The Future of Work
I hope 2022 has been treating you well. Last month, you heard from IPMA-HR’s current president, Jennifer Fairweather, M.A., SHRM-SCP, PHR, IPMA-SCP. I am excited to be working with Jennifer, IPMA-HR’s officers and the IPMA-HR Executive Council to continue to move the Association forward.

We celebrated the end of 2021 by releasing our Annual Report. I hope you’ve had a chance to peruse it and learn a little more about your Association and the work done to support you, our members.

Our theme for 2021 was resilience. As Pam Dollard, IPMA-HR’s 2021 president, and I stated in our joint letter, “While 2021 has been a rebuilding year, 2022 will see the fruition of several critical projects. The steps will continue to help IPMA-HR rebrand in order to more strongly support the mission and values of IPMA-HR and serve our members.”

In case you did miss them, a few highlights of the 2021 Annual Report include the following:

- From October 27 to November 8, we conducted a needs assessment survey, and current members, former members and nonmembers in the field of public sector HR submitted responses. The purpose was to determine your attitudes and perceptions about the Association and its products and services so we can tailor those to your needs. This survey data will be key to improving and creating programs that provide great value for you in the upcoming years.

- We completed an Organizational 360 Report that provided important data points on changes needed within IPMA-HR as an organization.

- In August, we held a successful virtual Chapter & Regional Leadership Conference during which we launched online resources for volunteer leaders.

- We focused on member-led webinars, resulting in a 20 percent increase in IPMA-HR members presenting to their peers.

- We added interactive Q&A sessions to all online professional development courses.

- The IPMA-HR certification program completed another strong year, with a 20 percent increase in international certifications.

- We released a new Police Officer Assessment exam, continuing our work to provide important resources for public safety hiring.

This month, we are looking forward to taking all the data collected throughout 2021 and putting it to good use as we craft our long-term strategy to refresh our brand and our member value proposition.

Turning to the magazine, this month’s HR News provides much food for thought. The future of work is on everyone’s minds as HR practitioners and organizational leaders reshape workplaces and workforces to fit everchanging circumstances. Will the pandemic permanently change how work is done, or are the effects temporary?

I, for one, see some lasting changes, particularly around employee benefits and where people physically work. Now is the time to thoroughly review your organization’s employee benefits, job descriptions and performance criteria to be certain all employees are provided with what they need to be effective and engaged.

We would love to hear from you. What do you think the future of work will be? More specifically, what do you need to help your organization be successful in the new world of work?

There are lots of opportunities to get involved in IPMA-HR. Take a look at upcoming IPMA-HR professional development courses, or consider earning an IPMA-HR certification. Perhaps you would like to present an upcoming IPMA-HR webinar. Please reach out, and we will connect you to the resources you seek right away.

Last, we are again planning an in-person IPMA-HR Annual Conference. Keep an eye out for more details on the 2022 meeting soon.

Let’s start the year strong! It’s going to be a great adventure, and I am looking forward to taking the journey with you.

Cara Woodson Welch
ipma@ipma-hr.org
Clear Your Webinar Queue

Now is the time to catch up on virtual panel discussions, roundtables or online presentations you missed last year. We'll be announcing new learning opportunities soon, so check out these archived sessions before you slip farther behind.

- Resilience Training in Rancho Cucamonga During the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Roundtable: How COVID-19 Vaccine Mandates Are Affecting Agencies
- Virtual Panel Discussion: HR20/20 Report—Focus on Culture and Talent
- HR20/20 Report: An HR Technology Focus, sponsored by Oracle
- Virtual Panel Discussion: Supporting Today’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Programs—A Public Sector HR Approach
- Return of Veterans to the Workforce
- Virtual Panel Discussion: Surviving Open Enrollment—A Public Sector HR Benefits Leader Perspective
- Managing Policy: Creating a Culture of Respect
- Virtual Panel Discussion: Developing a Mentorship Program—A Case Study With the City of McAllen, Texas
- Virtual Panel Discussion: Returning to the Physical Workplace—A Public Sector Perspective

- Virtual Panel Discussion: Public Sector Financial Wellness Programs in Action
- Virtual Panel Discussion: Putting Strategy to Work—Defining the HR Business Partner
- Improving Organizational Performance: Develop Your People!
- Virtual Panel Discussion: Mental Health in the Workplace

Log in to our Webinar Library 24/7 and learn on your own schedule. Each time you complete a webinar, you earn points toward recertifying as an IPMA-CP or IPMA-SCP. —

Have an idea for a webinar? Let us know!
Member Programs  For questions related to membership, professional development, certification or any other member program, please contact us at the corresponding email address of membership@ipma-hr.org, meetings@ipma-hr.org or certification@ipma-hr.org.

Assessments & Learning  For questions about our assessment services, test products or test orders, please contact assessment@ipma-hr.org.

Publications  For questions about our monthly HR News magazine or our weekly HR Bulletin e-newsletter, please contact publications@ipma-hr.org.

Research & External Affairs  For questions related to HR research, resources and government affairs, please contact hrresources@ipma-hr.org.

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Coming up in the March issue of HR News
Hiring, Onboarding and the New Employee Experience
FEATURES

HR and DEI in 2022: The Future is Here

Bringing Women Back Into the Workplace Should Be a Priority

The Role Apprenticeships Can Play in Building the Workforce of Tomorrow

Top 5 Screening Trends for 2022

Applying Emotional Intelligence at Work

The Great Reset Reveals Why We Need a Coaching Approach to Leading

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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: Millicent Aubain

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In 2022, the business case for diversity, equity and inclusion no longer needs to be argued. It is universally accepted that leaders who want their organizations to compete and win in the market for talent know they need to foster a dynamic culture of belonging and inclusiveness. They know this because they have seen organizations that didn’t commit to DEI falter and fail.

Consequently, I believe this will be the year the C-suite turns to human resources and DEI professionals to help solve three big sets of challenges. Let’s look at the solutions that are already being deployed.

Solving Employee Retention and Talent Demand Challenges

Executives are tasking HR and DEI professionals with leveraging creative and innovative ways to retain employees in a historically competitive market for talent. Workers are shopping for the best opportunities, and, as they say in the housing industry, it’s a buyers’ market.

In a market where job candidates have the advantage, organizations that offer more inclusive benefits and compensation packages stand the best chances of filling vacancies and plugging talent gaps. Battling the Great Resignation will also require putting in place a clear strategic plan for fostering inclusion and belonging. There can be no more “courageous conversations” that amount to nothing more than talking the talk. “Quotas” also need to be treated as the outdated concept they are.

