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How We Work

Our services encompass the culture, structure and processes a company must have in place to attract, develop and retain, and obtain high-level performance out of its workforce.

Whether you are looking for guidance in management, creating or upgrading your leadership development program, building teams, developing exist strategies and succession plans, or dealing with a transition phase – we have a program for you. Just give us a call or email us for more information!

Leadership Development

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cmc@calfeassociates.com

Open Up A World of Opportunity

Our programs are instructor led and delivered virtually or on site when permitted. We use a highly interactive approach backed by years of experience.

We are NWBOC, Hub Zone, DBE Certified
Everything DiSC Authorized Partner & Certified Facilitator
Dear HR Professionals,

This year’s conference marks our 73rd Annual Conference, Back to the Future. Don’t Stop Believing. PHRA will provide a virtual (and safe) experience, allowing attendees to enjoy 2 phenomenal days of connecting, learning and growing from anywhere!

Our conference committee has made every effort through their planning process to connect with our membership to determine your current needs to make sure this year’s conference is timely, informative and hopefully memorable. I believe there will be countless opportunities for you to leverage your Conference attendance experience.... here are just a few to consider:

Networking is a huge part of your professional success. When you meet with peers, you have the opportunity to collaborate, hear new ideas, engage in active dialogue and validate or perhaps change your own perspectives. This year’s conference will provide ample opportunity to virtually meet HR professionals with whom you may share common goals and challenges. I urge you to connect with as many of your peers as possible to expand your network, increase your influence, and grow your contact list.

Our exhibitors are industry experts and solution-providers who truly know what is happening in the world of HR and business. They have answers to many of your questions and I encourage you to invest time in the virtual solutions hall and discover innovative products and services that will help you as an HR professional stay competitive in today’s business environment.

Our speakers are proven business leaders, strategists, practitioners, and peers. Many of them are current HR professionals; others are well-respected industry leaders who know what you may need to know and are willing to share this knowledge with you. Our selection process for speakers is as rigorous as you’ll find anywhere, and we make sure that you’re hearing from the best.

It is our intention that you find a number of these educational opportunities at this year’s virtual conference. The PHRA Annual Conference is a lot of learning packed into a short amount of time, so have fun, enjoy learning and networking, and stay energized! I hope you will join us. Register here today!

Regards,

Lisa Petro, SPHR, SHRM-SCP
PHRA 2021 President
Director of Human Resources
Western PA Conservancy
Janet K. Manuel, MS, SHRM-CP, PHR Director of HR & Civil Service and EEO/D&I Officer
City of Pittsburgh
PHRA Past President - 2019

**Topic:**

**The Workplace Wellness Platform:** Influence Your Employees Lifestyle Factors That Impact Their Wellbeing

As the whole world is still battling the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, there is another epidemic that has catapulted to the forefront in the workplace and that is the wellbeing of the employees.

As some workplaces are dealing with a variety of work options for their employees i.e., virtual, hybrid (virtual & office) and the office, the wellbeing of all employees must still be on the forefront of the workplace wellness platform.

Attend this session and learn about different types of lifestyle factors i.e., social isolation, stress and grief etc. You will also learn about no-cost, low-cost, some-cost and high-cost wellness platform activities that you can implement to influence you and your employee’s lifestyle factors to impact your and their wellbeing.

As HR professionals, let us keep ourselves, our employees and our workplaces well and I look forward to seeing you in this session!
Are you prepared to lead in the Post-Covid World?

The past 18 months have thrust HR’s importance to the forefront, but our focus has been dealing with the global crisis. Though the Pandemic is far from over, it is now time to focus on our future roles as HR leaders.

Looking at the organizations that have survived, and even thrived, in this difficult environment, it is clear that good leadership was a key factor. Fortune Magazine created a list 2021 list of the World’s 50 Greatest Leaders. Many of them are on the list because of the way they responded to the pandemic or related crises.

The authors point out: “Tumultuous times bring forth unexpected leadership, often from people who had never imagined playing such a role. Many on this year’s roster are there because of how they responded to the global pandemic. Others rose up to meet different, desperate situations. Some were already in leadership positions; many were not.” https://fortune.com/2021/05/12/worlds-greatest-leaders-2021-crisis-response-covid/

So how can we be intentional in developing ourselves, our employees, and our future leaders to be ready for the next crisis? What are the most critical competencies we in HR need to drive the success of our managers, employees, and organizations?

The Mercer Global Talent Trends 2020–2021 Report, released this year, identified four business trends that have emerged:

First, The Importance of Stakeholder Empathy - Sometimes referred to as the “Purpose Economy,” “This mindset values outcomes that are broadly good for society. This is a shift from only focusing on shareholders — showing customers and employees the organization’s impact in areas such as social justice, the environment, and healthy, sustainable communities.”

Next, The Challenge of Reskilling the Workforce – During the pandemic “companies that understood the skillsets of their people were able to rapidly redeploy them to critical areas of the business. Those that can deliver skills at scale will outpace competitors and start to build the learning organization vital to staying ahead.”

Then, Making Sense with Science – managing data collection, use and security. “Data privacy and security took a backseat in 2020 as companies rushed to develop digital capabilities such as contact tracing and digital HR. With greater health and workplace surveillance an accepted reality for many, how data on employees is collected, used, and secured will require much more attention

Finally, Energizing the Employee Experience – understanding employee value propositions and responding. “The need to inspire people with an energizing and empathetic employee experience (EX). Delivering on flexible working at scale. Staying ahead will require taking an even broader view: redefining
the employee value proposition fit for today’s needs and tomorrow’s generations — upending what “being at work” means even as work and work arrangements remain in flux.”

Starting with the SHRM Competency Model we can examine the new world of work and identify which HR Leadership competencies we need to develop in ourselves and others.

Though the Model includes Leadership and Navigation and Ethical Practice as the Leadership Cluster, many of the other competencies are critical to being an effective HR leader. You can’t influence and inspire – one of the sub competencies in leadership – without the interpersonal behavioral competencies of Relationship Management, Communication and Global & Cultural Effectiveness.

By looking at the four trends and comparing them to the Model we can identify the critical competencies. Once we identify those key competencies, we can evaluate our own proficiency levels. Finally, we can begin to examine the activities we need to pursue and provide for others to grow our competencies.

In a time when most of us have less rather than more time available, it may seem unreasonable to carve out resources for development. The problem is, if we fail to do so, we will indeed fail our employees and our organizations.

Join me for a live virtual pre-session of the PHRA 2021 virtual conference, “Back to the Future, Don’t Stop Believing.” This session is available to you with your conference registration and will be held Tuesday, October 12 at noon.

By Phyllis G. Hartman, SHRM-SCP, pghr@pghrconsulting.com, PGHR Consulting, Inc.
The mental health and emotional well-being of employees, two topics that due to stigma have traditionally gone unspoken in the workplace, are now being acknowledged by businesses as inherent links to company productivity, profitability, and overall success. In the past, businesses focused largely on employees’ physical health as a variable to success, but neglected to factor in the emotional and mental health of their employees.

