



HC Newsletter

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Welcome to this month's edition of the HC newsletter! After a busy month we have a range of interesting articles for you to review.

We've got two articles for sports lovers in this newsletter. Firstly, we give you an update on how a water polo player that we sponsor is tracking in the lead up to the London Olympics. Secondly, for those NRL fans or those that are interested in leadership in sport, we've got an article that explores some recent captaincy decisions made at Souths Rabbitohs.

On the research side of things, we share some of our latest findings in relation to the attitudinal differences of part-timers that choose to resign from their employer. We are also announcing two opportunities for our clients and other interested parties to be directly involved in research (either University led research or HC specific research). In addition, we also provide information about our upcoming Customer Satisfaction survey for those that are keen to be involved.

In terms of HC products and services, this month we put a spot-light on what exactly is involved in self-facilitating the "Helping Hands" team building activity. For those of you who are not aware, HC recently became the distributor for this unique activity where participants get the opportunity to build prosthetic hands for less fortunate people overseas. It's a fantastic new life changing initiative that we encourage you all to investigate further.

Last but not least, this month we have a particularly interesting perspective on delegation which has been written by a special guest contributor Wayne Noakes. Wayne is the Learning and Development Manager at Veolia Environmental Services and has over 25 years experience in a variety of management positions so his perspective is particularly valuable and we are grateful that he's taken the time to write for us.

HC Sponsors an Olympic hopeful

Not many of our clients would know that HC sponsors an Olympic hopeful Water Polo player called John Hahn. Over the years we have regularly sponsored members of Drummoyne's National League Water Polo squad. However, this year, the player that we have chosen to sponsor has the potential to represent Australia at the London Olympics!

John has recently been announced as a member of a 19 man squad which has the first opportunity to press their claims for an Olympic berth later on this year. A quick Google using John's name reveals a number of stories about him, but we've selected our favourites below:

<http://london2012.olympics.com.au/news/sharks-name-first-squad-on-road-to-london>

<http://www.australianwaterpolo.com.au/news/article/2012/february/hahn-hoping-tenure-behind-coaches-clipboard-helps-shot-at-london/>

John is currently in the final year of his double degree in Applied Finance and Commerce Accounting at Macquarie University and, irrespective of whether he is finally chosen to go the London 2012, we're very proud of everything he has achieved.

We are really excited for John, and will have our fingers crossed over the coming months for him!



Differences in Outgoing Part-Time Employee Attitudes

This is the second in a series of research articles exploring some of our latest research into exit interview results. This article summarises a quick study that was conducted into the differences between exit interview responses of part-time employees versus full-timers. The research was conducted by analysing three years' worth of exit interview results across the large variety of organisations that utilise HC exit interview services.

Caroline's main finding was that, on average, part-time employees tend to be more positive about their workplaces than full-time employees. Exploring this further, she found that the specific areas in which Part-timers were more positive than Full-timers were:

- The overall quality of their working life.
- Their fellow team-members' commitment to safety.
- Their company's commitment to the environment.
- The induction that they received.

However, Part-timers were significantly less positive about the level of supervision received by their direct manager.

These research findings can be easily applied in practice. The main thing that distinguishes part-timers at work is that they have reached a formal agreement with the company about a particular working pattern and/or a reduced number of working hours. At their core, flexible working arrangements are a form of additional commitment that companies tailor to the unique needs of their employees. Such an additional commitment is likely to result in a sense of reciprocity and more positive views about the company in general. This is probably the simplest explanation for these results. If correct, it is also a compelling reason for managers to consider increased adoption of flexible working arrangements; in particular part-time arrangements.

In applying these findings, a word of caution should be noted. Our research does reveal that part-time employees are clearly less satisfied than full-timers with the level of supervision they experience. Although this is an intuitive observation, companies considering rolling out part-time arrangements more aggressively must be mindful of ensuring that their managers are able to effectively supervise people under these arrangements. The emphasis in such situations must be on ensuring that part-timers feel like part of the team, even though they may not be at the office every day.



Leadership in the NRL

For those international readers of our newsletter, this story is about the National Rugby League (NRL) competition here in Australia. The story is about the coach of one specific club, who recently made a decision which challenges many of our preconceived assumptions about leadership and people management.

The coach of the South Sydney Rabbitohs, Michael Maguire, recently made a shock decision by naming not one, but five captains for his first grade team. According to South Sydney's official website, Michael Crocker, Roy Asotasi, Sam Burgess, Matt King and John Sutton will form the "leadership group" for the duration of the year.

