The Top Best Practices for the High-Impact HR Organization

Executive Summary

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The Bersin & Associates Membership Program

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Introduction

In 2005, Keith Hammond of the magazine, *Fast Company*, wrote an article notoriously titled, “Why We Hate HR.” Hammond aimed to explain why so few HR leaders had found a place at the table with their companies’ top strategists and decision-makers. The article lambasted those who focused on administrative efforts, who had not claimed their roles as business leaders and who failed to recognize their value as the owners of any modern company’s greatest resource – its talent.

Though controversial and full of assertions that were hard to face, the article summed up important frustrations that were common among HR professionals at the time. Many were forced to acknowledge its validity, to pause and to wonder, “Okay. But where does HR go from here?”

In the years since, HR leaders have fought an uphill battle to change the profession. Today, smart companies do have a place at the table for HR. The challenge for HR now is in living up to the high expectations that come with the seat – expectations of high impact. It is not easy.

As HR leaders seek to identify and advocate for the best possible people-related business decisions, they often lack the kind of data, process support and industry-level standards that leaders of other functions rely on for guidance. In crafting the internal transformation that new expectations require (reevaluating the HR function’s purpose, structure, services and delivery models, as well as capabilities of the staff), too many HR leaders essentially must cobble together a new vision for their HR functions with few examples of excellence for guidance. The result can be well-intentioned but poorly executed transformational change. At best, that sort of change can achieve excellence through the superhuman efforts of an HR function’s internal staff and supporting third parties. At worst, it hurts the function more than it helps, especially in the eyes of the business partners who often feel that the HR function is focused more on internal HR needs than on business outcomes.

Of course, change in the function is not all with which HR leaders deal. Growth in global markets, rapid proliferation of new technologies and increasing productivity demands are transforming the overall business environment. HR must hustle to keep up with that transformation.

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1 Source: [http://www.fastcompany.com/magazine/97/open_hr.html](http://www.fastcompany.com/magazine/97/open_hr.html).
or better, to stay one step ahead of it, to ensure alignment with business needs.

At the same time, the workforce (both inside individual companies and in the talent pool at large) has grown more diverse in terms of age, cultural background, geographic base, skills sets, life experience and business-culture preferences. These shifts have altered the battlefield in the war for talent, making it necessary for HR to adapt approaches to recruitment, retention and engagement. Many business and HR leaders understand the value of high-performing talent, but few understand HR’s role in creating an environment in which that talent can thrive.

Again, it is not easy. But Bersin & Associates is here to help.

In the same year that Hammond’s provocative article appeared, Bersin & Associates released one of its first groundbreaking reports on *High-Impact Learning Organizations*. We realized then that the market was hungry for practical, research-driven insights on how to meet talent and learning needs. Today, we recognize the same hunger among HR organizations that are striving to heighten their impact. To address this need, we are launching a new area of focus for our research and advisory services – *Strategic HR*.

The Bersin & Associates Strategic HR Practice offers an integrated view of the entire HR function that is built from a research-driven understanding of business outcomes. With this new report, we tie together past research in the areas of talent and learning, and brand new research on the strategic elements of HR we have found that hold the greatest challenges for the function today. As Figure 1 shows, efforts such as HR measurement and workforce analytics can provide real business benefits or become major stumbling blocks.

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2 A “high performer” is an employee who is a key contributor, demonstrates high performance, is capable of a lateral move, may be qualified for a broader role within the same profession; and, has reached the potential to move “upward” in a management capacity.


In developing this focus area, we have taken a long, close, careful look at what high-impact HR functions do that others do not – how they operate, how they are structured, how they pursue improvements and evolve, and how they meet business needs and work with business partners. Our research included an initial survey of more than 720 companies representing a broad spectrum of global interests and industry types. In addition, we conducted more than 80 in-depth interviews with HR leaders and practitioners, as well as with business leaders. This report shares the findings of that research that are most relevant to all HR audiences. Inside this report, you will find:

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5 For an overview of the methodology and scope of this research, see section, “About Our Methodology.”
• Three key truths about the path to HR excellence, as well as
• The top 10 best practices that can help an HR function to not just meet modern challenges, but to excel.

Our report, *The High-Impact HR Organization*[^6], is just the beginning. We look forward to working with you as we continue to research strategic HR.