While awareness of the importance of employee emotional and mental health has been gaining attention in the last decade, the devastating effects of Covid-19 have brought the issue to the forefront seemingly overnight. Stress, depression and anxiety are at an all-time high due to health concerns, uncertainty, isolation, and some of the most common structures of life such as school, social gatherings, and access to physical fitness disappearing or becoming more difficult to access.

Helping employees with their mental and emotional health makes good business sense. For example, an estimated 1 million workers are absent every day due to stress and 60% of those absences are tied to mental health. Today, it is crucial for companies to talk about the negative impact of poor mental health among workers, not only for their bottom line, but in an effort to reduce human suffering.

There are millions of people experiencing mental illness in the United States. As of 2019, 1 in 5 adults in the U.S. were living with emotional disorders, and it is likely that number has increased due to the stressful events of 2020 (National Institute of Mental Health). With mental illness on the rise, mental and emotional health is more important than ever before.

It is important to understand the difference between mental illness and mental health, as the terms, although having different meanings, are often used interchangeably. The CDC summarizes mental health as, “our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices.” Mental illness is defined as, “conditions that affect a person’s thinking, feeling, mood, or behavior, such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, or schizophrenia. Such conditions may be occasional or long-lasting and affect someone’s ability to relate to others and function each day.” (CDC) Companies must not only promote mental health, but also provide more support for employees with mental illness.

Because of the substantial impact poor mental and emotional well-being has on a person’s day-to-day life, it is no surprise that this negative impact will carry over into an employee’s performance at work. The good news is, companies now have the opportunity to help improve their workers’ well-being by offering mental health support through a variety of methods.

Mental health support is defined as a wide spectrum of activities, from mindfulness practices and coaching to formal mental health services from a therapist or psychiatrist (Ginger). There are many ways companies can offer support to their employees, from opening up discussions about mental health and emotional well-being to implementing programs and benefits for promoting mental health.
According to the World Health Organization, workplaces that advocate for and invest in mental health support and assist employees with mental illness are more likely to reduce absenteeism, increase productivity, and benefit from associated economic gains.

Workplaces that do not invest in mental health support may see huge economic losses in coming years. Without scaled-up treatment, 12 billion working days will be lost by 2030 due to depression and anxiety disorders (WHO). In addition, the cost of depression and anxiety to the global economy is an estimated $1 trillion USD per year in lost productivity (WHO). With so many people struggling, it is not surprising that mental illness has a significant impact on the global economy and business productivity.

Ensuring the emotional well-being and mental health of employees is an investment with an incredible return. According to a 2021 report, 95% of employees report that mental health support helped them feel more positive, less stressed, and more productive at work (Ginger). In addition, for every dollar put into scaled-up treatment for common mental disorders, there is a return of four dollars in improved health and productivity (WHO).

Many of the world’s leading companies are recognizing the risks of neglecting employee emotional and mental well-being and implementing plans to help their employees improve their mental health. Microsoft has a mental health initiative called Microsoft Cares, that offers in-person and online counseling as well as employee support groups and workshops (Gringas). Barclays developed a campaign called This is Me to encourage employees to share their stories regarding mental illness to increase community and spread the message that “you are not alone.” (Gringas) Another company leading by example is Bell. Their Let’s Talk approach to improving employee emotional well-being includes a 24/7 helpline and a plethora of online resources for employees to use whenever they need. (Gringas) These are just a few of the organizations taking the lead and stepping up for their employees’ well-being. Each company has a different approach and perspective regarding what is best for their employees, therefore a multitude of approaches can work to improve employee well-being. Some changes may take months or even years to implement, while other things can be done starting today.

Some examples of things companies can do today to build a healthy environment in the workplace and prioritize the emotional well-being of employees include:

• Encourage open discussion around mental health and emotional well-being to help destigmatize the topic.
• Create awareness around mental health and mental illness.
• Encourage employees to speak up about their struggles and offer support and recognition when they do.
• Offer flexibility and promote healthy work-life balance.

A few ways companies can make long-term investments in employee mental and emotional well-being include:

• Developing and enforcing policies, programs, and practices that promote emotional well-being and support those with mental illness.
• Provide workers with resources to get help such as apps, hotlines, and coaching or therapy and communicate with them effectively so they’re aware of the benefits available to them.
• Invest in leadership training and offer incentives to employees for getting educated about mental health and mental illness. (Deloitte)

• Invest in an effective mental health benefit. (Ginger)

• Create assistance programs and offer psychological care benefits and work leave. (Deloitte)

By implementing new policies that prioritize employee emotional well-being and support of those struggling with mental illness, companies are not only helping individual quality of life, but also increasing company productivity and profitability. While, simultaneously, the companies are reducing turnover rates and sick days caused by mental illness. Prioritizing employee emotional and mental well-being will likely cause a positive ripple effect on businesses and the entire globe. It is imperative to continue advocating for mental health and the importance of emotional well-being in the workforce.

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Citations

*https://www.stress.org/workplace-stress


There are two recent and important wage and hour developments of which Pennsylvania employers need to be aware. Unfortunately, most employers have not been planning for either of these new developments.

(1) NEW OVERTIME PAY REGULATION NO LONGER IN EFFECT

First, effective September 7, 2021, (2021 Act 70, dated July 9, 2021), the Pennsylvania General Assembly repealed the state regulation that had amended definitions for the executive, administrative and professional (EAP) exemptions from minimum wage and overtime obligations.1 Under the now repealed regulation, the minimum threshold salary to meet the EAP exemptions in Pennsylvania had been raised to match the Federal threshold of $684 per week ($35,568 annually) effective October 3, 2020, and was scheduled to increase to $780 weekly ($40,560 annually) effective October 3, 2021 and $875 weekly ($45,500 annually) effective October 3, 2022, with further increases in future years. Beginning in October 2021, these increases would have placed the Pennsylvania threshold higher than the Federal threshold which remains at $684 weekly. Apparently, our state legislators determined that it was no longer desirable to allow the Pennsylvania weekly salary requirements to exceed the Federal level in October 2021. To accomplish this task, the General Assembly might have simply eliminated the higher salary threshold from the regulation or restored the very low thresholds that were in the regulation since 1977 ($8,060 per year under the “long test” for executive and administrative workers and $8,840 per year for professional employees, for example). But, the General Assembly did much more than this – the new law (2021 Act 70) repealed the entire EAP regulation, stating only:

SECTION 2215.1. ABROGATION OF DEPARTMENT REGULATIONS.--THE REGULATIONS AT 34 PA. CODE §§ 231.82 (RELATING TO EXECUTIVE) 231.83 (RELATING TO ADMINISTRATIVE) AND 231.84 (RELATING TO PROFESSIONAL) ARE ABROGATED

This means that Pennsylvania now has no regulatory guidance at all setting forth definitions or salary requirements for EAP exemptions in Pennsylvania. It does not mean, however, that there are no exemptions. In fact, the state statute remains on the books – the Pennsylvania Minimum Wage Act, which still authorizes but does not define EAP exemptions. The Pennsylvania Minimum Wage Act (PMWA) (43 PS §333.105), enacted in 1968, states that employees in EAP capacities are exempt from minimum wage and overtime requirements if they are employed:

