

# Making the Transition from “HR Manager” to “HR Leader” ©

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## Some Introductory Notes on Management and Leadership

- Many managers confuse “management” with “leadership,” and feel that they are automatically “leaders” because they occupy positions of higher responsibility and authority.
- While this assumption is often true in some organizational cultures, many managers fail to possess or consistently exercise the very qualities that constitute leadership.
- The roles leaders fulfill are different from those performed by managers, although sound management practices are complementary to effective leadership.
- In other words, the bona fide leader achieves a *balance* between exercising traditional management *competencies* and the *behaviors* expected of the leader.

# A Look at the “Image History” of HRM

- “Personnel”
- “Paper-Pushers”
- “Hire-and-Fire”
- “The staffing of HR itself”
- “Dirty Harry”

# “Assessing the Differences”

**The most significant differences between professional managers and *bona fide* leaders are:**

- **How they handle *power*,  
and....**
- **How they handle *people*!**

***This is a supervisory rule of thumb that crosses all company and industrial lines, and certainly resides in Human Resources.***

# The “Skills” of the Traditional HR Manager

HR Managers of the past were predominately task-oriented, and not necessarily focused on employees – theirs or the company’s at large.

They also tended to focus on their own experiential “comfort zones,” and were highly-skilled.....

- Planners,
- Organizers,
- Directors,
- Coordinators, and ...(especially)
  - *Controllers*

# Organizational and Personal Tendencies of the Traditional HR Manager

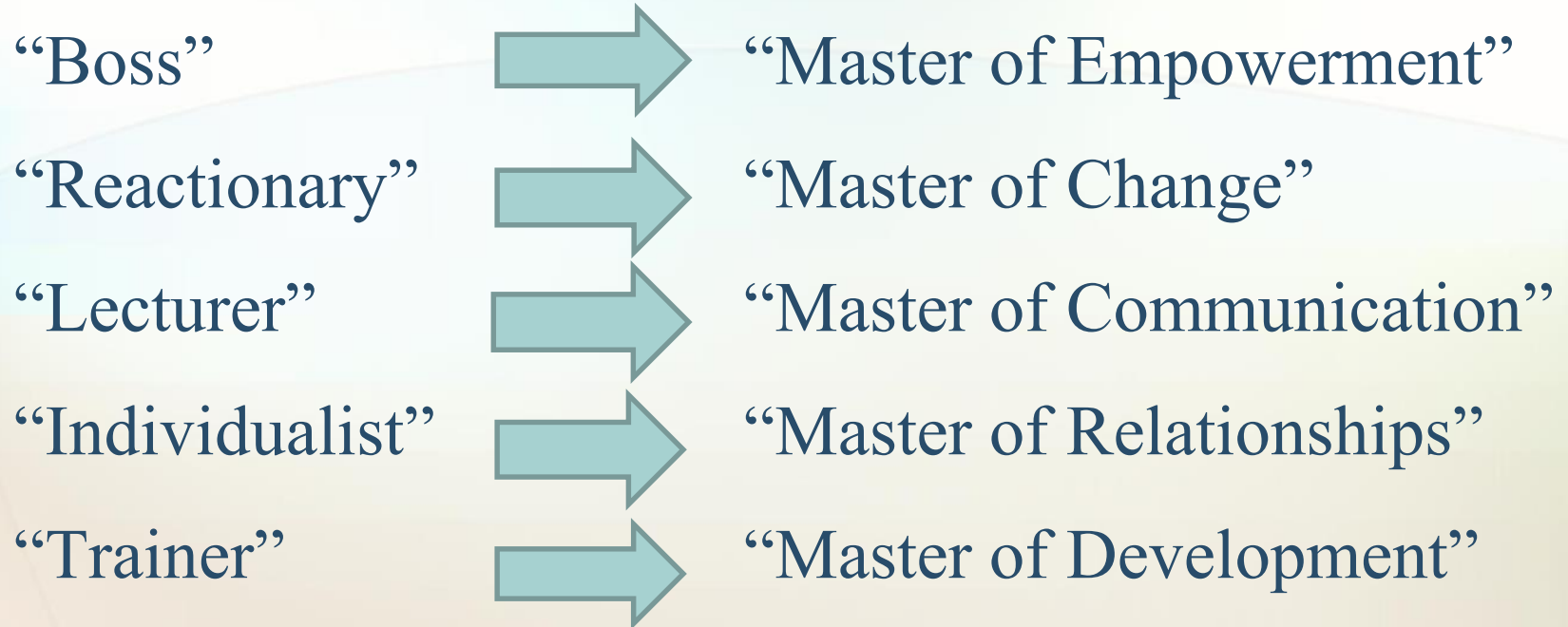
- Inflexible stance
- Focus on personal power
- Focus on “being heard”
- Impersonal handling of employees
- Tight focus on compliance
- Sustaining the bureaucracy

