

The HR Profession's Critical Role in Your Current & Future Workforce

Margie Harvey
Miles Kimball Company
New North Business & Education Partnership

1

Business & Education - Agenda

- **The New North**
- **Business & Education Partnership Committee**
- **Why is this Important to Business Leaders, our communities AND HR Leaders?**
- **SHRM Alignment**
- **Some Research ...**
- **Partnership Ideas – Simple to Complex**

2

The New North

- **18 county region in Northeast Wisconsin**
- **Mission is to harness and promote the region's resources, talents and creativity for the purposes of sustaining and growing our regional economy.**
- **New North, Inc. will concentrate on:**
 - Attracting, developing, and retaining diverse talent
 - Focusing on targeted growth opportunities
 - Supporting an entrepreneurial and small business climate
 - **Encouraging educational attainment**
 - Encouraging and embracing diverse talents
 - Promoting the regional brand

3

north of what you expect new north

Business & Education Partnership

- **Our purpose: mutually assured collaboration and success of regional business and education.**
- **Our goal: support the attainment of a full and qualified workforce.**

north of what you expect new north

4

Key Partnership Commitments

- **Understand current & future skills gap**
- **Work together to bridge gap**
- **Community connections promotes relevance in the curriculum**
- **Life-long learning**
- **Become involved, create a dialogue!**

north of what you expect new north

5

Why Is This Important to Business?

- **“Staffing, employment and recruitment are among the most critical HR accountabilities that contribute to our organization’s business strategies, followed closely by training and development”** SHRM Report Survey 5/08
- **We are faced with a critical shortage of skilled workers (lifelong learning)**
- **Our students are not learning the basic skills that business and industry needs for the future.**

6

Why Is This Important To Education?

- **Need partnership and input from their customers (business & communities).**
- **Need us to understand their challenges too (financial, political, etc)**
- **Missions vary greatly and not everyone understands differences...research institutions, regional comprehensive universities, two year liberal arts campuses, and technical college**
 - (Understand, then seek to be understood)

7

A Perfect SHRM Alignment!

- **Key initiative of National & State SHRM – Workforce Readiness:**
 - Formulate and develop stronger partnerships with external entities through chapter/state SHRM leaders to better serve and advance the HR profession.
 - Established SHRM Workforce Readiness Chair

8

SHRM Workforce Readiness Definition

- **Insure that today and tomorrow's workforce has the skills, competencies and behaviors in order to succeed in today's and tomorrow's workplace.**
- **Insure that today's and tomorrow's workplace maximizes the potential of today and tomorrow's workforce.**

9

What is Workforce Readiness?

- New Entrants to the Workforce
- Incumbent Workers
- Transitioning Workers
- Re-entrants to the Workforce

10

Group Discussion – How Are We Doing?

- Do we have a readily available workforce in Wisconsin to fill our talent needs?
- What are the skill and talent gaps?

11

Key Topics For Today

- What will it take to assure we have a qualified (current and future) workforce to draw from within Wisconsin?
- How critical is HR's strategic role?
- How can HR leaders use their knowledge, networking, and influence to create critical business, community, and education partnerships?

12

Is It Really True? Some Research

What Is The Data Telling Us?

13

Why Is This Important ? (UW-O Growth Agenda)

- Fact: Wisconsin ranks 35th in the nation for its low percentage of bachelor degree holders.
- Fact: Wisconsin ranks 7th in the nation for its high percentage of associate degree holders.
- Fact: Wisconsin needs 70,000 more adults with a bachelor's degree to reach the national average (~ 15,000 per year now)

14

Why Is This Important ? (UW-O Growth Agenda)

- Fact: Only 24.1% of Wisconsin's adults have a bachelor degree.
- Fact: The national average is 27%.
- Fact: Only 18.8% of Northeast Wisconsin residents hold bachelor degrees.
- Fact: The 18.8% is lower than that of any state except for one.

15

- **65-year olds in our state will approach the number of 18-year olds in the next decade.**
- **Wisconsin high school completion rates have fallen from 93% (1994) to 89% (2004)**

Are They Really Ready to Work?

White Paper by SHRM/Conference Board/ Partnership for 21st Century Skills

- **“The future US workforce is here – and it is woefully ill-prepared for the demands of today’s and tomorrow’s workplace.”**
- **Among the most important skills cited by employers:**
 - Professionalism/Work Ethic
 - Oral and Written Communications
 - Teamwork/Collaboration
 - Critical Thinking/Problem Solving

Are They Really Ready to Work?

- **“Employers need a better understanding of the classroom environment,**
- **And academics need a better understanding of the workplace.**
- **Employers and academics should work together to make instruction meaningful and internships relevant to workplace needs.”**

Regaining The Edge – SHRM 2/08

- **HR professionals are acutely aware of talent shortages in various business sectors.**
- **One reason for the unpreparedness: Employers have not clearly spelled out the skills and capabilities they need.**
- **Key Points:**
 - Lack of readiness has become a systemic problem requiring a systemic solution.
 - Systemic change requires partnerships between business organizations & education community.
 - Successful initiatives to improve workforce readiness can be studied and replicated.

19

Human Resource Executive 6/08

- **“Schools and employers are on such divergent paths about how they prepare their workforce.”**
- **“If they don’t begin to go down the same path, employers are not going to have enough bodies and schools are going to continue to pump people out who can’t get jobs.”**

20

SHRM Workplace Visions

- **A rapidly changing global business environment is creating demand for a high skilled workforce.**
- **The future U.S. workforce is not prepared for more intense global competition for high-skilled jobs.**
- **The mismatch of business needs and available skills could lead to significant challenges in managing the future workforce.**

21

The Strategic Role of HR

- **Your role (and your leadership) has never been more important to the long term success of your organizations, and your communities!**

22

What Can HR Do?

