



Powering Innovation That Drives Human Advancement

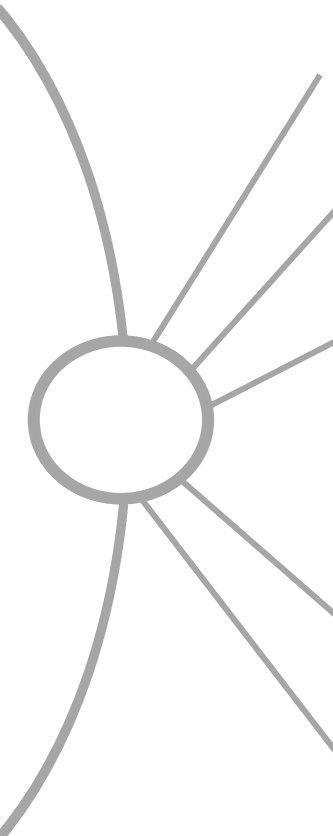
Navigating the Paradox of HR – The Balance Between Supporting Business Objectives and Trusting Your HR Instincts to Support Employees

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Agenda

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- 1 The HR Paradox: Identify & Understand the Tension**
 - 2 7 Strategies to Strike the Right Balance**
 - 3 Using Data to Influence and Advocate**
 - 4 Key Takeaways**

