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According to Metlife’s 15th Annual Benefit Trends Study, the workforce as we know it is transforming and a new generation of workers are redefining employee’s workplace expectations, especially when it comes to benefits and long-term retirement plans and expectations.

In modern times, mobile technology has allowed employees to be “on” anytime and anywhere, allowing for a more mobile workforce. However, this new workforce also has much higher expectations in obtaining work-life balance. According to the report, today’s employees put increased focus on happiness at work—they change jobs more often, their careers take unexpected twists and turns, and personal satisfaction can be as important as the numbers on their paycheck. Seventy-three of workers surveyed indicated that they feel their employers have a responsibility for their health and wellbeing. 58 percent of workers also said that they want customized benefit options that fit their personal lifestyle.

In this issue of HR News, we try and provide some useful articles to help public sector HR professionals better understand what benefit trends they should be aware of as we move into 2018.

Financial wellness expert Chris Whitlow discusses how HR can drive benefit engagement by thinking like marketers (page 10).

Payroll service expert Pamela Evette shares the differences between a payroll partner and a payroll vendor (page 8).

Leadership development and training expert Chris Douglas discusses how organizations can help employees take the stress out of taking vacations (page 6).

Also in this issue, Isaac Kohen with Teramind shares best practices for managing employee productivity and organizational performance (page 16).

Alex Smith, chief HR officer with the City of Memphis discusses the power of culture change for government agencies (page 18).

And IPMA-HR Research Associate Maria Villarreal shares the latest findings from the 2017 Benchmarking Report on how to foster a culture of innovations (page 27).

You’ll find these articles and more in this issue of HR News. Happy reading! —Jenny Chang

Jenny Chang

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Organizations Can Take the Stress Out of Taking Vacations

By Chris Douglas

Taking a vacation time is essential for relieving work-related stress, restoring personal balance and reconnecting with loved ones. Consequently, offering paid time off (PTO) can do wonders to ensure employees and managers perform their best by allowing them to step away from their jobs, recharge and return in a state of post-vacation bliss. Unfortunately, the scenario does not always play out as envisioned.

Many employees feel more stressed when returning to work than they did before taking time off. When Fierce Inc. surveyed more than a thousand full-time employees from across the United States, the leadership development and training company found surprising variations in experiences with PTO.

Seniority Matters

First, employees’ age, tenure and employer size play large roles in determining how many days off respondents receive. The majority of younger workers, those in entry-level positions and those who have shorter tenures receive less PTO. These respondents also believe that additional PTO would increase their sense of loyalty to their organizations.

Other top-line findings were

- Forty-five percent of individuals in households making $50,000/year or less reported that no one encourages them to take vacations.
- Less than 30 percent of those making $100,000 or more said the same about not receiving encouragement to take time off.
- The largest number of respondents (45 percent) said the ideal number of PTO days would be 20 days or more.
- Those 18-29, however, noted that their ideal number of vacations days is 16-20.

Leaving and Returning Cause Stress

What these results reflect is a need for individuals to be intentional in their planning and communication around taking time off. No one will take health and well-being more seriously than the person whose health is at stake. Since employees may feel fear or concern about initiating discussions around using PTO, managers and supervisors must take the initiative and clarify which steps an employee should take when requesting and using vacation days. Empowering employees to feel like they can step away and recharge will benefit employers.

“...respondents also believe that additional PTO would increase their sense of loyalty...”

No matter how much vacation is received, returning is stressful. Alarmingly, nearly two-thirds (62 percent) of survey respondents indicated they return from vacation feeling more stressed or as stressed as ever. The main reason given for this stress was the need to catch up on missed work. Having to readjust to a work mindset and needing to resolve major issues that arose while away followed as reason for lack of stress relief.

Half of all employees reported checking in with the office while on vacation, and 13 percent said they checked in daily. In the age of smartphones, the idea of completely unplugging seems unrealistic for many people. The key to making PTO relaxing and recuperative is...
to set up a system ahead of time that ensures work continues getting done despite one employee’s absence. At a minimum, making it clear that employees are not expected to check in more often than every three days can increase peace of mind.

Some See Vacations Discouraged

Support for using PTO varies. More than half of all respondents believe their managers support and encourage them to take time off, but just 40 percent of employees believe the same of their co-workers. Among employees who are unsatisfied with their current job, 57 percent said no one encourages them to use vacation days or supports them when they do take PTO. In contrast, just 18 percent of very satisfied employees reported sensing a lack of support.

Clearly, there are mixed feelings about PTO and how it affects individual employees. These responses are a wakeup call for organizations because the management of PTO affects employee satisfaction. Which is no small issue, as work-life balance is critical to long-term employee retention.

Changing Policies and Practices

Given the survey results, here are some steps managers and supervisors can take to be more supportive of employees taking PTO:

- **Plan ahead for deliverables and other needs.** Create clarity about how a vacationing employees’ responsibilities will be delegated and work to ensure necessary coverage is in place. Have employees prepare files and instructions before they leave and encourage meetings or briefings to ensure smooth handoffs. Also consider scheduling quick reentry meetings for when vacationing employees return to ensure they get up to speed on the status of projects. This could help relieve some stress and facilitate prioritization of catchup efforts.

- **Walk the walk.** Actually make time off available to all employees regardless of pay and tenure, and encourage them to use it. Encourage managers to take time off, as well, as many employees see them as examples.

- **Share vacation stories.** When employees return from PTO, take time during a team meeting to ask them about their vacation. Doing this communicates that the organization’s leadership cares about them and respects their time away from work while also encouraging others to take their allocated time off.

Organizations should view PTO as a necessary benefit that benefits both the health of employees and the organization. Conversations are needed about the efficacy of current PTO policies. If the policies are not effective, organizations must be willing to make adjustments.

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Chris Douglas is the executive vice president of training with Fierce Inc., a company that focuses on leadership development and training. For more information, please go to [www.fierceinc.com](http://www.fierceinc.com).
Across all organizations, payroll is generally the single most-expensive line item and has the most complicated compliance requirements. While some organizations have the internal bandwidth to effectively manage this process, most do not. The demand for easy payroll management options has led to an explosion of choices. From do-it-yourself software and online payroll processing to large payroll-only vendors and companies that can manage all your payroll and HR programs and systems, the selecting the most-appropriate service provider can seem overwhelming. Despite some industry claims, there is no one-size-fits-all solution. Making the right choice requires understanding what services each potential vendor or partner offers to address your organization’s specific needs.

Vendor Options

Payroll Service Providers
PSPs only handle payroll. They range from online vendors to large brick-and-mortar companies. The most basic PSPs operate in the cloud, meaning the organizations they serve do not purchase or install any software. Payroll can be managed from anywhere, and typical services include payroll processing (including overtime, holiday pay, taxes and benefit deductions), filing and paying payroll taxes, new hire and payroll reporting, paid time off management and employee self-service. Many online PSP access their clients’ existing accounting software, enterprise resource planning systems or human resource systems.

