

Working Group: HR Career Development

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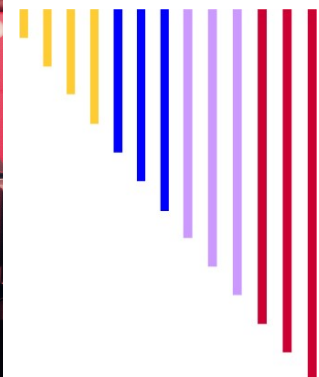
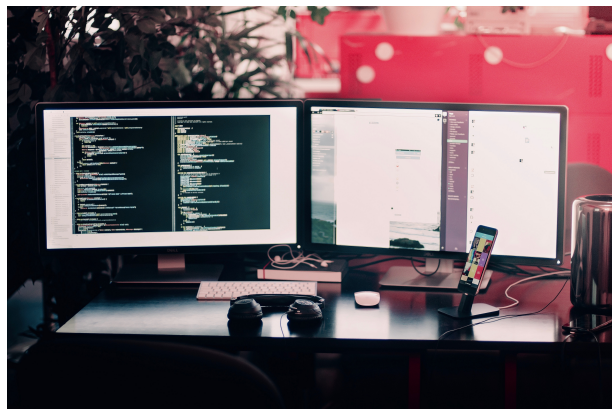
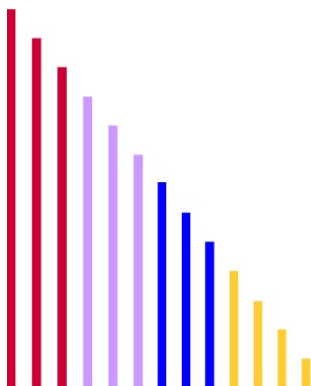
Key Takeaways

1. While there is more focus and investment than ever on upskilling HR due to the transformation of the HR Operating Model, the rise of new capabilities like Analytics and technological advances, HR still feels like the Cobbler's Children when it comes to its own development.
2. Most companies continue to offer things like an HR rotational program for new-to-company HR hires and special programs for high potentials; however, there are newer things happening too. One is HR Colleges or Academies built in conjunction with external partners to offer expertise depth and internal certifications. Another is upskilling HR enterprise-wide in new or emerging capabilities.
3. Some companies are shifting away from individual development to developing high performing teams through fast-to-action teams.
4. Measurement continues to be a challenge. Net Promoter Scores (NPS) is the newer way of thinking about the success of programs.

Participating Companies

Cigna
Cornell University
Estée Lauder
General Electric
IBM
Johnson & Johnson
JPMorgan Chase
UnitedHealth Group

Ask any HR professional about their company's HR Model and you are likely to hear "Our HR function is undergoing a transformation." One of the impacts of these transformations is the need to rethink how to develop HR professionals and HR leaders. There are new and evolving roles such as HR Business Partners (HRBPs), new areas of expertise like Data Analytics and Insights, and the build-out of shared service centers. Further, advancements in Human Capital Management Software allows HR and business leaders to have increased access to data, dashboards, and self-service transactions changing the skills and capabilities needed in HR. Two of CAHRS' Research Assistants, Jeff Serbin and Sabrina Williams, shared some early findings from a study CAHRS is conducting on this topic and they formed the basis of much of the discussion for the day.



Changing Focus on HR Development

The CAHRS RAs shared that during their interviews with companies, they found that the biggest area of focus was on HRBPs. With this role evolving dramatically because of HR Transformation, there is a need to upskill these leaders in several key areas: coaching, consulting, data interpretation/storytelling, change management and business leadership (elevated from business acumen). Priority is also given to client-facing roles, including the HRBP, due to the direct interaction and greater visibility they have. Several other companies said they focus on building skills across the whole HR function versus a select role. One company has identified what “hot skills” are needed in HR and provides development and training opportunities to support those across the function.

Companies are also building breadth and depth of expertise in different ways.

- Breadth: Intentional moves across HR functions (HRBP, CoE, HRSS) to build a well-rounded team
 - Appeared to be more desirable for HRBP roles than CoE or Shared Services
 - Some implementing special projects, short term-assignments to build breadth
- Depth: Intentional development of subject matter expertise
 - Ability to develop breadth within specialty through support of different client groups, geographic market, etc.

More specifics on this are offered below.

HR Development Programs

The RAs found that most companies have or are in the process of implementing formal HR Development Programs. The most common target is early career professionals using rotational programs. The programs are used to build foundational breadth and expose new hires to different functional areas of HR using rotations. Type and length of assignments vary between companies. Most programs are two to three years in length with three rotations, which may include an international or a cross-functional rotation. Most companies offer these programs as a way to attract newly graduating talent – they want these types of programs vs. a regular job assignment. Interestingly, one company has eliminated rotating international employees through the United States as they found they wanted to remain in the US and this is tougher with the immigration challenges currently.

Programs offered for mid-level HR employees were more differentiated between companies. Formal programs are generally reserved for high potential talent vs. others who are developed through on-the-job assignments. Some companies do offer mid-career development programs for experienced hires new to the organization. Others provide the same development of skills to all at the mid-career level. Another company provides development based on learning paths defined by role. One way to offer development was through doing experiential learning through projects, short gigs or using parental leave openings for a differential experience. One company doing this convinced leaders that this was a win/win vs. leaving roles open or hiring externally to fill the gap.