The elephant in the room



HR is too soft

HR is losing the 'human' in Human Resources

HR just does administrative stuff

HR is just there to fire people and protect the business from lawsuits

HR works for the Company, not the employees

HR is slow and bureaucratic

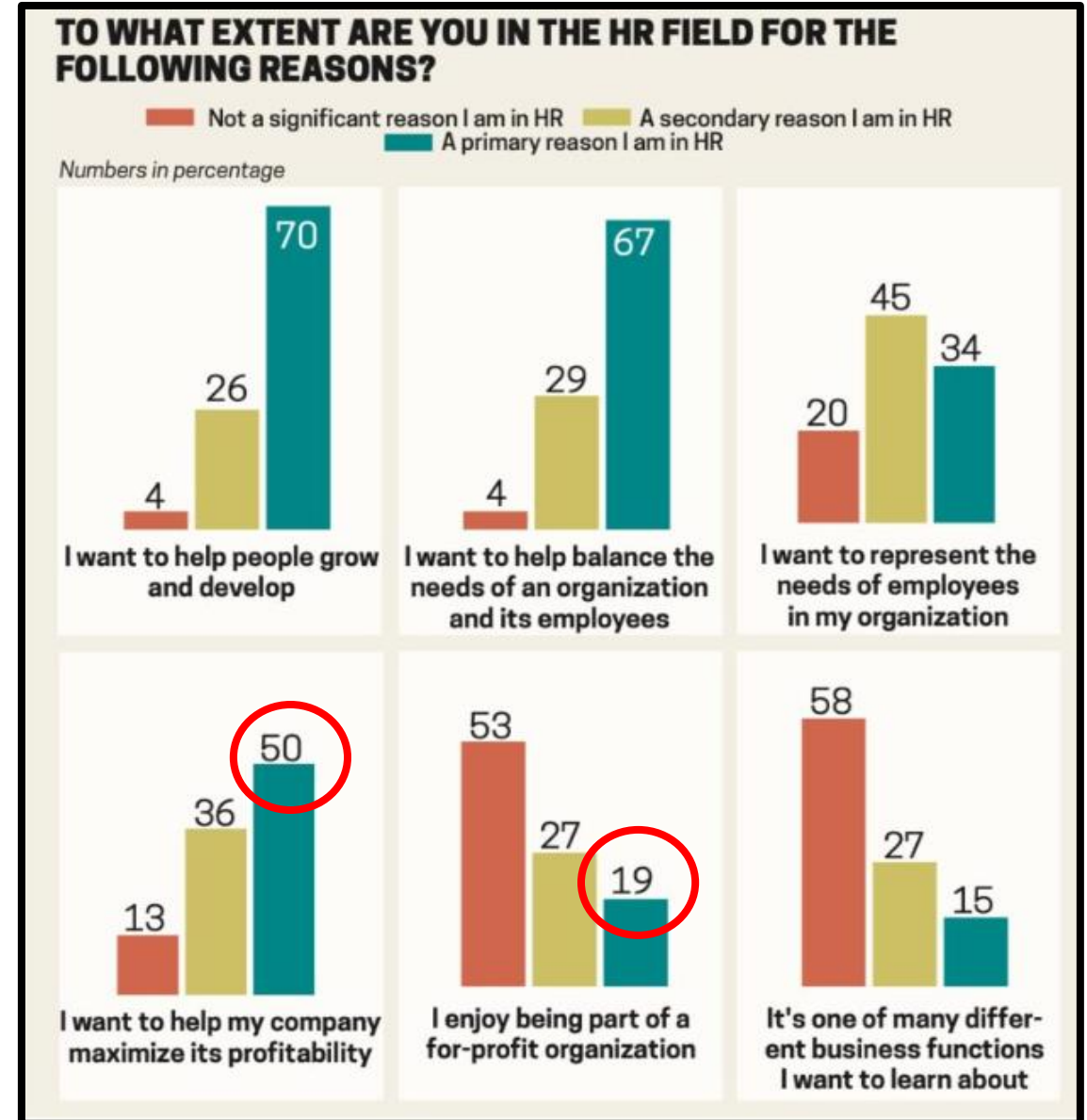


Why did you get into HR?

In a recent study conducted by Marc Efron and the Talent Strategy group, HR leaders' reasons for being in the profession, their specific capabilities and their career goals **prioritize people and the HR function above the business.**

This data suggests that perceptions of HR as not being keenly interested in the business are often correct.

There is still meaningful progress needed to instill a business-first mindset in HR.



“HR should be between 2 fires - the realization of business needs and partnership for company employees.”

Dave Ulrich, “HR from the Outside In”

The Paradox of HR

BUSINESS NEEDS

VS.

EMPLOYEE NEEDS

1

STRATEGIC PARTNER

2

ENFORCER

3

COST CONTROL

4

ADVANCING TECHNOLOGY WITH
AI

EMPLOYEE ADVOCATE

CULTURE BUILDER

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

MAINTAINING HUMAN
CONNECTION

Why does it matter?



What example can you share where you have seen this tension play out? How did you strike the right balance between aligning business and employee needs?

Real life
Insight

Striking the Right Balance

Align HR strategy with business goals to drive organizational success.

1

SPEAK THE CEOs LANGUAGE

2

BE A STRATEGIC PARTNER

3

BE DIRECT & CONCISE

4

ANTICIPATE & ADDRESS CONCERNS

5

BUILD TRUST & INFLUENCE

6

LEVERAGE STORYTELLING & DATA

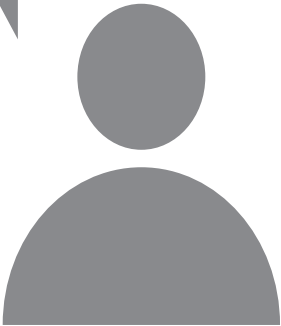
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STAY ALIGNED & FOLLOW UP

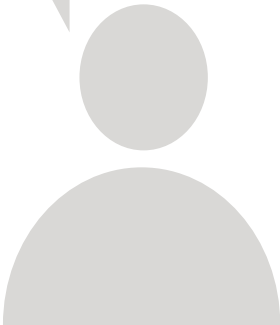


Speak your CEOs language

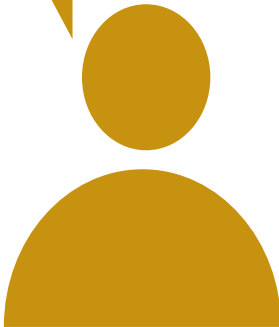
Use data and analytics to support recommendations



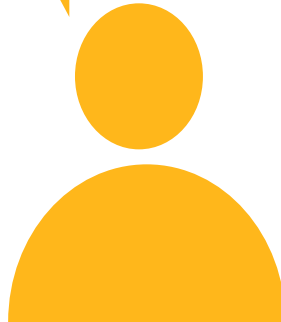
Tie HR initiatives to financial performance, growth, and risk management.



