



YOUR CEO WANTS ANSWERS... DO YOU KNOW THE QUESTIONS?

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In the 21st century leadership will be the single most important ingredient in company performance. Rapid change, global economics, free-flowing information, and dependence on knowledge workers will require leaders to manage more decisively and with greater insight and wisdom. Present leadership techniques will require better information in order to be successful. In this environment information-based leadership will become the norm.

To support the needs of leadership the Human Resources function will require systems and processes capable of providing operating management with timely, accurate information on the workforce.

Systems in use today do not collect and generate the type of information needed. How do we know? We asked the senior leadership of more than two dozen companies of varying sizes what they wanted to know about their people.

We have engaged CEO's CFO's, CIO's COO's, VP's and Directors in conversations regarding their people information needs. They came from more than two dozen companies ranging from 500 employees to 150,000 employees from the following industry segments:

- Energy
- Telecommunications
- Professional Services
- Software
- Retail
- Recreation/Hospitality
- Transportation
- Health Care
- Financial Services
- Government
- Aerospace
- Consumer Products
- Technology
- Medical/Pharmaceuticals

Executives were asked three specific questions; 1) What people information do you need today to assist you in making strategic business decisions? 2) Are you currently able to obtain this information in a timely and accurate fashion? 3) How would you like this information to be presented? How frequently?

The answers, regardless of industry, company size, or executive position were surprisingly similar. In general, the executives we spoke with could not obtain the information they sought to lead their organizations in the manner they wished to. This is a clear challenge to professionals in Human Resources, a statement that the status quo for HR won't cut it in the future. There are two sources from which CEO's might obtain this information in the future; the internal HR function or an external services provider. With the trend toward outsourcing functions like HR, the message is clear, the train is leaving the station, be on-board HR or be left behind.

RESPONSES

The following questions are direct quotes from executives and summarize the broader set of responses collected during interviews over the last 18 months.

- How do our people benchmark with other industries?
- Who are my diamonds in the ruff?
- What % of employees have an "entitlement" attitude?
- What are the important trends: motivation, interests, issues?
- Are we moving people between positions in the company successfully?
- Are my managers progressing, or staying stagnant?
- Are we creating better quality leaders?
- Who is interested in what future opportunities?
- What are my current competencies and skill gaps?
- Who should be promoted, when? Who should not?
- Who should be terminated immediately?
- Where are we effective at replacing marginal performers?
- How do I know who is truly loyal? Who really cares?
- Who can I recognize for their contribution?
- Do I have resources for my key initiatives?
- What critical skills take the longest time to mature?
- What employee profiles are most successful?
- Do our current people processes (PA) bring value?
- Are employees spending their time on the right things?
- Do we have the right people on the bus?
- What is the stretch capability of my workforce?
- Are my employees motivated?
- Where are my critical retention risks?
- What return am I getting on my development dollars?
- What is the relationship between people and business unit performance?
- Which leaders lead effectively? Which don't?
- Who are my top performers at all levels — unbiased?
- What are obstacles to success for my employees?
- Which practices contribute the most value?
- What is in the hearts of my people?
- Who are my future leaders — with unbiased data?
- Are the leadership messages reaching everyone?
- Where are my problem managers?

Our thanks to the many executives who were kind enough to share their insights.