Walking the walk on DEI is critical. Be aware, though, that an effective plan to boost inclusion and belonging must fit in with other efforts to meet hiring, retention and professional development goals. Filling talent pools and pipelines for executives and finance professionals will likely demand special attention.

Solving the Remote Work Challenge

More organizations are creating flexible work options, and hybrid remote/in-person schedules are becoming common. Despite the world doing the best it can to return to “normal” operations, part-
or full-time remote work will be a priority for many job seekers and long-term employees. An employer that insists everyone report to the office all day every day is likely to see a mass exodus of people who refuse to go back to the old way of doing business.

Obviously, many jobs must be performed on-site and face to face. But even those positions can be made more attractive with flexible work options such as 4-day weeks, earlier or later start times, and choice of worksite.

How does this apply to DEI? Flexibility makes a job more inclusive. It also shows that an employer values what people do outside of work hours.

Focusing on DEI when creating and modifying work policies ensures the needs of people are prioritized. Organizations that do not take this path will see employees disengage and jump ship to take new jobs or start their own businesses.

Solving the Leadership Diversity Challenge

As you probably know, a growing number of states have laws requiring publicly traded companies to include women and minorities on their corporate boards. NASDAQ also recently mandated board member diversity for companies trading on the exchange. Specifically, NASDAQ requires listed companies to have at least one board member who identifies as female, LGBTQ+ or a racial or ethnic minority. Anyone who thinks mandates for diverse leadership will end here needs to think again.

In Congress a U.S. House Subcommittee on Diversity and Inclusion exists under the Committee on Financial Services. Rep. Joyce Beatty, a Democrat from Ohio, chaired the subcommittee while also serving as vice chair of the full committee. Speaking at a diversity symposium in Cincinnati in late December 2021, Beatty remarked on the rapid shift in attitudes, saying, “I called the CEOs of each major financial institution to Washington, D.C., and they were given an action plan for diversification. And all of them showed up.” Watch this space.

Predictions for 2022 and Beyond

Granting that making predictions regarding DEI is like guaranteeing the weather in the Midwest (you think you know . . .), I will now offer my best advice regarding what HR and DEI professionals can expect. I promise I did not use my Magic 8-Ball!

- **Increased Compensation for New Employees:** Competition for talent is fierce, and the scarcity of great employees in various industries and locations enables talented people looking for jobs to demand their price. Finance departments should be ready to be flexible and prepared to set priorities for sweetening job offers in consultation with team leaders.

- **More Inclusive Benefits:** Growing numbers of employers will cover domestic partners in health plans, expand maternity and paternity leave, offer mental health days and make other formerly uncommon benefits common. The pandemic rocked everyone’s world and pushed us all to the limit. Don’t be surprised to see job candidates kicking the tires of your benefits offering.

- **DEI Maturing as a Standalone Discipline:** As DEI grows as a priority, I think we will start to see DEI departments separate from HR. The director of DEI will report directly to the chief executive. Why? DEI is not and should not be merely a compliance concern. Also, sometimes and in some situations, people do not trust the authenticity of DEI work when it is done exclusively inside HR.

- **Increased Reliance on Data Analytics to Support Strategic Planning and Bolster DEI:** As organizations grow in or walk a journey toward DEI, it will become more important for them to have reliable, consistent data for setting goals and establishing key results. Much of the raw data will be collected automatically and processed using AI tools.

- **More Chief Diversity Officers:** Look for the CDO role to become a staple. This will happen first within publicly traded companies due to rules like the NASDAQ listing requirement. As other organizations see the benefits of board diversity, they will add CDOs.

Amy E. Hull, M.Ed., is the first director and head of diversity, equity and inclusion at Paycor, Inc. Her work in helping company leaders internalize the work of DEI to achieve systemic change was a factor in NASDAQ agreeing to list Paycor and in earning Paycor a 2021 Top Workplace DEI Practices Award. Hull is also the founder and owner of Equity LDI, LLC, and a vice chair of eXclusive Services, LLC, which is a nonprofit that assists minority residents of Ohio with drug abuse prevention, addiction recovery and mental health challenges. 

WWW.IPMA-HR.ORG
Bringing Women Back Into the Workplace Should Be a Priority

By Bailey Showalter

Months of news about the Great Resignation has thrown employers into a panic. Justifying the reaction, a record 4.53 million Americans quit their jobs during November 2020. And that was only the latest shock in what has been a seismic shift in the workforce.

Many people who voluntarily leave one employer take new jobs. But millions of others, especially women with child care responsibilities, have stopped working outside their homes completely. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics numbers crunched by Fast Company for a Jan. 5, 2022, article show 2.3 million of the 3.9 million total U.S. jobs lost since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic had been held by women. That partly explains why the U.S. labor force participation rate for women dropped from 57.9 percent in February 2020 to 56.3 percent during December 2021, which was about the same as at the end of 1987.

With millions of women out of work, analysts are describing the economic effects of the pandemic as a “shecession” and expressing concerns over whether the considerable progress women made within the workplace can be maintained. Prior to COVID-19, women’s rights movements like #MeToo and marches for gender equality were producing positive effects in combating sexual harassment at work and closing the pay gap. Along with these advancements, McKinsey documented increases in the numbers of women in the C-suite and among the ranks of senior managers from 2015 through 2020. The first graph in a report titled “Seven Charts That Show COVID-19’s Impact on Women’s Employment” shows a rise in women executives from 15 percent to 21 percent and in senior positions from 23 percent to 28 percent.

These steps in the right direction of elevating women in their careers have stalled or reversed over the course of the pandemic. And hope for new progress in the future is waning.

As just one snapshot of the jarring impact the pandemic had on women’s careers, consider an Oxfam International estimate that around the world during 2020, women lost $800 billion in earnings. This figure is almost definitely too low because it does not include losses in income for workers in the informal economy, such as domestic laborers and market vendors who get paid in cash.

The Driving Force Behind The Setbacks

Various factors contributed to causing the shecession, but the lack of support systems stands out. In addition, female-dominated industries such as hospitality saw massive layoffs when stay-at-home orders were issued.

Women who cannot access affordable child care when schools are closed to students can find it difficult to work outside the home. As the pandemic dragged on, women, who had already taken on most family caregiving responsibilities, faced the difficult choice of keeping their jobs or prioritizing loved ones’ needs.

Why Bringing Women Back Matters

Women in the workforce do more than bring female viewpoints to bear. They disproportionately lead with the most important leadership trait of empathy. Research findings summarized by SCORE under the headline “How Diversity Drives Business Success” show in even more detail how creating diverse work teams cultivates a culture of excellence.

Organizations with high gender diversity realize the benefits of improved decision making, greater innovation, lower rates of
employee burnout and higher rates of employee retention. When women exit the workforce, affected organizations can see their workplace culture deteriorate because vital components needed to ensure success left with the women.

