



SABPP™
SA BOARD FOR
PEOPLE PRACTICES
Setting HR standards

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FACT SHEET



**INNOVATION
IN HR**

1. INTRODUCTION

“Innovation” is a common term used in business today. To define it means to encapsulate the different understanding in its diverse usage. The Business Dictionary defines innovation as “ The process of translating an idea or invention into a good or service that creates value or for which customers will pay.”¹ It has evolved in its definition and further explained as “To be called an innovation, an idea must be replicable at an economical cost and must satisfy a specific need.

Innovation involves deliberate application of information, imagination and initiative in deriving greater or different values from resources, and includes all processes by which new ideas are generated and converted into useful products. In business, innovation often results when ideas are applied by the company in order to further satisfy the needs and expectations of the customers.”² The definition in itself has a very clear map that leads to HR in the usage of resources and processes. The two things that HR is the custodian of in any business, as everything starts with an idea generated by a “person”.

The idea or concept of innovation, as best practice, was coupled with the profit generating or product development areas of the business. It has always made sense to link innovation to customer needs and satisfaction outputs, yet presently innovation is envisioned holistically by organisations, with every area of the business expected to innovate. HR is not the exception.

This fact sheet is designed to meet and guide the HR professional on their innovation voyage, which insists that the entire HR value chain meets the demand of business innovatively. It requires HR to visualise, research and develop HR systems and processes that lead HR innovation within a business context.

In order to understand HR innovation, we have to create content and context. Since there are numerous definitions of innovation, HR innovation is captioned gracefully within the SABPP Competency Model on the next page.

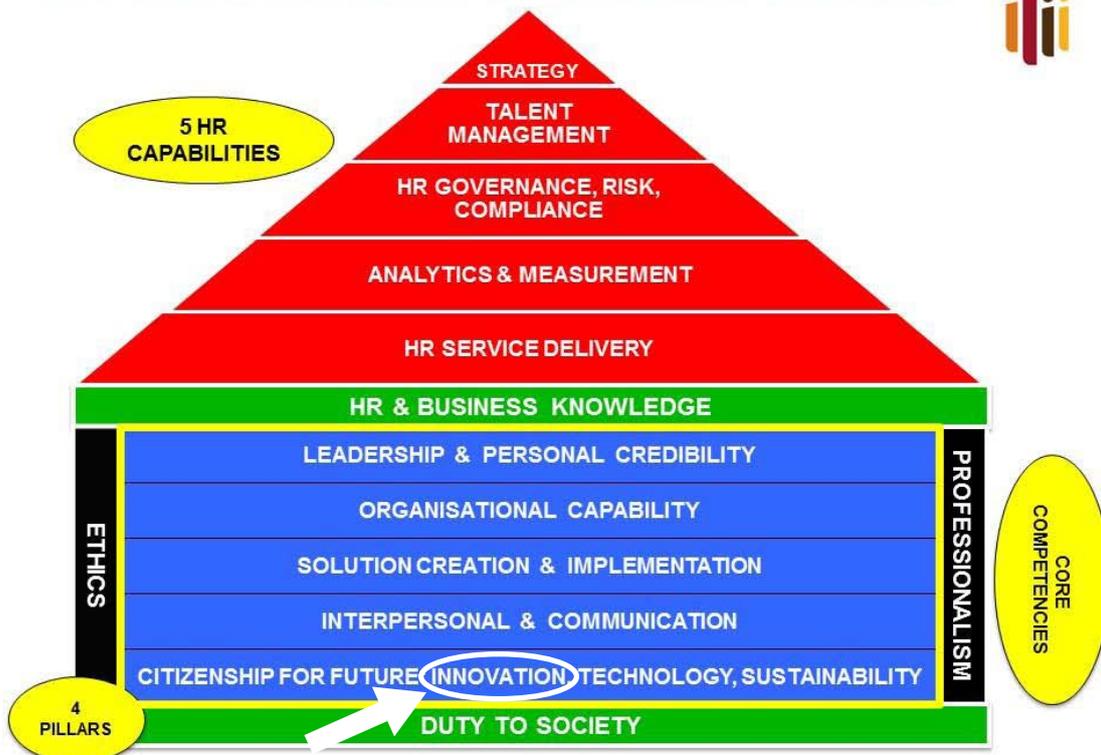
The SA Board for People Practices (SABPP) HR Competency Model Core Competency 5: Citizenship for the Future includes innovation in its definition:

“The ability to drive innovation, optimise technology and contribute to sustainability of organisations.”

¹ <http://www.businessdictionary.com>

² <http://www.businessdictionary.com>

SOUTH AFRICAN HR COMPETENCY MODEL



Further to its (innovation's) mention within the Competency Model, the SABPP has incorporated innovation within their National HR Management Standard: Standard 1: Strategic HR Management. Under the standard's objectives, the HR Strategy must make provision to the change towards innovative thinking to:

“Provide strategic direction and measurements for strategic innovation and sustainable people practices.”

Innovation in HR relates to the responsiveness and the proactive approach used by HR professionals to drive their employee strategies. It speaks to the creative and game changing initiatives that HR utilises to understand, motivate and direct employee thinking, behaviour and needs.



CEO's in Africa are ramping up their efforts to innovate and find new ways to do business on the continent in a move to stimulate growth in a challenging and uncertain global business environment."

*Hein Boegman,
PwC Africa Chief Executive Officer*

- HR needs an extreme makeover driven by the need to deliver greater business impact and drive HR and business innovation.
- While CEOs and top business leaders rate talent as a key priority, only 5 percent of survey respondents rate their organization's HR performance as excellent. This year, HR's self-assessment showed virtually no improvement over last year's.
- Companies are now moving beyond talk to action, revisiting the required capabilities of the HR function, building HR universities, and modernizing relationships with internal business partners.

Article: Reinventing HR: An extreme makeover³

HR AREAS OF INNOVATION, THE WHAT AND HOW?

With technological development, growing competition and current economic conditions, South African organisations are relying more and more on their human resources and workplace innovations to compete and be successful. The acceleration of digital disruption coupled with rapidly changing competitive markets does not make this an easy proposition for any business. HR is now expected to meet the changing environment with a focus on the following areas.