Stacey Harris

Principal Analyst

Executive Summary, Key Findings and Top 10 Best Practices

Our research found that most HR professionals have a general idea of how their functions need to improve. They are intelligent, hard-working, business-minded people who have been in the field for some time. The difficulty lies in organizing and prioritizing the efforts to achieve those improvements. **How do you allocate HR resources, time and energy? Which HR programs and strategies are the most important today? What factors in the work environment, business and level of organizational maturity⁷ should you consider in charting the course ahead?**

This report aims to help HR functions find the focus needed to answer such questions. This summary highlights three key truths about the path to excellence – findings to which organizations can turn to as stable elements to consider in decision-making. We also briefly describe 10 outstanding best practices that we have observed in organizations that either have achieved excellence or are well on their way.

Three Key Truths about the Path to Excellence

Our research for this report enabled us to look across multiple HR organizations, as well as deep within those functions. We looked for trends, best practices and insights that could be shared to inform critical HR decision-making. In this section, we spotlight three key truths that hold true across all of the high-impact HR organizations⁸ we studied. The following key truths underpin the top 10 best practices discussed later in this report, and give insights to the importance of both an HR function’s current starting point, as well as the external factors.

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⁷ This information is based on our current research, the report for which is due to be published in 1H’2011.
1. Workforce Size Matters in Charting the Course to High-Impact HR

Our research found that the size of a company’s workforce makes a big difference when it comes to how HR should structure itself and what its priorities should be. When we compared the data from high-impact HR functions in companies of various sizes, we found that, as organizations increased in size, the number of shared HR characteristics (such as HR roles, systems and structures) also increased.

Specifically, the number of shared characteristics jumps dramatically at two points along the employee growth chart, as seen in Figure 2.

For this research, Bersin & Associates identified effectiveness, efficiency and business-alignment measures by which to evaluate HR organizations. Our analysis also took carefully into account business performance data and interview findings. We then used a ranking process to identify the top 100 HR organizations from the original sample of 720 companies. Those 100 are what we consider to be high-impact HR organizations. For more information, see section, “Appendix II: High-Impact Research Methodology.”
High-impact HR organizations in companies with fewer than 5,000 employees are more individual in their approaches to HR. They tend to focus heavily on individual HR programs for each segment of the workforce (e.g., business unit, function, geography), leveraging various HR delivery models to support those HR programs, and functioning with unique HR roles and levels of responsibility. As seen in Figure 2, these high-impact HR organizations on average share less than 30 HR characteristics among the various organizations, or less than 21 percent of the 140 HR characteristics which we assessed. Yet, they are still high-impact.

Once high-impact HR organizations reach 5,000 employees, then the number of shared HR characteristics among these HR organizations increases to an average of 56 characteristics or 40 percent – as the companies they support grow in complexity and breadth of HR services required. Additionally, HR organizations begin to see benefits in terms of economies of scale, and an increased need to implement technologies and standard processes as their employee base grows to this level.

High-impact HR organizations in companies with more than 15,000 employees show as many as 117 (84 percent) shared HR characteristics, demonstrating the fact that these bigger companies make a major shift in the need to build enterprise-level frameworks and models for success. These high-impact HR organizations tend to be more alike than different in their HR support roles, people systems and HR processes.

The high-impact HR organizations in large companies (defined as those companies with more than 15,000 employees) tend to focus heavily on HR shared services\(^\text{10}\), common people systems and HR programs that drive the greatest possible impact on their businesses. They must establish both enterprise standards and models for practices, like sourcing, recruiting, onboarding, development, performance management, leadership assessment and executive development. These

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\(^{10}\) “HR shared-services organization” is an organizational model in which the consolidation and sharing of administrative HR services across various business units and functions are combined within a single HR unit. Services are then delivered from this single unit through call centers or technology. This model is driven by the desire to achieve economies of scale, enhance consistency or standardization across the organization, improve quality, leverage technology investments, and manage labor costs.
high-impact HR organizations must also create flexible organizational structures that include highly skilled HR practitioners and agile delivery models.

In many ways, this research shows that high-impact organizations understand the power of flexibility within a framework. These organizations leverage their size to drive greater effectiveness, efficiency and business alignment through common philosophies and common practices to further drive a flywheel of success. A great example of this finding is the history of GE and CEO Jack Welch’s focus in the 1970s on the “GE Way.” This standard approach to developing talent and leadership eventually paid off – and helped turn GE into a talent powerhouse.¹¹

For HR leaders or practitioners in larger organizations, this means that it is important to look at best practices, as well as those items that need to be unique when developing the programs, strategy and structure required to drive success.

