge the gap between personality and leadership using the Hogan Assessments framework for personality traits & derailers. The Hogan Personality Inventory, Hogan Development Survey, and Hogan Motives, Values, and Preferences Inventory will be presented and discussed.
11:15 – 12:15 1 credit hour	Jon Anderson, Gallagher, Maria Athanas, Gallagher Pete Stewart, Gallagher <i>Empowering Your Organization with Data-Driven People Strategies (Allegheny Room)</i> <i>Session Pre Approved for Business Credits (HRCI)</i> In this session, you'll learn how to elevate your organization's people strategy by leveraging data to enhance employee wellbeing both at work and at home. The discussion will focus on optimizing total rewards programs to attract, retain, and engage top talent, while prioritizing strategic investments and impactful outcomes. Key takeaways include crafting actionable people strategies that align with your culture and goals, optimizing spending for programs that deliver measurable results, and evaluating the long-term impact of your people strategy. Additionally, you'll gain insights into enhancing total rewards investments to maximize value. The session will explore five critical components of a successful total rewards strategy: Career Stages, Social Determinants of Health,	Lauren Rozell, Western Land Services, <i>Fearless Feedback: HR's Role in Transforming Workplace Communication (Monongahela Room)</i> <i>Sponsored by Liberty Insurance Agency</i> In this session, we'll uncover how HR professionals can drive meaningful change by creating a workplace culture where feedback is not just a routine, but a powerful tool for growth. You'll learn practical, proven strategies to coach managers in delivering feedback that is not only clear and actionable but also focused on building trust, respect, and development within teams. Attendees will learn how to create an environment where feedback flows openly, fostering a culture of transparency and trust. We'll cover how to overcome common feedback barriers, implement effective communication techniques, and position feedback as a key driver of employee development and organizational performance. This session will equip HR and business professionals with actionable insights to empower their leaders, turn challenging conversations into growth opportunities,

	Compensation, Mental Health, and Disease Prevalence. Join us to discover actionable insights that will empower your organization and drive sustainable success.	and build a culture where feedback is essential for long-term success.
12:15 – 1:00	Lunch	
1:00 – 2:00	David J. Baker, Human Capital Advisors, LLC <i>Revolutionizing HR with AI: Practical Strategies for Pittsburgh's HR Leaders (Allegheny Room)</i> Session Pre Approved for Business Credits (HRCI) Sponsored by CBIZ This tailored session explores the integration of AI to optimize HR operations, empower data-driven decision-making, and enhance employee engagement. Attendees will learn how AI can automate key HR functions such as recruitment, onboarding, and compliance workflows while leveraging predictive analytics and real-time insights for smarter workforce planning. The session will highlight how AI-driven tools can enhance employee development through personalized learning and career mapping, as well as foster diversity and inclusion by mitigating bias in recruitment and engagement processes. Through case studies, success stories, and practical guidance, this session equips HR leaders with the tools to adopt AI effectively while maintaining a human-centric approach.	Paul Spradley, Spradley Solutions and Jessica A. Merritt, Care Based Leadership, LLC <i>4 Mistakes HR Professionals Make When Assessing Organizational Culture (Monongahela Room)</i> Sponsored by University of Pittsburgh: Executive MBA Programs and the Center for Executive Education Assessing organizational culture is essential for building an inclusive and high-performing workplace, but it can be challenging to execute effectively. In this session, Dr. Merritt and Dr. Spradley of Care-Metrix will share strategies to overcome common pitfalls, such as poor timing, overwhelming leadership with data, distracting employees with irrelevant metrics, and addressing low participation rates. Care-Metrix, the inaugural winner of Vibrant Pittsburgh's "DEI Innovation" award, specializes in measuring inclusive cultures through a proprietary anonymous assessment tool and provides actionable insights to drive meaningful change.
2:00 – 3:00	Kim Abel, University of Pittsburgh, School of Business <i>The Employee Takes the Lead: Advancing Workplace Learning (Allegheny Room)</i> Sponsored by PeopleOne Advancing technologies, shifting labor markets, economic and geopolitical volatility along with social and environmental pressures have created an uncertain and constantly changing landscape for industry (WEF, 2023, Park & Lee, 2019, Noe, Clark & Klein, 2014). Faced with both opportunity and challenge, today's firms are seeking ways to sustain a competitive advantage by developing a new, holistic, and pragmatic strategy. Across industry, employees are facing a growing need to adapt and change, building new knowledge, skills, and competencies. Workplace learning has become a significant strategy for sustainable development. As workplace learning emerges as a vital part of corporate strategy, research on workplace learning has become crucial to understanding how employees learn and what mechanisms are necessary to build a dynamic learning culture. In this session, participants will gain insights on a) current trends in workplace learning, b) ways to leverage formal, informal and self-regulated learning, and c) the importance of psychological safety in relation to employee learning and performance.	Dan Simkins, ATiiD, David "Doogie" Levine, ATiiD, <i>Navigating the Ai Revolution: A Blueprint For Business Leaders (Monongahela Room)</i> Session Pre Approved for Business Credits (HRCI) Sponsored by Pittsburgh Post-Gazette / Jobcase AI is transforming the workplace at an unprecedented pace, reshaping everything from daily operations to long-term workforce strategies. As HR professionals and business leaders, the challenge isn't just understanding AI, it's knowing how to effectively integrate it while keeping employees engaged, productive, and future-ready. In this session, we'll explore how AI is impacting talent acquisition, workforce management, and leadership development, and what businesses must do now to stay ahead. Attendees will learn practical strategies for balancing AI-driven automation with human expertise, ensuring employees across all generations adapt and thrive. We'll also discuss how HR can take the lead in AI adoption, shaping policies that maximize efficiency while maintaining a strong, people-focused culture. This is more than a conversation about technology, it's a blueprint for business leaders looking to navigate the AI revolution with confidence. Whether you're just starting to explore AI or already implementing it in your organization, this session will provide actionable insights to help you build a resilient, future-proof workforce.
3:00 – 3:30	Networking with our Business Partners	
3:30 – 4:30	Danielle R. Mundekis, K&L Gates and Barry Gilliam, SOREC Behavioral Health <i>Breaking the Stigma, Building Support: Empowering Employee Recovery and Growth (Three Rivers Ballroom)</i> Sponsored by CTR Payroll HR In today's competitive talent market, some of your most promising employees might be quietly battling Substance Abuse Disorder or struggling to meet basic needs like housing and food. This session will challenge you to rethink workplace support, spotlighting the transformative impact of employer-driven assistance programs. We'll explore practical strategies to destigmatize these critical conversations, creating a safe space where employees feel empowered to seek help. You'll also learn how to connect with organizations that provide essential resources, helping your team members thrive both personally and professionally. Join us to discover how breaking the stigma can unlock the full potential of your workforce—because sometimes, the only thing standing between a good employee and greatness is the support they need.	