³ <http://dupress.com/articles/reinventing-hr-human-resources-human-capital-trends-2015>

- Culture design and development: fashioning a culture that behaves and thinks innovatively to meet business strategy with creativity and uniqueness. First National Bank (FNB) is a definitive example of this and was named the “World’s Most Innovative Bank 2012”.

South Africa’s First National Bank (FNB), a division of FirstRand Limited, was named the world’s most innovative bank of the year at the 2012 BAI-Finacle Global Banking Innovation Awards.

The panel praised FNB’s innovative culture, noting that the bank runs an internal competition that formally encourages and supports innovation, empowering business units within the bank to innovate through leadership buy-in and advocacy.

“Effectively, every employee can be an innovator and can change the way we conduct business,” FNB ex-CEO Michael Jordaan said in a statement. “This is an inversion of the historical top-down application of corporate strategies.

“With the concept of innovation we have created a far-reaching ethos of creativity, and we can see colleagues across Africa and India applying themselves to their jobs with a heightened sense of insight and innovation.”

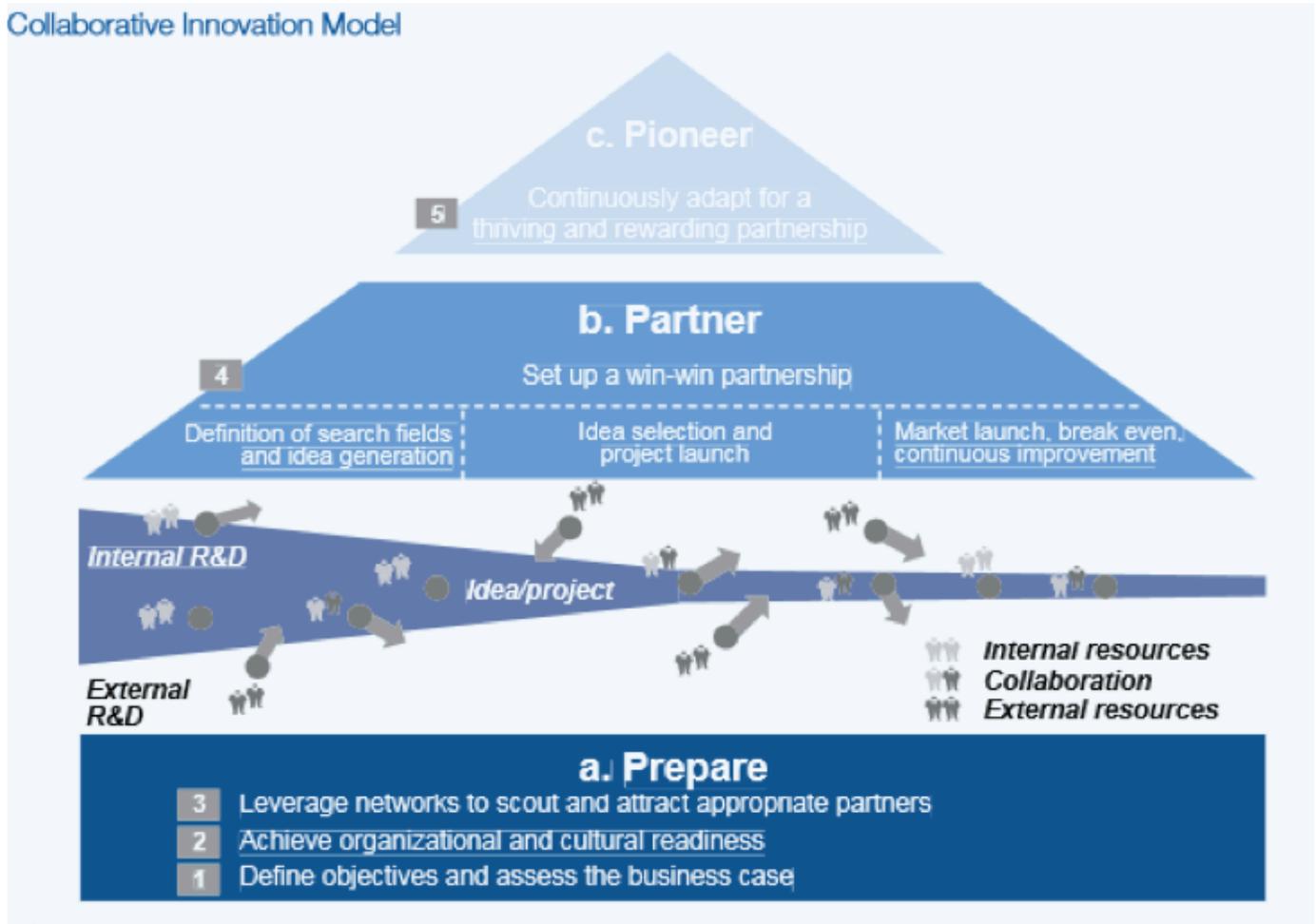
Read more:

<http://www.southafrica.info/business/success/fnb-011112.htm#.V2kdi490KYM#ixzz4CD7KS7ay>

Innovation and creativity requires a culture of respect where nothing should be ridiculed as being ridiculous or nonsensical and ideas should truly be given due consideration for their merits and impact. It can unlock cohesion, intellectual stimulation, challenge and flexibility and great leadership support and involvement. Innovation is a collaborative process, where people in many fields contribute to the implementation of new ideas and respect for these ideas is paramount. Since HR drives the people strategy within all organisations it should therefore influence the culture to collaborate and share ideas, incubate and develop the ideas, and finally implement them.

This can be done by HR who can create opportunities for collaboration (innovation committee or hub), identify innovative thinkers, create an inclusive blog for employees to share their thoughts on innovation. The culture that HR drives will always enable business success, as the culture is people involved. One way of creating a collaborative innovative culture is by adapting models that interrelate HR and innovation. The Collaborative Innovation Model (see on next page) promoted in the article *Collaborative Innovation Transforming Business, Driving Growth*⁴; supports the 3 P’s (Prepare, Partner and Pioneer). The model integrates HR and innovation within a value chain that initiates from the skill (employee) to product.