Brick-and-mortar PSPs typically offer slightly richer and more automated services and perform tasks without requiring the employer to run reports or queries. They also offer the confidence of working with a larger organization, which is important to many smaller employers.

The greatest benefit of using a PSP is that the payroll processor does all the basic work—payroll deductions, tax payments, end of year tax forms and the like—quickly and easily. However, there are vast differences in the level of service provided by PSPs.
Less-expensive options tend to be mostly transactional, with limited support, which forces clients to stay on top of pushing out payroll. They often do not provide notification if payroll data has not been received or do checks and queries if a client makes a mistake. They are also unable to handle or code certain types of discretionary income and benefits (i.e., fringe calculations) like bonuses or car allowances. At the same time, the services smaller PSPs do provide are generally not scalable to meet the needs of a growing or changing organization.

Moreover, these options may not offer the same high level of security when it comes to the transmission and storage of data and sensitive personal and business information. Last, these providers do not generally provide counsel on better ways to set up the system, contain costs or offer more-attractive benefit packages at a better rate.

For most organizations, even those working with a top-notch PSP, the major downsides are risk management and cost containment. In short, users must trust the provider to get everything right while maintaining ultimate responsibility for any problems that may be made. The risk for error is high from people entering data in multiple locations.

Administrative Services Organizations

Like PSPs, ASOs provide outsourced payroll services to companies. They go far beyond normal PSPs, however, by giving clients access to back office solutions, including benefit management, employee administration and workers’ compensation compliance. ASOs also offer deep human resources expertise, allowing them to consult on HR strategy, processes and best practices and to assist with creating customized programs to meet specific business needs and goals.

Partnering Opportunities: Professional Employer Organizations

Many organizations concerned with more-complicated arrangements, those with workforces dispersed across several localities and those looking to ensure compliance and find solutions tailored to their specific business challenges and requirements opt to seek out a true payroll partner in the form of a professional employer organization.

PEOs take the ASO model a step further by absorbing a far higher degree of risk. Specifically, PEOs deliver their services through a co-employment arrangement in which a client’s workers become joint employees of the PEO and paid by the PEO which serves as the employer of record for tax and insurance purposes. In other words, the client is the onsite employer, and the PEO is the administrative employer. While the client retains control over operations and workforce management in this scenario, working with a PEO allows the client to transfer much of its compliance burden and employer-related risks to the PEO. These benefits can make working with a PEO the best option even though the higher level of service generally comes at a higher price tag than PSP and ASO services.

In addition to gaining access to some of the brightest and most-focused HR minds, working with a PEO can deliver benefits in the areas of reduced benefit costs and improved employee attraction and retention. Because PEOs often represent large numbers of employers, they can secure volume pricing discounts, allowing their clients to offer richer benefit plans at lower total costs. Those factors often combine to enhance success rates in hiring and to improve retention. In fact, according to a recent study by the National Association of Professional Employer Organizations, the annual rate of employee for PEO clients is 10-14 percent lower than for organizations that do not work with PEOS.

Choosing a PEO Partner

If your organization needs more high-touch service and consulting, here are some key things to look for in a true payroll partner:

- A deep bench with expertise in the latest compliance requirements and evolving regulatory issues
- Backup systems, cross-checks and auditing services to ensure that people are paid correctly and according to proper coding
- A fully-integrated system with a single-sign-on to ensure ease of use and to reduce chances for making manual errors
- Ancillary products
- Scalable solutions
- Expertise and advice on growth strategies
- A dedicated payroll administrator you can contact directly at any time
- Personalized services to fix problems, anticipate issues such as giving reminders on moving payroll to a different day to allow for bank holidays, take care of stopping payment on checks, and prevent and fight fraud
- Manages and, if desired, absorbs HR and regulatory risks and liabilities
- A single location where everything gets handled

Finding the right payroll service for your organization depends largely on your needs, preferences and budget. A PSP or ASO can often meet the needs of organizations with small staffs. Organizations with more-complex needs or that desire higher-level services and greater peace of mind will usually do better with a PEO. While PEO services can cost more, many organizations find the expenditure quickly pays for itself by reducing compliance costs and enhancing employee satisfaction.

Pamela Evette is the founder and CEO of payroll, benefits and HR outsourcing company Quality Business Solutions. An author and speaker, Evette has been named one of Inc.’s top 50 women entrepreneurs in America. She can be reached at 877-834-3985. More information on choosing the right payroll vendor is available from the National Association of Professional Employer Organizations. —

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Many of the challenges human resources professionals face can be solved by thinking less like HR experts and more like marketers. Marketers utilize data to quantify and improve their strategies. They track how long consumers spend on websites, which social media posts followers engage with, and who opens emails and clicks through on offers. By collecting and analyzing such data, marketers learn what content people are interested in and which messages create the most engagement on which platforms.

For HR professionals, engagement is the key to offering and administering employee benefits that attract and retain skilled and productive workers. Every HR professional wants to know how to catch and keep employees’ attention, which is particularly challenging given the vast generational differences in today’s workforce. To avoid feeling like they are just taking stabs in the dark when creating new benefits, HR professionals should take a page out of the marketing playbook and adopt a data-centric approach. Those who think they have no data are wrong.

Determine Why Employees Engage

HR professionals should work to figure out why employees respond more positively to some programs. One of three explanations typically emerges.

1. Do it because I say so—This occurs in organizations that have a strong corporate culture. When employees trust their employer, they readily engage with new programs because they know the employer has their best interests at heart.

2. Something is in it for me—At organizations with weak cultures, boosting employee engagement can require emphasizing why a perk or benefit will improve workers’ situations. Offering incentives and rewards for participation may also be necessary.

3. Social pressure—Creating leaderboards or other easily viewed and regularly updated performance reporting tools will drive participation by appealing to employees’ innate desire to engage in friendly competition.

Collecting and analyzing data does more that illuminate which engagement strategies pay off. For example, HR professionals may know from past experiences that implementing a financial wellness program will prove difficult. Creating data points and using A/B testing for the design, headlines, and subject lines on digital communications will provide deeper understandings of how to target messages. For design elements, gauging the effectiveness of images and videos included with text messages can yield valuable insights.

Set a Benefit Program Up for Success

For organizations with limited time and resources, using turnkey communication systems to automate engagement efforts is
extremely beneficial. It takes pressure off HR staff to ensure program success and makes use of the knowledge and resources of benefit program providers that have worked with many employers and gained a better idea of what works when it comes to messaging. HR professionals who intend to handle communications on their own must create data analysis and testing protocols before launching a new benefit program. The best initial approach is to use all three of the engagement strategies mentioned above at the same time. It also helps to schedule an in-person program kickoff and to follow up with well-designed and targeted digital communications. Be sure to clarify information as much as possible by using videos and images.

Once the program is launched, use competitions and incentives/rewards to reinforce the individual value of participation and to reinforce positive social pressure. By using these tactics, an organization can create more awareness for employee benefit programming and increase organic engagement.

