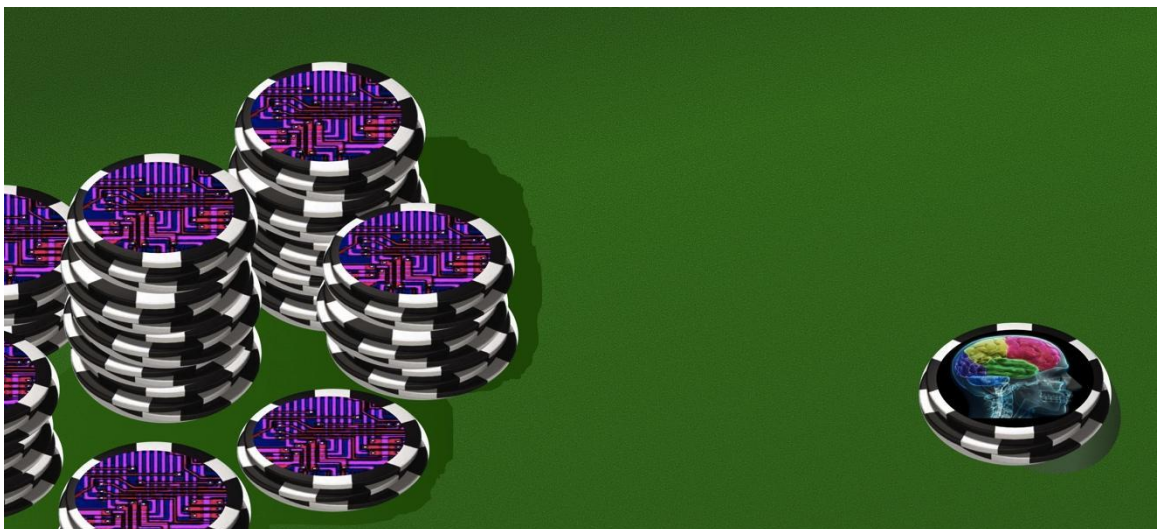


INSIGHTS

The Next Generation of Corporate Talent Management

Analytical insights you could only imagine. Unconditional trust from the senior team. A 24/7 work ethic. And a heart of silicon.





The Next Generation of Corporate Talent Management

By Marc Effron, President, The Talent Strategy Group

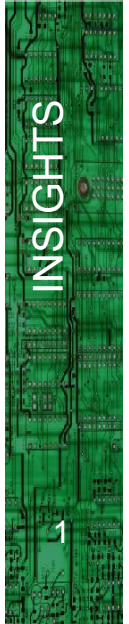
Checking his email one evening a manager opens a note from Suzie in HR with the subject line “Talent Actions to Complete.” The note contains a concise list of recommendations for managing his team and the specific reasons for taking them:

1. **Email Stephen** ([click for pre-written email](#)). Ask if he’s followed up on his development goal to build better relationships with the Marketing team. His calendar includes no appointments with those team members for the past 30 days and he hasn’t badged-in to their building during that time.
2. **Call Marta in Bangalore** ([click to auto-dial](#)). She’s triggered a departure alert due to a combination of her manager’s most recent 360 results ([details](#)), her low compa-ratio ([details](#)) and the team’s just-released engagement scores ([details](#)).

3. Re: **Rajan**, a new marketing director position just opened in Sao Paulo ([details](#)). This is the next experience he requires to move to the targeted role of Online Marketing VP. He has been in his role 24 months and is mobile. Based on his recent Hogan scores, cultural fit and performance record, he has an 84% chance of success in this role ([details](#)).

Suzie isn’t the best talent leader ever. She’s a million lines of code on a blade in a server. Suzie lives to provide managers with real-time, predictive intelligence to optimize the management of their team. She does this by constantly analyzing every employee data point across the company and attempting to optimize two talent outcomes – high performance and high engagement.

Suzie knows which analyses to conduct be-



cause she taught herself based on a few basic rules programmed into her. She's found productivity-driving relationships that your most analytical HR leader could never have imagined.

Suzie doesn't care if managers take her ad-vice, but she will track which recommendations have been acted on and produce a monthly report of managers who consistently don't follow up.

She has no bias, no hesitation and no conscience. She does what a good talent leader should do – focus exclusively on driving higher company performance using science and facts.

Same Story, Different Ending

A popular refrain among talent management leaders is that their ultimate success metric is no longer being needed at their company. We infer that this will happen because we will have made our leaders self-sufficient talent managers.

Decisions about who should be promoted, moved, rewarded, chastised and even fired will be done proactively and with far greater accuracy.