⁴ www.wef.org



“Innovative cultures start with the type of structure you have within the organisation as well as something as basic as the type of environment people work within. Eliminate hierarchical structures and look to new structures such as matrix ecosystems and de-layered structures where people can work across teams and projects and are not siloed.”⁵

Allow for information to be shared across boundaries and ensure a cooperative mindset with the focus on “we” and not “I”. Examine the psychology of your work environment and assess whether it stifles creativity or allows it to flourish. Look at the impact of the colours and layout of your office environment, what type of areas you have created for brainstorming and collaboration, how creative and inspirational those spaces are in themselves, how you allow for idea generation to be recorded and presented.

Drive your innovative culture through the use of graphics, symbols and posters, create emotive and motivational images that unlock new ways of thinking in people’s minds and continue to be innovative on an ongoing basis in your very approach to the office environment and culture. Live and breathe innovation and creativity from the moment the first step is taken into your working world.

⁵ <http://expedite-consulting.com/how-can-hr-generate-a-culture-of-innovation/>

“Symbols represent the underlying values of an organisation and those who intentionally curate the innovation symbols of their companies essentially curate their innovation cultures. Use story telling as a powerful form of inculcating the right innovative culture, stories of both successful and unsuccessful attempts at innovation. Explicitly shape the right stories to convey the key value of innovation within the organisation.”⁶

Businesses need to know themselves and how they will react to things like experimentation to be able to know what type of innovation program will work best. Which structures, behaviours, goals, and people must be in place to unlock innovation? Risk averse cultures may implement a different program to a very entrepreneurial culture but the idea is not to avoid discomfort but to embrace what will work within your organisation. HR can play a key role in guiding business in line with this.

“Exponential Organizations (ExO) can be used as a very good example of Innovation. These are defined as those whose impact (or output) is disproportionately large (at least 10x larger) compared to its peers because of the use of organisational techniques that leverage accelerated technologies, are the types of organisations that embody innovation by dematerialising what was once physical in nature into the digital on-demand world. One of the differentiating factors of these organisations is that they have a Massive Transformative Purpose (MTP) as well as internal mechanisms and externalities that they leverage to achieve exponential growth. By nature, ExO’s think BIG and aim high and this is aligned to a culture of innovation and creative thinking. The MTP is the higher aspirational purpose of the organisation and can be a key driver in engaging the workforce into aligning to this MTP with an innovative mindset. HR plays a key role in disseminating the MTP into the culture of the organisation through the people value chain right from the attraction and selection stage, all the way through to reward and recognition.”⁷



⁶ <http://www.fastcodesign.com/1672718/6-ways-to-create-a-culture-of-innovation>

⁷ <http://www.insidehr.com.au/4-ways-hr-can-help-innovation-go-viral/>

- Ensure you have **talent/resources** who think creatively, deliver on products and services that meet customer needs, possess the skills and competencies to drive and deliver on innovation. **Recruitment** of innovative individuals are important for competitive business advantage, however HR must define the skill set before recruitment, hence defining the innovative skill set required for the position. Going a leap further HR can track **innovative talent** at both undergraduate and graduate level thereby creating a pool of potential talent available for the organisation's needs. This displays a proactive HR approach in talent pooling and identification of future skills.

HR has to influence and direct innovation in recruitment, talent attraction, policies and processes and strategic visioning in driving innovative skills and competencies. It is important that HR understands the innovative talent required to support the strategy. HR professionals need to benchmark national and global companies who successfully drive their business strategy through their workforce and skills. Key questions an HR professional can ask to map their talent strategy through benchmarking is:

- What are their "success skills"?
- Do we have these skills within our organisation?
- Are these skills sufficient within our business environment? (Consider the sector, political climate, socio-economic climate).
- How do these companies utilise these skills to achieve innovation and success? How do they retain them?
- How can we attract, identify and retain these skills?

According to the article by the World Economic Forum: *Disrupting Unemployment Business-led Solutions for Action*, organisations can make the difference (failure or success) in a climate where a talent crisis is prevalent through their talent strategy. The article promotes a toolkit in the tracking of a talent management strategy that is tracked through the employees age analysis.

Toolkit



Engage employees in collaborating with public authorities and education institutions to design curricula and deliver formal education and technical training [View Case Studies](#)

Tailor education and vocational training to specific regional and industry needs by taking into account local perceptions and socio-economic contexts [View Case Studies](#)

Foster core employability skills in formal education through experiential learning for students, including internships, shadowing employees and field trips [View Case Study](#)

Establish a clear framework for vocational training which links to academic education and includes standards and transferable certifications [View Case Studies](#)

Extend the organization's training opportunities along the value chain and provide incentives for suppliers and distributors to participate in training [View Case Studies](#)

Re-skill and up-skill workers for new roles according to evolving industry needs and combine training with job placement services [View Case Studies](#)

Foster lifelong learning through flexible training modules and programmes, with transferable certifications [View Case Studies](#)

Disrupting Unemployment Business-led Solutions for Action: World Economic Forum

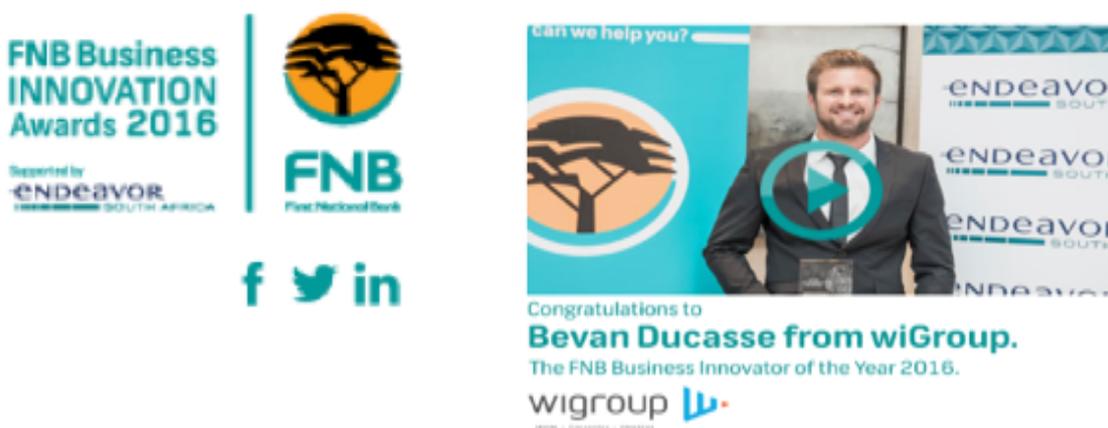


“I think the biggest leadership challenge is always making sure you have the right people on the team with the right talent to take the company forward. A good team (with the right skills and capability) working hard is vital for team performance.”