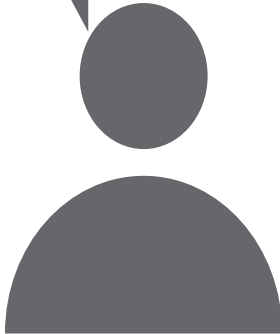
Focus on business outcomes rather than just HR metrics



Know what your CEO cares about



Communicate regularly and candidly



Impact of talent strategies on revenue, retention, and productivity

Revenue per employee, Cost per hire, Training cost per employee

Honest and constructive feedback, Healthy debate, Understand when to back down



What example can you share when you spoke your CEO's language?

Real life
Insight

Striking the Right Balance

Align HR strategy with business goals and drive organizational success.



2

BE A STRATEGIC PARTNER

- Understand the company's vision, strategy, and challenges.
- Proactively bring solutions, not just problems.
- Position HR as a driver of business transformation rather than an administrative function.

3

BE DIRECT & CONCISE

- Provide clear, to-the-point communication. Avoid excessive HR jargon.
- Present insights in executive-friendly formats (ie: dashboards, summaries)

4

ANTICIPATE & ADDRESS CONCERNS

- Think about the workforce risks, culture challenges, and succession planning.
- Offer proactive solutions for talent shortages, leadership gaps, or engagement issues.
- Provide scenarios and options instead of open-ended questions.

Striking the Right Balance

Align HR strategy with business goals and drive organizational success.



5

BUILD TRUST & INFLUENCE

- Establish credibility through deep business acumen and HR expertise.
- Be transparent about workforce challenges and realistic about solutions.
- Offer a balanced perspective-both employee-centric and business-driven.

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6

LEVERAGE STORYTELLING & DATA

- Combine data with real employee stories to make insights compelling.
- Use case studies or industry benchmarks to support recommendations.

7

STAY ALIGNED & FOLLOW UP

- Regularly check in to ensure HR initiatives align with shifting business priorities.
- Follow up on key decisions and provide progress updates without overwhelming the CEO with unnecessary details.



What example can you share when you incorporated one of these strategies to discuss an important topic with your CEO?

Real life
Insight

Using Data to Influence & Advocate



Metrics that Matter

Ask: What does my senior leadership team care about? Is it cutting costs, growing revenue, reducing risk, retaining pivotal employees, innovation?



Use data driven rationale to make your point about employee policy or benefits changes

- For example, look at projected turnover rates, or the need to invest in essential skill training put in terms of increases in labor costs

How does data compare to industry averages?

- Is your 7% turnover good or bad?
- Is your 78% engagement score good or bad?

Overlay metrics to see the big picture

- Compare employee compensation metrics with employee satisfaction metrics (ie: NPS) or turnover rates and patterns may emerge