Create Employee Workflows by Tracking Engagement

Once an employee benefit program has been rolled out, the real work of tracking how people engage with and respond to the program begins. From here, the data points are endless—how long employees spend on a platform, how often they use a platform, what options they select, how much interaction they have with the program …

Every piece of information collected can be used to create profiles of who engages and who does not. Going back to the financial wellness example, engagement can be improved by figuring out what resonates for employees in different age ranges, pay ranges, self-identified financial challenges and experience with technology. The same can be done for any type of employee benefit program.

Once profiles are created, messaging workflows can be created to spur and maintain engagement. The workflows can even be automated, using collected data to trigger emails, popups, or other digital communications and recommended actions.

Using Engagement Data to Build Trust and Organizational Culture

HR professionals face many challenges when implementing a new benefit program. Researching, rolling out and implementing the program take great deals of time and energy. If the program fails due to lack of participation, the HR professionals are less likely to try new things in the future. A failed benefit program that was not properly tested, tracked and communicated also sends the message to employees that the organization does not understand them or their needs. This fosters a culture in which employees ignore internal communications because they have historically provided no value.

Avoiding such terrible outcomes requires spurring ongoing engagement. When an organization takes the time to properly vet a program and clearly and effective communicate with employees, trust increases and culture strengthens.

Then, if the organization wants to introduce something new in the future, its HR staff can simply put the initiative directly into their existing workflow. Employees will respond because they trust that their organization is providing a benefit that is appropriate and needed in their lives. Such a relationship is the Holy Grail of employee benefit engagement.

Imitating the way marketers seek out and learn from engagement data enables HR professionals to set themselves and their benefit initiatives up for success. In addition to helping drive engagement by producing targeted communications and offerings, data can be analyzed to gain a better understanding of an organization’s unique employee population. Armed with an authentic picture of who they serve, HR professionals can make the best decisions for individual employees and the overall organization.

Chris Whitlow is the founder and CEO of Edukate, a workplace financial wellness provider that helps employers provide the best financial wellness benefits to help employees manage their financial stress, increase their productivity and live happier, healthier lives. For more information, go to www.edukate.com.

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For everything else 2017 threw at public sector human resources managers, from suspension of the new overtime rules on the eve of compliance to ongoing upheavals triggered by efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act, HR News readers can be forgiven for overlooking a potentially seismic shift in the treatment of employees’ sexual orientation under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Gender stereotyping in hiring and employment has been barred since Price Waterhouse v. Hopkins in 1989, but no federal job protections have extended to workers who are gay, lesbian or bisexual.

Three separate federal circuit appeals courts ruled on this issue between April and July, and each reached a different decision. Complicating things even further, the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) takes a view opposite from the one expounded by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ).

The U.S. Supreme Court may accept one of the recently decided cases, and there is always the outside chance that Congress could clarify whether the protected category of sex also covers sexual orientation. The most likely situation will be continued and growing confusion. HR managers can best serve their organizations by keeping up to date on developments and ensuring that their organizations create and implement policies that minimize the likelihood of discrimination on any grounds.

A Seventh Circuit Bombshell

The Chicago-based U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit voted 8-3 to allow a fired community college instructor to move forward with her sexual orientation claim against her former employer. She said that an incident in which a supervisor saw her kissing her partner in the school parking lot led to several years of mistreatment and repeated denials of career opportunities. Eventually, the school declined to renew her part-time contract.

The author of the decision in Hively v. Ivy Tech (No. 15-1720, Apr. 4, 2017) noted

The question before us is not whether this court can, or should, “amend” Title VII to add a new protected category to the familiar list of “race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.” ... Obviously that lies beyond our power. We must decide instead what it means to discriminate on the basis of sex, and in particular, whether actions taken on the basis of sexual orientation are a subset of actions taken on the basis of sex. This is a pure question of statutory interpretation and thus well within the judiciary’s competence.

The legal team for Ivy Tech argued that Congress holds sole authority to make this interpretation. This assertion was countered...
by explaining that courts’ interpretation of the meaning of “sex” in the statutory language of Title VII has expanded along with society’s. That members of Congress would not have conceived of LGBT right in 1964, the court stated, is no reason to ignore those rights in the present day.

The appellate court returned *Hively* to the federal district court in Indiana where it originated. The defendant community college has declined to appeal further to the U.S. Supreme Court, so employers in the states included in the Seventh Circuit -- Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin -- must start treating sexual orientation as a protected status.

**The Eleventh Circuit Upholds the LGBT Exclusion Under Title VII**

The Seventh Circuit broke with more than 50 years of jurisprudence. Considering a similar case, the appellate judges for the Eleventh Circuit went with precedent. In deciding *Evans v. Georgia Regional Hosp, et al.* (No. 15-15234), the federal appeals court for Alabama, Florida and Georgia ruled that the plaintiff could proceed with an amended gender nonconformity claim but not her sexual orientation claim.

A self-identified gay woman who stated in court filings that she does not act in a feminine manner brought this case because she claimed co-workers and managers denied her equal pay, restricted her work opportunities and subjected her to harassment, assault and battery during the time she was employed as a security guard. She left the job voluntarily. The defendant succeeded in having a district court dismiss the plaintiff’s case by arguing that she failed to properly state her grounds for suing under Title VII, that Congress had not included sexual orientation in relevant statutes and that an original claim of retaliation could not be proven.

The plaintiff’s legal team has asked the U.S. Supreme Court to review the part of the appellate court’s decision regarding sexual orientation discrimination. The High Court could add *Evans* to its docket as early as October of this year. In the meantime, the plaintiff has the right to reformulate her gender nonconformity claim and seek a rehearing at the district court level.

**Decision Pending in the Second Circuit**

As of this writing, the U.S. Second Circuit Court of Appeals, which serves Connecticut, New York and Vermont, was preparing to conduct an en banc review of *Zarda v. Altitude Express* (No. 15-3775). Regardless of what the 22 judges decide, the effect on Title VII sexual orientation discrimination claims is likely to be significant.

Both the EEOC and the DOJ have submitted amicus briefs, but the agencies have stated opposing positions. The EEOC affirmed its longstanding view that sexual orientation falls within the scope of sex. The DOJ, on July 26, 2017, submitted a 36-page summary of arguments for why the court should not recognize a sexual orientation claim. The Justice Department’s arguments boil down to court precedent and congressional silence, or essentially the same reason the Eleventh Circuit dismissed *Evans* and why the defendant contested *Hively*.

At issues in *Zarda* is whether the plaintiff lost his job as a skydiving instructor because he disclosed his sexual orientation with customers. The communications may have made some people doing tandem jumps, in which the instructor attaches him or herself to the customer, uncomfortable. The plaintiff denied ever making any sexual advances or making inappropriate contact.

Since the case started, the plaintiff died in a skydiving accident. A legal executor continues to press his claim, persisting with the appeal even when a three-judge panel of the Second Circuit upheld the district court’s decision to dismiss.