"One of these players will be appointed each game to toss the coin and speak with the referees, but on every other aspect of the team we operate as an entire group with these five players making up our captaincy," Coach Maguire explains, "It's a strong leadership model that everyone has bought into at the Club. I've experienced it at Wigan, and I've seen it work successfully at other Clubs and in other sports as well... We're confident that these five players will provide the leadership we need to operate as a team, and to continue our efforts to improve in everything we do."



Photo courtesy of the South Sydney Rabbitohs

Maguire's decision is certainly unconventional but he has explained clearly the way he expects the model to operate, and his logic for introducing it at Souths. However, will it work? With only four games played so far this season it is certainly too early to tell however with only one win from four outings, preliminary results are not good.

There are a lot of definitions of leadership out there, but Organisational Psychologist Elliott Jaques coined one of my favourites. According to Jaques, Leadership is "the talent to bring people together, to get them to work effectively together to meet a common goal, to co-operate with each other, to rely upon each other, to trust each other." Defined like this, it's clear that the role of a Captain within a sporting team is certainly a leadership role. So how do we evaluate whether Maguire's "5 is better than 1" logic is robust?

Let's take some time to consider it from a few different perspectives:

1. Emergent Leadership

It could be that Maguire simply did not know who would be the best leader within the team. He may have perceived both strengths and weaknesses in most of the candidates and wanted to allow the leader most able to get the best out of the group to emerge. Nominating five captains would certainly allow room for this to occur. By providing an equal platform to all five leaders Maguire is providing an equal opportunity for each of them to demonstrate leadership qualities. If indeed one clear leader emerges from within the leadership group, Maguire could always change his decision at a later date.

2. Training and Benchstrength

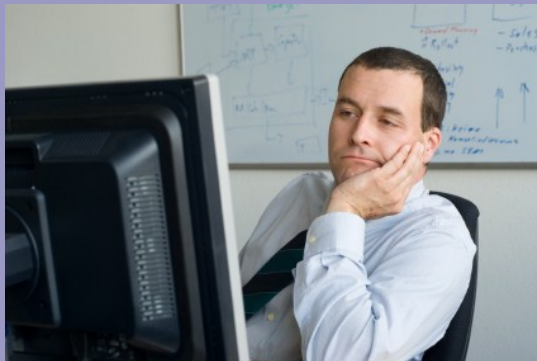
Although research suggests that some elements of leadership are genetic, or at least learned at a very early age, there are some aspects of leadership which, like any skill, need to be learned and practiced over time. If Maguire felt that leadership was a major gap within his team, then maybe he was hoping that that providing five people an opportunity to practice this skill on a weekly basis, should be better than only one.

3. Self-managed Teams

There are a number of famous case-studies that posit the benefits of self-managed teams. The idea with such an approach is by removing a traditional management role, it is expected that the individual contributors within the team will be comfortable taking risks, exercising judgement and innovating. Thinking from this perspective, it is likely that increasing the number of leaders will stifle creativity and leadership from within the playing group rather than encouraging it.

4. Specific Role Requirements of a Captain

It is important for any employee who wants to work effectively, to match their focus and effort with the needs of the role they are performing. For example, there are some roles where people management is much more important than a person's technical contribution. There are other roles where someone's accuracy implementing work is much more important than the quality of their strategic thinking. The role of a sporting captain is particularly unique. Often the captain is chosen for their leadership attributes. However, they usually also need to be one of the most skilled athletes in the team (otherwise their position is not safe week-in and week-out). This poses a difficult quandary from a leadership perspective and maybe this gets to the heart of why coach Maguire has chosen the strategy that he has. If a captain's role is much more applied athleticism than pure leadership then why not have a number of captains?



5. Bureaucracy Busting

Those of us that have been engaged in "bureaucracy busting" exercises will tell you that one of the first things that you look at when you're trying to unshackle a company's culture, is the number of managers that they have. The more managers that a company has per employee, the more hands-on you would expect those managers to be. Lots of managers often indicate a level of redundancy in the organisational structure, which often results in managers creating work for themselves. At times this can also result in managers engaging in unproductive behaviour such as office politics. If you take a bureaucracy busting perspective when thinking about Maguire's decision, you are likely to come to some fairly uncomplimentary conclusions. If it's "hands-on leadership" you are trying to encourage, why not make EVERYONE a captain, rather than choosing a third of the team?!

