

Talent Management in Question

Best Practices and Emerging Thinking

An interview with Brian Wilkerson, Watson Wyatt's Global Director for Talent

AS RECENT studies show, talent issues remain at the forefront of business preoccupations in Asia Pacific. For Hong Kong, ranked one of the top World Cities* and a global hub for talent and business, good Talent Management is essential to business sustainability.

Q: What are the management trends in companies investing in Human Capital in Hong Kong?

A: At the moment we are seeing clients make greater investments in both their HR functions and in their human resources – their people. There is an extremely high level of interest in Talent Management in all of its aspects from Strategic Workforce Planning and Strategic Recruitment through to Succession Planning.

Q: Are Hong Kong businesses adopting Best Practice principles? If not, how might they be influenced to change their practices?

A: It seems that many organizations in Hong Kong are just now starting to adopt best practices. The trend towards rising turnover and increased worker scarcity will certainly drive more to adopt best practices. In addition, more will adopt best practices as they better understand the potential financial returns from good people management practices.

Q: How are global human resource practices influencing Hong Kong?

A: Like many other Asian countries, Hong Kong is looking around the globe at best practices. However, rather than just adopting wholesale what has been done in other places, businesses in Hong Kong are looking at how they can adapt it to their specific business environment.

Q: Did a crisis like SARS change the way Hong Kong businesses manage their human resources? How has this evolved since?

** MasterCard Global Centers of Commerce Study, New York 2008*

A: SARS changed not only the way Hong Kong business manage their human resources, but also forced companies around the globe to look at things differently. SARS was the beginning of a movement to more closely integrate business continuity planning with people planning. Businesses have begun to look more closely at remote work strategies and how they can maintain productivity in the face of travel bans, etc. They have also begun to look at how they can maintain operational continuity in the event of the unavailability of key personnel for extended periods. The solutions that companies are employing range from more formal cross-training to more formalized knowledge capture and documented contingency plans for operations disruption.

Q: Are local companies changing their practices from the traditional Hong Kong business mentality?

A: The traditional Hong Kong business mentality, as far as people are concerned, has tended to be "Work hard, work long – but don't necessarily work smart!" We are seeing Hong Kong companies trying to move away from a "Just do what I tell you to do" mentality to giving their people greater autonomy, asking them to be more creative and innovative and expecting them to make decisions, rather than just waiting to be told. To do this, people usually need to be coached into a new way of thinking and working. Being the coach or being coached is not easy for many people! This presents particular challenges to businesses around their Strategic Recruitment, Performance Management and Learning Management systems. All of these elements need to be informed by the business strategy and whatever models of leadership or work place behaviour a company has in place.

Q: What are the strengths and weaknesses of Hong Kong businesses in that regard?

A: Generally the workforce in Hong Kong shows a high level of commitment and dedication to the business they work for.

人才管理 问与答

环球最佳实践法及新兴思维

华信惠悦全球人力资源部总裁Brian Wilkerson谈人才管理



据 近期一个研究显示，人才问题至今仍是亚太区企业最关注的事宜。香港作为一大「世界城市」*及全球人才及商业中心，人才管理自然成为业务稳健度的关键。

问：投资人力资源的香港企业，近年的管理趋势是甚么？

答：我们看到客户投放在人力资源的各种功能和员工本身的资源比以前多了，尤其是在各方面的人才管理，由策略性人力规划、策略性招聘，以至接任计划，企业都是极度重视的。

问：香港企业目前所运用的方式是否是“最佳实践”法吗？如不是，该如何影响他们作出改变？

答：看来很多香港企业才刚开始实行“最佳实践”法。员工的流动率在上升，加上人才短缺，这两项趋势令更多公司采用“最佳实践”法。再者，当公司完全了解到良好的人力管理可带来高潜力的财务回报

Centre: Brian Wilkerson, Global Director, Talent Management Consulting, Watson Wyatt Worldwide; Left: Deirdre Lander, Head of Human Capital Group, Watson Wyatt Hong Kong; Right: Polly Lee (李宝仪), Senior Consultant, Watson Wyatt Hong Kong

时，他们亦会乐意采用这管理概念。

问：环球人力资源的实践如何影响香港？

答：香港和其它亚洲国家一样，正在审视世界各地如何运用“最佳实践”法。香港的企业希望透过学习其它国家的长处，从而发展出一套适用于其特定商业环境的方法，而不是将全套其它地方的模式抄回来。

问：非典型肺炎这类危机有否改变香港企业的人力资源管理模式？自此如何发展？

“Companies must do a better job at workforce planning to get the supply of workers they need when they need them.”