- **Understand your business strategy**
- **Understand current and future skill set needs – competencies and capabilities**
- **Succession Planning**
- **Share skill gaps (current and future) with education partners**
- **Promote importance of life long learning**
- **Understand the consequences to our businesses and communities of NOT getting involved!**

23

Tie Learning to Career Planning

- **Use education and career planning to establish long-term relationships with employees**
- **Encourage employees to take greater responsibility for their learning.**
- **Help employees use assessment to make educational decisions.**
- **Create pathways for adult learners to gain credit from a variety of sources.**
- **Encourage your employees to get involved within your local schools.**

24

Small Group Brainstorm Exercise

- **What have you done/seen to become more involved in partnering with education?**

- **Consequences of not becoming involved?**

- **What can you/your local SHRM chapter do to enhance your local presence and involvement? (Easy to complex)**

25

Human Resource Executive 6/08

- **HR can share information with schools and universities about which positions may be hard to fill in the near future as well as critical skills that may be in short supply.**

- **Then help schools build internships and curriculum that teaches those skills (technical, medical, engineering, construction, etc).**

26

Regaining The Edge – SHRM 2/08

- **How should HR be involved?**
 - Become more involved in advocating for changes to the U.S. education system and help shape educational strategies.

 - Exert stronger leadership in creating partnerships between business organizations and the education community.

 - Become involved in research on workforce readiness – understand and share skills gaps.

27

Human Resource Executive 6/08

- Employers have reached out to elementary and high schools, forming partnerships to customize school curricula to produce a pipeline of ready-made talent.
- Employers help teachers integrate academic knowledge and technical skills into their information-technology curriculum.

28

SHRM Workplace Visions – Suggested Actions by HR Leaders

- Form a coalition of business organizations to create clear direction for workforce readiness.
- Convince leaders to articulate a strong vision and a rallying cry around workforce readiness.
- Define specific workforce skills and capabilities that employers need.
- Change company-funded tuition reimbursement programs to encourage voucher-based tuition reimbursements.

29

Suggested Actions by Government

- Learn from successful programs and replicate.
- Consider national certification programs that demonstrate readiness for various entry-level jobs.
- Streamline federal programs to coordinate better with regional initiatives.
- Implement programs that assist the dislocated, immigrant and older workers.
- Invest in teacher retraining.
- Provide individuals with tools to analyze their own competencies and readiness gaps.

30

Are They Really Ready to Work?

- **All stakeholders (business, educators, community) should partner to enhance important workplace skills.**
- **Examples:**
 - Internships, summer jobs
 - work-study programs
 - job shadowing, mentoring
 - on-the-job training
 - real-world experiences
 - community involvement

31

Partnership Ideas
Simple to Complex (1 hour to many days)

- **CEO's/department leaders lead classroom discussions.**
- **Participate in career sessions with students**
- **Be vocal about what sort of educational skills we desire from college graduates.**
- **Ask professors, administrators and other staff where you can best be used within their schools.**
- **Define intern needs and utilize them.**

32

Partnership Ideas

- **Volunteer yourself and other functional departments to speak to classes.**
- **Invite professors and teachers to tour your business and interact with other functional leaders.**
- **Assist with field trips, career days, and mentor programs.**
- **Develop a long term partnership with your local schools (K-12, technical colleges and universities).**
- **Support parents involved in schools!**

33

Partnership Ideas

- Support a program to allow mentoring or job shadowing of teachers and professors in the workplace, to bring that real life experience back into the classroom.
- Donate equipment or supplies or even scrap materials where useful.
- Support college foundations for student scholarships and other needs.
- Offer to do mock job interviews with upcoming graduates (all levels).

34

Partnership Ideas

- Be available to support your local college/school with issues that may arise at the state or federal levels.
- Offer to provide you local colleges/schools with real-world problems or company projects that provide practical learning opportunities for students.
- Involve your local colleges/schools in your professional associations, economic development entities, or service organizations.

35

Partnership Ideas

- Invite local educators to your in-house training programs and external speakers sessions.
- Encourage your employees to get involved in your local education entities.
- Assist in doing more "application" vs. "theory" in classes.
- Volunteer to speak to college clubs and organizations.
- Attend Educational Summits.
- Request school records when recruiting

36

Partnership Ideas

- We must have conversations in our communities around finding the right balance between continuing to “invest” in education while also expecting process improvement and controlling spending
- Per Dr. Willard Daggett (International Center for Leadership in Education) Wisconsin has more programs and stipulations required of our educators, than any other state in the nation. We must “focus” on the most critical things, or we will be good at nothing.

37

Community Business & Education Partnerships

- PIE – Chamber sponsored Partners in Education (& benchmark with others)
- SHRM chapter workplace readiness committees (& benchmark)
- New North Business & Education Partnership
- High school, tech college, and university advisory committees
- Junior Achievement
- School Boards
- NEW Era

38

Summary

- What is needed most is leadership that brings together the best ideas, coordinates strategies and defines the changes that are needed. HR leaders are well positioned (and needed!) to provide some of this kind of leadership within their companies, their communities and collectively at the national level.

39

Summary

- As the business world begins to deal with the growing challenge of building a strong, skilled and capable workforce, HR leaders will be called upon to demonstrate their capacity for leadership not only by dealing with the immediate problem of finding workers with the right skills but also by shaping the solutions that address the wider crisis.

40

Final Thoughts

- If every HR professional in Wisconsin does "just a little bit more" to partner with their local educators, just think of the power of the impact we will have within our communities, organizations, and our future!
- It can all start here, with our leadership!

41

Thoughts, questions, ideas?

Thank You!

Margie Harvey
mharvey@mileskimball.com

Helen Englebert
helen@cwfv.com

42