If the court eventually finds for the plaintiff, the EEOC’s view that Title VII protects jobseekers and employees from sexual orientation discrimination will pick up a major endorsement. Conversely, a ruling in line with DOJ’s current interpretation would make it increasingly difficult for a plaintiff to succeed with a Title VII sexual orientation claim.

**A Texas Case Could Reopen Obergefell**

The Supreme Court of Texas on July 30, 2017, sent *Pidgeon v. Turner* back to its trial court to decide whether Houston taxpayers could demand that the city deny spousal benefits to the same-sex partners of municipal employees. The case arose from a decision by the mayor in 2013 to fully recognize same-sex marriages performed outside of Texas. Two residents challenged that policy on the grounds that they should not be compelled to support marriages they did not personally consider valid.

In 2015, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Obergefell v. Hodges* that no state could deny marriage licenses to same-sex couples. Whether Obergefell compels a state or its administrative units to grant all the rights and privileges of heterosexual marriage to same-sex couples remains unsettled, according to some conservative activists.

It is this question that the highest court in Texas has asked a trial court to answer. The plaintiffs in *Pidgeon* are arguing that since no law or necessity mandates offering spousal benefits to government workers, Houston can legitimately bar same-sex partners from receiving such benefits even when they are conferred on other spouses.

A good place to follow developments in *Pidgeon* is the National Center for Lesbian Rights at http://bit.ly/2w90I4f.
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Best Practices for Managing Employee Productivity and Organizational Performance

By Isaac Kohen

Measuring employee productivity is a challenge that many managers and executives lose countless nights of sleep over. So imagine mentioning measuring the organization’s performance beyond a financial ratio. Most would say it is incredibly hard to do. Linking employee productivity to organizational performance has become very difficult. It is very common for companies to increase investment in boosting productivity, but many do not see the return in the form of organizational performance. So what is a manager to do?

Thankfully, a solution—a framework, actually—does exist. The Balanced Scorecard (BSC) developed by Robert Kaplan of Harvard Business School can help companies align their employees’ productivity to overall organizational performance in order to get the most out of their measurements of each. This framework is a strategic planning and management system, but it is not enough on its own. In addition to using the BSC, linking employee productivity to organizational performance requires having measurements in place to track employee productivity using key performance indicators (KPIs) that align with the organization’s strategic goals.

An Overview of the Balanced Scorecard

The BSC accomplishes a lot for the private and public sector organizations that have adopted the system. Specifically, it connects the big picture strategy of an organization with the day-to-day work of employees by

- Communicating vision,
- Aligning operations with strategy,
- Prioritizing projects, and
- Measuring organizational performance in relation to strategic goals.

In order for any BSC to be successful, the system must be driven from the top down, and it must factor in the mission, vision, core values, focus areas, operational objectives, KPI measures, targets and initiatives.

The BSC reflects financial, stakeholder, internal and organizational capacity perspectives. Each perspective examines a different aspect of the organization, and any KPIs, targets and projects that are developed are based on the perspective being employed. This article focuses on the internal perspective, which encompasses the productivity of employees, key processes and general departmental efficiency.

Employee Productivity

Employee productivity has been one of the most difficult things to measure. Even when an organization does figure out what the best measurement practices are, they tend to keep best practices siloed in disparate departments. Often, the case is that upper management is coming down on the rest of the organization to be more productive, but lower-level managers do not see the end goal and, thus, start measuring productivity for the sake of measuring productivity. This is when the BSC and its associated KPIs can show their worth by illuminating the relationships between strategic performance and employee productivity.

KPIs and Organizational Performance

Depending on the goals of your organization, you may need to maximize quality, maximize quantity, or adjust both. In all cases, you will need to select metrics that provide the data needed to assess progress toward goals. Selecting the wrong metrics can produce unintended behaviors. The following suggested metrics are general but can be modified to fit your specific context.

Objective Tracking

Objective tracking involves breaking strategic goals into bite-sized milestones that must be accomplished in order to move things forward. Performance is measured both in terms of individuals meeting their objectives and in terms of the time they take to meet their objectives, with the resulting data indicating how their productivity is contributing to organizational performance.
Benchmarking With Revenue per Employee (Total Revenue/FTE)

This is a financial metric that can provide an organizationwide measurement of the performance of an average employee. The finance department can provide information on total revenue by department; dividing that by the number of full-time equivalent employees in a department shows how much revenue each employee generated. Calculating this data will be complex because every department makes a different contribution to the organization’s total revenue. Operational units and finance need to work closely to understand what the appropriate dollar values and FTE counts are and to ensure that maximizing total revenue/FTE does not become a competition in itself across departments.

360 Degree Feedback

Relying solely on quantitative data can make it difficult to understand low productivity. Employees need to be able to share their thoughts on how processes or managers are potentially failing to support them at work. The common practice is to evaluate employees only, placing all the responsibility for productivity on employees’ performance. This overlooks other factors. Allowing workers to give anonymous feedback on specific topics, business processes and managers’ performance creates a more holistic picture of where productivity failures are happening. The resulting information links organizational performance to how well processes and management practices align with achieving performance goals.

Remote Employee Engagement

The productivity of remote employees has become increasingly hard to track. Thankfully, solutions for tracking the work of off-site and home-based employees are emerging. Some are simple time trackers that record when people are on task, and others incorporate live video feeds. Regardless of technologies used, it is important to have well-thought-out processes and communications for remote employees.

Connecting organizational performance and employee productivity does not have to be such a challenge. Working within a known framework like the Balanced Scorecard can help. At the core, it is important to track productivity against your organization’s strategic goals. This allows performance to be measured in the context of what your organization is trying to achieve, and it highlights whether your people and processes are in alignment to achieve its goals.

Isaac Kohen’s time programming trading algorithms at a major hedge fund triggered his curiosity about IT security. He founded Teramind, where he serves as CEO and a product development team leader, to improve algorithms that target user behavior to secure the IT infrastructure of companies with masses of confidential data. He has years of experience increasing productivity in remote teams. You can contact Kohen at ikohen@teramind.co.
There are many stereotypes about large cities’ governments—it’s bureaucratic, slow, political. Despite the misperceptions, public sector organizations are often multimillion-dollar enterprises that employ thousands of individuals who work hard to serve residents. The City of Memphis takes in revenues of $640 million and employs more than 6,500 people, numbers that match or exceed many midsized private sector companies.

Still, many do not see Memphis as a major employer. Under Mayor Jim Strickland, who took office in January 2016, the aims to change this perception. Our mission is to transform city government to an organization that focuses on residents as customers while working to “improve the quality of Memphians, every day.”

To aid in shifting perceptions of city of government, senior leaders have taken an inside out approach, emphasizing culture change and new cultural values of innovation, collaboration, accountability, and service. The mayor’s first step toward changing the culture involved establishing a “C-suite” whose members help him govern and report directly to him.