Organizations should view taking actions aimed at bringing women back into the workforce and putting women back on track in their careers as critical. Two effective ways to make opportunities accessible to women who have spent time out of the labor market are outlined below. Implementing these strategies will help women whether they simply took time off or have decided to change careers.

Embrace Skills-Based Hiring

Experience gaps on job applicants’ have traditionally been red flags for hiring managers. Removing this barrier to workforce reentry is key to helping women who exited the workforce during the pandemic.

Adopting a skills-based approach to hiring shifts the focus away from continuous employment and toward both what a candidate has accomplished over time and what they could contribute in the future. Instead of relying on outdated and possibly inaccurate indicators of a person’s qualifications for a job such as educational backgrounds or years of experience, hiring managers should seek out proven competencies and soft skills. Looking beyond whether an applicant has worked steadily over the past two years enables a hiring manager to find the best individual to fill a given role.

Champion Upskilling and Reskilling

Pursuing traditional forms of learning in academic settings is out of reach for many workers. Individuals often lack the time and money to take college courses and earn a degree past high school. Alternative forms of learning targeted toward gaining specific skills are much more accessible, and employers are increasingly offering employees opportunities to upskill and reskill on the job. Doing this can increase employee engagement and provide the foundation for a new, more effective talent management strategy, especially when digital credentials are recognized.

Helping women become more proficient and develop new skills empowers them to merge back into the workforce more easily and to progress faster in their resumed careers. Being proactive in offering upskilling and reskilling opportunities also benefits employers because people seek out workplaces that support career growth. Today, many job seekers view not offering learning and development initiatives a dealbreaker.

The ultimate lesson for employers is that it is more important than ever to be an ally to women by providing opportunities that support returning to the workforce. Creating programs aimed at bringing women back to work should be top of mind for any organization that values diversity, equity and inclusion and is genuinely committed to representing all individuals.

Employers can start making headway on creating an environment where women feel seen and valued by embracing a skills-based hiring approach and by committing to upskilling and reskilling new hires. Not only will those efforts positively impact workplace culture, they will promote marketplace innovation and improve financial performance.

Bailey Showalter is vice president of talent solutions at Credly, where she is focused on growth initiatives that help people connect to the right opportunity at the right time on the basis of their verified skills. Showalter is particularly invested in helping employers find approaches to hiring and deploying talent that do not perpetuate systemic bias. —

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The Role Apprenticeships Can Play in Building the Workforce of Tomorrow

By Paula Mathias-Fryer

Recruitment and retention continue to be major challenges for employers. During what some are calling the Great Resignation and others have dubbed the Great Reshuffle, millions of Americans are quitting their jobs each month. As one result, many public sector agencies have made talent acquisition their number one priority.

In their efforts to find the right candidates, more human resources professionals are considering nontraditional methods for identifying and attracting talented workers. The U.S. Labor Department has supported such innovations and last year awarded more than $130 million in grants to registered apprenticeship programs. Those funds will lead more employers across the country to establish and expand apprenticeship opportunities in order to fill talent pools.

Apprenticeships Already Exist at Local, State and Federal Agencies

Apprenticeship programs, whether conducted in-house or administered by an independent firm under contract, have proven their worth as workforce development solutions. In particular, they help public sector agencies recruit and train workers for roles that demand high degrees of skill and knowledge.

Offering apprenticeships is an especially effective way to attract and expose young people to government careers in areas of fast-growing demand such as IT and cybersecurity. Such programs can also create talent pools and leadership pipelines that are more diverse than the ones produced by traditional recruiting methods. Training young people for public sector careers via apprenticeships can even improve the quality and quantity of public services.

For older workers, an agency can realize great value from viewing an apprenticeship as a retraining program. Many jobs that were lost during the pandemic are not returning. This has led a growing number of people to look for work in new fields. Making retraining a major component of an apprenticeship would do much for getting people back to work.

More than 150 apprenticeship programs currently operate across the U.S. federal government. Those programs collectively enroll nearly 1,500 apprentices in a broad array of disciplines, including technology, health care, financial services, transportation and skilled trades occupations such as carpenter, electrician and plumber. In addition, more than two dozen states have coordinated, centralized apprenticeship programs, as shown on the accompanying map. These numbers could very well increase following the award of federal grants during 2021.
Meeting Pressing Workforce Needs

As noted, apprenticeship programs can play a crucial role in building workforces in new and fast-growing professions where competition for talent is fierce. This is already happening in the area of cybersecurity. Federal agencies have been organizing bootcamps to identify talent and offering apprenticeships to fill their talent pipeline. In addition, more programs are being launched to train both younger and older workers to fill in-demand positions in areas such as child care, software development and manufacturing.

The bootcamps can be conducted online, in person or a mix of both. Important factors that go into making bootcamps successful are camaraderie between participants, effective communication from sponsors and mentors, and consistent support throughout.

Promoting Agility, Increasing Diversity and Facilitating Workforce Reentry

Organizations have learned to use bootcamps and apprenticeships to meet rapidly changing business and staffing needs. During the COVID-19 pandemic, for instance, digital marketing bootcamps were launched once it became clear social media was critical for keeping employees and members of the public fully informed.

Low barriers to entry have also made apprenticeship programs good for attracting diverse groups of participants. Apprentices do not need the same educational backgrounds and years of experience as traditional job applicants, and many apprentice positions are part-time. This makes apprenticeships key tools for broadening and deepening talent pools, particularly for IT and computer jobs where apprentices without college degrees can learn on the job and get paid instead of borrowing to cover tuition.

One more benefit of offering apprenticeships is providing a path for women who put their careers on the back burner during the pandemic to reenter the workforce in new roles they enjoy more than their previous ones. Across the bootcamps and apprenticeship programs my organization is involved with, 35 percent of participants are women. Women account for half of the enrollments in some coding bootcamps, and the age range of participants has been remarkable. One participant was 67 years old during 2021, and the median age of all participants was around 35.

Recruiting for Attitude Rather Than Experience

Government agencies achieve the best results when they align their apprenticeship programs with their overall hiring needs. Doing this allows them to fast-track bootcamps and prioritize the recruitment and training of job candidates who are ambitious and hungry for new opportunities but not ideal fits on paper.

My organization, which administers apprenticeships for a number of private businesses and public sector agencies, has always found that hiring for a positive attitude, general aptitude and willingness to learn produces the best job candidates. Learning new skills can be challenging, so apprentices who are motivated and have a go-getter attitude have the best chance of becoming successful employees. We have also found that mentorship and support from fellow apprentices are important for helping program participants overcome challenges and stay the course.