One company also offered “colleges” based on HR role or center of expertise. For example, they offer HRBP College and an Experienced HRBP College; Talent College; Compensation College, etc., and offer certification in each. Another company is offering “badges” for completing training.

For HR Directors and above, the focus is more on leadership development and is offered at the enterprise vs. the functional level.

Learning Content

The CAHRS RAs found in their benchmarking study that:

- 96% of companies surveyed offer some form of e-Learning platform
- 56% of companies surveyed offer HR academies

They also found that content is developed both internally and externally. If developing internally, it can be fully tailored to fit the company. However, it is difficult to maintain and this may be one reason why it is less common than developing externally. Using external partners allows you to buy their content while still customizing it. However, the tradeoff is that vendors lack the company context and institutional knowledge.

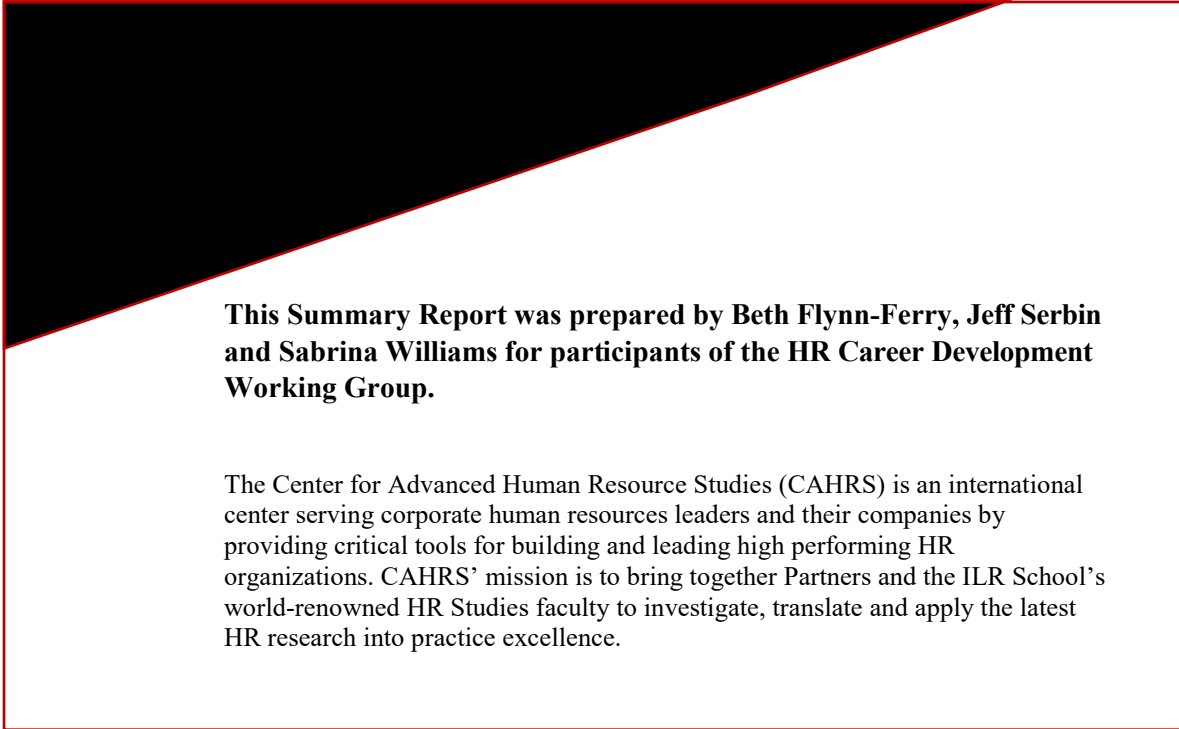
Other themes included moving from in-person to digital training and shifting development ownership from the company to the employee. One company is experimenting with more simulation and applied learning through the use of video recordings to make online learning more interactive. A common issue for companies is that there are vast amounts of material and information for HR development available but it is difficult to sort through, especially with more external content. Those companies are focusing on curating what they have and aggregating it using external technology.

Team versus Individual Focus

While traditionally, the focus of HR development has been on the skills or capabilities of an individual, there is increasing thought around how to develop high performing teams. This also leads to movement away from “high potential” or “rock star” designation and movement to network/team based development. A number of companies at the meeting had examples of deploying smaller “Fast to Action” teams to tackle programs, processes, reorganizations, etc. One consideration in deploying these floater teams is determining who will pay for them. One company experienced difficulty implementing and some internal opposition when individuals were still reporting to and paid for by their respective groups.

Measurement

Most companies felt they could strengthen measurement efforts of development effectiveness. Some examples of current measurement include informal feedback, competency models, performance discussions, bench readiness, and Net Promoter Scores (NPS). The development model still used most often is 70/20/10 - 70% on the job development, 20% interaction with others and 10% formal training. A few companies are moving to skill-based frameworks and experience maps.



This Summary Report was prepared by Beth Flynn-Ferry, Jeff Serbin and Sabrina Williams for participants of the HR Career Development Working Group.

The Center for Advanced Human Resource Studies (CAHRS) is an international center serving corporate human resources leaders and their companies by providing critical tools for building and leading high performing HR organizations. CAHRS' mission is to bring together Partners and the ILR School's world-renowned HR Studies faculty to investigate, translate and apply the latest HR research into practice excellence.