**Their impacts on the domain of the HR Manager?**

# Common Errors by “Personnel” Managers

- Failing to provide clear direction on HR issues,
- Failing to view HR employees as “people,”
- Failing to treat members of the organization as “customers,”
- Failing to build and maintain an “HR team spirit,”
- Becoming friends with employees,
- Ignoring employees’ inputs into HR policies and practices,
- Failing to develop HR employees,
- Not quickly acting upon HR or pertinent organizational problems,
- Failing to provide timely positive or negative feedback,
- Failing to accept responsibility for their own actions,
- Not staying abreast of environmental issues that affect the organization,
- .....and the “biggie,” ***MICROMANAGING!***

# The “HRM Paradigmatic Shift”



Result? “The Human Resources *Leader!*”



# The Attributes of the Modern HR Leader

**Effective HR Leadership goes beyond managing all of the tasks and responsibilities associated with HR services; it also demands the “soft” skills needed from any kind of leader – only more so:**

- Courage
- Judgement
- A balanced ego
- Influence
- Political agility
- Superior communication skills and practices
- Customer orientation

# Facing the HRM of the Future

- Challenging perceptions of and attitudes toward HR; “re-branding”
- HR Customer Service Issues
- *Earning* a Seat at the Corporate Table
- Dealing with various dramatic “demographic” issues
- Continuing technological changes that directly affect HR

# The Most Common Complaints About HR

1. Perceived or actual hiring and promotion biases
2. Perceived or real unfair compensation practices
3. Poor communication and feedback techniques
4. Perceived and actual unfair employee performance evaluations
5. Limited employee development opportunities
6. The violation of confidences
7. Hiring and retaining bad supervisors and managers
8. Poor customer service techniques and attitudes

# The Demand for HR Leadership

**These areas in particular require a strong blending of the skills and behaviors of Human Resources Leadership in the modern organization, regardless of the type of business or industry involved:**

- Employee Retention
- Employee Mentorship
- Employee Motivation
- Employee Development
- Employee Performance Assessment
- The HR “Strategic Partnership”

# “Leading” Employee Retention

- When the Retention initiative begins
  - The hiring process
  - NEO
  - Follow-up on “the fit”
- HRM Proactivity
  - Discovering why employees stay
  - Discovering why employees leave
- What to do about it
  - Documenting the “lessons learned”
  - Making systemic changes where needed

# The Most Compelling Reasons for Leaving

- Employees who find their “hands tied” are 28% more likely to leave.
- Employees who are not engaged in worthwhile activities will eventually leave.
- Employees who are “micro-managed “ almost invariably burn out and leave.
- Growth opportunities are unavailable over a long period of time.
- Poor “people skills” on the parts of their managers, such as rude behaviors, perceived favoritism, retaliation, assigning blame, etc.
- Work-life imbalance challenges.
- Poor rewards and motivational systems.
- Compensation and benefits issues.

## **An *FYI* for HR Leaders:**

“Employees generally do not leave companies; they leave *managers!!*”

# The Mentoring of Employees

## The Role of Human Resources

- *Mentorship* defined
- The purposes and levels of *Mentorship* in the modern organization
- Identifying the high-performing employees
- The good and the potentially “bad” sides of formal mentorship and “High-Potential” programs

# The Motivation of Company Employees

**Unmotivated employees are the anchors that will drag down the morale, loyalty, productivity, innovation, and eventual success of any organization.**

- “Motivation” defined
  - “Rewards” versus “Motivation”
- Proactively discovering the motivational needs of employees
  - Demonstrating a true motivational strategy



# Leading Employee Development

**One of the most important roles a leader must fulfill is to cultivate, support, and nurture employees. Anything can be achieved by “preparing the ground” to plant the seeds of growth for the organization and its future leadership.**

**The role of the HR Leader?**

- Role modeling personal educational attainment and self-improvement.
- Collaborating with management on developmental needs and programs.
- Collaborating with employees on their developmental needs.
- Using the Performance Evaluation System wisely!
- Building and fostering the “Learning Organization”

# What HR-Led “Learning Organizations” Do

- They use learning itself to reach organizational goals;
- They help employees at all levels value the importance – and the effects – of their learning on their organizations;
- They actively support the position that management has just as much to learn as the rest of the employees;
- They share information that is vital to the organization’s growth, and indeed survival;
- They create structure, procedures, and programs that support and encourage the learning process;
- They strive to avoid making the same mistakes again – and again and again – by instituting enlightened employee development strategies.

# The Performance Assessment Dilemma

**In most organizations, there are common repeated errors in judgement and practice that utterly destroy the purpose, value, and desired outcomes of performance appraisal systems. This is an HR Leadership challenge!**

- There are few consistently reliable and fair organizational APR systems.
- The performance review is regarded as a once-per-year bureaucratic task.
- Supervisors at all levels are insufficiently trained in the use of PRs.
- Supervisors have tendencies to inflate ratings.
- Performance feedback is limited to the “APR.”
- Management resistance to change.