Vodacom CEO Shameel Joosub

Talent management of the workforce looks at the way HR develops innovation with their learning and development programmes, tracks the innovation through a skills pipeline aligned to product/service delivery, monitors innovation growth through employee performance linked to business performance.

- **Reward and recognition** is dominant within HR's area of retention and attraction. Again FNB can be used as an example to magnify the success of recognising employees for their employees contribution towards the innovative culture and delivery. The bank has created an event to award these employees and promote them via social media platforms. They also reward the successful employee with a monetary incentive.

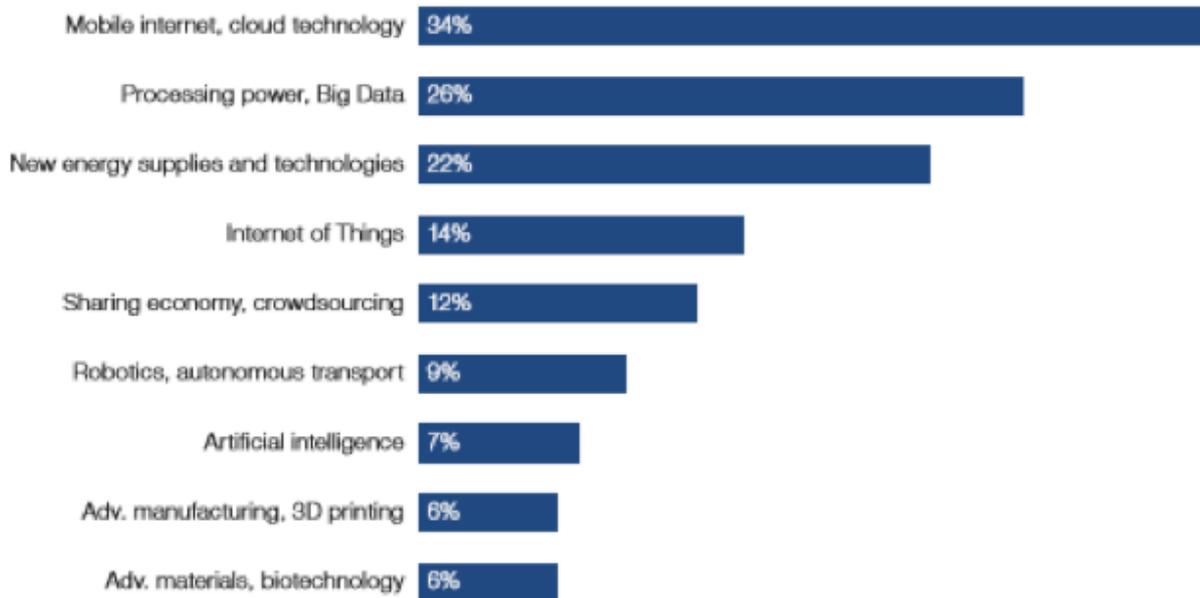


HR has the influence to create individual bonuses and / or salary increases that are linked to innovative successes. These could be the recognition of new and proved ideas, products, services and offerings, policies, processes that all add to a profitable bottom line. HR should collaborate with other departments to recognise and reward these efforts. This must be linked explicitly to the strategic business objectives – portfolio objectives – individual objectives.

Companies cannot buy creativity but they can reward talent that creates innovation. They can show that innovation is a key component of the organisation by rewarding innovative minds. Most companies still stick to Key Performance Areas which will simply get the work done but do not include innovation as a key focus area. It is a strategic opportunity for HR to drive performance criteria to deliver skills that generate profit.

- **Technology and digital** platforms has been seen as a leading driver of innovation. Analysts have categorised the drivers of this change into streams: “**social**”, “**mobile**”, “**analytics**” and “**cloud**” in an effort to understand and manage the change, and it is dually acknowledged that these drivers are related to “technology”. These are streams that HR professionals should keep in mind when looking at how to innovate both within their own areas as well as to enable the business to innovate and adapt. As stated in the article *Future of jobs*, technology is a key driver that is changing the dynamics of jobs and skills. HR professionals can plan and project the skills and technology required futuristically, and advise leadership how the business growth strategy can be supported by the people's strategy.

TECHNOLOGICAL



Source: Future of Jobs Survey, World Economic Forum.
Note: Names of drivers have been abbreviated to ensure legibility.

The digital and technological frontier has forced companies to change their strategies and adapt to the emerging consumer needs. However, HR is faced with the emerging needs of employees as well. As access to digital platforms increase so does the skills and needs of the employees. We have seen this evidently with the access to social networking sites like Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. HR had to adapt by creating policies that embrace the usage of these platforms by reminding the employee of their obligation to carry out the employer brand ethically when using these platforms.

Researchers are now developing talent models that respond to the digital change, in the article *Building your Digital DNA: Lessons from Digital Leaders*⁸, talent management is a critical for existence and business sustainability. So critical that it led to the development of a model in managing the digital talent lifecycle.