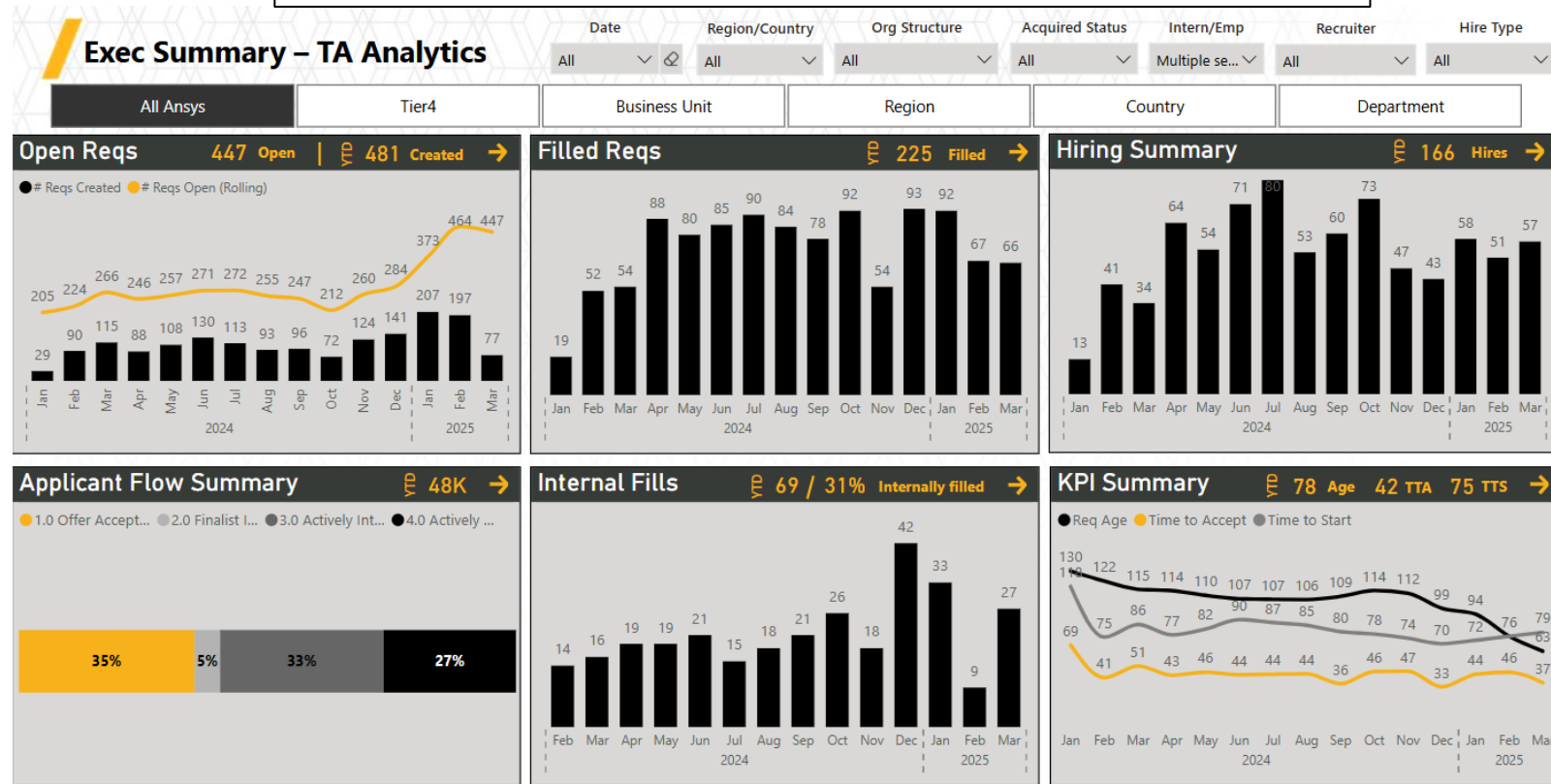


Metrics that Matter

Forbes Top 10 metrics to drive a data-driven approach:

- Cost per Hire
- Time to Hire
- Quality of Hire
- Employee Net Promoter Score
- Absenteeism Rate
- Employee Growth Rate
- Employee Turnover Rate
- Salary Average
- Salary Range Penetration
- Diversity Ratios

Telling the story through use of compelling dashboards:







Can you give an example of how you used data to influence a business decision while also trusting your instincts?

Real life
Insight


Key takeaways



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XX



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Ansys

Outline

Description:

In today's fast-paced, ever-evolving business landscape, HR professionals face a complex challenge: how to strike the right balance between aligning with organizational business goals and advocating for the well-being and development of employees. This session will explore the inherent paradox that HR professionals often navigate, where business objectives, such as profitability, productivity, and growth, may sometimes seem at odds with the need to provide empathetic, people-focused support for employees.