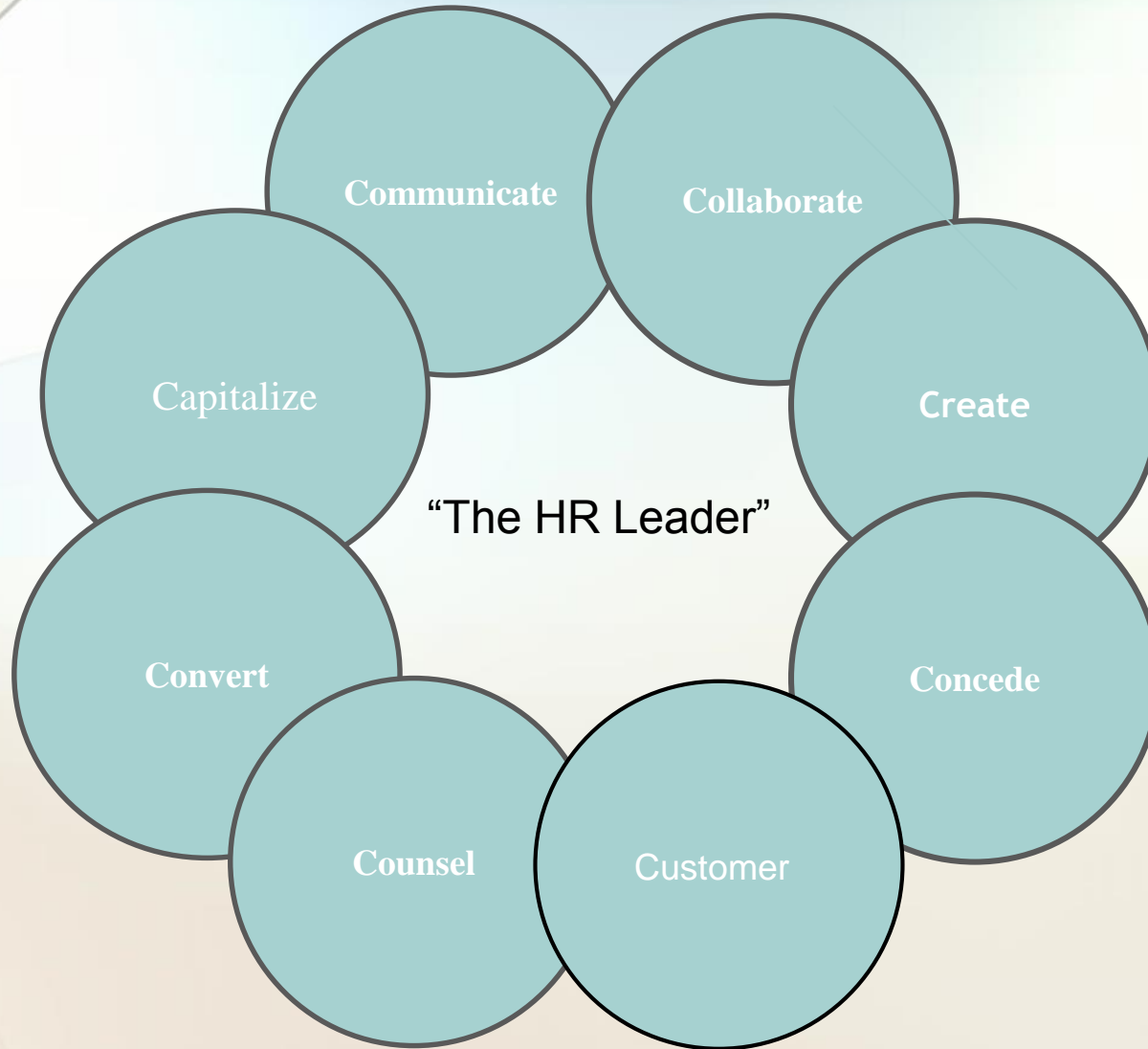
**What are the HR Leadership responsibilities necessary to resolve the dilemma?**

# Human Resources as a Strategic Partner

*Earn a seat at the “Corporate Table” by:*

- Developing an awareness and understanding of the business itself - its goals, its objectives, its needs, and its finance and profit systems.
- Marketing HR services and capabilities.
- Making HR workforce strategies integral to company strategies and goals.
- Helping supervisors at all levels to achieve their goals.
- Developing an “HR Performance Measurement System” that clearly displays to executive management an ROI in “people!”
- Leverage HR’s role in mergers and acquisitions, reorganizing/ downsizing, and systems implementation.

# The “Eight C’s” of Human Resources Leadership



*Thank you for the opportunity to share this presentation and your time, and for your interest, respect and participation. It is always a great pleasure to meet with dedicated HR professionals.*

*Dr. Briggs*