⁸ Building your Digital DNA: Lessons from Digital Leaders by David Wheldon

Managing the digital talent lifecycle



Managing the digital talent lifecycle

Technology can also be used to train and develop employees through HR's learning and development programmes. We have been exposed to E-learning platforms that save costs and time, however with the new digital advancements in the mobile technology, learning has become more accessible and current. Generation Y or Millennials (born 1980-1995) learning is described as "We learn as we go and when we need to, using technology and contacts. We know information is a click away."⁹ HR needs to prepare their learning strategies to adapt to the new ways of learning.

⁹ Accelerated Learning for Breakthrough Results by Debbie Craig and Kerry Kohl

Gamification is the new buzz word around innovative learning and development. “Gamification uses the stuff that makes play fun and irresistible and applies these measurably into non-game contexts. Engaging ‘players’ through Feedback, Fun and Friends.”¹⁰ HR can utilise gamification to drive learning strategies in a different and “fun” way. The output and objectives for learning remain intact, however the method becomes more attractive to employees since they are consistently exposed to technological trends of gamification practices.

- **Performance management** is a business process that can monitor and evaluate innovation. Even as a country, South Africa’s performance is always under scrutiny. According to the Human Capital Report 2015, South ranked an overall 92 out of 144 countries, and its potential for innovation ecosystem was very low for an emerging market with its¹¹:
 - State of cluster 4.16
 - University-business R&D collaboration 4.49

The reason for the low scoring is linked to educational opportunities, the innovative skills existing and potentially identified, and its function within the global economy itself. Organisations within South Africa have to be aware of their performance within three areas (industry, country and globally). This awareness creates the opportunity to create strategies that improve their performance in all three areas. It also affords HR the opportunity to create performance management systems, processes and strategies that are flexible and able to adapt to the different climates within each area.

Business performance is driven by the employees and their individual performance drives business success. Accenture has created an innovative way to implement their performance management system and method, with innovation through their HR. The main output is superior performance derived from a dynamic strategy. HR professionals can capitalise on the following learnings:

- The system is in line with Accenture’s innovation vision and strategy.
- The buy-in was adopted, supported and practiced by leadership and then rolled out to the rest of the group.
- The rollout was global and adaptable to all countries, areas of business and aligned fully to the HR strategy.
- It was driven by HR.
- Performance drives business profitability, and employees are aware of the key performance indicators of the company.

“Innovation has long been recognised as a source of competitive advantage. Although human resources drive the most valuable assets in today’s organisations (employees), how HR innovation enables organisations to deliver **superior performance** remains an area of ambiguity. The primary focus in business up to now has been on technical (product and process) innovation with little attention paid to non-technical innovation such as HR innovation. As non-technical innovation differs from technical innovation, this means that the approaches adopted to capture the latter may not be adequate and appropriate to understand the complexities involved in HR innovation.”¹²

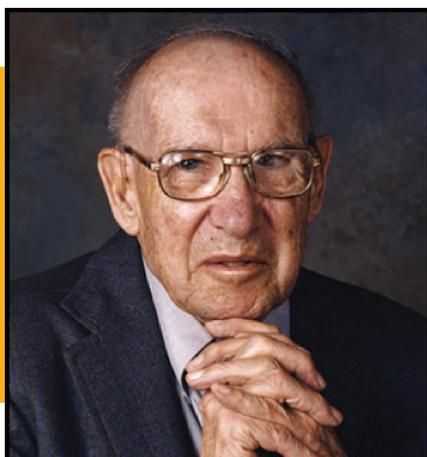
¹⁰ Accelerated Learning for Breakthrough Results by Debbie Craig and Kerry Kohl Chapter 11

¹¹ www.wef.org

¹² Competitive Advantage Through HR Innovation by U Amarakoon, J Weerawardena, M Verreyne

- **Leadership** must set the tone for innovation. HR must guide and groom leadership with development programmes like coaching, innovation awareness training, innovation skills orientation by using gamification/casestudies/videos. Innovation must be included as a major competency in leadership development plans. Having innovative leaders helps to promote the commitment to creativity in your organisation, but still a number of companies do not include innovation as a key competency. Leadership is the start of innovative thinking, developing and sustaining it.

HR must be enabled and supported by leadership to drive an innovation ecosystem (in HR) through culture, people and systems. They need to inspire innovative thinking and behaviour with clear standards, values and vision. They need to envisage their people within an innovative hub that produces success after success. Leadership is the link that holds HR and innovation tightly with its support and encouragement. Peter Drucker eloquently links HR and innovation below¹³:



“Innovation is both conceptual and perceptual. The second imperative of innovation is therefore to go out to look, to ask, to listen. This cannot be stressed too often. Successful innovators use both the right side and the left side of their brains. They look at figures, and they look at people. They work out analytically what the innovation has to be to satisfy an opportunity. And then they go out and look at the customers, the users, to see what their expectations, their values, their needs are. Receptivity can be perceived, as can values. One can perceive that this or that approach will not fit in with the expectations or the habits of the people who have to use it. And then one can ask: ‘What does this innovation have to reflect so that the people who have to use it will want to use it, and see in it their opportunity?’ Otherwise one runs the risk of having the right innovation in the wrong form”.

Peter Drucker

Leadership has a bigger role to play in managing innovative disruption in all forms. According to recent trends in driving innovative leadership, research has found that effective leadership must ensure the building of organisational capabilities that promulgates innovation routinely. These capabilities¹⁴ are:

1. Creative abrasion. This capacity for collaborative problem-solving includes the ability to generate a marketplace of ideas through discourse and debate. It requires a healthy culture of listening, inquiry and advocacy, alongside an underlying recognition that breakthrough ideas rarely emerge without diversity of thought and conflict.

¹³ <https://www.goodreads.com/work/quotes/1975163-innovation-and-entrepreneurship>

¹⁴ <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/01/is-this-what-it-takes-to-be-an-innovative-leader/>

2. Creative agility. This capacity to learn by discovery includes experimenting through quick trial, reflection and adjustment. Typically associated with design thinking, this capability is a mix of the scientific method and the artistic process – in which you act, not plan, your way to the future.
3. Creative resolution. This is the capacity to create new and better solutions by integrating diverse ideas, even opposable ones, in unanticipated ways. No one individual or group is allowed to dominate – neither bosses, nor experts. Rather, the team practices a patient and inclusive decision-making approach that allows “both-and” versus “either-or” solutions to emerge.