Once candidates with the right attitude learn the right skills, they become attractive recruits for open positions. Several people who completed apprentices my organization administered received multiple job offers. When that happens, we provide ongoing support to help former apprentices navigate the hiring process.

While no one can be certain what new challenges public sector agencies will face in the future, everyone can be sure workforce needs will continue to evolve and organization will have to fill roles that do not currently exist. Due to their agile nature and ability to increase diversity and equity, apprenticeship programs will likely play a growing role in helping all employers meet their changing talent needs as they build the workforce of tomorrow.

Paula Mathias-Fryer is program director at SLO Partners. She has a passion for connecting organizations with their ideal employees, and she has a proven track record of forging relationships across business lines and among individuals. Contact Mathias-Fryer at info@slopartners.org. —N
Despite welcoming a new year, HR teams experienced a strong sense of déjà vu during January. COVID-19 cases surged, courtesy of new variants. Job vacancies remained unfulfilled at record levels, giving candidates more options and employers more competition for talent. Even some, but not all, of this year’s screening trend predictions have a familiar ring to them. So, what does the future hold?

**TREND 1**
A Protracted Pandemic Recovery Reinforces the Value of Digital Hiring

When organizations pivoted to remote work for office staff at the start of the pandemic, most expected this to be a short-term solution to complying with social distancing requirements. Two years later, it has become clear that remote work is not going to fade out of existence.

Gallup’s 2021 State of the Workforce study found that 91 percent of workers who were working in hybrid or remote roles wanted to continue on that path. What’s more, organizations have realized that productivity is not compromised by remote work. When these insights are coupled with potential savings from reducing an organization’s brick-and-mortar footprint, it seems obvious to conclude hybrid and remote work will be around long-term.

Of course, when staff work from anywhere, HR professionals and recruiters need hire-from-anywhere capabilities. The first must-have tool is digital identity verification. During the pandemic, fraud risks climbed. Hijacked identities were used to make unemployment claims and to apply for jobs. One company discovered it had a group of imposters in its employ—individuals who were “sold” a remote work position along with the identities they used to get hired.

Identity fraud is a potential risk for any organization, and it is a particular problem when people using faked identities interact with the public or have access to personal, financial or proprietary data kept by an employer. Hiring with confidence starts with knowing, even before background screening begins, that people are who they say they are.

Like digital wallets on smartphones, modern digital identity verification solutions use mobile technologies such as face or thumbprint recognition to create a collection of proofs of identity and verified credentials that can be shared securely. Fingerprinting...
is especially important for positions in financial services.

Digital identity verification and subsequent screening also play critical roles in addressing the next trend on this list.

**TREND 2**

**The Competitive Job Market Intensifies the Need for Candidate-Friendly Screening**

The demand for talent will continue to outpace supply in 2022 for several reasons, including the following:

- Time spent in lockdown at the height of the pandemic caused some people to reevaluate what work-life balance looks like. Those who were able to work remotely found they liked the flexibility it offered and grew reluctant to return to conducting business as usual.

- Frontline workers were finally recognized as being essential during the pandemic. Newly empowered, individuals with experience in customer service are holding out for higher pay, more consistent hours and better benefits. Such demands pose hiring and retentions challenges across a range of organizations, from health care facilities to transportation agencies.

- The Great Resignation continues. Prior to December 2020, the average quit rate for private sector workers was 2.5 million a month—a statistic that remained relatively stable for two decades. The number swelled to an average of 3.4 million a month for the first half of 2021 and hit a record-breaking 4.53 million in November of last year. In doubly bad news for employers, an analysis by the firm Visier revealed workers with 5-15 years of tenure have been the most likely to quit. Those employees are some of the hardest to replace due to their experience and institutional knowledge.

In a competitive job market, candidates are spoiled for choice. This will make streamlining screening processes for job applicants and new hires more important than ever.

Strengthening the HR workflow with digital identity verification, digital background screening and mobile candidate hubs will equip organizations to make pre- and postemployment screening more transparent and minimize perceived effort on the part of workers.

Both outcomes will help ensure more people stay engaged from their initial application through receiving an offer, onboarding and pursuing their career.

**TREND 3**

**Hiring Will Become Even More Centralized**

Work-from-anywhere is becoming more mainstream, and organizations are expanding their workforces across the country and around the globe. In 2022, this will lead to a shift in how hiring is managed.

Experts expect to see more organizations create an HR Center of Excellence responsible for making hiring workflows more consistent. Taking a centralized approach to hiring enables organizations to follow adaptable policies that comply with regional or local employment laws and shifting vaccine-or-test mandates without compromising data security and while addressing fairness and privacy concerns.

**TREND 4**

**Drug Screening Fades and Social Media Screening Flourishes**

Financial services firms have begun removing drug screening from background checks, and signs suggest employers in other industries may soon follow. Regulated organizations and roles where public safety or data security could be compromised, however, will have to continue complying with applicable drug testing rules.

For instance, midway through 2021, Amazon, the second largest employer in the United States, announced it would no longer routinely screen candidates or employees for marijuana use unless a person was in position that is subject to U.S. Department of Transportation regulations. Instead, Amazon will do on-the-job impairment checks and test employees involved in on-the-job accidents for all drugs and alcohol.

Loosening restrictions on medical and recreational drug use is driving the trend against screening all workers for all drugs. Differing regulatory schemes from state to state, and even city to city, add complexity to screening protocols. Moreover, the competitive job market is making organizations consider whether a positive drug test result merits disqualifying an otherwise ideal candidate.

While drug screening loses momentum, social media screening is gaining traction for both prehiring and rescreening purposes. Social media screening makes organizations aware of potential reputational risks before a hiring decision is reached, and rescreening can keep regulated and nonregulated entities alert to signs an employee could pose a physical or reputational risk over time.

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Applying Emotional Intelligence at Work

By Latha Poonamallee, Ph.D.

I lost my father and first mindfulness teacher in November 2010. His death was not a surprise, and I travelled to India to be with him as he passed away.

After spending a few weeks with my family grieving, I returned to the United States. On my first day back at work, I went to the mailroom and ran into a colleague who was not a close friend. Probably clueless about my situation, this colleague innocently asked me how I was doing.

When I responded to this innocuous greeting with a flood of tears, my colleague took time to sit with me, give me a hug, bear willing witness my suffering and be there when I needed someone the most. In those moments, we were fellow human beings experiencing a poignant soul-to-soul connection.

“It is with the heart that one sees rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye.”

— Antoine De Saint Exupéry

The Little Prince

I still share this story more than a decade later because the interaction left me deeply moved. I also cite this simple act of reaching out as a demonstration of the key components of emotional intelligence, which are empathy, compassion, comfort, connection and acknowledgement.