(5) In a bona fide executive, administrative, or professional capacity (including any employe employed in the capacity of academic administrative personnel or teacher in elementary or secondary schools) or in the capacity of outside salesman (as such terms are defined and delimited from time to time by regulations of the secretary, except that an employe of a retail or service establishment shall not be excluded from the definition of employe employed in a bona fide executive or administrative capacity because of the number of hours in his

or her workweek which he or she devotes to activities not directly or closely related to the performance of executive administrative activities, if less than forty percent of his or her hours worked in the workweek are devoted to such activities)

43 PS §333.105.

It is not clear how the Pennsylvania Supreme Court would interpret the recent actions of the General Assembly. In abrogating the new regulation, did our legislators mean that Pennsylvania should follow the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and its regulations and precedent, as some commentators have suggested? Or did they mean that Pennsylvania should treat its EAP employees differently, as others have suggested? Is there any minimum salary required at all for EAP employees? Is the minimum salary now at the level it was prior to the newly abrogated regulation ($250 weekly) or is it at the level established by the FLSA regulations in 1968 when the legislature adopted the PMWA ($150 weekly)? Will Pennsylvania recognize the FLSA’s exceptions for teachers, lawyers, doctors and academic administrators, for example? Under the FLSA regulations, these employees may qualify for the exemption without meeting the minimum salary threshold required for other EAP exemptions. Recent decisions by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court suggest that the Court might decide that the PMWA does not always follow the FLSA, especially where a difference would benefit employees. See, for example, In re Amazon, No. EAP 2019 (July 21, 2021) (PMWA requires payment for security checks at worksite even though FLSA does not) (further described below); Chevalier v. General Nutrition Centers, 220 A3d. 1038 (Pa. 2019) (PMWA does not allow use of the “flexible workweek” to compute overtime wages, even though FLSA does allow); Bayada Nurses v. Commonwealth Department of Labor and Industry, 8 A.3d 866 (Pa. 2010) (PMWA limits the exception to exemption from minimum wage and overtime for domestic workers paid directly by a householder who employs them even though FLSA provides a broader exception to the exemption). In any case, it is likely that there will be litigation regarding the EAP definitions unless the legislature acts quickly to provide some guidance.

(2) MANDATORY SECURITY CHECKS ARE COMPENSABLE AS HOURS WORKED

In the second recent wage and hour development, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court declined to follow U.S. Supreme Court precedent interpreting the FLSA and instead found, on July 21, 2021, that time employees spent on an employer’s premises waiting for and undergoing mandatory security screenings is always compensable as hours worked within the meaning of the PMWA even if the amount of time is small. In re: Amazon.com, Inc., No. EAP 2019 (PA. July 21, 2021). The Pennsylvania Supreme Court answered two certified questions from the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, which is adjudicating multidistrict wage and hour litigation involving several Amazon fulfillment centers, including at least one location in Pennsylvania. A class of employees sought compensation for time spent undergoing required, routine security checks. After clocking out at the end of their shifts, employees were required to undergo antitheft security screenings, which included metal detectors, searches of bags and other personal items,
and a secondary screening process if the metal detector’s alarm sounded. The Pennsylvania Supreme Court noted that the United States Supreme Court had interpreted the FLSA involving the same Amazon employees and the same security screenings and had found that the time was not compensable under the FLSA and the Federal Portal-to-Portal Act (PTPA), which amended the FLSA. Integrity Staffing Solutions v. Busk, 574 U.S. 27 (2014). The PTPA amended the FLSA to make it clear that “activities which are preliminary to” a worker’s principal activity and activities which occur prior to the time an employee commences work or subsequent to the time the employee ceases work are not compensable. 29 U.S.C. §254(a). The Busk Court explained that an activity, even if required by the employer, does not count as compensable time worked under the Federal FLSA, as amended by the PTPA, unless the activity is an “intrinsic element” of the employee’s principal duties, and “one with which the employee cannot dispense if he is to perform his principal duties.” 574 U.S. at 33. The Busk Court concluded that the routine security screenings at the Amazon fulfillment centers were not intrinsic to the warehouse packing and shipping work the employees performed, and therefore not compensable under the FLSA. Id. at 35.

In addition, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court noted that the Pennsylvania General Assembly had not amended the PMWA in the manner the PTPA amended the FLSA. “Hours worked” is defined by Pennsylvania regulations to include “time during which an employee is required by the employer to be on the premises of the employer, to be on duty or to be at the prescribed work place, … and provided further, that time spent on the premises of the employer for the convenience of the employee shall be excluded.” 34 Pa. Code §231.1.

Thus, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court concluded that this state regulation clearly evidenced that the time spent at mandatory security checks on the employer’s premises must be compensated. The Court “reaffirmed the principle that the PMWA manifests this Commonwealth’s strong public policy protecting an employee’s right to be adequately compensated for all hours for which they work.” (Slip Op. at 14, citing Chevalier, 220 A.3d at 1055). The Court noted that the FLSA, by its own terms, specifically permits states to enact more beneficial wage and hour laws than provided by the FLSA. Slip. Op. at 15. Thus, the Pennsylvania courts are not bound by decisions interpreting the FLSA. Pennsylvania never adopted the PTPA provision which states that activities that occur subsequent to the time the employee ceases work are not compensable. “Indeed, we perceive the legislature’s decision not to adopt the PTPA as wholly consistent with that body’s clear and unequivocal policy statement statutorily expressed in the PMWA, that its overarching purpose is to address the evils of unreasonable and unfair wages and to ameliorate employer practices which serve to artificially depress those wages.” Slip Op. at 16.

Similarly, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court in Amazon concluded that it was not bound to follow the judicially created de minimis exception to the FLSA, which suggests that small amounts of time worked are not compensable. The Court again noted that the de minimis exception would conflict with the
purpose of the PMWA, which is “to maintain the economic wellbeing of our Commonwealth’s workforce by ensuring that each and every Pennsylvania worker is paid for all time he or she is required to expend by an employer for its own purposes.” Slip. Op. at 28.

**TAKEAWAYS.** First, Pennsylvania employers should review their payroll practices to ensure that nonexempt employees are paid for all time they are required to be at the workplace or otherwise performing tasks for their employer, including post-shift security screens. Second, Pennsylvania employers do not need to raise salaries for exempt employees already making at least $684 per week. Finally, Pennsylvania employers should not assume that the Pennsylvania Supreme Court will interpret the PMWA consistent with wellaccepted precedent interpreting the FLSA unless similar provisions are clearly provided for by the PMWA.

This summary of legal issues is published for informational purposes only. It does not dispense legal advice or create an attorney-client relationship with those who read it. Readers should obtain professional legal advice before taking any legal action.

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Ripped from current headlines/news...

“In today’s challenging talent market an outstanding (or less-than-stellar) candidate experience can affect not only your hiring outcomes, but also how well you’re retaining employees and creating employee advocates”.

Brazen—July 2021

“If companies do not reinvent the candidate/employee experience business outcomes will suffer measurably”.

AIHR—July 2021

“Employers fear effects of the “Great Resignation” as millions of workers are moving on monthly”.