6. Expectation Management

As leaders, it is always important to be mindful of the expectations that you are raising via the promises that you make or the actions you take. By nominating five captains, Coach Maguire is encouraging all of these players to see themselves as leaders within the team, subordinate to nobody. While taking on such an attitude will be critical for the success of this leadership model now, it must be said that it will be difficult to go back to a sole captain approach at a later date, without disenfranchising at least four of the team's most skilled players. Time will tell whether this decision is the right thing for the club and players concerned. If this turns out to be the wrong decision... the club will almost certainly experience some turmoil as they try and roll-back the initiative.

So what is the right answer?

To my knowledge there isn't sufficient empirical research available to know for sure how effective this initiative is likely to be. It could also be that the role of a sporting captain is sufficiently different to the role of a leader in corporate life that any leadership research in this space is irrelevant. However, if I was a betting man I would NOT be gambling on this experiment coming off. The role of a leader is a careful balancing act that requires skill and practice. Just like every other role, we need room to make mistakes and learn from them, to have the courage to make decisions and stand by them. The idea that five people sharing a key leadership role will somehow result in better decisions (especially in the heat of battle within a Rugby League match) I find fairly unlikely. However, I LOVE the fact that Michael Maguire has had the courage to take this step and that Souths management are sticking by him. Now THAT IS true leadership!

For further information about Coach Maguire's captaincy decision please check out the following article which is referenced on the website:

<http://www.rabbitohs.com.au/News/Club-News/Rabbitohs-Announce-Five-Captains-for-2012.html>

Helping Hands Information

HC has recently won the rights to distribute the Helping Hands (also known as "Build A Hand") activity within Australia and New Zealand and this article has been written to provide information to clients that might be interested in exploring the activity for their next conference, team meeting or staff retreat. It's a corporate team building activity unlike any other and is guaranteed to change the way that employees see their work and give them a renewed sense of energy and purpose.

I'm normally pretty cynical about Team Building / Conference activities. However, the first time I experienced the Helping Hands activity, it literally blew me away. Basically, attendees at this activity get the chance to build artificial hands for later donation overseas. The artificial hands that teams build find their way to amputee land-mine victims that would not otherwise be able to afford prosthesis.

Here's how the process works....

Facilitation

Professional facilitation, as always, is key to ensuring that you get the most out of the activity. HC has a team of facilitators that have all received specialist training in running this particular program. However, unlike with other team building companies, we think that this activity is just too cool to keep to ourselves. So if you can't afford for us to facilitate for you, then we provide ALL the information and training that you will need to be able to facilitate the activity yourself!

The build

In groups of 3, the teams then go about building the hands. There are detailed instructions provided, so all groups are set up for success. Normally, the entire conference is given a target as a whole group. This ensures that small groups are not set up in competition and small group members are free to help others... just like back in the workplace! As an added challenge, normally participants bind one of their hands during the build process to further remind them of why they are doing the activity. Often individual participants will take on unique roles within the team and, as with any team, there will be interesting team dynamics that emerge to debrief at the end of the activity.

Commencement of the activity

At the start of the activity, participants are provided with a bag of parts. They typically feel a little overwhelmed and are usually less than motivated to participate as memories of pointless and annoying team building activities from their past flood back to them.

THEN, we show a video which normally both surprises and moves participants. All of a sudden, they realise that the activity they are engaged in today has a purpose. They realise that if they work well together, they will literally be changing someone's life on the other side of the world... Needless to say, at this point normally energy levels immediately go through the roof!

Decoration of the packaging

Each hand is put into a container which has been uniquely decorated by participants. This is a critical component of the activity. Some people will feel overwhelmed by the responsibility of building a hand and will prefer to use their artistic skills during the exercise. BUT it's way more than just an outlet for those of us that are more artistic than others... finish reading until the end of this article to find out why!

“I just wanted to tell you how deeply moved and impressed I was by your session. I have been in many team-building sessions, but nothing quite like working with a team to assemble an artificial hand for somebody. Kudos to you all for being such creative and inspirational individuals.”

*Peter K., Sr. VP
Constellation Energy*

Completion and photographs

Once groups complete the task, they bring their decorated container up to the front of the room and have a photo taken with it as a team. This photo is then sent with the hand to the recipient. So when the recipient opens up their package, along with the hand itself, the first thing they see is a picture of the people that made their hand for them.

