Award Nominations for BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP EXCELLENCE

Please review the following two nominations submitted verbatim by each nominator.

**FIRST NOMINATION**

**Nominee Organization/Company:** Elements Global Services  
**Websites:** [http://elementsgs.com](http://elementsgs.com)

A summary of why the team/organization should be considered for the Business Partnership Excellence award:

Over the past 18 months, Elements Global Services has made a major impact on the HR/EOR industry by crafting a direct employer of record (EOR) solution that allows companies to expand globally at half the cost and in half the time. As one of the only providers to offer a direct employer of record model, Elements helps companies around the globe quickly onboard, manage and pay employees worldwide, while most importantly, making sure the business complies with local employment laws. Unlike other service providers that utilize an indirect EOR model, Elements works as a one-stop-shop business partner to streamline operations for companies as the sole EOR. For example, if a company needs to hire in Spain, it would work directly with Elements’ dedicated team to get the job done – Elements wouldn’t outsource any operations to local entities. Elements recognized this pain point for clients and with its direct EOR model, companies have the ability to work with a single partner when expanding their businesses across the globe.

List the major contributions and accomplishments and their impact to the organization(s):

- Elements’ direct model has resulted in record revenue growth from $18 million in 2015 to $65 million in 2016.
- Elements continues to see success with this model and has astounded internal stakeholders by meeting its annual sales goals for 2017 in the first quarter of the New Year. To supplement the company’s incredible revenue growth, Elements has also expanded its global footprint into an additional 21 countries in 2016 to support client needs.
- With Elements’ rapid expansion and revenue growth in 2016, the EOR service provider now operates in over 135 countries and is a true world-wide partner for companies looking to expand globally. Elements is also opening a new office hub in Barcelona in July 2017, an operation hub in New Delhi, India in September 2017 and a new corporate office in Hong Kong in Q1 of 2018 to better serve the APAC region.

Provide an example of a specific challenge, solution, and the outcome using specific data and/or metrics (where possible):

While most companies across the industry employ an indirect service model, which sometimes requires third or fourth party partners to navigate processes, Elements utilizes a direct service model, positioning the company as the sole EOR for clients and provides a single partner when expanding business across the globe. Ultimately what this means is that Elements keeps all operations in-house, rather than outsourcing to local entities. Outsourcing to these entities can cause confusion in terms of communication and delays the onboarding process of employees. Elements recognized this pain point for clients and with its direct EOR model, companies have the ability to work with a single partner when expanding their businesses across the globe.

Additionally, Elements has advanced the HR profession with an innovative Resource Information System & Payroll technology that allows clients to quickly and securely organize data in one easy-to-use system, streamlining processes and simplifying procedures for the businesses that use it. Multinational clients are offered a single Human Resources Management System (HRMS) that directly connects with the company’s payroll platform for the appropriate country.
and related employment and tax regulations. The technology brings together domestic and international employee data into one holistic system. Offerings with the technology system are vast and include specialized reports, API integration for accounting and other software packages, employee self-management portals, applicant tracking and much more. To ensure clients are comfortable and well-versed in the software’s capabilities, Elements provides hands-on training and support for all platform users.

Please post any links to articles, whitepapers, speeches, or other published content to support the nomination. You may also upload supporting PDF documents below:

Note: Elements Global Services wishes to keep the names of their clients confidential.

Example: Elements worked directly with an industry-leading, EMEA-headquartered, IT and Software company as they hired their first employee based in Japan. After extensive research into a global employment resource revealed options that were too costly and immensely time-intensive, the client made the decision to move forward with Elements and partner with a firm that was not incumbered by an extremely tight deadline. Hoping to complete this process in a mere four days, the client met with the Elements’ implementation team to facilitate the new hire, and while there were other key elements the company addressed in making their decision, the top priority was this tight turnaround. The ancillary benefits Elements was able to provide—top-notch customer service, cost savings and the peace of mind knowing they would be in compliance with local employment laws—completed the client’s checklist and Elements enacted an accounting and payroll platform that allowed for a seamless and trouble-free hiring in far less time than would have been possible through other measures. Today, the client team lauds the above-and-beyond approach of Elements’ customer service and implementation teams and may look to build upon their partnership as future expansions into other markets arise.