World Economic Forum: What it takes to be an innovative leader



“Leading innovation is not about getting people to follow you into the future, it is about getting people to co-create it with you.”

Linda A. Hill

Harvard Business School

Leadership and employees must be enabled to engage the innovation through opportunities created collectively within the organisation. There is a distinct thought of leadership researchers who believe that “engagement” is the key ingredient for innovation. If leadership is visible in their engagement and show a keen interest in the innovative ideas generated by their workforce (no matter which level it is produced at), then innovation flows and becomes embraced rather than a barrier. The diagram below looks at the dynamics of leadership driving innovation through culture and engagement.



Graphic: Deloitte University Press | DUPress.com

“Without leadership, internal forces common to virtually all groups will stifle and discourage innovation, in spite of everyone’s rhetoric about how much they want it. Indeed, our research showed that embedding these three capabilities requires leaders also create organizations that are willing to innovate. Our leaders devoted time and attention to cultivating a culture of community in their organizations, with three key qualities:

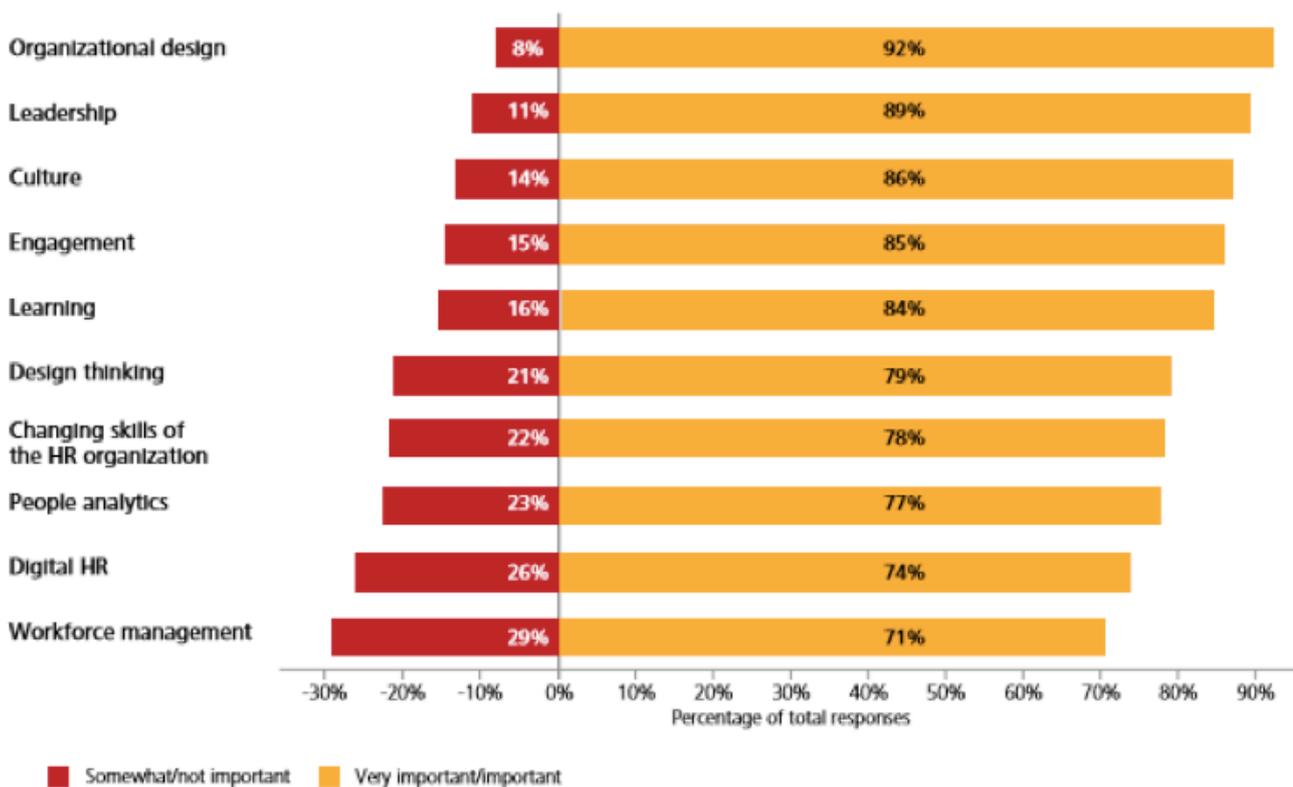
1. Common purpose. People endure the personal challenges of innovation when they feel they are part of a group engaged in tackling something larger than anyone could accomplish alone. This sense of belonging enables individuals to withstand the inevitable conflict and tension that happens along the way.
2. Shared values. Members of innovative organizations agree on what is important. Values influence individual and collective action; they shape a group’s priorities and choices. We found innovative organizations embraced four key values: bold ambition, collaboration, learning and responsibility.
3. Mutual rules of engagement. Innovative groups follow two sets of ground rules for working together. Leaders attend carefully to how people in the group feel. To ensure people feel safe to contribute ideas, they cultivate mutual trust, respect and influence (words easier to say than practice). Leaders also pay heed to how people think. They ask everyone to question everything, be data-driven and take a holistic view.”

World Economic Forum

- Create the policy for **innovation**. HR is the custodian for people policies and innovation is a people issue. The need is relevant for the innovation policy to be designed by HR as HR has to ensure innovative skill sets, culture and leadership. The policy should set the tone, guidelines and expectations that are required by the company from the individual, in delivering innovation. The policy itself must collaborate and link into policies like:
 - Research and development.
 - Recruitment.
 - Learning and Development.
 - Marketing and brand.
 - Employer brand.
 - Values and code of ethics.
 - Talent modelling, tracking, promotions.

An innovation policy must tie into the business strategy and the innovation strategy. HR can be innovative in its approach to create and monitor this type of policy.