This, of course, has both positive and negative consequences: “stability” on one hand but the possibility of “stagnation” on the other. In our increasingly global business world, decisions need to be made faster and closer to the customer interface and sometimes this is not helped when people have to wait to be told what to do. Again, these changes in “mentality” are not easily achieved.

Q: What about China? How are companies managing their talent and human resources?

A: China is a mixture of more traditional management approaches and more innovative talent management practices. Again, there is a strong focus on addressing scarcity of talent and turnover. Some companies are trying to create best practices models, but they are focusing on issues such as leadership development, workforce planning, and succession planning in addition to recruiting and retention.

Q: Where are they looking at in terms of management models?

A: Like Hong Kong, China is looking globally at best practices, but trying to adapt them to their particular business environment and challenges. China is also looking closely at other rapidly growing economies to see what challenges they have faced and how they have addressed them. But there is a strong desire to find uniquely Chinese solutions to their particular talent problems.

Q: Will China's emerging market take the lead in talent management?

A: The potential certainly exists for this outcome. As China looks to the successes and failures of other companies and countries, it has a chance to leapfrog others in its talent management practices. It also has the opportunity to create its own innovations in the area of talent management. For example, globally there is an emphasis on linking company brand with employment brand. Because of the brand-conscious nature of China, there is an opportunity to create leading edge practices in this area. This is just one example.

Q: Are there any critical issues in talent management that Hong Kong businesses should address urgently?

A: They need to differentiate themselves from their direct competitors and other business with whom they compete for talent



答: 非典型肺炎疫症不但改变香港企业的人力资源管理模式，还改变了世界各地的企业思维。它开始使企业加快了实现业务发展与人员发展计划整合的步伐，企业开始更加留意远程遥控的工作计划，和该如何在突发情况下(如交通网络瘫痪)时维持生产力。还有，他们亦开始考虑如何在长时间缺少人事部门时，保持公司的运作。面对这些困难，目前企业所实施的解决方案颇为广泛，从提供更多正规的训练，乃至当遇到运作崩溃时应有的知识，及已纪录的突发事故应变计划。

问：香港本地企业有否从传统的商业思维中更新其运作手法？

答: 香港传统的商业思维是「勤劳、长时间工作，但毋须精明！」我们可以见到香港企业正逐渐离开「依照我吩咐去做」这种模式，让员工有更多的自主性，要求他们有创意、工作上要创新，还期望他们可以自己做决策，而不是等待别人叫他们去做。要达到这目标，就要训练员工新的思考和工作方式，但对很多人而言，训练者和被训练者都并不容易做。企业更要面对策略招聘、工作表现管理和学习管理系统的重大挑战。无论一家企业属于哪种类型的领导模型或工作环境，企业策略也必须了解以上的元素。

问：在这方面，香港的企业拥有什么优势和弱点？

答: 一般来说，香港的员工有很高的承诺度，忠于他们的公司。凡事有好也有坏，一方面这可以令企业很稳定，但另一方面却导致公司停滞不前。全球经济一体化迫使企业决策要快而准，还要紧贴客户需要，根本没有时间让人停下来等待别人下命令，但这些思维上的转变是不容易达到的。

问：中国的情况又如何？企业如何管理人才和人力资源？

答: 中国是传统管理模式和创新人才管理方式的大熔炉，但他们同样面对人才短缺和流失率问题。一些企业正在建立最佳实践法，但他们把重点集中于领导发展、员工规划、继任计划、聘请和保留员工方面。

“如果企业想在其需要时找到理想的员工，就必定要有良好的、长期的员工规划。”

through the employment brand. This has implications for both recruiting and retention. In addition, companies must urgently address potential succession risks and plans for addressing them. Finally, companies must do a better job at long-term workforce planning if they want to be able to get the supply of workers they need when they need them.