On the other hand, well-run, smaller companies tend to structure and run HR in more varied ways. HR functions in these organizations generally face fewer hurdles in obtaining buy-in for initiatives which they want to implement – but they also have fewer resources to help them craft those initiatives and measure success. They often find unusual ways to meet the needs of their business leaders – and this level of autonomy pays off because it lets the company create the most efficient solution for each problem at a local level.

In both large and small companies, HR functions require a balanced approach to benchmarking industry standards and developing creative ways to align with business needs.

2. HR Organizations Must Get the Basics Right before Pursuing a Strategic HR Agenda

Solid execution of fundamental HR services is essential to demonstrating competence and building credibility with leaders outside the function. Make sure that your handling of payroll, benefits, compensation, employee relations and onboarding is airtight – and the rest of the company knows it. Organizations that rated themselves as “below average” at core services, such as recruiting, onboarding and basic skills

development, were three times more likely to complain of a lack of respect from business leaders. Simply put, HR’s number one goal is to do the basics flawlessly – and this alone takes focus and energy. Once core processes are well in place, then you can focus on business partnerships and a strategic HR agenda.

3. High-Impact HR Organizations Focus on Continuous Improvement, Not Radical HR Transformations

High-impact HR organizations never stop improving; in a sense, they are in a constant state of transformation – incremental transformation or continuous improvement. But the phrase, “HR transformation” has become associated with more sweeping, whirlwind approaches to change. These are dramatic efforts to restructure, redesign and repair an HR organization’s ability to work strategically and deliver better results for the business. It has become common for these organizations to attempt to bring about all of the necessary changes at once. Many companies that embark on full-throttle, one-shot HR transformations quickly come to regret it.

As our interviews pointed out, the problem is that running HR is difficult. Day-to-day efforts need to be highly attuned to the current needs of the business. So, rather than try to make a drastic change, leaders of high-impact HR organizations create a function that can continuously adapt as the workforce, workplace and business itself change. When HR leaders sell radical transformation to business executives, it usually results in disappointment – because changing HR tends to require a substantial amount of effort and time. When change is undertaken all at once, the result is HR professionals being consumed with system upgrades, new roles, new reporting structures and process reform. Although these are often foundational to long-term business alignment and better business support, they can negatively impact the business when they become an HR function’s primary focus.

Instead, companies that take a continuous-improvement approach by integrating transformation efforts into daily work tend to suffer less short-term discomfort and realize greater long-term benefits. Ultimately, the problem is not one of transformation but one of continuous adaptation – ensuring that the HR structure, team, programs and systems
are modernized, as well as being aligned with and relevant to the needs of the business.

Consider, for example, what is going on today. Recovering from the latest recession, organizations are dramatically shifting their workforces and attention toward business needs in emerging economies. Rather than “transform” HR to deal with this change, organizations must design a 2011 to 2012 plan to enable company growth, efficiency, and hiring and leadership transitions, as well as productivity in emerging economies. Two years from now, organizations are likely to be in a new period of economic growth – and HR will need to be ready to adapt again.

**Top 10 Best Practices for High-Impact HR**

In this research on high-impact HR organizations, we identified numerous best practices – how these functions are organized, how they offer better services and how they measure impact more effectively. Some of these best practices were dependent on an organization’s size, culture, history or even leadership style. But we also found several HR practices that were relevant for high-impact HR organizations of every sort and provided high levels of overall impact – these are considered our top 10 best practices (see Figure 3). In this section, we provide a summary of each of these 10 best practices, which will be discussed in detail with examples and further support for the research findings in our full report, *The High-Impact HR Organization*.12

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1. A Formal Governance Model\(^\text{13}\) and Business-Case Development Process Can Greatly Improve an HR Organization’s Effectiveness, Especially If Business Leaders Are Included in Both.

High-performing HR teams have the necessary business relationships and processes in place to build a business case for every major initiative. They focus on the process for making decisions, not only the decisions themselves.

Building a business case requires a clear understanding of the business or businesses that HR serves, as well as working relationships with all business leaders. HR can achieve both by involving business leaders in

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\(^{13}\) “HR governance models” define how business priorities are set, how decisions are made and how communications flow throughout an HR organization.
the planning processes and governance. This involvement also helps to ensure business alignment and, as a result of that alignment, business buy-in and support.