Supporting documents upload:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D5fTv99Th9U


SECOND NOMINATION

Nominee Organization/Company: Capgemini and Syngenta

A summary of why the team/organization should be considered for the Business Partnership Excellence award:

We believe Syngenta and Capgemini should be considered for the Business Partnership Excellence award in recognition of the recent transformation in the way Syngenta delivers HR to 29,000 employees across the globe, and the preparations underway for further modernization.

The transformation has been driven by Syngenta’s inspirational Global Head of HR Services Ben Debnath (see supporting documents 2 for profile). Working closely with Capgemini, whose team is headed by Global Lead for Syngenta HR Services, James Eastwood, Ben has achieved phenomenal progress in the past 12 months (supporting documents 1 – pages 3,4,5) and Syngenta has mapped a clear path forward for delivering modern HR services in a digital world.

Under Ben, Syngenta and Capgemini (“the partners”) have improved HR from all angles. To date, the partners have achieved operational excellence by putting the customer at the heart of service, and customer satisfaction ratings have soared to record levels. For the future, plans have been developed during 2016 for moving to a new HR operating model underpinned with the latest technology; Ben’s business case for this “Next Generation” program has already been approved.

Partnership has been crucial to Ben’s success in 2016. A strengthened Syngenta-Capgemini partnership is the driving force for ongoing HR transformation. Ben has also been the catalyst for more effective dealings between the HR Services organization and other teams, such as HR Business Partners, other areas of Syngenta Business Services (such as IS and Finance), the HR leadership team, business leaders, line managers, and a myriad of other third-party suppliers and vendors. Ben leads by example and is partnering with internal HR and business leaders and Capgemini to make his strategic vision a reality, influencing the wider HR industry in the process.

BACKGROUND

Syngenta is a leading agriculture company helping to improve global food security by enabling millions of farmers to make better use of available resources. Capgemini is one of the world’s foremost providers of consulting, technology and outsourcing services.

Syngenta and Capgemini have been partners for more than a decade. In 2010, they jointly embarked on a journey to centralize and standardize HR services. When Ben joined Syngenta in 2015, the companies had already successfully consolidated a dispersed HR community into four centers across the globe, while introducing standardized processes and SLAs.

The HR service centers are operated by Capgemini, Syngenta’s outsourcing partner. Capgemini provides the bulk of HR services (excluding gross-to-net payroll) and operates a service desk for Syngenta colleagues to call for any HR query or request. Around 22,000 Syngenta employees worldwide receive a comprehensive range of HR services from the centers, which also carry out data entry for a further 7,000 employees in countries where HR is still provided locally.

This initial phase of work attracted favorable attention from the wider business community – for example, a global compensation transformation program won Syngenta and Capgemini the “transformation” category of the 2015 Information Services Group UK & Ireland Paragon Awards (see link 1).
CHALLENGES OVERCOME

With consolidation complete, the partners had gained the ability to evaluate HR services in ways that hadn’t been possible before – most notably by measuring customer satisfaction. This in turn made it possible to identify areas where services needed improvement, and so to set about creating the right customer experience for HR service users.

Under Ben’s leadership, the partners adopted a strong focus on improving the customer experience. He set three challenges:

1. Transform the quality of HR services, and the way they’re delivered. This means pleasing a wide range of customers: Syngenta employees range from office workers to farmers carrying out research literally in the field.
2. Create a vision of the next generation of HR services, and start putting in place the technology and the operating model changes required to deliver modern HR services in a digital world. (Initially the HR service centers continued to use Syngenta’s existing HR systems.)
3. Develop an even more effective partnership model, and engage and energize the joint teams, to tackle the first two challenges more effectively.

List the major contributions and accomplishments and their impact to the organization(s):

We’ll discuss the contributions and accomplishments achieved by the partnership in relation to the three challenges mentioned above.

1) Transform the quality of HR services, and the way they’re delivered.

Under Ben’s leadership, the partners have dramatically IMPROVED THE QUALITY OF HR SERVICE DELIVERY. Satisfaction has increased from 58% to over 85%, while customer complaints have decreased by almost 75% (supporting documents 1 – pages 3,4,5). Resolution is faster and more effective, with more than 90% of tickets being resolved within two days. Separately from the satisfaction survey, over 350 unsolicited positive appreciations have been recorded, such as emails and letters where employees went out of their way to congratulate HR on the service provided (supporting documents 1 – page 9). Achieving this satisfaction level is especially remarkable in HR, as in many cases customers tend to get in touch when they think something has gone wrong (e.g. why has my overtime not been paid? which form do I need to complete? why can I not see my employees in the system?).