To pull back from the micro to the macro, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has merged personal traumas into a global experience of suffering and loss. The individual burden is crushing, and the path ahead is hazy. This collective trauma, which encompasses economic upheavals and significant social change, calls for a response far larger than we can imagine.

Even before the pandemic, a tectonic shift had altered the paradigm within which organizations operate. In 2019’s Leading in a Changing World, futurist Graeme Codrington described the shift as the information economy giving way to the connection economy, the experience economy or the relationship economy. Technologies—more specifically, the use of social technologies—drew the shift. In contrast to the secrecy of business processes that defined the information economy, success now comes down to willingly sharing information with others and establishing personal connections. Another way to put this is that the ability to form meaningful connections and relationships confers a competitive advantage in the connection economy.

From a management and leadership perspective, nothing is more needed in organizations today than emotional intelligence. Activating emotional intelligence makes it possible to relate to job seekers and employees who, for the most part, look, think and act differently from those who have come before. Workers in 2022 come to organizations with unique needs, wants and challenges. For this reason, displaying emotional intelligence is the key to attracting, engaging and retaining talent.

Defining Emotional Intelligence

While there are many definitions of emotional intelligence around, one that personally works for me describes being emotional intelligent as having the ability to accurately read and manage one’s own emotions and the emotions of other people. Accepting this definition means embracing the possibility that, in a very real sense, we have two minds—one that thinks and one that feels.

Daniel Goleman succinctly summed up the how-to of emotional intelligence by writing in Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ, “People’s emotions are rarely put into words; far more often they are expressed through other cues. The key to intuiting another’s feelings is in the ability to read nonverbal channels, tone of voice, gesture, facial expression, and the like.”

In the context of work, people who possess high levels of emotional intelligence lead by showing empathy, exerting influence and collaborating. Being able to do those things will take on greater importance as working arrangements and the workplace radically transform and as managing for resilience and renewal takes precedence. Already, remote work and hybrid schedules are prevalent. The management by walking around style of the 1980s...
is history. In the new world of work, working and living spaces are shared. This calls for a shift in leaders’ core values toward compassion, empathy and trust.

Note that while compassion requires empathy, the latter alone does not encompass compassion. Showing compassion requires acting to help others. Empathy, on the other hand, is the ability to understand others’ feelings, desires and goals. In this way, compassion goes beyond empathy. It is acting on knowledge. And all that being said, people respond best to those they trust.

Take Steps Toward Activating Emotional Intelligence

Here are five illustrations of how leaders can move from knowing colleagues need support—from perceiving a set of facts—to acting and providing the necessary guidance or assistance.

Recognize That It’s Business Unusual

Facts

Millions of Americans are quitting their jobs, and large numbers of people are anxious about going into work while the pandemic persists.

Actions

In the current world of work, no leadership skills are more important than displaying emotional intelligence and compassion. In fact, the pandemic is proving to be the greatest test of emotional intelligence in a generation. During turbulent times, emotionally intelligent and confident leaders can help employees navigate through uncertainty and mental anguish.

Focus on People and Their Emotions

Facts

Many in the workforce are emotionally frazzled and physically fatigued. Though they try to hide it, the strain manifests in more errors, showing up late and just not being mentally present.

Actions

Managers and supervisors have a tendency to view underperforming employees as inefficient or simply lazy. Taking this perspective turns employees into problems to be fixed instead of people to be helped.

An emotionally intelligent leader views the situation with a different mindset. They will inquire why an employee appears to be overwhelmed. The first step is acknowledging that a workplace is a human institution. The following step is engaging with one’s own discomfort and with the struggles others are experiencing.

While engaging with employees, leaders must understand regulating their emotional response is not about suppressing or denying their own feelings. The opposite response of expressing all their emotions is also inappropriate. What employees need are leaders who express emotions that are appropriate to the context and the hour. Striking the perfect balance in managing one’s own emotional reactions means satisfying others’ need for immediate or instant gratification without losing sight of how one’s actions have long-term impacts.

Listen to What People Are Really Communicating

Facts

Experiencing suffering and trauma puts people in an ironic situation. While few of us have friends who are close enough to fully confide in, we are always communicating our emotions despite not uttering a word. A widely accepted theory of human communication posits that we convey 7 percent of what we mean in words, 38 percent with the tone of our voice and 55 percent with physical cues and body language.

Actions

To recognize another’s suffering, we must first notice it. That being done, an emotionally intelligent leader will reach out to help and go beyond helping by sensitively bringing the situation to the attention of others. In the workplace, the others to inform will be direct managers and close coworkers.

Requisite to taking these actions are listening eyes and a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20
The Great Reset Reveals Why We Need a Coaching Approach to Leading

by Michael “Woody” Woodward, Ph.D.

What some refer to as the Great Resignation and others are calling the Great Reset continues building momentum. Data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics show:

- 4.53 million Americans quit their jobs during November 2021, which was a 3 percent increase from the prior month and the highest number on record.
- In total, a record 20 million Americans quit their jobs during the second half of 2021.
- 10.6 million jobs were open across the United States at the beginning of December 2021.
- Just 3.9 percent of Americans were unemployed in December, marking a pandemic low and coming close to an all-time low.

It is worth noting these numbers mostly reflect conditions just prior to the rapid rise of COVID-19 infections caused by the omicron variant. That latest surge of the pandemic exacerbated the employment situation by resurfacing persistent COVID-driven challenges such as:

- Inconsistent guidance from federal and local government agencies,
- Confusing work-from-home and office attendance policies, and
- Caring for kids who are at home because their schools are closed … again.

The picture for the rest of this year does not look any rosier. Consider data from Fidelity Investments’ 2022 Financial Resolutions Study. Surveys conducted in October 2021 found 39 percent of all working Americans intended to seek a new job in 2022. Among employed survey respondents who were between the ages of 18 and 24, 47 percent intended to change jobs. According to the study, “Aside from money, the reasons for seeking a change were largely values based, with stress levels, flexibility and ‘finding a job that better aligns with my personal values’ cited as top reasons.” In addition, millions of baby boomers are retiring earlier than expected.

Fueled by changing work-life priorities, the rapid spread of omicron and the outright lack of empathy from leaders, American workers across all generations are demanding employers do more to accommodate their most basic work-life needs. The challenge is that leaders at all types of organizations have failed to listen and respond meaningfully to employees. Hence, the Great Reset.
Employees’ Traditional Ties to Employers Have Weakened

As we enter year three of working in the COVID-created world, leaders nostalgic for the pre-pandemic mentality of viewing employees as fungible assets are destined to succumb to the swelling wave of exits that will likely continue through the first quarter of 2022. This raises the question of what human resources professionals can do.