- HR must keep an eye on the **emerging trends and research** around “people analytics”. By doing this HR will understand how potential employee trends will impact the HR strategy. Simply put if you have a glimpse of what the future may hold, you can prepare and plan accordingly for it. According to the Deloitte Human Capital Trends 2016, innovation is visible through the following top 10 trends. A keen eye is focused on the rise of the “Gig Economy” as it questions whether it is a distraction or disruption. A further association to innovation is the skill in “People Analytics” which is proving to be an asset, competitive driver in successful companies. The top 10 trends are listed below:



Graphic: Deloitte University Press | DUPress.com

Innovatively thinking companies do use these trends to develop the skills they want to drive their competitive edge. Many companies like Google, Discovery, Coca Cola, First National Bank and South African Breweries (to name a few) have all proven to be profitable and innovative. This is visible in their market approach, product and service offerings, employee strategy and the encouragement and support in driving innovation. From a HR perspective, they drive innovation through their people's skills and competencies. Listed below are the "what" these companies do differently and innovatively¹⁵:

1. Use people analytics to drive HR practices

Companies synonymous with continuous innovation do not tend to do things by chance. Quite the contrary, the company makes calculated decisions in everything it does, including HR. Basically, these companies use people analytics to steer their people management practices. All their decisions are based on what data reveals and very little is decided purely on gut feel or according to the old school HR practice of relationship building only. These companies have a scientific approach to everything from improving retention, diversity and workplace collaboration, to implementing hiring algorithms of what type of candidate has the highest probability to succeed.

2. They know their talent for now and the future

Companies track their talent pipelines and pools consistently, and this is used to match talent to new projects. They also use networking and social media platforms like LinkedIn to engage potential talent and screen what talent is outside of their organisation. They start creating a database for potential talent they would like to recruit in the future.

3. Keep it real

Be honest and simply follow this advice: "Say it how it is!" An example is a company that produced a document that revealed the company's corporate philosophy and approach to managing people, an authentic and no nonsense guide to what the company stands for. It might not be to everyone's taste, but that is precisely the point – these companies are not trying to appeal to the average person. Quite the opposite, they are looking for a particular breed of employees. Honesty, respect and integrity must be aligned to the values you project in "Say it how it is."

4. Give more power to the people

Just recently some companies have eradicated job titles, managers and hierarchies and have implemented what is now called a Holacracy (something which replaces the top-down model and distributes power across the organisation). Is it absolute madness? Or is it a clever way to give more autonomy to the people on the floor? One of the core ideas of a Holacracy is to make people take personal accountability for their work and give them the flexibility to pursue what they are passionate about. Moreover, it's meant to overcome the limitations of more conventional structures that can create bottlenecks and hinder quick decision-making.

¹⁵ The World's 30 Most Innovative Corporate Human Resource Departments January 2015 written by: Human Resources MBA staf www.humanresourcesmba.net

5. People are a priority

A company like Google is consistently ranked as the best company to work for in the world. What truly makes Google a great place to work is the priority focus placed on people. Google's headquarters offer a seven-acre sports complex, three wellness centers, indoor roller hockey rinks and over 100,000 hours of subsidised massages doled out each year. Google's philosophy is that with the right tools, you can attract the best talent, and develop happier and more productive employees.

Since being founded in 1824, Cadbury has maintained its worker village and factories. The village offers its staff and their families a comfortable environment to work and live. The company is built on an altruistic belief system that makes people a priority. The Cadbury culture combines positivity and balance, among work and life.

THE FUTURE OF HR INNOVATION: A CHALLENGE OR AN OPPORTUNITY

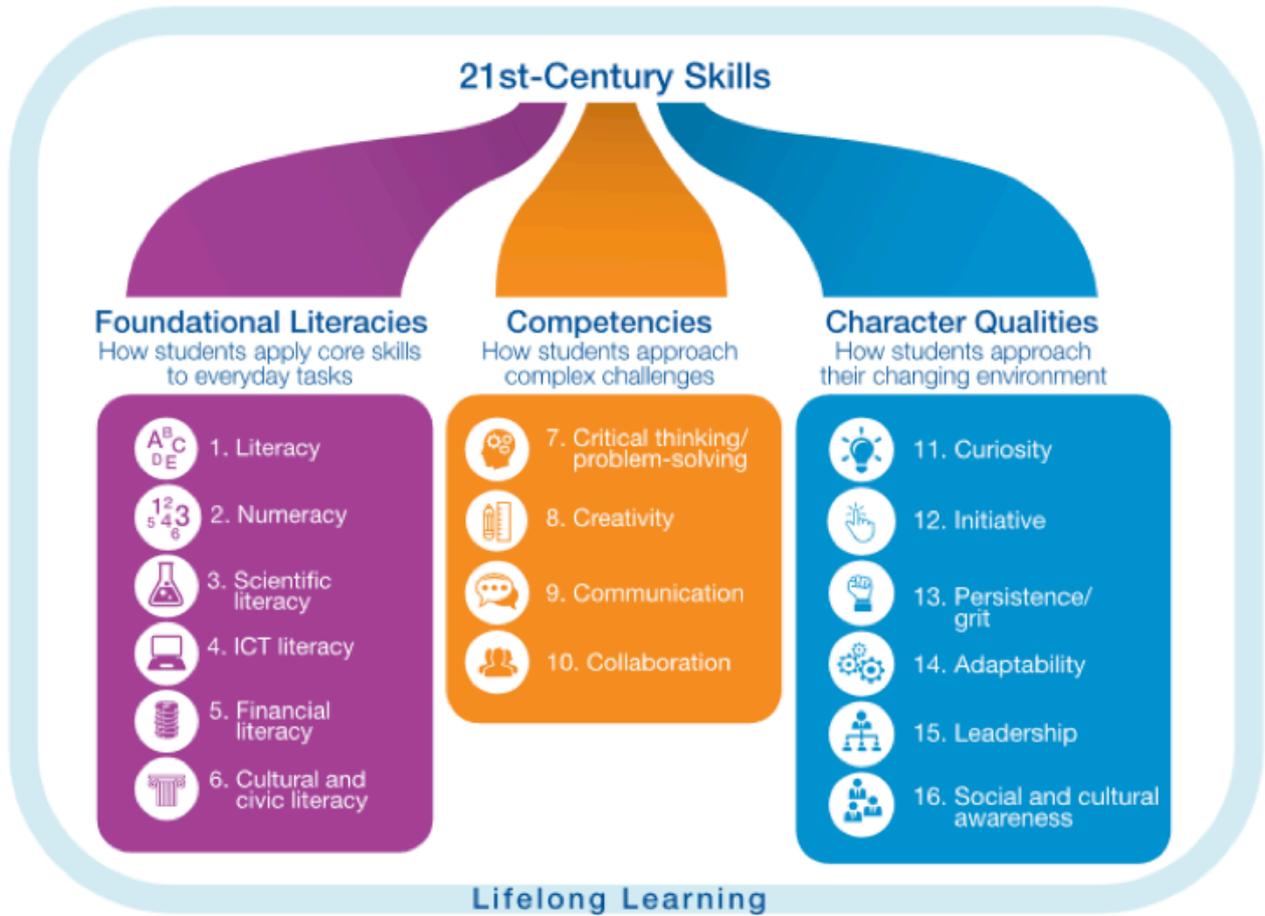
The mapping out of HR innovation has brought to light many opportunities and challenges for HR professionals. The beckoning question is "does HR see this as a challenge or opportunity?" Business leaders are explicit that talent drives innovation and their dependence weighs heavy on the HR function to deliver on required talent.

