

HRD

The only independent strategic HR publication

the **HRDIRECTOR**

MAY 2019 | ISSUE 175

SPECIAL REPORTS

CAN BIG FIRMS BEHAVE
MORE LIKE NIPPY START-UPS?
PLUS, HOW TO PUSH BACK,
CREATE SPACE TO THINK,
RELATE AND ACT ON
A DEEPER LEVEL

SCOTT NORTHCUTT, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, HUMAN RESOURCES - BACARDI LIMITED

{ TEAM SPIRIT }

“WE HAVE “FREEDOM IN THE FRAMEWORK”, BECAUSE WITH
FREEDOM COMES ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY”

ALSO FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE

GAMIFICATION We assume younger people have the advantage in gamified assessments, but properly calibrated, it can be truly age-blind

COLLABORATIVE WORKING Businesses steeped in complex power dynamics, will struggle with the collaboration imperative

SUCCESSION PLANNING The trinity of CEO, CFO and COO stands firm, triumvirates of; CIO, CDO and CMO or CPO are now at the table

DATA & ANALYTICS Without digital, data-driven HR is to be resigned to some kind of spreadsheet nightmare, mired with inconsistency



RECEIVING THE HOSPITAL PASS

Every business would prize a high performance culture above all else - unquestionably, it is a proxy for revenue and profits growth. But there is little clarity on the type of organisational culture that actually drives commercial objectives. In the absence of meaningful data, a picture of what a high-performance culture looks like is shaped by the narratives of 'successful' short-term business strategies.

ARTICLE BY CHRISTIAN HUGHES, CEO - MYPEOPLE GROUP LIMITED

After businesses are acquired by private equity firms followed by organisational restructuring and a focus on; budgets, forecasts, costs and sales pipelines, there are often unaccounted people and cultural costs including; high churn, increased stress related absenteeism, bullying claims and, as pressure to deliver mounts, increasingly bad sales and accounting practices. These can harm the business, and, in the long term, this type of 'high performance' often results in lower sales revenues and the evaporation of gains. This is the business version of a crash diet, achieving results in the short-term but unhealthy for longer periods.

Saracens Rugby Club changed from being chronically underachieving to one of world rugby's most successful teams in the last decade, winning the Rugby Premiership four times and the European Cup twice. In common with many teams, they use the latest data analytics tools and player monitoring approaches. Their recruitment, selection and player wellbeing practices are excellent. However, where they differ is in the measurement of their culture. This is measured in terms of social capital, the strength of relationships across the team, player and coach behaviours and, crucially, how effectively they communicate both on and off the pitch.

The cultural insights that are generated impact recruitment and Saracens tests and selects individuals with a burning desire to improve and the ability to receive feedback and adapt. The club also looks for players with strong communication skills that go the extra mile for team mates. As a result, Saracens can 'manage' the club culture and statistically it can be shown that the culture scores correlate with performance on the pitch. This approach has been named the Saracens Way and, at its heart, are values that drive continuous everyday improvements and relationships that, in turn, drive better communication. For Saracens, a high performance culture is actually a high improvement culture.



SARACENS DOES NOT
TALK ABOUT ACHIEVING
CERTAIN RESULTS AND
IS MORE CONCERNED
WITH INCREASING THE
PROBABILITY OF WINNING
BY FOCUSING ON WHAT
CAN BE CONTROLLED
- CONTINUOUS
IMPROVEMENT IN THEIR
PEOPLE AND PRACTICES



There is plenty of supporting research for the benefits of measuring culture. During a 2008 MIT study at Google, around 700 people were separated into teams and given a range of tasks, like an academic version of *The Apprentice* without the cameras or Sir Alan Sugar! The tasks were designed to measure the collective capability of the group and identify the factors that contribute to team performance. The research indicated that good team-based habits raised the collective capability of the group whereas poor behaviours reduced team capability regardless of individual IQ and skill levels. At its simplest, this research highlights the importance of communication practices and the need to create environments where there is freedom to share individual perspectives. Whilst analysing employee engagement is the first step towards measuring culture, this data, used in isolation, does not tell organisations enough. More data is required to measure, understand and drive an improvement culture that creates sustained performance. To really understand culture, organisations need to measure communication, relationships and team behaviours to gain more meaningful data. This requires the capture of basic personality psychometric data to help understand teams and their performance strengths and weaknesses. The addition of dynamic mood data helps take an organisation's pulse in conjunction with behavioural data which determines how well company values are adopted.

Cultural analysis is time well spent and will underpin processes such as recruitment, internal promotion and team selection as well as enabling a more customised approach to be taken to achieve an improved ROI on training budgets. It can also help in mergers to assess similarities and differences in teams. Back in the sporting environment, Saracens does not talk about achieving certain results and is more concerned with increasing the probability of winning by focusing on what can be controlled - continuous improvement in their people and practices. ●

FOR FURTHER INFO WWW.MYPEOPLEGROUP.COM