



# TALENT MANAGEMENT:

## CAREERS, DEVELOPMENT AND SUCCESSION IN A CHANGING LANDSCAPE

On 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020, CRF members gathered for '**Talent: Careers Development and Succession in a Changing Landscape**', a Zoom Interactive Event. With a panel of expert speakers, we explored how organisations are rethinking their approaches to talent and career development in the light of changing expectations around careers, the need for fluidity in talent, and the emergence of new technologies in the talent field.



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### KEY TAKEAWAYS

**1** THE PURPOSE OF TALENT AND CAREERS SHOULD BE ABOUT DEVELOPING FUTURE CAPABILITIES TO BE ABLE TO TRANSFORM THE BUSINESS AND EXECUTE NEW STRATEGIES.

*We need to beware of an over reliance on line managers to provide career support. Although they are often a key point of contact they are not always the best people to action this. Explore other ways of delivering support and help employees develop their own skills in managing their own careers.*

**2** The organisational climate needs to support development. We need to be providing the right tools but also attend to the organisational culture and leadership behaviours to support what we are trying to achieve from our career strategies.

**3** There is a wider adoption of flexible ways of working through projects and Agile teams, providing the opportunity for experience-led development. Roche has adopted an Agile methodology which frees up talent to 'swarm' towards internal needs, supported by a talent database that creates a 'shop window' for potential projects and opportunities. The technology makes visible employees' skills, and all available internal postings to best match up development opportunities.

**4** The top priority in improving career development is creating a better connection between strategy, future skills and career development activities. This is according to a poll of our webinar attendees.

**5** Communicating tangible examples of progression are proving to be an evergreen alternative to structured career paths. As part of its careers strategy, Coty developed a number of video resources based on real colleagues and their personal career journeys. These promoted experiences and demoted job titles to push the value of a personal career approach. This was backed up with role snapshots: one-page documents outlining the crucial experiences and expectations of key roles.

**6** There is a need for better joined up thinking between talent management and careers. They should be two sides of the same coin, but the top down talent processes are often not as well connected to bottom up careers processes as they should be.

**7** New technology is transforming the fields of talent and careers. Technology is being deployed to make skills more transparent, provide personalised tools for career planning and connect learning opportunities.

**8** Five tips for improving career development practices:

- 1. Embed a specific role in HR:** Part of the reason why career development strategies aren't sustained is because it is hardly ever someone's job in HR. It needs dedicated resources.
- 2. Provide positive, practical information:** Communicate the support and available careers, as well as the skills needed to achieve them.
- 3. Grant access to conversations beyond line managers:** Line managers often have little knowledge of the opportunities available within the organisation. You need access to people who understand career opportunities in addition to conversations with direct managers.
- 4. Provide access to developmental work tasks:** Replicate how we treat high potential candidates across the workforce. This could include 'gigs', project work and job swaps.
- 5. Develop career management capability:** Train those who support employees and develop the career management skills of employees themselves through interactive tools and workshops

**9** Four themes concerning the connection between careers and succession planning:

- 1. Engaging with employees' preferences and aspirations:** Creating a culture where people can be honest about aspirations and become more disciplined in tracking what people want.
- 2. Getting real about the concept of mobility:** Being diligent in keeping employees' plans and work life preferences up to date in order to make succession planning work in practice.
- 3. Dramatic shift away from thinking about linear careers:** Thinking more creatively about where talent is coming from in the organisation and being cross-functional in the ways we move talent around.
- 4. Getting experiences to develop capabilities:** Encouraging people to develop capabilities, rather than ticking career boxes, with methods such as boomerang talent which encourages people to look externally for experiences before welcoming them back into the fold with new capabilities.



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### **AUDIENCE Q&A**

- Q** How can you implement access to career development conversations beyond the line manager?
- A** One of most cost-effective methods is to have networks of volunteer career coaches. It is not their main job, but they are properly trained. Some organisations allow employees at different levels to volunteer and some frame up people in HR and L&D for this role. It has to be confidential, but it gives people very clear access. Other practices include mentoring, the use of Manager Once Removed frameworks for conversations, and offering career conversation workshops to both staff and line managers.
- Q** Are career paths redundant, or should we be providing structured guidance?
- A** Career pathing has its place and use in the world. There will be organisations that will be served by having that clarity for people, especially where employees are motivated by that level of prescription. However, there is a diminishing need for career paths because of the nature of change in the world. In many cases, we need to adapt and let go of the concept around providing clarity through career paths. There is a tightrope that needs to be walked between giving enough guidelines without making it too heavy in order to enable organisations to evolve.
- Q** How do you motivate employees to keep their skills/progression aspiration information up to date?
- A** It's a big culture shift that takes years and starts with psychological safety and trust. People need to feel comfortable in being vulnerable and sharing their hopes and dreams and there needs to be a culture of self-knowledge and awareness. The organisation needs to encourage and support people to go deep about what will bring value to them. Transparency is key and this is top down: people need to know that the direction from the architects in the organisation marries up to their experiences.