Quality control

Once the activity is completed, all hands are shipped back to the company that designed them to ensure that they are built properly. This company does a range of quality checks and then ships them to where they are needed most

Feedback from recipients

Wherever possible, pictures of the actual recipients, holding the hands they have been given (along with their uniquely decorated packaging) find their way back to HC and we then send these pictures through to the companies that made the hands. This part of the process is not something that can be guaranteed all of the time. Some of the locations in which the hands are distributed are not technologically advanced. We also rely on a range of separate charity organisations to distribute these and when push comes to shove... if we had a choice, we'd always prefer that they ensure the hands are distributed and fitted correctly.

The help desk

During the activity a help desk is setup, where participants can go to ask technical questions if they are having trouble putting together the hand. The person behind the help desk needs to be fully trained in building the hands before the activity commences

Activity debrief

It is critical to ensure that there is a detailed discussion at the end of the activity. This activity can be a particularly emotional and exciting experience for many people and we find that you need to provide people with the space to share this with their fellow team-mates. A thorough debrief is also important as it ensures that participants are reminded of the unique challenges that their organisation faces. As with most team building activities, the range of behaviours or mindsets that can be debriefed at the conclusion of this activity is diverse and depends on what your organisation's intentions are. This is where expert facilitation can really make the difference!

Once the debrief is completed, a "post build" video is played. This video really drums home how much of a difference the hands that have just been made will make to their recipients. It also is a fantastic way to complete the activity as it ensures that all participants are left energised and with a renewed sense of purpose.



A memento to remember the activity by

At the conclusion of the activity, each participant is left with a small metal key-chain style clip that they can keep. It's just a little thing. But it's important as it ensures that once the participants go back to their day-jobs, they still have a little reminder of the overwhelming sense of purpose that they experienced during the activity.

“

“We were looking for something that would bring our organisational values to life in a meaningful, memorable way. The impact on our team was profound”

*Helen Landry
Marketing & Special Programs GE
Healthcare*

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Some other considerations...

Recycling

There are a range of spare parts and tools that are distributed as part of this activity. These spare parts are returned, along with the finished hands and are recycled for the next group that builds the hands. This ensures that nothing goes to waste and that the impact of our resources and efforts is maximised within our global community.

Batch size

When you purchase this activity, there is a lot more that goes with it than just the hand. There are videos, spare parts, tools and materials to help bind participant hands. For this reason, the hands are normally distributed in standardised kit sizes of ten. If your organisation only has need for a smaller number of hands then we can also help meet your needs. Just let us know.

Duration and integration of the activity into your agenda

The activity takes between 1.5 to 3 hours to complete and is the perfect conclusion to a day off-site or workshop. Participants are left feeling energised, inspired and filled with a sense of purpose. Our advice would be to NOT try and stretch this activity out to take any longer than this. Keep it as a high impact component of your broader agenda and make sure that you spend the rest of the time getting through other content as you wish.

Team size

This activity is ideal for groups of ANY size and can be just as powerful for a group of 6 as it is for a group of 600! We suggest a ratio of 3 people per hand (e.g. a group of 60 would need to purchase 20 hands). At this level, every single conference participant will be required to play an active role in building the hands.

For more information on what you receive when you order a self-facilitation kit, please see the following article on self facilitation

SO WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?!

Why not contact us via email for more information and to place your order:

info@henricksconsulting.com



Self Facilitation of the Helping Hands Activity

When you choose to self-facilitate the Helping Hands activity, we set you up for success from the start of the activity. You are not just sent a box full of miscellaneous parts, everything has been meticulously packed to ensure that the process is clear, even to a first-time facilitator.

The kits are designed to be easily scalable for large groups and the activity works just as well for a group of 600 participants as it does for a group of 6. As a facilitator, all you need to think about is how many Help Desk Operators you need to pre-train for larger groups.



Each carefully packaged facilitation kit contains the following:

- The parts to build 10 separate hands. Appropriate for use with between 10 and 30 participants
- Step-by-step facilitation and assembly instructions, program videos and PowerPoint presentations to help build these state-of-the-art hands
- Spare parts
- Tools for help desk officers to use during the exercise
- All the materials required to bind a participants hand, if this is the facilitation technique that you choose to use

Launch of the HC Customer Satisfaction Survey



Prior to commencing our business planning process for the coming financial year, we have decided to launch a Customer Satisfaction Survey. This survey will be a critical component of our planning cycle and will help ensure that we keep our customers first and foremost when deciding what new products and services to invest in over coming months.