Yahoo Finance—July 2021

“United States is seen adding 845,000 new jobs in July, but on-going labor shortage poses a severe threat to future hiring. The US still remains about 6 million jobs short of its pre-pandemic employment numbers”.

MSN MarketWatch—July 2021

Yes, we all see and read the articles and take in the dire news on a daily basis but what are we actually doing to overcome the issues that we face? Old ways of combatting these issues no longer work and to successfully move past these issues forward and creative thinking is necessary. As all companies are in the same boat we must rise above our competition and be at the forefront of devising ways to solve the issues that confront us.

I am honored and humbled to be speaking at the 2021 PHRA Conference and my presentation will look to solve some of these issues as we look at future HR trends and what we must do to combat these and other pressing HR issues. We will look back at past trends and how they have positively impacted HR today but also view how most of these trends are no longer effective and that going forward new and more creative ways must be followed in order to move our companies into a more positive future.

The entire candidate/employee experience will be dissected and we will view both the good and bad of HR and what must be done in order to set ourselves up for the challenging years ahead in a post-Covid world.

My presentation will cover topics such as Employee Ghosting, Artificial Intelligence, Data Analytics, Gamification, Value Driven Recruiting/Retention, Digital HR and the like and will offer real-life examples that can be used as valued takeaway for those in attendance.

An overall rethinking of HR needs to take place to combat the problems that face us today. Covid has forced us to realize that activities like recruiting and onboarding for example are forever changed. These activities, as well as performance management and even firing decisions need to be changed to adapt to today’s realities.
Moving forward HR will have to redesign the employee/candidate journey and measure the virtual employee experience. Elements like work-life balance, wellbeing, connection, and collaboration will be crucial both for employee satisfaction and the optimization of business outcomes.

Just as companies will continue experimenting with more informal ways of team-building and socialization, we may also see more formalized online connections and partnerships being piloted at companies all over the world.

As employers we must also now ace Analytics in order to better forge a path forward. Analytics is one of those oft-repeated topics we’ve seen on HR trends lists over the last few years. Although people analytics is gaining a solid foothold in many organizations, the impact of their findings is often still lacking. Are we measuring the right data, redesigning systems based on data, and actually making change happen?

Finally, my presentation will discuss the meaning of “HR With a Purpose” and we will discuss whether we are actually bringing purpose into our organizations? Do we have a purpose and are we mindful of this purpose as we drive decisions, conversations and behavior across all levels of our organization?

Are we engaging in value-based recruitment to support our purpose and mission and are we engaging candidates in a way that our values will meet theirs? Are we looking past just job qualifications in order to land the best candidates or are we digging deeper into the individual and training the skills as need be after the point of hire?

We will have a great deal to cover as you can see during my presentation and I am hopeful that you will take the hour-long journey with me on October 20, 2021 from 10:50 AM-11:50 AM. Please come prepared with “virtual questions” and I look forward to interacting with you at the upcoming 2021 PHRA Annual Conference.
Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, medical statistics had shown black and brown people were adversely impacted by a number of health conditions, including hypertension, diabetes, cancer and cardiovascular disease. Following that trend, studies have revealed this same population more likely to contract COVID and succumb to the virus at three to six times the rate of their white counterparts. Some believe that there are biological differences between whites and people of color. Others take the stance that the variance in medical outcomes have much to do with health inequities. The reality is that this isn’t natural or happenstance and addressing this holistically, together, is the only way.

If any positive can be found with regard to COVID, it has accelerated the focus of health disparities and social determinants of health brought to the forefront of our health care system injustices, which have plagued our practices, policies and procedures. For this reason, health equity can only be achieved once we address race equity, assuring one’s race has no influence on how one fairs in our health care system.

Changes in our system are long overdue. The “fix” is shared responsibility among the medical community, politicians and employers because the issue goes beyond the personal medical outcomes for these individuals as it also affects the community as a whole. Improving the health of those residing in our most disadvantaged communities may also lead to lower taxes and health care costs because health disparities often equate to unnecessary expense and financial burdens related to medical assistance and acute care setting expenses, among others.

As a result, health care costs place undue burden on employers. Therefore, the importance of health equity being incorporated into the well-being strategies and mindsets of human resource personnel is key. It’s not enough to have a robust benefits plan if the bias still exists when utilizing health care services. Business CEOs and representatives need to serve as allies, advocates, and sometimes even activists for the rights of minority employees. Employers who don’t believe health disparities affect their business because of lack of diversity in their workforce must recognize they can’t only consider their current employees, but future employees as well.

Individually we may not see the data because it does not personally pertain to us. However, the solution will only be realized when we each accept responsibility in finding it.
Recently, Henderson Brothers’ Director of Pharmacy Solutions, Dr. Chris Antypas, was invited by the Pittsburgh Business Group on Health (PBGH) to speak about specialty medications and their impact on work, cost, and pharmacy benefits for employers.

**Without a clear and strong specialty pharmacy strategy - your company is at great risk of facing unaffordable healthcare costs.**

Specialty Medications are the fastest growing segment of the healthcare sector, and these medications now account for more than 50% of all pharmacy costs. This is an astounding number, especially when you consider that, typically, less than 2% of your population is responsible for this spend.

**Our Director of Pharmacy Solutions and team of advisors bring a comprehensive strategy and set of solutions to manage your growing pharmacy coats.**

The pharmacy supply chain is riddled with conflicts of interest, which can lead to exorbitant waste in your healthcare spend. You may not realize that this waste can be driven by your PBM and even the pharmacies dispensing the medications to your members. If these vendors generate more revenue when you spend more on pharmacy, chances are that they are working against your interests.

Your pharmacy spend is **an investment** in the health of your population, as the medications purchased are used to manage acute and chronic conditions. Your pharmacy benefit should be designed to ensure a fair price on the product, and to provide you with a demonstration of a real return on this massive investment. Program design, transparency, and data analytics are essential to achieve an effective pharmacy benefit for you and your members.

Is your current advisor telling you this? If they aren’t Henderson Brothers - chances are they’re not.

**If you’d like to schedule a conversation with Dr. Chris Antypas, our Director of Pharmacy Solutions, please contact Sean Ganoe, Vice President of Business Development.**

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If there’s one persistent human resources problem that never seems to go away, it’s workplace harassment. Despite the fact that over the last decade or more, a great deal of light has shined throughout the law and society in this particular area – especially in the last 5 or so years since the onset of the #MeToo Movement – the stories we hear about harassment in workplaces never seem to abate. Whether it involves high profile complaints of harassment on a large scale at a private sector monolith like Google, allegations of another ‘frat-boy’ culture environment at a specialized tech company like Activision-Blizzard, or even a history of conduct which brings down a high profile, public sector governmental official (I’m looking at you in New York, former Governor Cuomo), it remains discouraging to see continued and repeated instances of this issue surface in workplaces of all types and sizes, despite many efforts over the years to combat it.

As discouraging as they are, however, instances like these are always a good reminder that this issue remains an active problem employers must continually take steps to address. But how? Let’s examine some things employers can do to protect their employees and avoid having to contend with this very dangerous issue in their workplaces.

