

CALL FOR PAPERS

People + Strategy Journal 41.3 (Summer 2018)

Start-ups and the Role of HR

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Theme of the Upcoming Issue

In times of uncertainty, we often hear companies advocate going “back to the garage,” hoping to reclaim their start-up spirit. Is that even possible? Is it desirable? Is it the recognition of something missing, or simply a fantasy about what might be?

Every business was once in start-up mode. As the dream of every entrepreneur, a start-up can offer the promise of fulfilling a vision or bringing independence, wealth, or to change the world. The reality of integrating people and strategy within a start-up, however, may be far different from the world of large companies. Attending to these dynamics can help us examine our fundamental assumptions about how we work, in new companies and established ones.

Topics to Consider

At the early stages of a new organization, the founder and leadership team jointly own people and strategy as an integrated reality of daily life. People in young organizations are engaged in intense learning, taking enormous risks, being hyper-productive, and working long hours. Most leaders focus on product and financing as the keys to success, with few think of themselves in the business of leading people. This issue of *People + Strategy* focuses on organizational life within start-ups, how they evolve, and the lessons that can be applied. Topics may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- How are the dynamics of start-up life a potent metaphor for other organizations?
- How do boards and investors shape the life of start-ups, and what lessons do they offer for the boards of larger firms?
- Start-ups and nonprofit companies are each highly mission driven. How can the two learn from each other to foster productive workplace cultures?
- Most start-ups go through cycles of restructuring. What are the lessons and practices that best permit agile evolution of a young firm?
- What can seasoned HR professionals bring to start-ups, and where does the expertise from larger firms fail to support HR people as they move into start-ups?
- How are traditional HR functions—recruiting, selection, and leadership development—radically different within start-ups?
- How do start-ups hire for expertise, yet ensure specialists can adapt to the evolving needs of the business?
- How are attraction and retention strategies different for start-ups? What strategies might help start-ups compete with larger, better funded companies to get the talent they need?
- Are there substantive differences in the role of HR professionals at start-ups compared to HR’s role in

larger firms? What HR skills are most transferable between start-ups and larger firms?

- What personality dynamics among founders and leadership teams foster healthy, engaged growth and which tear at the fabric of the business?

We are looking for articles that have the following attributes:

Strategic importance: Have a link to business decisions and do not rehash well-known information; should be the type of article an HR partner might pass on to business leaders to educate them about a concept, provide the basis for a decision or influence their thinking.

Impact: Have a “so what” for the HR executive as well as a business leader, for example, does not just present research findings but also discusses applications and impact.

Actionable: Focus on solutions, not just descriptions of issues.

Grounded: Based on research, theory (with examples), or proven practice to provide a “proof of concept;” provides frameworks that can be applied in a variety of situations.

Point of view: Make a case for thinking about a topic differently.

Readable: Non-academic prose; uses active verbs and minimal jargon.

Our Audience

The typical reader of *People + Strategy* is an internal human resource executive or consultant seeking actionable and practical advice based in sound evidence. Our reader wants to be challenged by new practices, approaches, and models. Our readers are experienced, knowledgeable and work in and for a variety of organizations across the globe. They turn to *People + Strategy* for clear, actionable, and thought-provoking articles on current topics.

Types of Submissions

Articles can take a number of forms, including frameworks for understanding and taking action on a topic, presentation of research findings with interpretation, case studies illustrating best practices, or essays advocating new ways of thinking about an issue.

Submission Process

We encourage submissions of one-page proposals and article ideas first to the editors prior to submitting the completed article. All proposals will be reviewed by the editors and returned to the authors with comments and recommendations. If accepted, we will then guide you on the development of your

article. Final submissions will be reviewed by members of the journal’s editorial review board. Criteria for evaluation include significance of contribution to the field of human resource management; usefulness of knowledge; timeliness of content; originality; provocative nature of content; quality of the data supporting the points; logical; and well-written. The reviewers’ comments will be sent to authors.

Writing Style and Guidelines

Articles should range from 2,500 to 3,500 words. Perspectives articles range from 500 to 700 words. When applicable or available, include high resolution graphics or charts with submissions to help present any complex information in a visual format. Please limit these to one per every 700 words in an article. See examples of articles published in the journal under “Quick Links” at <http://www.hrps.org/PSJ>.

Time Table and Submission Information

All proposals should be sent to editor@hrps.org. Please designate in your subject line that the submission is for the Summer 2018 issue: Start-ups and the Role of HR. Please indicate if your article is based on any prior publication or is also currently submitted to another publication for consideration.

Feb. 9, 2018: Proposals due. Submit a one-page overview of the article concept with an author’s bio.

Feb. 16, 2018: Feedback provided. We will provide feedback and direction on your concept.

Mar. 2, 2018: Articles due. Submit a well-written draft ready to be edited.

Mar. 9, 2018: Feedback provided. We will indicate if the article is accepted, and, if so, what revisions are needed. We will work closely with you to shape and revise your article to meet the final deadline.

Apr. 10, 2018: Final articles due. All articles are due in final edited form.

Review Process

Contributions will be reviewed by a committee, and each paper will get at least two independent reviews, based on criteria including relevance, clarity, soundness and power of the arguments, generality of results/claims, and novelty. Papers will be accepted based on this criteria and space availability. Accepted papers will be published in the Summer 2018 issue of *People + Strategy*.

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