Q: What is the emerging thinking in talent management? How are these new ideas different from prevailing trends?

- A:**
- Broad use of predictive modeling to understand where to make workforce investments
 - Workforce Planning
 - Linkage between Compensation and Business Metrics
 - Deep Talent Segmentation and Differentiation of strategies based on segments
 - Intact Team Recruiting
 - Closely linking Customer Brand Delivery with Employment Brand
 - Retention as a 2-way value proposition
 - New role of managers in talent management.

All of these differ from traditional practices in 3 fundamental ways:

- 1) Shift ownership of talent management from the HR organization to line management
- 2) Bring additional process, analysis, and discipline to traditional talent management
- 3) Focus on different strategies for different segments of your workforce, with specific innovations targeted at different types of workers.

Q: Are there any fast tracks that Hong Kong could follow in elevating Talent Integration?

- A:** There are three keys to accelerating talent integration:
- 1) understanding the talent decisions that the organization wants to be able to make,
 - 2) have leaders demonstrate that they value talent and talent management, and
 - 3) implement technology solutions that can make talent management both easier and more effective.

Q: What could Hong Kong businesses do now to retain talent and plan for the next generation for their companies?

- A:** At their current stage of maturity, Hong Kong businesses should:
- Understand the motivations and desires of the workforce they are targeting, as well as how to address those
 - Elevate their workforce planning approaches to better understand future needs
 - Invest in building strong people management skills in line managers
 - Build their employment brand
 - Look at innovative ways to staff and structure their organizations
 - Measure the results of their talent management efforts and prove the value. **W**

问：他们正留意哪个国家的管理模型？

答：国内跟香港同样，正在留意世界各地的「最佳实践」法，并尝试应用于其特别的市场环境和挑战中。国内还会观察其它急速发展中的经济体系，了解他们所面临的挑战及如何解决问题。但企业依然很渴望找到一个独特的中国方案，以解决其特别的人才问题。

问：中国的新兴市场会成为人才管理的领头人吗？

答：中国的确有这样的潜力，因为中国可以借鉴其它企业和国家的成功和失败例子，有机会在人才管理上赶上其它国家。而且还有机会创出新的管理范式，例如全世界都强调把企业品牌和雇主品牌结合，因为中国很有意识地强调品牌，这是成为人才管理领导地位的好机会，这只是其中一个例子。

问：关于人才管理，香港企业有什么关键性的问题必须尽快解决？

答：这应该是他们的雇主品牌，即如何区别自己跟竞争对手、自己跟其它竞争人才的雇主，这对招聘和挽留人才是很重要的。另外，企业必须立即正视潜在的继任风险和计划。最后，如果企业想在其需要时找到理想的员工，就必定要有良好的、长期的员工规划。

问：有什么新兴的人才管理思维？这些跟时流行的有何分别？

- 答：**
- 预测模型的广泛使用，使企业了解应在哪些人力资源范畴做出投资
 - 人力规划
 - 薪酬和企业组织机构之间的联系
 - 深层人才分层和分层策略的分别
 - 完整队伍招聘
 - 客户品牌和雇主品牌的紧密连接
 - 挽留人才作为双赢建议
 - 人才管理中管理层的新角色

以上各项同传统做法有3个基本分别：

- 1) 将人才管理的主权由人力资源部移交至管理层
- 2) 为传统人才管理带来更多的程序、分析和范畴
- 3) 不同的员工分层采取不同策略，特定的改革针对不同类型的员工

问：有没有快速的途径让香港进行人才整合？

答：有3个重点可以加快人才整合：1)了解组织希望可以做到的人才决策，2)拥有珍惜人才和人才管理的领导，及3)应用科技于人才管理上，使其执行更容易和有效率。

问：香港企业如何留住人才和为企业计划下一个世代？

- 答：**根据香港企业现阶段的成熟度，他们应：
- 了解员工的动机和他们希望达到的目标，并如何满足及解决他们这两方面的需要
 - 提升他们的人力规划方式，可以更有效地了解未来需要和如何优化员工
 - 投资于管理层，建立更强的人才管理能力
 - 建立雇主品牌
 - 考虑员工的创新性并把他们组织起来
 - 考量人才管理的结果及证明其价值。 **W**