In the full report, we provide further data supporting this finding, sample HR governance models and best practices in building effective business cases.


High-impact HR organizations incorporate sophisticated forecasting and workforce analytics into their processes. This enables them to translate companywide talent, business data and external workforce segment data into workable insights that they can use and share with business leaders. Such insights inform short- and long-term decisions about the talent a company has and how to develop it, as well as the talent it needs and how to attract it.

Developing the skills, capabilities and processes to effectively implement workforce planning takes time – and this evolution in itself creates a set of powerful goals for the HR function. In the full report, we outline the elements included in a workforce planning process, the various maturity levels and how organizations are currently overcoming the many challenges faced in implementing workforce planning for today’s HR function.

\(^{14}\) “Workforce planning” is a systematic process that looks at what an organization needs to accomplish in a given period of time due to business goals and strategies; what knowledge, skills and experience are required to get the job done; and, what size and type of workforce is required to provide that mix of skills, knowledge and experience. The workforce planning process then compares current workforce data on employees, as well as external data on workforce segments, and creates a gap analysis that highlights general workforce needs, critical talent segments and their needs, and required workforce reductions to meet business needs.
3. High-Impact HR Organizations Develop an Enduring and Relevant HR Philosophy and Mission.

The high-performing companies that participated in this research have a real mission and philosophy for their people. They select words that both guide and inspire.

High-impact HR organizations tend to commit themselves to creating work environments that enable employees to thrive both as individuals and as contributors to business success. They strive to create positive employee environments, and clearly communicate these expectations in the HR philosophy and mission. The most effective philosophies focus on fostering innovation and collaboration, or creating the best place to work, while the least effective philosophies focus narrowly on efficiency or cost-cutting efforts.

These philosophies provide an HR community with the guidance by which they make decisions and interact with their audiences. In the full report, we include further evidence of this finding, as well as detailed examples of the impact of HR philosophies and best-practice guidelines for communicating an HR philosophy.

4. Implement HR Business-Partner Roles Correctly – or Do Not Bother. An HR Business Partner Is Not an HR Administrator.

Many HR functions have a role that is a liaison between the HR function and business leaders. The specifics of this role vary widely. High-impact HR organizations use it to advise senior business leaders, focusing on decision support, workforce planning, leadership development and executive coaching. By enlisting the right person, HR can improve its credibility across the enterprise, improve working relationships with business leaders, cultivate mutual understanding and gain influence.

When this role is implemented poorly, with more focus on administrative duties and taking orders, our research found that it can actually reduce an HR function’s ability to work effectively and efficiently.
5. Flexible HR Structures Allow High-Impact HR Functions to Align Organizational Models and Roles to Meet Changing Business Needs.

High-impact HR organizations are flexible and agile. Like earthquake-proof buildings, they are structured to allow adaptive movement if the ground shifts. No overall HR structural model (centralized, decentralized or a combination of the two) in itself emerged as a predictor of HR success. But certain structural features do lend themselves to areas of excellence. One feature that we found to be universally valuable was flexibility. Fancy organization charts and designs are fine – provided that you also have a culture which recognizes the need to adapt structurally when business needs and challenges change, as well as an HR staff that is capable of making those changes.

For example, Booz Allen Hamilton, a leading provider of consulting services to the U.S. Government in defense and civil markets, created a “flexible HR organization structure” to get ahead of upcoming changes in its business needs, which are driven by expected company growth within specialized areas of its U.S. Government consulting, such as “cyber-security” or “civil engineering,” and an increase in U.S. infrastructure work. In the full report, we outline the details behind this finding, as well as the best practices in creating a flexible HR organization.

6. High-Impact HR Organizations Implement HR Systems That Enable Stakeholders and Clients to Help Themselves and Connect as Part of a Community.

We researched a variety of systems strategies. The most significant contributions to the overall effectiveness of an HR function come from community-building and self-service elements. Knowledge-sharing portals, web-based recruitment tools and management dashboards let various HR stakeholders and clients find what they need when they need it. HR functions with user-friendly client systems are regarded as twice as effective and efficient as functions that do not invest in this advantage.

In the full report, we discuss in more detail the value of HR taking ownership of enterprisewide knowledge-sharing tools and social networking environments.
7. An Effective HR Measurement Strategy for High-Impact HR Functions Includes Both Operational HR Measures and Advanced HR Analytics Strategic People Measures.