These improvements have been achieved by embedding a “One HR” team mindset. Syngenta and Capgemini work together as one team not just to respond to queries and complaints, but to find and deal with the real root cause of problems, and hence reduce recurrences. The One HR mindset has been crucial to effective root cause analysis – getting to the bottom of problems requires open and honest dialogue with a common understanding, and without finger pointing or blame (supporting documents 1 – page 7).

Other improvements are as simple as leaving tickets open for a couple of days after an issue has been resolved to make sure the customer really is satisfied. A collection of small and often local changes adds up to a massive reduction in service issues, with a corresponding increase in satisfaction.

AUTOMATION AND ROBOTICS, for which Ben is a strong advocate, are playing a major role in quality improvement by transforming the way processes are carried out. For example, a “robotic” piece of software can execute a series of processes in the SAP system to input information about a new hire – a task that previously required manual action with the associated risk of inaccuracies and human errors. In 2016, automation projects were implemented across quality checking, data entry, annual compensation, and record filing. As well as bringing financial savings (such as a three-year
$340,000 saving in compensation statement production alone) they have improved speed and reliability and reduced the scope for human error, with a major impact on service levels.

Syngenta’s automation and robotics initiatives beat more than 140 entries from all over the world to win first prize for competitiveness in Capgemini’s Business Services Innovation Games 2016 (supporting documents 1 – page 10).

There are also initiatives to improve the CONSISTENCY OF HR SERVICES using a knowledge base to find answers to customer queries. Enhancements to the ticketing system have increased consistency and made it easy to collect customer satisfaction information by inviting customers to pick a smiley before the call or ticket is concluded. These smiles are then analyzed to provide rich satisfaction data. Sometimes the HR services team follows up this analysis, e.g. with a phone call, to garner even more valuable insights into customer experience.

Ben’s current initiatives to improve HR services extend beyond improvements to the way that existing services are delivered. He has driven transformational change through TECHNOLOGY, PROCESS RE-ENGINEERING, AND PARTNER RE-EVALUATION AND SELECTION in critical areas, including:

• Transformation of Syngenta’s GLOBAL LEARNING STRATEGY. The existing, underutilized, learning management system (LMS) is being replaced with modern tools to facilitate learning organization-wide. Working with Capgemini and specialist partner SumTotal, Ben is implementing a new LMS. This will be available for all learning, not just a subset, so the organization will know exactly what it’s spending on employee development, and where.

• Transformation of RECRUITMENT via re-engineering of administration activities. The partners are moving to a more efficient process and model, with a change in the service providers for some elements. A new tool, Escriba, is also being implemented. All this will make it much easier to manage the candidate onboarding process – including activities from offer acceptance through contract generation and reference checking to starting employment – ensuring a smooth and satisfying experience for new Syngenta employees. This transformation will also deliver efficiency savings, improve accuracy, and increase onboarding speed. Even verification of candidates’ qualifications will be automated. The model and technology will also be leveraged in non-outsourced countries as well as by Capgemini teams – another example of Ben’s global perspective on transformation.

• New platform and transactional pricing for enhancing COMPENSATION. The move to an upgraded platform (developed by Ben in partnership with Capgemini/SumTotal) will give line managers and HR practitioners a more consistent and user-friendly tool for managing the annual compensation reviews.

These technological changes are underpinned by new commercial arrangements, described below under point 3.

2) Create a vision of the next generation of HR services, and start putting in place the technology and the operating model changes required.

Ben and his team and partners have created transformational plans for putting in place the new technology and operating model required by next-generation HR. The executive has approved a multimillion-dollar business case for re-engineering the HR operating model and services around new technology platforms.

These plans reflect Ben’s commitment to using technology to improve accuracy and efficiency without taking away the human element that is so important to customer satisfaction.

Projects of this scale and nature often take years to gather momentum, but Ben’s business case was approved within just 12 months of the initial idea. Ben’s inspirational leadership was crucial to the success of the project. He also drew on Syngenta’s partnerships not just with Capgemini but also with a wide variety of internal and external stakeholders and
third parties to ensure that the vision and plans represented the state of the art but were also technologically and commercially realistic.

