







About your Presenter

- Founder and President of Workforce Learning LLC, a management consulting company in business for more than 20 years.
- Formerly held key senior leadership positions with Freddie Mac, Amtrak and others.
- Mission: I work with business leaders to ensure organizations are healthy from the top down, and ultimately if an organization has happy, energized, engaged employees they find it reflected in the bottom line.

Key Learning Points

- The hallmark of great leadership is the ability to create a compelling vision to inspire and motivate
- Strategic thinking is the gas that fuels the vision engine

Poll

Please share where you are in having an HR vision for your organization:

- A. We have a robust vision that has the review and support of our senior leaders
- B. We have an HR vision that drives our HR function but has not been shared with our senior leaders
- C. We've began to talk about a vision but have not created one yet
- D. We do not have an HR vision for our organization

Vision: What is it?

- Seeing the possible beyond the present
- Describes a future success state
- Is inspirational and aspirational
- Challenges and inspires
- Galvanizes action
- Answers the **why** in every decision

Vision: Why it's Important

- Anticipates disruptors
- Bedrock of strategy
- Provides a description of the end goal
- For HR, demonstrates ability to think beyond today
- Needs to align with organization's mission and vision (if they have them)
- Provides the path, the roadmap to success
- Research shows it is a critical motivator:
 - Dan Pink's **Drive** – purpose
 - Teresa Amabile & Steven Kramer **The Progress Principle**

Reflection: Where is my Focus?

1. Estimate the % of your time spent on this continuum
2. Using your calendar, calculate the reality

→

TACTICAL
Focus:
Today,
tomorrow,
next week

STRATEGIC
Focus: 6 +
months from
now

Poll

I spend the following amount of my time thinking strategically on issues and items that will affect my HR function more than 6 months from now:

- A. 40%
- B. 30%
- C. 20%
- D. Less than 20%

Vision: Structure and Components

- Verb – target – outcome
- Apply **verb** to **target** for **outcome**
- Question: What are you going to do to whom, for what reason
- Use concrete positive language for end result
- Be brief, concrete, concise
- Be inspirational, aspirational, energizing

Vision: Some Samples

- We **aspire** to build partnerships with **management** at all levels of the organization to **create a culture** that values all employees.
- We work to **build a culture** that encourages and rewards exceptional performance and continuous improvement, fosters teamwork, and supports balance to work and personal life issues.
- We **provide services** of the highest quality in a cost-effective manner while creating a **healthy professional environment** that fosters respect for both diverse perspectives and a service orientation.

Vision: The 6 Step Process

1. Define your focus
2. Set the timeframe
3. Create a list of past successes
4. Draft the vision
5. Field test the vision
6. Share the vision

Vision: The 6 Step Process

Step 1: Define your focus

- Organization overall?
- HR Department only
- Other supporting department? Divisions?
- You personally?
 1. Be specific
 2. Put a box around it
 3. Write it down

Vision: The 6 Step Process

Step 2: Set the timeframe

- How volatile is your profession/industry?
- How volatile is your organization, it's leadership?
- How much certainty, predictability in trends do you see?
- Shorten or lengthen based on these questions

Vision: The 6 Step Process

Step 3: Create the list of past successes

- HR truism: past success equates to future success – maybe
- Include:
 - Positive achievements advancing organization's mission
 - Successes implementing complex programs or services
 - Praise or accolades from key stakeholders
 - Awards
- Mine this list for success factors that can be leveraged going forward

Vision: The 6 Step Process

Step 4: Draft the vision

- Work quickly
- Inverse relation between time spent and quality
- Be brief – two or three sentences.
- **What** not **How**
- Inspire, motivate, engage, lead

Vision: The 6 Step Process

Step 5: Field test the vision

- Start with trusted colleagues, partners, peers, internal and external
- Do NOT rewrite, refine
- Broaden to include key stakeholders, opinion leaders, the TO WHOM
- You are looking for understanding first, then agreement second, maybe

Vision: The 6 Step Process

Step 6: Share the vision

- Key stakeholder, suppliers, staff
- Note but sidestep HOW questions
- Look for evidence of excitement, inspiration
- Remember: this is a guide, not a rule book for the future

Strategic Thinking

- A process that defines the manner in which people think about, assess, view, and create the future for themselves and others
- Also called forward-thinking, future-thinking
- A way of thinking, a mindset that looks at things and sees connections, patterns, repetitions that can be extrapolated going forward
- A cognitively exclusive mindset; must switch from strategic to think tactical
- The mindset needed to create a vision

Strategic Thinking Tools

Trend and Forecast Analyses

- Identify trusted sources for trends, forecast, predictions
 - Internal
 - External
 - Industry
 - Community
 - Workforce
 - Key professions
- Create a regular schedule for trend-scanning and channels to communicate trends to relevant internal sources

Strategic Thinking Tools

Create and use a **Strategic Thinking Inquiry** list:

- What would success look like in 3 years?
- What constitutes failure?
- Have we seen anything like this before? How did it work out?
- What do we know now? What is unknown?
- Can we determine probabilities, possibilities?
- What is Plan B? DO we even have a Plan b?

Summary

If HR leaders want to get and keep a seat at the leadership table, they need to be strategic thinkers fueled by a compelling and inspirational vision of success.