The new organizational structure fosters collaboration, adaptability, and effective communication and information-sharing. It also enables the members of the C-suite to present and resolve issues in real time. Last, monthly performance management meetings were instituted, during which city leaders view important KPIs and develops action plans real time.

While refocusing top leaders was an important place to start, Strickland and his administration quickly realized that true culture change happens from the bottom up. This made it critical to boost employee engagement.

The city’s human resources team conducted engagement surveys and convened focus groups, which revealed that the major barriers to achieving culture change consisted of eroded trust and feeling undervalued. These insights gave birth to a powerful talent management strategy with four areas of emphasis:

1. Paying competitively and for amazing performance,
2. Keeping employees well and safe,
3. Developing and growing employees, and
4. Creating an inclusive and equitable work environment

Memphis views growing and developing its employees as a particularly important value proposition. Offering professional and advancement opportunities helps attract and retain talent.

The city’s longstanding tuition reimbursement program was enhanced during 2016 to provide an extra $3,000 for college courses taken as part of course of study for a degree. Also, to address the recent 5 percent increase in employees’ student loan debt, Memphis partnered with Tuition.io to offer a student loan contribution program, becoming the first municipality in the United States to offer this benefit.

Education loan contributions lessen city employees’ financial burden and demonstrate that Memphis is an employer who listens and cares. The unique benefit may also have helped boost interest in public service among residents. The city’s recruiting numbers have increased since this new benefit was announced. Growing and strengthening its workforce will allow the city government to continue on its journey toward making life better for Memphians every day.

The experience of Memphis tells the story of how adding innovation to reorganization and existing employee engagement efforts can produce magic.

Alex Smith is currently the chief HR officer for the City of Memphis. She is a career HR professional with management experience at Microsoft and Target. You can contact her at alexandria_smith@hotmail.com. —
Why Has the Question Received Such Attention?

In her July 17, 2017, Bingham Greenebaum Doll LLP blog post to Lexology.com, Morgan A. Davenport explained that “following the Supreme Court’s decision in Obergefell v. Hodges (135 S.Ct. 2584 [2015]), which legalized gay marriage in the United States, many individuals have criticized the fact that the current protections mean one could marry a same-sex partner on a weekend -- and be fired for that marriage the next Monday.”

The acting chair of the EEOC, Victoria Lipnic, told Bloomberg BNA on Aug. 10, 2017, that she expects the U.S. Supreme Court will take up the issue this term or next. Lipnic, who is herself a Republican and expects two more Republicans to fill open seats on the five-member commission, also said her agency will hold to its opinion. At the same time, she acknowledges the validity of the DOJ interpretation and welcomed a final determination from the High Court.

“It is an open legal question,” Lipnic said. “It raises all kinds of questions of statutory interpretation. What does it mean if a term has changed over time culturally?”

Ed Lamb is a freelance writer and editor in Virginia Beach, Va., and a longtime contributor to HR News. You reach him at thoroughcursor@gmail.com. —N
Eleventh Circuit Affirms That Failure to Provide Breastfeeding Accommodations May Violate the Pregnancy Discrimination Act

The Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals upheld a jury’s determination in favor of a woman on her claims of failure to accommodate and constructive discharge in violation of the Pregnancy Discrimination Act (PDA) and the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) (Hicks v. City of Tuscaloosa, Alabama, No. 13-cv-02063-TMP, Sept. 7, 2017).

The plaintiff was a narcotics task force officer for the Tuscaloosa Police Department when she became pregnant. The plaintiff’s captain assigned her to tasks that did not require working nights and weekends. The plaintiff subsequently took 12 weeks of FMLA leave and, upon her return, was placed under the command of a new captain. The plaintiff was written up on her first day back from leave and claimed that she overheard her supervisor tell the new captain that the plaintiff was a “b*tch” and that she would find a way to get rid of the plaintiff.

Eight days following her 12-week leave, the plaintiff was reassigned to patrol duty per the recommendation of the captain. The new job imposed loss of the plaintiff’s own police vehicle, loss of weekends off, different job duties and lower pay. The patrol officer position also required the plaintiff to wear a ballistic vest, which caused her doctor to provide a recommendation for alternative duties because the vest was so restrictive that it could cause breast infections and interfere with her ability to breastfeed. The chief of police, however, disagreed with the doctor’s recommendation and denied the plaintiff alternative duties because, in his experience, other officers who breastfed did not experience complications from wearing vests. The chief gave the plaintiff the options of not wearing a vest at all or wearing a “specially fitted” vest. Upon hearing this from the chief, the plaintiff felt forced to resign because not wearing a vest would prove too dangerous and the specially fitted vests were known to be ineffective because the special fitting involved cutting out holes.

The plaintiff then brought claims of pregnancy discrimination, constructive discharge and FMLA interference and retaliation against the police department. At trial, the jury found in favor of the plaintiff on all claims other than FMLA interference, and the judge ultimately awarded her $161,319 plus costs and fees. The police department appealed for a new trial, saying the laws were misapplied and the jurors received erroneous instructions.

With respect to the plaintiff’s constructive discharge claim, the appeals court found that a reasonable person would have been compelled to resign given that both of the options regarding the vest were unsafe and lactation is a condition medically related to pregnancy. The court also found that the plaintiff’s reassignment to patrol duty was, in fact, a discriminatory violation of the PDA and retaliation under the FMLA.

To make the latter decision, the appeals court relied on the defamatory language the plaintiff heard the supervisor and captain use and the temporal proximity between her return from FMLA leave and the transfer from desk duty to patrol duty. The court clarified that while breastfeeding is covered under the PDA as discrimination “because of” or “on the bases of sex,” employers are still not required to provide special accommodations to breastfeeding workers. However, taking an adverse action against a woman because of breastfeeding is a violation of the PDA. Accordingly, the court allowed the jury’s decision and the trial judge’s award to stand.

With the doctor’s recommendation and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22
with his ability to perform his job. The court also relied on the plaintiff’s testimony regarding the various unwelcomed sexual advances by the manager and explicit comments that conditioned his employment on acceptance of the sexual advances.

The court also allowed the retaliation claim to proceed to trial. There was no dispute that the employer knew about the former employee’s complaints of sexual harassment, considering he went directly to the owner. The plaintiff was able to establish causation through the close temporal proximity between his complaint and his termination. Furthermore, the court took into consideration the evidence that the man had asked the manager to stop touching him and making offensive comments multiple times. The plaintiff’s testimony regarding threats of termination were particularly useful in the court’s decision to deny the employer’s request for summary judgment on the retaliation claim.

The court did, however, grant the employer’s motion with respect to the employee’s gender discrimination claim. It determined that the former employee failed to allege that the decision to terminate him was based upon his gender. Instead, the plaintiff alleged that the employer terminated him in retaliation for his complaints about the sexual harassment. Those allegations were deemed insufficient to support a claim for gender discrimination.