HR has the opportunity to create opportunistic scenarios by innovatively creating solutions for these challenges. In innovation, every failure or challenge is seen as a learning opportunity, and HR needs to embrace innovation within their own practice and skills development. The environment that HR functions within is creating change at a faster rate, and HR must be equipped to lead the dynamics of change with innovative solutions.

The first step is to analyse the need for HR innovation by engaging the leadership and employees. By understanding their input integrated with the HR innovation stated in this fact sheet, HR will clearly map out their strategy to align to current and future trends in people management. Innovation is an opportunity within challenging environments and HR holds the key to unlocking innovative talent and thinking. HR can start by understanding what the trends and data are saying about HR innovation, then HR needs to decide how they are going to move ahead armed with this knowledge.

HR has the opportunity to paint the canvas of future skills and competencies based on current data projections, and more so HR has the opportunity to innovate new trends that can change the projections currently. They would have the ability to track potential talent from school -tertiary- work entry levels. As mentioned by the World Economic Forum on the 16 skills students require for the 21st Century, HR has the opportunity to create programmes to sponsor and harness these skills for an organisation moving into the change of the 21st Century. Recruitment becomes more defined and aligns the actual skill set to the culture and business need. The growth strategy and global footprint of the organisation becomes more distinct in their skills alignment. The 21st Century model can be used to develop existing skills and plan for future ones.

The only challenge foreseen is if HR decides to be more reactive (rather than proactive) and slow to embrace innovation. Other than that opportunity beckons HR to think, behave and create innovation.



World Economic Forum: 16 Skills students require for the 21st Century¹⁶

CONCLUSION

Evolution of the HR Professionals role: From HR Administrator to HR Professional/ HR Visionary and beyond.....



¹⁶ <http://widgets.weforum.org/nve-2015/chapter1.html>

Despite good progress being made by a few top companies, most organisations are still struggling with innovation and HR Practitioners can play a key role in driving and supporting innovation. This fact sheet was written to highlight and promote HR's role in driving innovation through its people, by leveraging the organisation's skills and competencies.

The global and local practice clearly points its compass towards HR and innovation being the partners in a successful business. Leaders are recognising the importance of HR in driving the culture of innovation and encouraging the workforce's thinking and behaviour towards innovation. Without innovation companies would cease to exist.

It is up to HR professionals to grasp the concept of innovation and "innovatively" keep up or lead in their space. Innovation will position HR as a strategic driver/advisor or business partner to realize the overall business vision.

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Research References:

Interviews and input from employees at Britehouse:

Vermaak Swanepoel – Success Factors
Mark Corry - Cloud
Marienus Trouw – HR Innovation
Alison Jacobson – Digital

FACT SHEET

DATE	NUMBER	SUBJECT
2013		
February	1	GAINING HR QUALIFICATIONS
March	2	ETHICS, FRAUD AND CORRUPTION
April	3	NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
May	4	BARGAINING COUNCILS
June	5	EMPLOYMENT EQUITY
July	6	HR COMPETENCIES
August	7	HR MANAGEMENT STANDARDS
September	8	PAY EQUITY
October	9	COACHING AND MENTORING
November	10	HIV/AIDS IN THE WORKPLACE
2014		
February	1	EMPLOYING FIRST-TIME JOB MARKET ENTRANTS
March	2	PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION ACT
April	3	QUALITY COUNCIL FOR TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS
May	4	WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING
June	5	RECRUITMENT – SCREENING OF CANDIDATES
July	6	HR RISK MANAGEMENT
August	7	BASIC HR REPORTING (1)
September	8	BASIC HR REPORTING (2)
October	9	EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT
November	10	SEXUAL HARASSMENT

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FACT SHEET

DATE	NUMBER	SUBJECT
2015		
February	1	AMENDMENTS TO LABOUR LEGISLATION 2014
March	2	THE REVISED BROAD-BASED BLACK ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT CODES OF GOOD PRACTICE
April	3	LESSONS LEARNED FOR EMPLOYERS FROM CCMA CASES
May	4	EMPLOYEE WELLNESS SCREENING
June	5	CHANGING THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY LANDSCAPE
July	6	EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING
August	7	DEPRESSION IN THE WORKPLACE
September	8	EMPLOYEE WELLNESS
October	9	EQUAL PAY AUDITS
November	10	BASICS OF EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATION
2016		
February	1	PRODUCTIVITY BASICS
March	2	SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS
April	3	TALENT MANAGEMENT: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE
May	4	BUILDING ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITIES
June	5	CHANGE MANAGEMENT
July	6	INNOVATION IN HR

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