It All Starts at the Top

Like so many other workplace issues, one of the most proactive steps an employer can take to avoid or eradicate harassment is for the company’s leadership to not just make prevention of the issue a priority, but to consistently prove it in action. The commitment to a harassment-free workplace must start at the top of the pyramid, and must bleed down from there throughout the executive team to high level managers, to mid-level supervisors, and ultimately to every person that walks through the door. It requires focus, and implanting that dedication through affirmative steps which consistently send the right message to employees.

Of course, a lot of CEO’s and leaders talk the talk in this area, but don’t walk the walk nearly as well. And there’s one particular step which many organizations are reluctant to take when confronted with a harassment problem: Addressing a confirmed instance of harassment with swift, decisive action. Often this will mean meaningful discipline, and sometimes losing certain valuable personnel in the process, but that’s a key step in making the elimination of harassment a priority.

Follow it up with Fundamentals

Beyond charting a course from the top, employers often aren’t sure how to prevent harassment. So, let’s quickly review some basics here. Of course, employers who don’t have robust harassment policies should immediately look to develop them. Besides outlining a commitment to non-discrimination and harassment on the basis of ANY protected category and setting forth examples of prohibited conduct, the policy should include a reporting procedure that has multiple avenues of reporting, and a commitment to non-retaliation for bringing concerns forward. It also should make plain what the consequences of violating the policy may be. Meanwhile, employers that already have such policies in place should take steps to review and improve them. Don’t overlook the assistance which qualified counsel can provide in this area.

Once a policy is in place, it’s important to regularly train on it. That means yearly, at least, and maybe even twice a year. That sounds like a lot, but if you want to take this problem seriously, that’s one thing it will require. Also, consider filling your training program with many interactive examples of harassment, and refresh them regularly. Further, consider doing these programs in-person. While there are certain on-line modules available which offer
harassment ‘training,’ I assure you that your employees are much more likely to look at going through one of those modules as an obligation (and will not pay as much attention to it as a result), compared to the delivery of a highly interactive, nuanced, in-person program which is more apt to capture their attention and be effective as a learning tool. It does take more time and cost more money to do it that way, but again – how serious are you about trying to prevent this from happening in your workplace?

Finally, if there is a complaint of harassment in your workplace, be sure a prompt and thorough investigation is conducted, and document all aspects of the investigation. The investigation, steps, and documentation may vary from employer to employer and investigation to investigation, but it is an essential aspect of addressing and combatting this issue. Also, be mindful of the fact that you may have to make a judgment call about what happened in certain instances.

**Do a Culture Check**

Beyond setting the tempo with company leadership, having a policy and training employees on the policy, and conducting investigations, many organizations get stuck. They also can get lulled into a false sense of security, thinking they don’t really have a ‘harassment problem’ simply because they haven’t gotten any (or many) complaints in this area. However, beware – harassment is often an issue which bubbles just under the surface, because many employees are uncomfortable bringing their concerns forward no matter how much you assure them they should (and need to).

Obviously, no employer wants employees to feel uncomfortable bringing concerns forward any more than they want to ever have to contend with a deluge of harassment complaints suddenly, so one useful recommendation to try and put your thumb on this issue in your workplace is to conduct regular surveys of your employees about your workplace culture and environment. Ask them – even anonymously – if they’ve ever been made to feel uncomfortable. Ask if they’ve heard a remark in the workplace, even if not made to them, which they feel is inappropriate. Ask if they didn’t report it, why didn’t they. These questions and others may open your eyes about things you need to do better to improve the environment in your workplace.

Another consideration is to hire a Chief People Officer (or a like position) separate and apart from Human Resources, where one of the key emphases of the role is to ensure an environment free of harassment, bullying, intimidation, and the like. This individual can be a point person for all harassment matters, including the training, complaint-handling, and more. Again, many employers often don’t think about this option or consider going that far, but to be serious about addressing harassment in the workplace, this is a worthwhile possibility to evaluate.

**The Bottom Line**

As challenging as it may be these days, it is important to remain vigilant in taking regular, consistent steps to maintain a work environment free from harassment. I saw an article in the aftermath of Governor Cuomo’s recommendation which talked about how the scandal which ultimately forced his resignation underscored the limits of the #MeToo movement, and while I understood the systemic point the author was attempting to make – the impact of that movement has been more to simply drive awareness than change – I still thought that overall message was unfortunate. Whether you are a large employer or a small one, don’t be discouraged. Continued efforts here matter, and considering the impact on any victim of harassment, as well as the fact that a single instance of it in your workplace can have not just legal consequences, but practical ones, too (like negative impacts to morale, retention, reputation, and much, much more), you should have all the incentive you need to keep doing all you can to address this persistent workforce issue.
Focus on HR Reporting
Securing and Maintaining a Seat at the Strategy Table
By: Bob Greene, Senior HR Industry Analyst, Ascentis

For years now, top HR professionals have been promised greater presence, participation, and visibility at the executive “round table,” working with other chief corporate officers like the Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Financial Officer and Chief Technology Officer, among others, to set corporate direction. In some companies, particularly larger ones (e.g., more than 2,500 employees), this has occurred, and many of these top HR vice-presidents have even achieved the title of Chief Human Resource (or People) Officer, with the executive influence that title implies.

But for the majority of small and mid-sized businesses (“SMBs”), HR is still in the process of attaining that influence. What is standing in the way? For too long, the art and science of Human Resources has been seen by Executive Teams as too focused on the tactical – hiring, firing, negotiating the endless details of benefits plans, promulgating corporate policies (set by others), and avoiding compliance pitfalls. In these circumstances, is HR “missing a boat?”

**Becoming Data-Driven**

It’s well-established that executive teams and corporate boards are comprised of both “left-brained” and “right-brained” individuals. Put very simply, left-brained people are more logical and fact-focused, while right-brained people tend to be more emotional and focused on art and creativity. While the typical organization might point toward their CFO and CIO as left-brained, and their CMO and top HR professional as right-brained, these are gross generalizations and don’t always apply. Most major work-oriented personality assessments recognize these dichotomies: **Working Styles Assessments™** assigns them to an “expressive” vs. “analytical” scale, while **Myers-Briggs Type Indicator®** uses their “intuition” vs. “sensing” vector.

Assuming for a moment that such personality distinctions apply to your executive team or corporate board, the challenge for the CHRO (or equivalent head of HR) comes quickly into view: when presenting crucial information about personnel-related operations within an organization, how do we appeal to everyone in a way that makes our “seat at the [strategy] table” essential?

Sapient Insights HR Systems Survey (formerly known as Sierra Cedar) is an annual survey of HR and related systems that provides detail, summaries, and key trend analyses for all issues surrounding human resource information systems. In their 2020-21 (23rd annual) survey, the researchers point to the trend for mature HR organizations to transition from process-focused to outcome-focused. Intuitively, it is clear that executive teams are going to be far more interested in better organization-wide business outcomes than merely department-specific improved processes.

The Sapient Insights survey goes on to describe multiple paths for HR teams to achieve a business outcomes focus, and one of those is evolving an organization’s HR function to be data driven. There are many steps an organization can take to be more data-driven, including reducing the number of separate databases being used to maintain employee data, moving data maintenance to the source by fully deploying employee and manager self-service and mobile apps, and ensuring that where separate systems and/or databases are
necessary, the interfaces between them function correctly and on a timely basis. All of these steps increase the trustworthiness of the information that HR departments produce for executive consumption.