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**E.D. Michigan Finds That Mention of Terminated Employee’s ‘Maturity’ Suggest Age Bias**

The U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan denied an employer’s motion for summary judgment on a former employee’s claims of age discrimination in violation of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) (Trapani v. 19 Mile Senior Housing, LLC d/b/a Villa Bella of Clinton, No. 16-12714, Aug. 29, 2017).

The plaintiff had worked as a community liaison for Villa Bella apartment complex and was responsible for marketing, leasing and conducting tours. In 2013, Villa Bella experienced financial difficulties brought on, in part, by decreased occupancy and increased expenses. The bank that financed the complex made various recommendations on how the complex could improve its debt-to-credit ratio and increase occupancy. One such recommendation was to provide the former employee with additional monetary incentives to lease apartments to new residents.

During Villa Bella’s financial difficulties, the plaintiff complained to the senior property manager that the general manager and assistant manager bullied her and made it difficult for her to perform her job. A few months later, as part of financial restructuring, the senior property manager suggested that the former employee’s position be eliminated to alleviate expenses. While the bank did not recommend this type of change, Villa Bella terminated the 57-year-old woman anyway.

During the hearing on the employer’s request for summary judgment, the plaintiff argued that she was discriminated against because of her age and pointed to the general manager’s testimony that the assistant manager and she had a contentious relationship because the assistant manager knew that she could not manipulate the plaintiff due to her “maturity.” The general manager went on to state that the assistant manager got along better with the receptionists because they were younger and more easily manipulated. The plaintiff did not argue that she was replaced by a younger worker, but that many of her tasks were absorbed by the receptionists, both of whom were in their 20s. The court relied on the fact that prior to the plaintiff’s termination, both receptionists were staffed as part-time employees, but both were promoted to full-time following the plaintiff’s termination. The moves to full-time status were made so the receptionists could absorb most of the plaintiff’s duties.

The court acknowledged that cost-cutting may be a legitimate nondiscriminatory reason for termination but also found that the plaintiff raised a genuine issue of fact regarding whether cost-cutting was merely pretext for age discrimination. She did this, in part, by relying on the bank’s financial recommendations, which did not include the elimination of her position, and the general manager’s testimony regarding her maturity. Villa Bella argued that the general manager’s testimony should carry little weight because she did not participate in the termination decision. The court disagreed and found that the owner, who made the termination decision, exchanged correspondence with the general manager before making the decision and asked for his input. Since a genuine issue of material fact exists, the court denied Villa Bella’s motion for summary judgment.

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**Court Holds That a Male Employee Cannot Bring Claim Under Pregnancy Discrimination Act**

The U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Mississippi granted an employer’s motion for judgment on the pleadings of the estate of a former employee’s claim of discrimination under the Pregnancy Discrimination Act (The Estate of Andrew Tyler Pennington v. Southern Motion, Inc., No. 1:16-cv-110-DMB-DAS, Sept. 6, 2017).

The former employee’s wife was in the middle of a high-risk pregnancy when he took a day off of work to accompany her to a doctor’s appointment. He was terminated upon his return to work and committed suicide shortly thereafter. His estate brought a claim against the employer and argued that the employer terminated him due to his gender and his
Highlights of the September IPMA-HR Executive Council Meeting

The IPMA-HR Executive Council met on September 16th in San Antonio, Texas. The Executive Council approved the association’s 2018 budget along with changes to the Long-Range Strategic Plan. The Executive Council also approved a number of changes that were recommended by the Member Alignment and Relevance Committee.

The Executive Council discussed the establishment of a policy on the scheduling of future IPMA-HR events and agreed to recognize the importance of inclusion as an internal consideration when selecting locations for events and to develop a statement in support of diversity and inclusion.

The Executive Council reviewed reports on a number of issues including:

- Membership
- Restructuring of the agency membership
- HR 2020 report
- International Training Conference
- Professional development
- Certification
- Government affairs
- Governance
- IPMA-HR website

The next meeting of the Executive Council will be held on March 10, 2018 in Alexandria, Va. For additional information on the Executive Council meeting, please contact Neil Reichenberg, executive director at nreichenberg@ipma-hr.org. —N

wife’s pregnancy in violation of Title VII as amended by the PDA. The employer filed for judgment on the pleadings, arguing that a male employee cannot succeed on a claim for discrimination under a law that protects pregnant female employees. As the plaintiff, the estate of the former employee argued that discrimination against him due to his spouse’s pregnancy constituted sex discrimination.

The court first acknowledged that there is very little authority regarding whether a male employee may bring a discrimination claim based upon his spouse’s pregnancy. Relying on piecemeal case law, the court stated that in order for a male employee to bring a viable claim of pregnancy discrimination, he must allege that he was discriminated against “because of his sex.” The former employee’s estate in this particular case claimed, however, that he was “treated less favorably than male employees whose wives were not pregnant” instead of alleging that he was treated differently than female employees.

The estate argued that its factual allegations were sufficient to state a claim based upon “associational discrimination” found in past court decisions regarding interracial marriage. The employer argued that the concept of associational discrimination was inapplicable, and the court agreed. It found that associational discrimination claims are dependent on discriminatory behavior arising from a relationship rather than the pregnancy status of an individual’s spouse.

The court further stated that in order to plead a viable claim, the estate would have to allege that the former employee was terminated because of his spouse’s pregnancy and that a female employee would not have been terminated due to her spouse’s pregnancy. Since the estate failed to make such allegations in its complaint, the court had no choice but to find that it failed to state a claim with respect to pregnancy discrimination. The court dismissed the estate’s claim without prejudice, giving the estate the option of filing an amended complaint.

Contact David B. Ritter, partner at Barnes & Thornburg LLP, either by email at david.ritter@btlaw.com or by phone at (312) 214-4862. Contact Laura Luisi, Associate at Barnes & Thornburg LLP, either by email at laura.luisi@btlaw.com or by phone at (312) 214-4582. More information is available at www.btlaw.com. Follow our blogs at www.btcurrenselectemp.com and www.btlaborrelations.com. —N

LABOR RELATIONS
Certification Corner

Congratulations to these newly certified individuals!

Kristie Marquez, IPMA-CP
Personnel Assistant
Merced County HSA
Merced, Calif.

Norma Duran, IPMA-CP
Senior Departmental Personnel Technician
La Mirada, Calif.

Alejandra Hinojosa, IPMA-CP
Senior Departmental Personnel Technician
Downey, Calif.

Elizabeth Loud, IPMA-SCP
Associate Personnel Analyst
County of Yolo HHSA HR
Woodland, Calif.

Maria Saguisag-Sid, IPMA-SCP
Principal Analyst
City of Brisbane
Brisbane, Calif.

Nancy Haffey, IPMA-SCP
Senior Management Analyst
Nevada County Human Resources
Nevada City, Calif.

Mariam Ko, IPMA-SCP
Human Resources Manager
City of South Pasaden
South Pasaden, Calif.

Christian Losche, IPMA-CP
HR Generalist
Arapahoe Community College
Littleton, Colo.