Let's discuss how to:

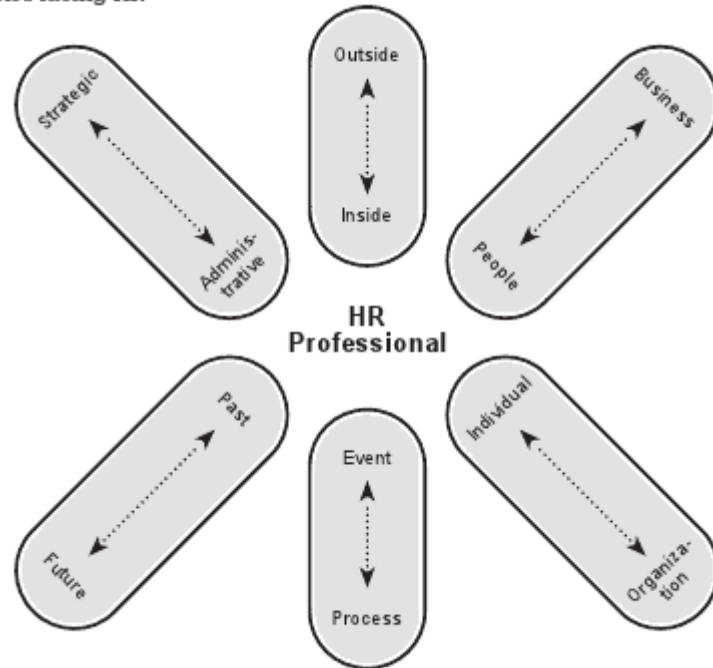
- **Identify and understand the tension:** Gain insights into the common conflicts HR professionals face between supporting business strategies and addressing employee needs.
- **Develop strategies for balance:** Explore practical approaches to ensure business goals are met while fostering a positive workplace culture that prioritizes employee satisfaction, well-being, and retention.
- **Build data-driven decision-making skills:** Learn how to leverage HR metrics and analytics to justify employee-centric policies that also support organizational objectives.
- **Trust your HR instincts:** Discuss the importance of intuition in HR decision-making, especially when data or company strategy may not always offer clear guidance.
- **Cultivate communication and collaboration:** Learn how to effectively communicate with leadership teams to advocate for employee interests while aligning with broader business strategies.

Sources

- [Dave Ulrich on the outside-in view of HR | Roland Berger](#)
- [Paradoxes for HR – Lead-Wise](#)
- [The Talent Strategy Group - 2024 Global Human Resources Census](#)
- [It's Time to Split HR](#)
- [6 Tips for Talking With Executives | The Muse](#)
- [7 Questions CHROs Should Ask Themselves About Their Role – Betterworks](#)
- [How to Present Metrics that Matter to Senior Leaders](#)
- [10 Essential HR Metrics – Forbes Advisor](#)
- Podcasts:
 - HR is not about HR podcast - Dave Ulrich - Future of HR
 - HR Outside of the Box podcast - Lisa Buckingham - Future of HR

Paradoxes for HR – Lead Wise

Six paradoxes facing HR



Outside & Inside

How do you simultaneously understand the dynamics and operate in the marketplace and the workplace?

Business & People

How do you balance the tradeoff between people and business? Many discussions in recent times have suggested that HR is losing the 'Human' in 'Human Resources'. On the other side, I've heard leaders say that HR is too 'soft'.

Organization & Individual

How do you manage the tensions between talent and teamwork, individual ability and organizational capability? In today's environment, there are lots of discussions regarding 'outliers' and the value they bring to an organization. An overemphasis may lead to a feeling of unfairness, frustration and disruption of shared values.

Process & Event

How do you look beyond isolated activities and events to processes that generate sustainable solutions?

Future & Past

How do you balance the past and the future – rely on the past for present choices or ignore the past?

Strategic & Administrative

How do you balance flawless execution of administrative actions with strategic adaptation to future business scenarios? One common discussion and frustration I've encountered within HR organizations is regarding where the 'strategic' line is drawn, how and who are involved, and to what extent.



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