**Dashboards, Analytics and Executive Outreach**

As important as all these steps are, there is arguably no greater priority for HR professionals to gain access to the strategy round table, than presenting meaningful, reliable and decisionable information to that group. In the past, and for some organizations continuing to today, the practice is to offer raw data to company leaders, rather than information. The “green bars” may have disappeared from the reports’ visuals, but the contents of those reports are often simple listings, with little filtering, analysis, highlighting or trend-spotting, leaving the reader to attempt to draw their own conclusions from the output. Going back to the split between left-brained and right-brained management consumers, this may work reasonably well for the left-brained, more analytical audience, but leave others cold, and unable to see past the individual data points to the underlying issues being brought to their attention.

Today’s available HR technology facilitates many approaches to improved information flow that can make a huge contribution toward executive team inclusion by our HR leaders. Of course, first and always, the information produced must be correct, well-defined and never ambiguous. The classic (and very “entry-level”) test for this, for example, occurs when an executive or manager asks for an active employee headcount as of a specific date and time, perhaps requesting that information from both the Payroll and HR departments ... and gets different numbers. Those of us “deep in the weeds” of human capital management systems and reporting can offer any number of legitimate reasons for these contradictions – from the timing of interfaces or integrations between disparate systems, to the ways that transactions workflow through approvals within a system or even ambiguity in the way terms like “active” are defined in our systems. However, no matter how legitimate these reasons for producing questionable data might be, they will always hamper the ability to be seen as equal partner at the strategy table, and must be resolved before sending the data on for consumption by management. This is a basic tenet of turning raw data into actionable information. It is “table stakes” for full participation at the executive round table.

Once such basic data cleanliness challenges are resolved, an organization can be ready to move to “needed to win” actions around information reporting, and these are a few of the best practices in that regard:

- **Graphical summaries or detailed data listings?** Referring back to the issue of left-brained/right-brained, organizational psychologists agree that most employees, and most executives, have a preferred way of absorbing information. Some will prefer to be presented with summaries of the data and proposed conclusions and next steps, while others will gain more from perusing the detailed data itself and drawing their own conclusions. Modern HR, payroll, workforce management and talent management systems are frequently capable of generating both types of output – why not offer both to the executive team, the charts and summaries in the “main body” of reporting, and perhaps the supporting detail in appendices?
Focus on HR Reporting
Securing and Maintaining a Seat at the Strategy Table (cont.)

- **Modes of information delivery**: It would be wonderful, from a CHRO’s perspective, if executive team members thought about people issues every hour of every business day, but that is certainly not the case. HR challenges compete for top-of-mind space with the CEO, COO, CFO and CIO against a myriad of other issues: supply chain, customer service, sales achievement, financial considerations, to name just a few. Given these facts, if best practice is to set up an HR dashboard or reporting portal for each such executive, would it be realistic to expect the executives to visit those pages and use the available tools daily? The entire category of so-called “pull technology” (whereby the executive decides to visit and explore available reporting tools) is only half the battle for mind-share. “Push technology,” whereby alerts are automatically sent to an executive when key productivity indicators reach (or even approach) a level that requires some attention on the part of executives, is also fast becoming a best practice. These push notifications also allow the executive to be better prepared for an upcoming meeting in which they will be discussed – always a valuable feature in an environment in which management has shown they “hate surprises” – particularly downside ones. Finally, it is clear that, as more and more executives spend a larger share of their available time on their mobile devices, push technology is a potential HR attention flag for those executives between meetings or otherwise “on the go.”

- **Trending, predictive analytics, and artificial intelligence**: The cutting edge of increased reporting effectiveness involves going beyond the data on the page, to draw conclusions and make logical recommendations to address the issue being highlighted. This requires HR software capable of doing trend spotting, some degree of predictive analysis, and perhaps in the near future, artificial intelligence incorporating external corporate data, industry data and perhaps even developing economic trends to make more targeted recommendations for action.

For a deeper dive into this subject matter, don’t miss the session, “Human Capital Reporting: Present With Impact in the Boardroom” at the 73rd annual PHRA Conference, on October 19, 2021 at 10:50 am.
Pennsylvania’s Shared-Work program is a great tool that allows an employer to temporarily reduce the work hours of a group of employees while supplementing their lost wages with partial unemployment benefits rather than laying off any employees. Employees covered by the Shared-Work plan receive a percentage of their unemployment compensation (UC) weekly benefit amount while they work the reduced schedule, if they are otherwise eligible for UC.

Shared-Work plans empower employers to retain a trained and qualified workforce during periods of slowdown, and quickly ramp up operations without the expense of recruiting, hiring, and training new employees.

Since March 2020, more than 750 shared-work plans have been successfully put into action from employers across the commonwealth. With changing dynamics in the modern-day work place, Pennsylvania’s Shared-Work program may help your business in its continued success.

“As a small company that sells winter heating oil, the Shared Work program allows us to share the work between employees during the slower, warmer months. The company benefits because it is simple to sign-up for, we save on wages and training costs, and it helps us keep our well-trained employees year after year. “Our employees benefit by maintaining their jobs, pay, and benefits, and enjoy some additional time off during the summer. We are thankful that this program, which we’ve participated in since 2016, has allowed us to avoid annual employee layoffs.”

Amy Purcell, President
Robert E Reedy & Sons Inc

Who is included in the Shared-Work plan?

As the employer, you select which employees will be included in the Shared-Work plan. A plan must apply to one “affected unit” which is defined as a department, shift, or other organizational unit. Employers may have more than one plan if there is more than one affected unit. For example, all employees working the night shift may be one unit. All employees in the affected unit must participate; however, an employee who has been employed in the affected unit for less than three months, or an employee who would work 40 or more hours a week under the plan may not participate. There must be at least two participating employees, determined without regard to corporate officers.

How much will the employees’ hours be reduced under the Shared-Work program?

Once you have identified the affected unit(s), you must select the percentage by which the employees’ hours are reduced, referred to as the “reduction percentage.” The employer determines the reduction percentage based on business needs, but it must be at least 20 percent and cannot exceed 40 percent of the employees’ normal weekly hours. The reduction percentage must be the same for all employees.
participating in the Shared-Work plan. For example, if an employee normally works 40 hours per week, and the reduction percentage is 20 percent, then the employee’s hours are reduced by 20 percent and he or she would work 80 percent of 40 hours, or 32 hours per week. If an employee in the same unit works 30 hours per week, then he or she would work 80 percent of 30 hours, or 24 hours per week.

**How are UC benefits determined under the plan?**

For each week in the plan, an employee receives a percentage of his or her UC weekly benefit amount (WBA) equal to the reduction percentage. For example, if the employee’s WBA is $400 and the employee’s hours are reduced by 20 percent under the plan, the employee would receive 20 percent of $400 (or $80) in Shared-Work UC benefits.