- Q** How do you measure line managers' effectiveness in supporting teams?
- A** Shell uses a range of methodologies. We have our yearly employee survey that has a number of very specific questions in relation to career development. We have technology-enabled processes that capture if conversations have happened and we run qualitative checks on the conversations, and spot activities to make sure the system is working. We encourage spot mentoring to make sure those development conversations are happening.

### **FURTHER READING**

- CRF. 2020. **Talent: Careers, Development and Succession in a Changing Landscape**. Research Report. <https://www.crforum.co.uk/research-and-resources/talent-careers-development-and-succession-in-a-changing-landscape/>
- CRF. 2018. **The Future of Jobs, Work, and Working**. Report. <https://www.crforum.co.uk/research-and-resources/the-future-of-jobs-work-and-working-2>
- Mercer. 2020. **2020 Global Talent Trends Report: The Future of Work**. Report. <https://www.uk.mercer.com/our-thinking/career/global-talent-trends-2020.html>
- SD Worx. 2020. **Towards Fluidity in HR**. White Paper <https://go.sdworx.com/en/towards-fluidity-in-HR>
- RHR International. **Power Your Leadership Succession with Behavioural Science**. Online resource. <https://www.executivebench.com>

### **crf UPCOMING CRF EVENTS**

-  **ONLINE:**  
**HR Agenda in the Organisation of the Future**  
**7<sup>th</sup> December 12.00 GMT**
-  **ONLINE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME:**  
**Creating Business Impact Through People Analytics**  
**8-9<sup>th</sup> December**





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### SPEAKERS



✉ EMAIL

**ANDREW ARMES** has been UK Head of Talent Acquisition at Roche since 2015. A coach and facilitator, he has been voted twice in the top 100 most influential HR professionals by HR Magazine. Armes has fifteen years of large blue-chip HR experience, and co-founded Leadership and Personal Development social enterprise The Spring Project in 2009. He previously designed and delivered bespoke cross industry leadership development programs as a director at the Leadership Development charity Common Purpose.



in LINKEDIN

**SARAH BURNS** is Vice President for Global Talent at Coty. Her work on a three-year strategy and model for careers at the global beauty company was short-listed for an HR Distinction award (Distinction in Organisational Learning) and aspects of the work will be included in a forthcoming NICEC Journal. Burns' twenty-three years of experience as an organisation development and talent practitioner recently includes nine years at L'Oréal holding a number of global talent and learning roles.



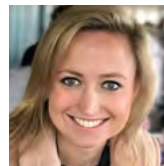
✉ EMAIL

**DR. JESSICA BIGAZZI FOSTER** joined RHR International in 2008. She is a senior partner and serves as the firm's practice leader for Executive Assessment & Development. Her work with clients includes senior-level executive development, talent management, and team effectiveness. She manages large global accounts for RHR, with a particular focus on systemic pipelining of near- and long-term C-suite successors.



✉ EMAIL

**WENDY HIRSH** works as a researcher and consultant, specialising in the future-oriented aspects of people management – workforce planning, sustainable organisational performance, succession, talent and development. She is a Principal Associate of the Institute for Employment Studies and Visiting Professor at both Derby and Kingston Universities. Wendy works across private, public and third sectors and has been researching how workforce planning in companies is responding to the uncertainties of Brexit.



**CELINE LAMMERS** is Vice President Leadership Succession at Shell. She has a broad range of international experiences across several businesses and geographies. Her current work focuses on senior-level executive selection, development and Talent management across Royal Dutch Shell globally. She has a background in HR, primarily in the domain of Business Partnering, Organisational Effectiveness, Change Management and Cultural Change. She holds a Masters in Organisation, Culture and Management.



✉ EMAIL

**GILLIAN PILLANS** has worked as a senior HR practitioner and OD specialist for several organisations including Swiss Re, Vodafone and BAA. Prior to her HR career, she was a management consultant with Deloitte Consulting and is also a qualified solicitor. Gillian has written various CRF reports on subjects including HR strategy, organisation design and development, leadership development, coaching and diversity.