**How the organization(s) has contributed to advancing the HR profession and/or industry:**

With Ben at the helm, Syngenta is CREATING A BLUEPRINT FOR HR IN A DIGITAL WORLD. It would be hard to find another complex global organization that is so well advanced with transforming HR. With the four centers already in place, Syngenta and Capgemini are on the way to introducing a new operating model supported by world-class technology – not just for the core HR system but also for ancillary tools in areas such as recruitment, learning, compensation, knowledge base, case management, and data analytics. The business is closely involved to ensure all solutions are fit for purpose. Many other large organizations are interested in learning more about the Syngenta approach to HR, and in particular in Ben’s ideas about what the next stage in HR’s evolution should be (especially the use of automation and robotics to change how work is done).

Already, Ben and his colleagues and partners have demonstrated to the profession how it’s possible to TRANSFORM HR SERVICES RADICALLY IN AN ASTONISHINGLY SHORT TIME. Ben inherited a complex outsourced model with various disadvantages left over from pre-consolidation arrangements, such as multiple legacy systems that were difficult to use and not fully integrated. Just a year later, Syngenta enjoys quality HR services with high levels of satisfaction. HR has earned a reputation as an effective change agent. It has also pioneered an improved method of working with partners as one team, and of preparing jointly for future change.

As a result, HR is now held up as an EXAMPLE OF GOOD BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP enabling great customer service. HR’s methods are being adopted by other back office functions within Syngenta Business Services, several of which are going through consolidation exercises of their own. The work is being used as a model for outsourcing relationships across Syngenta, and ideas like the Olympics and smiley analysis to gauge customer satisfaction are being rolled out across other areas (supporting documents 1 – page 8).

The Syngenta blueprint for HR in a digital world has also caught the imagination of senior leaders within Capgemini. The company is now building and exploring – and investing in developing – the new services and ways of working needed to underpin the next-generation HR model. These new service lines will also be offered to other clients looking for HR solutions for a digital world. In a demonstration of true partnership, Ben makes himself available for interview with prospective Capgemini clients with interests in this area.

Syngenta’s contribution to advancing the HR profession is due in large measure to Ben himself. He has driven transformation within HR but also influenced the entire business. He’s achieved in one year what might take most organizations much longer, by leading from the front and by adopting a One HR mindset that allows him to get the most out of all the resources available to him, whether they work for Syngenta, Capgemini or another supplier.

**Provide an example of a specific challenge, solution, and the outcome using specific data and/or metrics (where possible):**

An important challenge that the HR team faced at the beginning of Ben’s tenure was that of improving customer satisfaction. To do this, the team had to understand the causes of dissatisfaction.

The first step towards a solution was to put in place a system that invited customers to assess their experience of having calls dealt with by the HR service desk by choosing a smiley representing their level of satisfaction, as described earlier. Customers who had indicated they were dissatisfied were then contacted to find out more about their experience. From the initial round of callbacks it emerged that premature closure of tickets was the single biggest cause of dissatisfaction. In other words, calls were being closed by the service desk when the customer did not regard them as resolved, which
made it hard for the customer to get more help when required, as they then had to open a new ticket to get the old one fully resolved.

As a solution to this issue, the team put in place changes to the case management workflow rules, and began to delay closing calls until a couple of days after the last customer contact. The outcome was that, three months later, satisfaction levels had risen and premature closure had not just been reduced but had completely disappeared from the list of causes of dissatisfaction for over 170 customers interviewed.

**Explain why your team/organization should be considered an industry leader in this category – What are you doing that other organizations are not?**

Only 5% of our colleagues have their own work email address, so we needed to think of a way to communicate to our other 95% in a way that was convenient and east for them. We have a platform called Bundle that is available on any smartphone, tablet, laptop and even our store office computers. So for those who are technically savvy or new to it... its simple and easy for them to access Business Performance, our engagement survey, speak through live chat to out people support team, apply for an internal vacancy or submit their performance review from their sofa at home.

**Please post any links to articles, whitepapers, speeches, or other published content to support the nomination. You may also upload supporting PDF documents below:**


3. Ben Debnath’s LinkedIn video: [https://ch.linkedin.com/in/bdebnath](https://ch.linkedin.com/in/bdebnath)

- Supporting documents:
  


(1) Ben Debnath - Syngenta + Capgemini - supporting documents 1.pdf

Page 3,4,5 Customer satisfaction data
Page 6 2016 Olympics program
Page 7 One HR team mindset
Page 8 Ideas & initiatives being leveraged across SBS
Page 9 Unsolicited appreciations (examples)
Page 10 Business Services - Innovation Games 2016

(2) Ben Debnath’s LinkedIn entry .pdf

***END OF NOMINATIONS***