Generally speaking, people stay in their jobs for three reasons:

- They need to stay,
- They feel obligated to stay, or
- They want to stay.

And to be fair, most employers are staying. At least for now.

With respect to needing to stay in a current position, however, higher wages, increasing job opportunities and the explosion of remote work options have reduced the financial and geographical handcuffs that traditionally kept employees bound to their jobs.

When it comes to feeling an obligation to an employer, the inability of leaders to empathize with and prioritize people’s needs has all but eliminated feelings of loyalty. Which brings us to staying with an organization because you want to.

The law of inertia applies to employment; it is always easier to stay in a job than to leave. Having a leader who supports you, a team you feel connected to and some sense of purpose in your work are even more powerful reasons to hold on to a job.

To create the conditions that make employees want to stay, leaders must evolve as coaches. Taking a coaching approach involves partnering with employees, co-exploring ideas and co-creating solutions. Great coaches, both at work and in sports, create resonant relationships with the people they coach. Those relationships strengthen as both individuals make meaningful connections and the coach seeks ways to support the other person’s desire for continued growth.

HR’s Role in Developing Coaches

When organizational leaders adopt a coaching approach, they genuinely get to know employees as human beings and establish more positive working environments. To realize these positive outcomes, HR professionals must be at the forefront of developing frontline supervisors, C-suite executives and others in leadership positions as coaches.

At a minimum, leaders who want to excel as coaches must know how to do the following three things.

**Empathize to Understand**

Empathy is key to success in a COVID-created world. You must be able to put yourself in the shoes of others if you want to lead them. The best way to do this is to take a coaching approach to conversations with direct reports.

To coach successfully, leaders must learn to ask employees questions about their work-life balance, explore whether barriers are impeding their work and connect with them on a personal level. In short, leaders must be human.

**Flex to Meet Needs**

Flexibility is now one of the greatest competitive advantages for retaining employees. Leaders must be thoughtful in making accommodations because the idea that one size fits all no longer flies in this on-demand, bespoke world.

Leaders must consider offering employees alternate hours, flex schedules, remote and hybrid work, changing roles, split duties, and priority for thinking time. Again, this is about taking a coaching approach. Leaders must co-explore options and co-create solutions that are for the people in collaboration with the people.

**Break From Tradition**

Organizations must constantly update their products, services and technologies. What about the employee experience?

Leaders must understand that introducing simple tangible offerings like free lunches and ping-pong tables is not the change people want to see. Research has shown employees want meaningful experiences and a positive connection to their work. This is not new information, but the pandemic has certainly brought people’s needs for purposeful work and strong interpersonal relationships into sharp focus.

As coaches, leaders must start engaging with employees in order to understand the kinds of work experiences that resonate with them. Stop worrying about fancy offices and plush playrooms. Those are played out. The world has changed.

After two grueling years and multiple traumatic waves of COVID-19, American workers are getting serious about rethinking their social contract with employers. Workers across all generations and most industries are flocking to new opportunities that provide them with a better work-life blend, increased flexibility and more meaningful connections with organizational leaders.

Stemming the swelling wave of resignations will require more than platinum benefits packages and giveaways. An overreliance on “fun” workplace perks is also a nonstarter. What weathering the Great Reset will require is empathetic leadership. This is why leaders at all levels must adopt a coaching approach to engaging with employees if they hope to thrive in 2022 and beyond.

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Work: The Future Is Now

By Bob Lavigna, IPMA-SCP

Former NFL coach George Allen once replied to a question about his team’s future by saying, “The future is now.” He then put his words into action by trading away most of his team’s draft choices for current players.

Without regard to whether his strategy was successful, Allen’s comment rings a bell as I hear and read predictions about the future of work.

Want to understand the future of work? Just look around. The future is already here, characterized by a sellers’ market for talent in which job candidates and employees have options and bargaining power. The results are unprecedented challenges in attracting and retaining talent, including in the public sector.

Employers need to adapt to job seekers and employees instead of expecting them to adapt to our processes. This is particularly true now that the COVID-19 pandemic has changed how and where many people work and also caused many to rethink what they want out of work and life. Add in dramatic demographic changes in the U.S. population, and the result is far more workplace complexity—and more jobs than people. The evidence is clear.

- Record numbers of employees are quitting. More than 4.5 million Americans left their jobs in November 2021, marking a new record in a monthslong trend of high rates of voluntary separations.
- Also in November of last year, there were 800,000 vacancies in state and local government, a 37 percent increase over the same month of 2020.
- Surveys show up to 50 percent of employees nationwide are thinking about changing jobs.
- COVID-19 has driven a wave of retirements, including in government.
- State and local governments lag behind the private sector in recovering jobs lost during the pandemic.
- U.S. birth rates have steadily declined, and the country experienced its lowest population growth rate ever during 2021—barely 0.1 percent.

How Should Government Organizations Respond?

What do all those statistics mean for attracting and retaining talented government employees in our new world of work? First, public sector organizations need to dramatically up their hiring game. Unfortunately, improving government hiring is a target-rich environment.

A Randstad survey revealed 86 percent of employees “would not apply for or continue to work for a company that has a bad reputation with former employees or the general public.” One takeaway from this is that government needs a branding makeover to change the (mis)perception that it and government work are boring and bureaucratic.

Job announcements that use dull and dense language straight from position descriptions only perpetuate the unflattering stereotypes. For example, one ad for a government position posted to a popular online job site advised candidates, “The employee is required to talk, stand, sit, walk, stoop, lift, bend, push and reach with hands and arms. The position requires long periods of sitting.”

Sounds pretty exciting. How can I apply?

Government must do better. Ditch the PD language and instead describe the ways the person who lands the job will be able to make a difference in the lives of the people government serves. Hiring must also be streamlined. I once heard someone describe a government agency’s process as hiring the best of the desperate—only those hardy souls willing to fight their way through a long and convoluted process because they see few other options.

Some government organizations get it and are aggressively rebranding while also changing how they recruit and making the hiring process more user-friendly. Some now even hire on the spot for select positions.

CPS HR Consulting recently worked with a department of corrections to rebrand its image and recruit more aggressively, particularly through Facebook, Instagram and other social media. The result has been a dramatic increase in the number of applications for correctional officer positions, which are traditionally among the toughest jobs to fill.

Reforming hiring involves being more flexible about job requirements and focusing more on skills than on traditional basic qualifications such as years of experience. After all, how can we know if an applicant touting five years of experience hasn’t just had one year of meaningful experience five times over?