**What qualifications are required for participation?**

As an employer, you are eligible to participate in Pennsylvania’s Shared-Work program if you have filed all UC tax reports and paid all amounts due under PA UC Law, have a positive reserve account balance (for contributory employers) and have paid wages for the last 12 consecutive quarters, according to the department’s Office of UC Tax Services.

For more information and to view FAQs, forms and the brochure, please visit [www.uc.pa.gov/sharedwork](http://www.uc.pa.gov/sharedwork).

I look forward to you attending my presentation where I’ll describe the Shared Work program in more detail at your pre-conference session on Tuesday, October 14 from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.
As an employer, you probably assume that paying for performance is something that you should at least try to do. This article is intended to provide a framework within which you can decide whether or not paying for performance makes sense for your organization.

**What is performance?**

It is always necessary to define what “performance” means. Chances are it means different things to different individuals in your organization. To some, it may mean having the tools to achieve results. To others, it may mean the end results themselves. This is a critical distinction.

The tools are the means of achievement: the enablers, if you will. They include skills, traits, and behavioral competencies. These are the characteristics of the employees that enable them to produce results.

The end results are what happen as a consequence of the individual’s competencies. Results include goal achievement, meeting standards, and other accomplishments that can be objectively measured in terms of quantity, quality, and/or timeliness.

Organizations need to define exactly what they mean by performance if they hope to be able to effectively pay for performance. In most cases, it means paying for the end results.

Why link pay to performance?

Why would an organization choose to link pay to individual or group performance? There are four primary benefits:

1. Motivate improved productivity consistent with overall organizational objectives
2. Improve communications between supervisors and their employees
3. Help facilitate team processes
4. Substantiate higher compensation levels

1. **Motivating improved productivity**

The academic community and other theorists regularly question whether financial rewards are actually motivational, or just excuses for organizations to manipulate their poor, overworked employees, who would much prefer to be motivated by the implicit value of the work itself. (See Kohn, Alfie Punished by Rewards. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1993/1999.)

Although there is much to be said for creating meaningful work for employees, I believe that financial rewards are, for most people, powerful motivators.

Most organizations with whom we have worked are very interested in creating ways to manage performance in such a way as to realize productivity and efficiency gains. This generally becomes a process of establishing individual and/or team goals that support the organization’s overall business plan or mission.
2. **Improving communications**

Focusing on productivity provides a unique opportunity for organizations to improve communications at all levels. We have become a society in which unconscious assumptions exist about almost everything. In the workplace, both employees and their supervisors have their own perceptions about their jobs that frequently don’t match. Sometimes, employees are not even sure who their supervisors are! This, of course, leads to considerable confusion and, eventually, to inefficient work habits and less than optimal results.

Developing a system through which performance results are articulated and documented requires participation on the part of all employees. This involvement in a communication process often leads to improved productivity in and of itself - even before the connection to financial rewards is made.

3. **Facilitating team processes**

Often, attempting to force team behavior by providing team rewards is a recipe for frustration. This is particularly the case when “teams” exist primarily in the minds of management staff.

However, an organization that has functional, established teams whose members acknowledge them as such can benefit from a pay-for-performance plan that provides meaningful financial rewards for collaborative goal achievement. In this context, the facilitation of team processes can be enhanced by making sure that all team members participate equally in the payoff, even if some team members are higher-paid, and/or have higher levels of responsibility than others. In a sense, they all sink or swim together. This creates more peer pressure to perform, which is one of the fundamental benefits of establishing teams in the first place.

4. **Substantiate compensation levels**

Many organizations have an imperative need to attract and retain top performers in order to meet their business goals. Paying for performance then becomes the obvious answer. If it can be shown that difficult-to-achieve goals were met and/or exceeded, and that they resulted in greater outcomes or better operating efficiencies, senior management will feel comfortable proposing higher pay levels, at both base pay and incentive levels.

**ARE YOU READY FOR THIS?**

Here are some basic issues to consider when deciding whether to pursue a pay-for-performance approach in your organization:

- **LEVELS OF BASE PAY**: Are they generally high, low, just about right, or mixed? We suggest that base pay should be structured and consistent before attempting any form of performance-based variable pay approaches. A clear pay philosophy should be established that incorporates understanding of your labor market, your competitors, and what you want to achieve as an organization.
• **ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE**: Is it performance-oriented? For example, some not-for-profit organizations are more concerned about employee development than they are about productivity or measurable outcomes. In some instances, it may be difficult to measure outcomes, and the culture has fostered a mentality that contributing to the mission is enough of a reward.

• **MANAGEMENT TOOL**: Will the organization adopt pay-for-performance as a way to manage? In order to be effective, there must be conceptual changes that affect the day-to-day management approach.

• **SENIOR MANAGEMENT**: Does the organization’s management group have the right competencies to manage and support a pay-for-performance approach? Usually, it’s only highly skilled managers who are able to effectively work with their employees in the context of a pay plan linked to performance. Not only must they be able to do this, but they must also want to do it - it takes time and effort to do it right.

Defining (or redefining) an organizational pay philosophy and developing a corresponding pay structure is not an easy or obvious process. Many organizations avoid the uncomfortable transition between their old, traditional plan (or no plan at all!) and a new, performance-based one. With some thorough discussions and careful implementation however, the benefits are substantial.
It started with a simple question, “How are our best and brightest leaders addressing the concurrent challenges of a global pandemic and racial justice and equity while creating new opportunities for their enterprises and teams?” It resulted in The Leadership Café, a webcast series in which we interviewed extraordinary people leading remarkable businesses (including all of the 2021 nominees for PHRA’s HR Leader of the Year.) So far, we’ve met with over 40 executives and business owners from a variety of organizations and industries. And more are on tap.

We are not only having a blast but are also learning a lot about what leaders and organizations have done to pivot, learn-on-the-fly, and bounce forward during major disruptions. Rather than focusing on what the pandemic did TO organizations and leaders, we focused on what the pandemic did FOR us.

Here are some of the highlights.

**Culture Matters.** Culture has been a common topic of discussion on the Cafe’. Sheetz Inc. has been one of the top 100 Best Places to Work in the US for several years. Their V. P. of HR, Stephanie Doliveira, emphasized that the investment that Sheetz had made in their “Culture Bank” over many years was what really set the stage for the organization to effectively respond to the pandemic and bounce forward.

Jamie Gallagher, President and CEO of Faber-Castell USA described how the strategic planning that his leadership team had completed just prior to 2020 prepared the organization for rapid and constant change. In fact, he explained that the pandemic really helped the strategy to come alive and show everyone how they can achieve their mission of enhancing people’s everyday lives. The true understanding of Faber-Castell’s strategy and “living their Why” began in the middle of March 2020.

Research that we conducted with colleagues from Denison Consulting reinforced the role that culture played in how successfully organizations responded to 2020’s challenges. Organizations with clearer and more aligned cultures were perceived by their employees as being more resilient during the pandemic. It turns out that culture is the vaccine that can help any organization ward off the impact of almost any disruptive event.

**Adversity Drives Innovation.** A common theme across our Café discussions was the role that innovation played in responding to the pandemic.

