

amongst other things, people analytics demonstrates HR's value for top management!

HR and its' leaders are very aware of the importance of being *'strategic'* and getting an opportunity to influence and truly enable top management to *'buy in'* to the crucial people issues that are becoming increasingly important in the digital world in which we now find ourselves.

Having provided support to a wide number of HR functions over many years when implementing process and structural changes across an organisation, a key observation that is commonly shared is that few of the highly professional HR practitioners I have partnered with seem to demonstrate the full impact of what they are proposing. Common sense is thankfully at the heart of a lot of what HR do but just working harder, agreeing to unreasonable requests and focusing on delivering operational changes, isn't good enough anymore and irrespective of the size of your organisation or your HR function, what is needed is the demonstration of key business outcomes that will get the attention of the CEO and their top management team. That means that HR practitioners will need to be able to provide clear business and functional leadership and amongst many qualities can:

- **Credibly talk about and influence** others about people issues with a commercial and business mindset not just an HR or people perspective; that means aligning HR practices with commercial outcomes.
- **Think about issues from a wider business perspective;** that means aligning HR actions with the business

outcomes that are key priorities for an organisation.

- **Work collaboratively and effectively** with different teams and work groups to make changes happen.
- **Bring a focused business insight into people-based issues;** that again means having a clear commercial focus on what HR is delivering.
- **Deliver what they say they will deliver** and on time with a tangible business related outcome that is measurable in 'commercial business terms' not HR speak.
- **Proactively provide business leadership** and new insights on organisational and people-based issues at both an operational and at a broader or strategic level.

That all sounds easy when you put them down in a list but the underlying theme behind these points are that the HR function must be able to converse in a more commercial way and that is the reason that people, workforce or HR analytics has been the hot topic for the past few years. When HR says that they want to be strategic this means that they will be impacting upon what the CEO is measured on and what they care about the



most – their hot buttons! Impressing the CEO is crucial because almost by definition, nearly everything they and their top teams do are strategically driven and focused by a numerical outcome.

The key for me, therefore, is numbers and there is only one place to start and that is business performance because that is inevitably the key area that the top team will be remunerated on!

CEO's and their top team are always impressed by people that understand what is important to them and to be brutally honest, what is important to them in business is ultimately reflected in their bonus criteria. Everyone in some shape or form is influenced by what they are measured and rewarded against but the additional factor with CEO's and their top team is that they can significantly influence that criteria; that's why being able to sell your ideas to them is so important as they can influence people and groups that go beyond your span of control. The net result is that what they are assessed on tends to be things that they believe in, that they own and truly know the significance of, in relation to the organisation as a whole.

What are some of these hot buttons then? Here are some that are worth considering and they are all numbers driven.

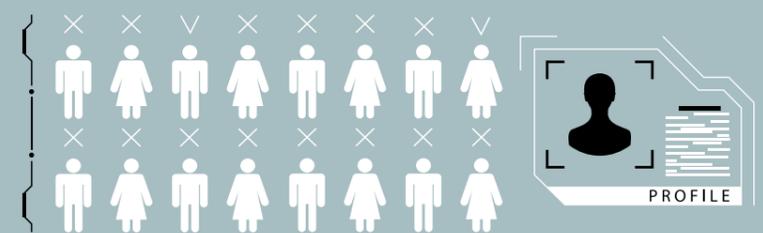
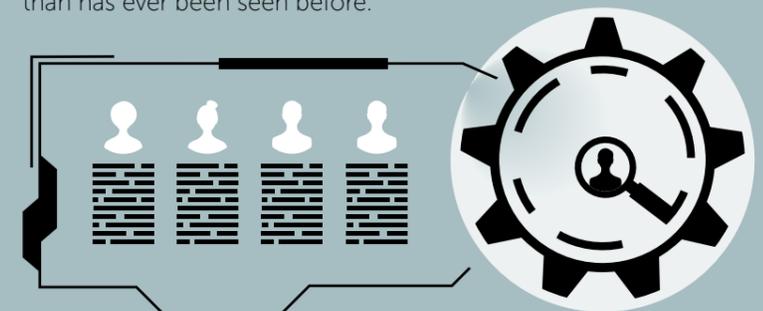
- Share price and shareholder value
- Customer satisfaction and feedback
- Profitability
- Business performance (volume and quality)
- Business and revenue growth
- Customer attraction and retention

- This/next month's results
- Performance forecasts
- Competitive advantage
- Competitor activity

This excludes the major HR card and that is the people! They are likely to be one of the organisations largest fixed costs but are also in a number of instances one of the key differentiators between you and your competitors – everybody says it so it must be true! Turning this into a reality where people are truly engaged and feel valued is a key challenge for all organisations, and the role of people analytics is to support and drive the new agenda for HR which is to become more of a commercial function than has ever been seen before.



Short on time? CRF's *Strategic Workforce Analytics Speed Read* will introduce you to the essentials of HR Analytics. Click [here](#) to download and read.



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