Michael McDonald, IPMA-CP
Human Resources Generalist
Broward County Board of County Commissioners
Coral Springs, Fla.

Tanyi Grimm, IPMA-CP
Port Saint Lucie, Fla.

Leonor Rosario, IPMA-CP
HR/Risk Coordinator
Miami Shores Village
Miami Shores, Fla.

Amanda Cloyd, IPMA-SCP
Executive Advisor/HR Commander
KY State Police
Frankfort, Ky.

Desta Cogan, IPMA-SCP
Human Resource Administrator
Department of Public Advocacy
Frankfort, Ky.

Bob James, IPMA-SCP
Staff Assistant
State of KY/CHFS/OIG
Frankfort, Ky.

Connie Heggs, IPMA-CP
Administrative Aide
Prince George’s County Fire/EMS Department
Largo, Md.

Debra Phillips, IPMA-SCP
Administrative Support
City of Alexandria
Ft. Washington, Md.

Christina Woods, IPMA-CP
Human Resources Specialist
City of Traverse City
Traverse City, Mich.

Kimberly Cooper, IPMA-SCP
Human Resources Generalist
City of Branson
Branson, Mo.

Sonya Brooks-White, IPMA-SCP
Human Resources Director
City of Florissant
Florissant, Mo.

Cindy Leigh, IPMA-SCP
Human Resources Generalist
City of Osage Beach
Osage Beach, Mo.

Susan Sult, IPMA-CP
Human Resources Director
Town of Selma
Selma, N.C.

Maria Hicks-Few, IPMA-SCP
Diversity and Inclusion Officer
City of Greensboro
Greensboro, N.C.

Bonnie Swain, IPMA-SCP
Finance and Personnel Officer
Town of Southern Shores
Southern Shores, N.C.

Shannon Barrett, IPMA-SCP
Human Resources Manager
City of Asheville
Asheville, N.C.

Malissa Dance, IPMA-SCP
Human Resources Recruitment Analyst
City of High Point
High Point, N.C.

Kellie Brandt, IPMA-SCP
Senior Classification & Pay Analyst
NYS Department of Civil Service
Albany, N.Y.

Kathy Boffa, IPMA-SCP
Human Resources Manager
Township of Livingston
Livingston, N.J.

Hilary Hyser, IPMA-SCP
Personnel Director
Ewing Township
Ewing, N.J.

Lisa Hogan, IPMA-CP
Human Resources Analyst
Clark County Water Reclamation District
Las Vegas, Nev.

Jennifer Maxwell, IPMA-CP
Human Resources Analyst
NYS Office for People with Developmental Disabilities
Albany, N.Y.

Holly Gray, IPMA-SCP
Associate Director Human Resources 2
NYS Dept of Transportation
Albany, N.Y.

Philip Kelly, IPMA-SCP
Associate Program Manager
NYS Department of State
Albany, N.Y.

Debra Meade, IPMA-SCP
Director
NYS Department of State
Albany, N.Y.

Abner JeanPierre, IPMA-SCP
Director of Classification & Compensation
New York State Department of Civil Service
Albany, N.Y.

Gretchen Resendes, IPMA-SCP
Director of Human Resource Management III
NYS Office of Medicaid Inspector General
Albany, N.Y.

Cassandra Allison, IPMA-SCP
Director of Labor Relations
State Education Department
Albany, N.Y.

Heath Boomhower, IPMA-SCP
Human Resources Specialist II
Environmental Conservation
Albany, N.Y.

Veronica Diver, IPMA-SCP
Human Resources Specialist II
NYS Office of Medicaid Inspector General
Albany, N.Y.

Carol Diotte, IPMA-SCP
Human Resources Specialist III
Labor Relations
NY State Thruway Authority
Albany, N.Y.
### Certification Corner

Congratulations to these newly certified individuals!

**Nancy Aldrich**
Arlington Heights, Ill.

**Veronica Diver**
Albany, N.Y.

**Jim Herring**
Selma, Ala.

**Jeff Tends**
Los Angeles, Calif.

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### Membership Matters

### IPMA-HR Recognizes New Members

IPMA-HR would like to recognize the following individuals and agencies for recently becoming members.

#### New Individual Members

**Lori Bays**
has been appointed as the human resources director for the City of Phoenix, Ariz. Prior to joining Phoenix, she served as the chief administrative officer for Salt Lake County. She also worked for San Diego County, the State of Utah, and the State of California.

**Ronnie Charles**, IPMA-SCP, has been promoted to managing director with Arthur J. Gallagher & Company. Prior to working with Arthur J. Gallagher & Company, he has worked for Baltimore, Md, Washington, D.C., Suffolk, Va, and the Commonwealth of Virginia. He has served as an instructor for the IPMA-HR Developing Competencies for HR Success training program. He will be joining the IPMA-HR Executive Council in January 2018.

**Gabriele Friedman**, IPMA-SCP, retired in November from her position as a human resources analyst with the City of Laguna Beach, Calif. —

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<th>Daniel Ragone, IPMA-SCP</th>
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<td>Human Resources Specialist III, Labor Relations</td>
<td>NYS Office of Mental Health Delmar, N.Y.</td>
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<th>Kelly Carpenter, IPMA-SCP</th>
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<td>Senior Classification &amp; Pay Analyst</td>
<td>NYS Department of Civil Service Albany, N.Y.</td>
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<th>Jeanne Pope, IPMA-CP</th>
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<td>Human Resources Director</td>
<td>City of Wilmington Wilmington, Ohio</td>
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<th>Susan Miller, IPMA-SCP</th>
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<td>HR Management Specialist IV</td>
<td>Oklahoma Dept of Rehab Services Oklahoma City, Okla.</td>
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<th>Heather Martino, IPMA-SCP</th>
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<td>Deputy Director</td>
<td>RI Dept of Revenue Providence, R.I.</td>
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<th>Chris Taylor, IPMA-SCP</th>
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<td>Assistant HR Manager</td>
<td>City of Hendersonville Hendersonville, Tenn.</td>
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<td>Director of Talent Management</td>
<td>TN Department of Human Services Franklin, Tenn.</td>
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<td>Human Resources Director</td>
<td>TN Dept of Labor and Workforce nashville, Tenn.</td>
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<td>Human Resources Manager</td>
<td>State of Tenn/Department of Finance Nashville, Tenn.</td>
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<th>Caitlin Krobot, IPMA-CP</th>
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<td>Employee Engagement Coordinator</td>
<td>City of San Antonio San Antonio, Texas</td>
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<td>Human Resources Manager</td>
<td>Fairfax County Health Department, Kelly Square Fairfax, Va.</td>
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<td>Human Resources Manager</td>
<td>Fairfax County Juvenile &amp; Domestic Relations District Court Fairfax, Va.</td>
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<td>Benefits and Work Life Coordinator</td>
<td>Campbell County Rustburg, Va.</td>
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<td>Human Resources Analyst</td>
<td>King County Water and Land Resources Division Auburn, Wash.</td>
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<td>Village Clerk/Employee Resource Manager</td>
<td>Village of Weston Weston, Wis.</td>
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**Caitlin Krobot, IPMA-CP**
Employee Engagement Coordinator
City of San Antonio
San Antonio, Texas

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Fairfax County Government - Human Resource Office
Fairfax, Va.