Lisa Scales, CEO of the Greater Pittsburgh Community Foodbank, described how the Food Bank quickly and rapidly developed their “Doorstep Delivery” program that brought thousands of meals to people who were over 60 years of age, unable to leave their homes and were in need of food. In previous years, Lisa told us, it would have taken the Food Bank 6-12 months to develop, vet, and implement this kind of program but given the urgency of the Pandemic and the need for speed, it only took them 5 days to get it up and running. The Food Bank leaders learned that, through effective partnering and innovation, they were able to build new processes and capabilities much quicker than they had in the past.
Dr. Tuesday Stanley, President of Westmoreland County Community College, indicated that the school was able to effectively switch from classroom to remote instruction in a matter of days due to the investment the school made in innovative technology and teacher development. Dr. Stanley pointed out that “external pressures that are sometimes a gift” allowed WCCC to become a stronger, thriving institution.

**Adversity Builds Leaders.** Several of the Café’ guests noted that one of the unusual positive features of navigating a significant challenge was that it was a unique skill-building opportunity. One CEO completed regular After-Action Reviews with his Pandemic Response Team to intentionally identify and capture what they did as leaders that worked, what didn’t work and what they learned that could be applied in the future. By purposely taking time out for intentional feedback and reflection, leaders were able to lock-in what they learned from navigating a powerful, development challenge. At Faber-Castell, Jamie Gallagher described how his leaders intentionally addressed the trial of “being apart but being together” by building new leadership skills and by changing their mindset of about how “work” is defined. Dr. Stanley reinforced this concept more personally by pointing out that it was tough, pivotal moments like these in her career when she learned the most.

**Opportunities to Build Equity and Inclusion.** The pandemic and actions around racial equity came together and our leaders recognized the importance of addressing these issues head on. Jessica Brooks, CEO of the Pittsburgh Business Group on Health, has been tracking data in health care disparities and has seen how this impacts businesses as well as people and communities of color. Engaging members of her consortium as well as business leaders is creating new ideas during this time of our health care crises.

Marvin Ferguson, founder of “Let’s Get Healthy Cleveland” decided that he could address health care issues in minority communities by hosting a radio show “Ask the Pharmacist” where he and fellow pharmacist colleagues can provide straight answers to callers about medications and beyond.

**Communicate AND Listen.** The importance of opening listening channels during a crisis was reinforced in the global culture research we mentioned above. In that study, employees were very positive about the efforts their companies made to keep them informed about new pandemic policies and work procedures. However, many felt like they had lost an opportunity for their voices to be heard. The volume of communication to employees was at an all-time high, which some employees viewed as overload. The CEO of Pittsburgh Mercy, Anthony Beltran, reinforced the importance of maintaining connections. Beyond a regular drumbeat of communicating to employees, Tony and his executive team made a special effort to safely visit their many locations to listen to employees.

These were amazing insights from some remarkable leaders. What has the pandemic done FOR you?
Congratulations to the following PHRA members on their recent achievements:

• Jenna Fioravanti has achieved her SHRM-CP credential
• Malorie Hague has achieved her SHRM-CP credential
• Tiffany Mikesic has achieved her SHRM-SCP credential
• Shaun Nicholson-Rochmann has achieved her SHRM-CP credential
• Jessi Wielock has achieved her SHRM-SCP credential

On the move

Congratulations to the following PHRA members on their recent achievements:

• Ann Zerby has achieved her SHRM-SCP credential
• Franchesca Soos Pitts has achieved her SHRM-CP credential
• Rachel Eaglehouse has achieved her SHRM-CP credential

New Members

Haley Antoniotti  
MedExpress Urgent Care

Jeffrey Arnold  
Leadership Adventures Inc.

Darrell Baltimore  
Carnegie Mellon University

Jaclyn Bionci  
Schwebel Baking Company

Randi Blanchard  
Pressley Ridge

Dayna Brown  
Pittsburgh Hires Veterans

Kimberly Bush  
Westmoreland Intermediate Unit

Jesse Cartney  
Justifacts Credential Verification

Amie Chulack  
UPMC

Teresa Clark  
Allegheny County Airport Authority

David Colamarino  
Justifacts Credential Verification

Natalie Cruz  
Software Engineering Institute/ Carnegie Mellon University

Julie DiDonato  
Carnegie Mellon University

Colleen Everett  
Colleen Everett

Patricia Fraas  
East End Cooperative Ministry

James Garboden  
Human Capital Advisors

Preston Gibson  
Justifacts Credential Verification

Kristine Gil  
Carnegie Mellon University

Jay Glunt  
Fisher Phillips

Sarah Herold  
Decision Resources Inc.

Kelli Komondor  
K2 Creative LLC

Shacara Kuczma  
Allegheny County Airport Authority

Jennifer Liokareas  
Savin Rock Communities

Elena Mazzoni  
Allegheny County Airport Authority

Taylor McBride  
Port Authority of Allegheny County

Maria del mar Morales  
University of Pittsburgh

Heather Murray  
Advantage Credit Counseling Service Inc.

Alexander Papson  
SDWMA

Kameico Robison  
Carnegie Mellon University

Allyson Ross  
Forms+Surfaces

John Rudzki  
ACA Group

Tricia Rutherford  
Monongahela Valley Hospital

Darlene Sauers  
Seton Hill University

Peter Schramm  
Lattus

Luis Segovia  
Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh

Stephen Spolar  
SBS Strategic HR Consulting LLC

Marissa Sundberg  
US Foods

Paige Szmyczak  
Cipriani & Werner P.C.

Allyson Tokarek  
Edgar Snyder & Associates

Katie Turner  
Tamila Wolf  
Cook MyoSite Inc.

Arthur Wolfson  
Fisher Phillips

Carly Woods  
Ritchey Metals Company Inc.
The Pittsburgh Human Resources Association offers many valuable networking and education programs throughout the year. Keep an eye on the PHRA online event calendar for a complete and up-to-date listing of all programs. Register for an upcoming event today!

September 14 | Learn
Growing Your Conflict Management Skills During times of Change

September 22 | Network and Learn
PHRA Book Club Meeting

September 23 | Learn
HYBRID PROGRAM: Speaking of Viral: Preparing for a Social Media Crisis Before it Hits

September 24 | Network
Annual Golf and Bocce Outing

October 8 | Network
Coffee Corner: Meet the PHRA Board of Directors

October 12 | Learn
Pre-Conference Session: Core Competencies for Leadership in a Post-COVID World

October 13 | Learn
Pre-Conference Session: Listening to Create Engagement in All Environments: A Lesson from Improv

October 14 | Learn
Pre-Conference Session: Shared-Work, an Alternative to Layoffs

October 15 | Learn
Pre-Conference Session: How to Create Relationship-Centered, Inclusive Workplaces

October 18 | Learn
Pre-Conference Session: HR 101 for Departments of One & Small Business

October 18 | Network and Learn
Networking Social: Never Have I Ever (Professional Version Only)

October 19-20 | Learn
2021 PHRA Annual Conference & Exhibition: Virtual Experience

October 29 | Network and Learn
Your Job Search In a Virtual World: Panel Discussion

November 4 | Learn
Your Job Search In a Virtual World: Panel Discussion

* Online Registration Coming Soon For This Event
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