Measurement strategies in high-impact HR organizations have evolved to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and business alignment. Such strategies incorporate both operational measures by which to manage the HR function and strategic people measures to support crucial business decisions. New HR technologies and skills in HR data analysis have provided an opportunity for HR organizations to become more data-driven. HR data is now systematically gathered and analyzed, so that it can be translated into actionable insights and measures of impact. These measurement approaches provide clear connections between the efforts of both the HR function and individual people in the performance of a company.

In the full report, we outline the evolution of HR measurement efforts, as well as the elements of an HR measurement strategy and examples of best-practice HR measurement practices.

8. Development of Internal HR Team Members Is a Priority for High-Impact HR Teams.

As they focus on programs to develop employees companywide, HR organizations often neglect the development of their own team members. This is a mistake. The world of HR solutions is constantly changing. High-impact HR organizations must invest the time and money needed to ensure team members’ competence grows in such disciplines as change management and relationship management. Efforts must also focus on developing team members’ business acumen, industry knowledge and command of current best practices in all areas of talent management, as well as the use of social networking tools and other HR technology.

The value of internal HR development is outlined in the full report in which we discuss the value of various development approaches and topic areas.
9. High-Impact HR Organizations Outsource with Strategic Goals in Mind, Focusing on Reducing Costs and Optimizing Services, as well as Leveraging External HR Expertise.

High-impact HR organizations use outsourcing to enable their internal teams to focus on things that cannot be outsourced, such as building business relationships and developing custom solutions for business managers. These organizations outsource areas that can be improved through economies of scale, or which require global coordination and expertise. What an organization outsources often depends on its level of maturity.

Mature businesses are more likely to outsource core HR services, such as payroll and benefits. Businesses in a rapid-growth or rebirth stage are more likely to outsource strategic services, such as learning and development (L&D), or strategic recruiting. In the full report, we discuss these different approaches to HR outsourcing and how these decisions are made in a strategic manner.


HR must address the needs of all of its stakeholders (e.g., candidates, employees, alumni and contingent workers); but placing particular focus on its line-management support provides numerous benefits – which range from improved business performance to reduced requirements for HR staff and more engaged employees.

A common pitfall for many HR functions is the attempt to meet the needs of every stakeholder directly, thereby spreading limited HR resources very thinly. High-impact HR functions have prioritized the focus of their HR resources on building the capabilities of their line

15 “Organizational maturity” is the level of organization’s readiness and experience in relation to people, processes, technologies and consistent measurement practices.
managers. This decision allows them to work in partnership with their line managers, versus trying to work around line managers who may be incompetent or ill-prepared.

In the full report, our research shows how high-impact HR organizations concentrate their resources on the development, assessment and selection of line managers and leaders – and this investment pays off. As the overall effectiveness of line managers improves, so does the effectiveness of the HR organization. In fact, one of the best ways to gauge the overall effectiveness of HR is by examining the effectiveness of line managers.

This research illustrates the enduring quality of many of these best practices, while highlighting the growing relevance of new ones. It is built upon more than two years of study with almost 1,000 HR organizations and highlights the importance of prioritizing efforts for every HR function. Throughout this new report, we examine these areas in detail and help you to take action to implement these findings in your own organization when appropriate.

A Final Thought about These Top Best Practices

Some of these points are ones that we, and perhaps you, have heard before – but the context surrounding them (as noted in the introduction) is different, making them ripe for fresh attention. Others are altogether new insights, drawn from the experiences of organizations dealing with an unprecedented combination of market forces and environmental change.

Conclusion

Over the last several years, we have heard a lot of analogies about HR being the same as supply chain and IT markets in their transformation phases of several years ago. In some sense, this is true. Our industry is developing tools, processes and consistent language that are beginning to standardize our work and enable a more data-driven approach.

In another sense, that concept can be very misleading. People are not boxes or IT programs – they are living, thinking, feeling and ever-changing entities who have been shaped by multiple sets of backgrounds, cultures and experiences. Today, we have the tools and capabilities to begin to understand the importance of not only the things that are the same about our workforces but, more importantly, the value in their differences.