**Pamela Crum-Davis, IPMA-CP**
Human Resources Manager
Fairfax County Health Department, Kelly Square
Fairfax, Va.

**Carolyn Ford, IPMA-CP**
Human Resources Manager
Fairfax County Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court
Fairfax, Va.

**Darlene Cowart, IPMA-CP**
Benefits and Work Life Coordinator
Campbell County
Rustburg, Va.

**Erika Yanak, IPMA-CP**
Human Resources Analyst
King County Water and Land Resources Division
Auburn, Wash.

**Sherry Weinkauf, IPMA-SCP**
Village Clerk/Employee Resource Manager
Village of Weston
Weston, Wis.

**Lori Bays**
has been appointed as the human resources director for the City of Phoenix, Ariz. Prior to joining Phoenix, she served as the chief administrative officer for Salt Lake County. She also worked for San Diego County, the State of Utah, and the State of California.

**Ronnie Charles**, IPMA-SCP, has been promoted to managing director with Arthur J. Gallagher & Company. Prior to working with Arthur J. Gallagher & Company, he has worked for Baltimore, Md, Washington, D.C., Suffolk, Va, and the Commonwealth of Virginia. He has served as an instructor for the IPMA-HR Developing Competencies for HR Success training program. He will be joining the IPMA-HR Executive Council in January 2018.

**Gabriele Friedman**, IPMA-SCP, retired in November from her position as a human resources analyst with the City of Laguna Beach, Calif. —

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**IPMA-HR Recognizes New Members**

IPMA-HR would like to recognize the following individuals and agencies for recently becoming members.

**New Individual Members**

**Nancy Aldrich**
Arlington Heights, Ill.

**Veronica Diver**
Albany, N.Y.

**Jim Herring**
Selma, Ala.

**Jeff Tends**
Los Angeles, Calif.
THE REVIEWS ARE IN ON THE NEW MUCH SMARTER BARGAINING BOOK!

THESE PUBLIC NEGOTIATORS ABOVE HAVE SPOKEN!

Much Smarter Bargaining: Modern Contract Language for Today’s Public Negotiator is a new book written by the attorneys at Clark Baird Smith LLP. It offers almost 700 pages packed full of sampling bargaining clauses from existing contracts, negotiation issues unique to public employers, step-by-step instructions preparing for bargaining, and the scope of duty to bargain, plus much more. With this book, there is no need to reinvent the wheel when it comes to public negotiations, because the attorney’s at Clark Baird Smith LLP did the work for you in this modern contract language book for today’s Public Negotiator. Use the coupon code below and save $200!

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*Coupon only valid for IPMA Members
This offer expires 6/30/2018
IPMA-HR releases its 2017 Benchmarking Report with a focus on Innovation. The benchmarking survey focused on organizational culture, structure, innovative projects, and HR’s role in fostering a culture of innovation in the organization. The survey was completed by 311 of 5,275 IPMA-HR members.

The study defines organizational culture as the value, beliefs, and attitudes which affects how people behave in their organization. The survey asked participants about their perceptions on communication and collaboration between staff, with managers, and with other departments. It also focused on their perceptions of the organizations support for change, autonomy and leadership’s commitment to innovation. According to experts, cultural factors have been shown to be key determinants of building a culture of innovation.

The structure of the organization was also assessed, particularly regarding its support for innovation. IPMA-HR members were asked if their organization included innovation in their mission statement, designated a Chief Innovation Officer, and developed a workforce and succession plan. Procedures that may support staff to be innovative, like time allocation for new projects and periodic implementation of employee engagement surveys were also considered.

The results of the survey show that organizational culture is related to the structure of the organization. Members from organizations that include innovation in their mission, vision, or value statement rated their organizations higher on communication, collaboration, and support for change. Organizations with higher levels of senior leadership commitment to innovation scored higher on communication between staff and managers, and staff autonomy.

Support from leadership for innovation seems to influence organizational culture and norms. This is reinforced even further when support from leadership was chosen as the top factor to enable HR to play a role in organization wide innovation.

Some differences in structure and culture were found by organization size. Medium-sized and large organizations were more like to include innovation in their mission, vision, or value statement and more likely to have a Chief Innovation Officer or an innovation workgroup. However, in general, members from smaller organizations rated communications between staff, managers and staff, and departments higher than their counterparts at larger organizations.

Although organization size had no effect on the top factor to enable innovation, primary challenge to innovation vary for organizations by size. Small organizations identified budget constraints as the greatest challenge, while medium-sized and large organizations identified outdated HR systems as the greatest challenge to innovation.

Lastly, participants were asked to briefly describe recent innovative projects, with the comments showing that the most common type of innovation is incremental service innovation. That is, organizations are most frequently adopting upgrades or employing new methods and technologies to improve the delivery of existing services. Across all areas of recruitment, hiring, compensations, performance management, and learning and development implementing digital updates as the way they deliver services was a main theme of innovative projects.


Maria Villarreal is IPMA-HR’s research associate and can be reached with more details about the report at mvillarreal@ipma-hr.org.
International Conference Sponsored by Thailand Civil Service Commission

The Thailand Office of the Civil Service Commission sponsored an international conference that was held in August and had about 1,400 participants. The conference was opened with welcoming remarks from Methini Thepmani, Secretary-general of the Office of the Civil Service Commission and featured sessions on:

- Thailand 4.0: An Integrated Mechanism in the Thailand Civil Service presented by Wissanu Krea-ngam, Deputy Prime Minister
- Showcase of Innovations in the Thailand Civil Service presented by delegates from the National Reform Strategy and Reconciliation Committee and the High Performance Potential System
- Keynote Session on Collaboration in the Speed of Trust, presented by Stephen M.R. Covey
- Panel discussion on Public Service Mindset and Leadership featuring Piyawat Sivaraks, Deputy Secretary General, Office of the Civil Service Commission, Evan Berman, Professor of Public Management, School of Government, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, and Neil Reichenberg, IPMA-HR Executive Director.

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For more information, please go to our website at ipma-hr.org/certification/recertification.

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CALENDAR 2018

| April 25-27 | 2018 Western Region Conference
Sacramento, California
For more information, TBA |
| May 20-23 | 2018 Southern Region Conference
North Birmingham, Alabama
For more information, TBA |
| June 17-19 | 2018 Eastern Region Conference
Baltimore, Maryland
For more information, TBA |
| June 24-June 27 | 2018 Central Region Conference
Madison, Wisconsin
For more information, TBA |
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— Charles Barga, City Manager, Nelsonville, Ohio
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