But, like so many generations before us, we'll be wrong about both the speed and the means by which our jobs will disappear.

A more likely reality is that managers won't improve their skills. They'll remain theoretically committed to growing better talent while being just as pre-occupied with other business demands.

Talent management leaders will no longer be needed because the quality and predictive accuracy of Suzie's advice will be vastly superior to anything that they can produce.

A Better Future

The next generation of talent management may not involve us, but it offers a far better future for our organizations.

Possible, but not yet built, the next generation of technology will integrate what we already know about psychology, personality and human behavior with every employee data point in the company. It will actively seek out the predictive relationships between those factors and corporate performance.

By integrating this disparate and far-flung information, it will improve both corporate performance and the individual work experience.

If you're not instantly enamored with that future, consider the benefits. Great talent management technology can overcome the fundamental executional weaknesses, politics and biases that live in today's talent management practices. It will be able to:

Better predict talent outcomes: The most exciting benefit Suzie can deliver is more accurate advice about managing talent. Decisions about who should be promoted, moved, rewarded, chastised or even fired will be done proactively and with far greater accuracy.

Today, we try our best to determine if we should move Li-Wen to the junior GM role in Hanoi or the corporate role in Mumbai. We know his work history, how (we think) he behaves against our leadership model and his career ambitions. Those involved in making that decision will each interpret that data in a



different way and ultimately decide based on consensus or hierarchy.

Suzie will have assessed every demographic variable we have about Li-Wen, every performance indicator, every psychological and personality assessment, his company network, every online social post that passed through the company's servers, every 360 and engagement survey he has taken, his travel history, the performance history of people in similar roles, his purchases at the company cafeteria and hundreds of other variables.

She can state his likelihood to succeed in not only that role but in others where he would be predicted to outperform the current incum-

all be included in her analysis. In the unlikely event that one of them is a salient factor in her recommendation, she'll be very clear about the specific facts that brought her to that conclusion.

Did we give Joe three extra chances to increase his performance but terminated Mary after just two? Suzie will catch that mistake before it's made.

Identify early warning signals: The same variables that Suzie analyzed about Li-Wen can flag organizational concerns ranging from potential team issues to impending employee burnout.

Those six people assigned to the critical XYZ

She won't ignore gender, race or other demographic variables – they'll all be included in her analysis. In the unlikely event that one of them is a salient factor in her recommendation, she'll be very clear about the specific facts that brought her to that conclusion.

bent. Even if her conclusion is that it's a 50/50 chance that Li-Wen succeeds that's a far more accurate estimate than what the best talent leader could have provided.

Make bias-free decisions: Research continues to show gaps in the opportunities and rewards men and women receive at work.¹ The positive intentions and hard work we put into ensuring a level playing field are no match for the hidden biases we struggle to eliminate.

Suzie has no bias. She won't ignore gender or race or other demographic variables – they'll

project? They all have Hogan derailleurs in the high-risk zone for both Colorful and Bold. Either put a strong facilitator in there now or expect frequent infighting and little progress.

Garima has traveled each of the past 16 weeks (vs. her typical 4 on, 4 off) and her spot engagement score is down. That's a sure predictor of increased turnover and higher medical claims. Her manager should do A, B, and C based on past successful experiences with similar profiles.

Always be on: Suzie works 24/7 and constantly incorporates new data into her algorithms. The moment that data triggers an alert, there's a note and advice sent to the relevant parties. In

¹ "Good intentions, imperfect execution? Women get fewer of the "hot jobs" needed to advance," by Christine Silva, Nancy M. Carter and Anna Beninger, Catalyst, 2012.



Fact, every piece of analysis mentioned in this article would have been produced in a flash of a second.

A Brief Note about Privacy

Those who see this potential type of analysis as intrusive or a violation of privacy should consider the current state of law, particularly in the United States. Many US employers already explicitly state that employees should have no expectation of privacy or confidentiality of data stored on company computers.

In 2010, the US Supreme Court ruled that select employers could monitor personal use of company computers and mobile devices if they had a legitimate, work-related purpose. Other countries' High Courts have issued similar rulings.

Employee data is already largely available to employers to analyze as they feel is appropriate. The fact that this deeper analysis hasn't yet been done is due only to the limited capabilities of today's technology.

Moving Forward

It's difficult to embrace technology changes that will eventually eliminate both your job and your field. You may even believe that there will always be a place for the human element in talent management. If there is, it will be a smaller, far less influential one. The thinking part of the role will have already been filled.

There is some good news however. If we're serious about wanting our organizations to be self-sufficient in talent management, it appears there's now a clear path for getting there.