The Customer Satisfaction Survey will be sent to both past and present clients. It will NOT be sent to people who have subscribed to our mailing list. If you are keen to participate, but are neither a past or present client then drop us a line with your details via:

info@henricksconsulting.com

The Power of Delegation

How many times, when you have asked someone how they are going at work, have they responded with something like the following: "I'm flat out. I'm really busy. I don't have enough hours in the day. I've got to work this weekend etc" It's fairly typical. Yes, it's obvious that as a workforce we are working longer hours but are we working smarter?

Having been in management positions for over 25 years, working across a number of industries, I've observed a common theme; the failure of many managers to delegate tasks/responsibilities to their staff. The solution to the problem of an overwhelming workload sounds simple - get someone else to do it. There is no doubt we apply this mantra in our personal lives, just look at the rise in service industries such as household cleaners, gardeners, 'hire a hubby' and car wash cafes! Yet, why is it so hard for a manager to let go and empower others to do their work?

Certainly there are reasons, such as the inability to trust others to do a good job. How many times have you heard someone say "if you want it done right, do it yourself"? This issue is usually related to an ignorance of your staff's capabilities. There is also a certain enjoyment felt by managers who have the 'power' of control, which results in a general fear of letting go - I'm a manager, I'm the expert and it's my job! Often it comes down to not having the time to teach others the skills to complete your tasks, after all if you don't have the time to complete your normal workload, how will you have time to conduct training?

I'm not advocating you just go out and 'dump' your work on other people. Although in some workplace cultures this 'dumping' or 'sink or swim' mentality does prevail - and we all know how stressful it can be as the recipient of this inefficient work practice.

What I've observed, and practiced as a manager, is that by actively empowering employees they become not only more motivated but also keener to help out if your workload is particularly overwhelming. If you give people the skills, coach them, let them try (and not criticise them if they fail!) and reward their efforts, they by and large succeed at the task at hand and want to push themselves to do more. So through involvement, comes responsibility, ownership and then commitment (I.R.O.C). It's a simple but effective mantra.



Several years ago I was responsible for a number of retail branches for a major Insurance company. Each branch had a manager and the staff referred to them for direction, solutions and also left the branch administration activities to them. The fact is that many of the staff had the skills to do the reports, run the communication meetings, do the budgets, train the staff, promote the business and solve customer issues. They were very capable people but they just hadn't been given the responsibility to do anything beyond their job role. After several meetings in which the concept of 'empowerment' was discussed each branch's staff identified what 'management' actions they could take on and manage for the branch - in essence I introduced 'self-directed work teams'. The concept successfully freed up the manager's time as they coached the staff to do the functions management usually did. Staff motivation rose as well as their results and managers became more strategic rather than tactical practitioners. It also aligned with the company's focus on career development and progression within the company.

Of course there were sceptics but the concept worked and was eventually adopted across the company's branch network.

It's a simple example and took 1-2 years to maximise the full benefits, but it worked and 'self-directed work teams' led to a dramatic change in work culture.

So I would encourage you to increase your delegation, you will be surprised on the return it gives you.

If you would like to find out more about the value of empowering staff I would recommend you read Ricardo Semmler's book 'Maverick'. An amazing story on how he transformed his business through empowering his staff and applying the principles of I.R.O.C.



This article was written by a guest contributor, Wayne Noakes. Wayne is the Learning and Development Manager at Veolia Environmental Services and a client of Henricks Consulting.

A call for organisations to participate in research... FOR FREE!!!

All of the staff at HC are continually upgrading their skills via higher education. We currently have staff enrolled in Undergraduate, Masters and PhD level studies and all of these staff requires the assistance of willing organisations to participate in research as part of their degrees. Participating in University research has a number of benefits:

- Researched is supervised by world-renowned leaders in their field
- You normally obtain data about your organisation that you could NOT have accessed any other way
- Research can often be tailored to suit the needs of the organisation that is participating.
- It's FREE

Currently, our staff are looking for willing organisations to participate in research in the area of Change Readiness. This is a fascinating emerging area within Organisational Psychology which is likely to help Organisations improve their capacity to manage change.

Our company is also strongly committed to continual research. The arrangements for this research are slightly different to when you participate in University-led research. However, participation in such research is normally free too! Currently, HC are seeking suitable organisations to help us with research into both exit interviews and 360 degree assessments.

If you are interested in participating or finding out more about either types of research mentioned above then please contact us at info@henricksconsulting.com . Even if you're only half-interested we'd encourage you to drop us a line to find out more.





If you have any further queries:

www.henricksconsulting.com

info@henricksconsulting.com

Phone: (02) 8084-4284

Fax: (02) 8569-2309

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