Focusing on skills can make jobs more accessible, expand candidate pools and help diversify the workforce. As an official with the Greater Green Bay Chamber of Commerce advised during a workforce panel discussion in late December 2021, “Tear down your preconceived barriers about what you can and cannot do, especially around job requirements. The concept that this job wants five years experience and you need to have this degree and this background, those are oftentimes self-limiting beliefs.”
Creating a Positive Employee Experience

The future of government work isn’t just about improving recruiting and hiring, of course. It also has to be about engaging and retaining current employees. Replacing a disaffected employee who votes with their feet costs valuable expertise and experience—as well as up to 150 percent of the employee’s salary.

Many organizations, including those in government, are responding to the Great Resignation by increasing pay. An explosion of compensation studies has swept the nation as organizations struggle to compete for talent based on pay. And, certainly, if the salary and benefits for a position are not competitive, both need to be improved.

But pay is also not the whole answer. Attracting and retaining talent requires creating the best possible employee experience (EX), or what is sometimes described as “moments that matter.” EX covers the entire employee lifecycle from hire to retire. It includes hiring, onboarding, supervision, training and development, workplace flexibility, recognition, performance management, pay and benefits, resources and employee well-being.

According to Virgin Group founder Richard Branson, “Clients do not come first. Employees come first. If you take care of your employees, they will take care of your clients.” As proof of this, an analysis conducted by Josh Bersin showed that organizations that create a positive employee experience are almost two and one-half times more likely to “delight” customers, more than four times more likely to be innovative and five times more likely to retain employees.

The graphic above lists some key EX activities and shows how a positive employee experience results in a stable, engaged and high-performing workforce, which then drives organizational performance and customer satisfaction.

Assessing the Employee Experience

The axiom “You can’t manage what you don’t measure” applies to EX, and there are multiple data points to use. These include turnover and retention rates, insights from exit and stay interviews, attendance data, employee performance metrics and customer satisfaction scores. Remember, a positive EX drives a positive customer experience.

At the Institute for Public Sector Employee Engagement, we believe surveying employees is the best way to understand and measure EX. Asking every employee to provide feedback on their work experience enables the employer to assess the level of engagement and identify barriers to a high-performing and high-engagement workforce.

Our national surveys and work with multiple public sector organizations often uncover employee frustration with EX factors such as recognition, change management, training and development, communication, work-life balance, flexibility, equity and inclusion, and pay.

No one-size-fits-all solution exists. Each organization must base its actions to improve the EX on how its employees feel about the work environment. Guessing or relying mostly on social events—“Virtual bingo, anyone?”—no longer cuts it in an era of intense competition for talent.

I once heard a speaker say, “In government, they ask us to do more with less, and then even more with even less and then—ultimately—they want us to do everything with nothing.”

This assessment may be harsh and, at least with the last part, exaggerated. But it contains more than a grain of truth. The public continues to demand high levels of service from all levels of government. In fact, the public demands more now than ever before. To meet expectations, public sector organizations must ensure they have systems in place to attract, develop, engage and retain talented employees. Creating a positive employee experience is key.

Because the future of work is now.

Bob Lavigna, IPMA-SCP, is director of the Institute for Public Sector Employee Engagement with CPS HR Consulting, an independent and self-supporting public agency. The Institute provides employee engagement services to IPMA-HR members. Lavigna has more than 30 years of experience leading public sector HR organizations. You can reach him at rlavigna@cpshr.us. —N
Emotional Intelligence

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

hearing heart. Really listening to people at work calls for being intentionally sensitive to verbal, tonal and physiological communications.

Interpreting communications correctly is essential to showing compassion, which itself is a process that depends on experiencing appropriate levels of emotional arousal and providing proper cognitive framing. Forming accurate mental models and calling up the best options from one’s repertoire of behaviors also depend on managing one’s emotional response and framing facts correctly.

Model Empathy and Compassionate Behavior

Facts

Reciprocity and mutuality are essential aspects of a culture of compassion within a team and across a workforce. The unfortunate reality at every organization is there will always be colleagues who claim to feel marginalized or silenced.

Actions

Paying attention to and acknowledging the feelings of marginalized individuals are essential. Reading emotional cues in meetings will help a leader determine whether a person genuinely has nothing to say or if they are keeping silent because they honestly feel excluded or expect their contributions to go unheeded. It is fine when a team member just doesn’t feel like saying anything in a group of people. It is not fine when a team member is intentionally shut out or shouted down.

Being empathetic and compassionate enables a leader to model those behaviors for all employees. It also allows the leader to create a psychologically safe environment for individuals who may require support in order to speak up and make their strongest contributions. Additionally, an emotionally intelligent leader will regularly check whether the workload and work culture is punitive toward or supportive of employees. When necessary, an emotionally intelligent leader will allocate additional resources or revise processes to ensure people have every opportunity to flourish.

Celebrate Joy and Gratitude

Facts

Pandemic trauma is real. Surveys of employees conducted since mid-2020 document consistent increases in self-reports of burnout. The pandemic effect has also been gendered, with working mothers, women in senior management positions and Black women suffering greater job and wage losses than some other groups of workers. For these reasons and more, the lack of joy and dearth of occasions to express gratitude at work are not difficult to discern.

Actions

Intentionally creating joy at the workplace instantly connects people and changes their attitudes toward the looming issues they are dealing with. This works for two simple reasons. First, people seek joy. Everyone has an intrinsic need to take visceral pleasure in something. Second, when it is experienced in the presence of others, joy connects people more powerfully than almost any other human emotion.

In a team environment, joy arises from a combination of harmony, impact and acknowledgement. Joy at work can result from connecting with friends or just sharing a laugh. And, come to think of it, there are plenty of insider jokes coworkers can share.

Related to sparking joy, practicing gratitude and showing appreciation at work has delivered some eye-opening results. Studies on gratitude at work, though somewhat limited, link it to more positive emotions among employees, less stress, fewer health complaints, a greater sense of achieving goals, fewer sick days and higher job satisfaction.

Maya Angelou, who is one of my favorite American poets, serendipitously summed up emotional intelligence when she observed, “I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” This nicely explains how leading with emotional intelligence at work births hope in people’s souls and leaves a lasting impact on their minds and hearts.

A professor, researcher, tech entrepreneur, Fulbright Fellow and thought leader on management and social justice, Latha Poonamallee, Ph.D., is an associate professor, a university fellow and the chair of the Faculty of Management at The New School in New York City. She is also cofounder and CEO of In-Med Prognostics Inc., the first company to provide ethnicity specific neuro assessment reports, biomarkers and surrogate endpoints relevant to all people, everywhere. Her book, Expansive Leadership: Cultivating Mindfulness to Lead Self and Others in a Changing World—A 28-Day Program, was published in 2021. —N
Your current job entails much more than recruiting job candidates and managing the employee classification system. Walk us through some of your primary responsibilities and describe a typical workday.