High-impact HR functions that have mastered core HR service areas, as well as spending several years honing their approaches to managing talent, are now investing resources in creating the capabilities to strategically look at their workforces. In looking at their workforces, they are assessing company risks, analyzing opportunities and forecasting expected outcomes. In today’s working environment, organizations’ greatest assets are their internal knowledge bases and skilled employees. HR functions that develop the ability to provide leaders with data-driven insights on the people component of business decisions are invaluable.
About Our Methodology

This study was conducted from December 2009 through May 2010, during which time contacts from the HR Executive magazine, select solution providers and Bersin & Associates databases were emailed invitations to participate in our online survey. The final analysis included organizations with 100 or more employees. The final count of qualified respondents was 720.

The survey yielded a large cross-section of company sizes, which we classified as detailed in Figure 4.

### Figure 4: Respondent Count by Organization Size – 2010

<table>
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<th>Size Description</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small (100 to 2,499 employees)</td>
<td>353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midsize (2,500 to 14,999 employees)</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (15,000 or more employees)</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>721</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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In addition, in-depth interviews were conducted with 50 companies representing a range of industries and company sizes. In total, we conducted 80 interviews for this research, speaking with chief HR officers (CHROs) and HR senior vice presidents, as well as directors, business leaders, chief operating officers and chief executive officers. These interviews were designed to gather qualitative information on HR practices and validate particular high-impact HR activities in order to provide a keener understanding of trends and best practices.

The study also yielded a large cross-section of industries. The percentage of organizations in each industry is shown in Figure 5.
High-Impact Research Methodology

In the course of this research, we came up with the criteria that ultimately defined a “high-impact HR organization.” To place a value on the “high-impact” rating, we had to identify measures by which we could evaluate an HR function and its practices. Our research found that there were four significant measurement areas that had a direct bearing on an HR organization’s perceived value to its company.
• **HR Effectiveness** – This is a measurement of an HR organization's business impact and competence in critical domains and practice areas.

• **HR Efficiency** – This is a measurement of how well an HR organization uses its resources to accomplish required tasks and achieve business goals.

• **Business Alignment** – This is a measurement of how clearly an HR organization connects its activities with the company's business needs and goals.

• **Manager Effectiveness** – This is a measurement of how capably leaders and line managers select, assess and develop employees, as well as manage employees’ pursuit of goals.

The aim of the Bersin & Associates WhatWorks® research methodology is not to create a list of top companies but, rather, to provide you with clear, specific, actionable recommendations for improvement.

To accomplish this, we examined several organizational characteristics or dimensions, and how they did or did not tend to move the needle on key performance measures. A “measure” quantifies some aspect of how well an organization performs. For example, a measure might gauge the ability to attract, source and select the best talent. A “dimension” (or organizational characteristic) may or may not have an impact on different aspects of performance. For example, one dimension might be an HR organization’s degree of centralization. We analyzed numerous dimensions in terms of whether they helped or hindered the achievement of desired outcomes, and whether they did or did not move the needle on various performance measures.

In this research, we studied the four measurement areas listed above, with 10 critical questions and more than 68 different measurement elements, to identify our high-impact HR practices.

**Multidimensional Analysis**

We sent our survey to approximately 300,000 HR practitioners and leaders. We then carefully cleaned the data, eliminating answers from vendors or other individuals who were not representative of their enterprise organizations.
After collecting this information, along with comparing the effectiveness, efficiency and business alignment measures across more than 30 dimensions, we used a variety of statistical tools to understand which factors correlate to various desired outcomes. We also conducted more than 80 interviews with HR and business leaders to validate our measurement findings and gain a real understanding of the nuances of what the data indicated. We supplemented these interviews and surveys with a variety of discussions and interviews with HR solution providers and industry experts.

No two HR functions are exactly alike. High-impact HR functions understand the market, industry and business in which they operate – and have tailored their HR functions to match those needs. Our research found that certain dimensions, practices and approaches created environments that facilitated the ability to meet the business needs and add value as an HR function.
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About Us

Bersin & Associates is the only research and advisory consulting firm focused solely on WhatWorks® research in enterprise learning and talent management. With more than 25 years of experience in enterprise learning, technology and HR business processes, Bersin & Associates provides actionable, research-based services to help learning and HR managers and executives improve operational effectiveness and business impact.

Bersin & Associates research members gain access to a comprehensive library of best practices, case studies, benchmarks and in-depth market analyses designed to help executives and practitioners make fast, effective decisions. Member benefits include: in-depth advisory services, access to proprietary webcasts and industry user groups, strategic workshops, and strategic consulting to improve operational effectiveness and business alignment. More than 3,500 organizations in a wide range of industries benefit from Bersin & Associates research and services.

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About This Research

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