I started my human resources career at the central personnel office in 1991. Through the years, I progressed from intern to personnel analyst, supervisory personnel analyst, supervisor and territorial administrator. My current position classification is territorial administrator of recruitment & classification, and I’m transitioning to being the chief of talent acquisition.

From the start, I saw the need to prepare myself with HR trainings and professional certifications to stay abreast of changes in the field. I’ve also worked to acquire extensive knowledge and expertise in both management and labor relations.

My position as chief talent acquisition officer is unique in nature because it is not a political appointment or part of a bargaining unit. Some of my primary responsibilities are managing the day-to-day operations of the USVI central personnel office with regards to recruitment, retention, talent acquisition management, staffing, classification, strategic leadership, and workforce planning, as well as consulting with HR professionals within more than 26 other agencies.

A typical workday involves briefing staff and preparing action plans to handle requests HR professionals made regarding the challenges and issues they face. I also spend time consulting with HR professionals at various agencies to fan the flames or put out fires on recruitment, staffing and classification matters.

How has talent acquisition changed since you began your HR career? How have you and your team adapted to those changes?

Through the years, we have streamlined our processes by digitizing and automating what had been paper-based and manual procedures. For instance, we typically post job openings for 10 days. Not too long ago, it took at least 40 business days after the posting period closed to complete the process of referring eligible job applicants to agency HR managers for screening and interviews. This was due to the large volume of paperwork and the difficulty of tracking physical forms. Now, we are processing applications online and referring candidates within three business days.

Switching from in-person paper-and-pencil exams to virtual exams proctored remotely has also shortened the time to hire. Candidates receive their scores as soon as they complete exams, and hiring managers no longer wait a couple weeks to view results. As a bonus, testing security and transparency have increased.

On the personnel side, we’ve become more aggressive and data-focused when it comes to recruiting. We do more marketing of vacancies through social media platforms, and we view the USVI government as a global competitor for talent. Our goal is to attract the best job candidates and to retain the most qualified future leaders in our pipeline.

An effort that helped with identifying talented individuals is organizing campaigns with professional organizations throughout the United States to sell the territorial government’s brand as a top employer. That effort also encompassed networking events with participating business and educational associations.

Does your Division of Personnel handle recruiting and hiring for each island? If so, does centralization create challenges to filling certain local positions? How do you and your team meet those challenges?

The Division of Personnel is a centralized agency under the Governor’s Office of the U.S. Virgin Islands. We are responsible for administering recruitment across all territorial government agencies based on plans for meeting current and projected workforce needs.

We have offices located in the districts of St. Thomas/St. John and St. Croix, and we tailor recruitment strategies to both labor market conditions and the number and types of positions that need to be filled. Centralization does not create a challenge because internal or external candidates for vacancies across both districts apply online.

Each open staff and management position is an equal employment opportunity.
opportunity, but we may give preference to local candidates when jobs require specific knowledge of local conditions. Other times, a manager may be based in one district while overseeing the work of employees in both districts. The goal is always to fill positions with the best people to ensure organizational effectiveness.

My team handles challenges by engaging in workforce planning, building strategic partnerships and aligning HR strategies with the missions of the territorial government and individual agencies. Delivering management training, doing consultations and developing tools for talent management are also important.

Of course, our operations are governed by personnel rules and regulations, as well as applicable local and federal legislation.

In addition to the Division of Personnel, the USVI government has an Office of Collective Bargaining. How do the agencies work together to meet the needs of employees and the government?

Both agencies work in tandem. Allegations of failures to comply with collective bargaining agreements are handled by bargaining office staff while DOP staff provide subject matter expertise on matters of fairness, equity and transparency. DOP staff also help prepare the HR professionals for individual agencies to succeed in their roles. These arrangements help put out campfires before they grow into forest fires.

You take more than a professional interest in labor relations, having served as president of the United Steel Workers of America local for nearly a decade. How important is unionization and collective bargaining for public sector employees? In your experience, what works to make bargaining productive and collegial for management and union reps?

Unionization and collective bargaining are very important in the public sector. America was built for the middle class, and collective bargaining affords opportunities to secure better wages, upward mobility, health benefits, and safe and healthy living and working conditions.
Screening Trends

TREND 5
High-Impact Hires Will Be Subject to Deeper Screening and Rescreening

The fact that safety and security are top-of-mind concerns in 2022 is being reflected by a trend of employers digging deeper when making critical hires. Any job that requires a high level of trust demands an equally high level of confidence before the hire.

In addition to stricter identity verification and more-thorough background checks for critical roles, fingerprinting may be mandated, as it already is in financial services, health care and education. This is true in the C-suite and on the front line.

Screening will also move away from a one-and-done process. Periodic checks on existing employees, particularly those in roles with high public visibility or access to financial data, intellectual property or other high-value information, can keep organizations aware of activities that increase risk or liability, such as criminal behavior or out-of-date certifications. And this is true trend for 2022 and beyond: Organizations will increasingly pull out all the stops to create safe workplaces.

Joy Henry is the general manager of Sterling’s Financial and Business Services Group, where she holds responsibility for P&L and all functional areas of the business. Henry was previously senior vice president of regulated industries at Sterling. In that role she worked with the firm’s customers in health care, financial services and transportation. — NC

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You may not have heard, but plans are in the works at the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) to revise and reissue overtime eligibility rules under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act. Consequently, IPMA-HR joined with 110 associations representing employers across the public, private, education and nonprofit sectors to ensure stakeholders have as much input as possible.

On Jan. 25, 2022, the group sent a letter to Labor Secretary Marty Walsh requesting a series of meetings on how to best rewrite rules for determining when workers who hold what are commonly called white-collar jobs are and are not eligible to earn overtime pay.

The letter states, in part,

This will be a significant rulemaking with respect to cost, difficulty in implementation and impact on the workforce, particularly given the current acute labor shortages. Our organizations urge DOL to follow past precedents and hold meetings with the regulated community to obtain input on the potential impact of any changes to the overtime exemption requirements. …

DOL would benefit from stakeholder input on the current economic situation and the potential impact new overtime regulations could have on the workforce and economy.

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**Certification Corner**

*Congratulations to these newly certified individuals!*

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<td>Eunice Oh</td>
<td>IPMA-SCP</td>
<td>Diamond Bar, Calif.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nancy Ortiz</td>
<td>IPMA-CP</td>
<td>City of Jacksonville</td>
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<td>Kelly Usher</td>
<td>IPMA-CP</td>
<td>Town of Raynham</td>
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