

Episode 353: HiBob and Workology HR Benchmark Survey With Zoe Haimovitch



Zoe Haimovitch: [00:00:00.06] Do you agree that senior leadership are now acknowledging the impact of HR? I mean, when you talk to them, do you feel that HR has a business impact?

Jessica Miller-Merrell: [00:00:09.00] This is a tough one because my answer is kind of no. It's, I feel like we are rating ourselves higher than what our executive team would rate.

Intro: [00:00:21.58] Welcome to the Workology Podcast, a podcast for the disruptive workplace leader. Join host Jessica Miller-Merrell, founder of Workology.com, as she sits down and gets to the bottom of trends, tools, and case studies for the business leader, HR, and recruiting professional who is tired of the status quo. Now here's Jessica with this episode of Workology.

Jessica Miller-Merrell: [00:00:46.90] Today's episode on the Workology podcast is a special one. It is about the first-ever HR benchmark survey that HiBob and Workology recently launched. And we wanted to share the results through a webinar that we named "Key Roles in HR: Uncovering Trends and Research." It's a full hour in which we are diving into the role of human resources with discussions on how we, as HR leaders can increase business alignment relationships and communicating how our activities in HR aligned with business outcomes. Now, in this podcast format, I wanted to share with you some of the more interesting responses that we got from the survey. So we've taken bits and pieces of the actual webinar which you can get access to at Learn.Workology.com. It's available under our free offering there. You can access the full and complete webinar titled "Key Roles in HR: Uncovering New Trends and Research" there. It's also eligible for an HRCI and SHRM recertification credit while you were there. So in this episode of the podcast, I'm joined by Zoe Haimovitch. She's the Senior Director of Communications and Strategy Projects at HiBob. Zoe is a strategic HR tech marketing communications leader and a hands-on professional with 25 years of experience, developing industry insights and executing upon them. Zoe is passionate about being a communications leader and working together with her team. She builds a story that elevates the value of HR tech services and solutions, the brand and its promise. So, in this episode, we are going to be touching on some of the high points from our webinar and really the HR Benchmark Survey results. If you're like, Hey, I didn't take part in this survey, you can simply go to www.HRBenchmarkSurvey.com. In this first excerpt, we're going to talk about the most senior HR roles and some of the trends in terms of HR titles. You don't want to miss it.

Zoe Haimovitch: [00:02:59.05] So the first question, one of the first questions we asked is what is the title of the most senior HR role in your organization? We wanted to see where HR people are positioned in the companies, and this research is about HR people for HR people, and we wanted to see how senior they are. Whether the person answering the questionnaire was the most senior or not wasn't the issue. It was who is the most senior in that organization. And we see that 25% are at C-level already and another 17% are VP's.

We still see many senior, the most senior position in HR, directors, heads-off managers. But overall, 42% of the most senior HR leaders are at the executive level. If I add VP and C-level together. Just as this find, finding align with your community, do you think does this make sense to you?

Jessica Miller-Merrell: [00:04:00.07] I love that we have so many Chief People Officers or Chief Human Resources Officers. I feel like and as we'll see in some of the other results and further into the report, that it speaks to me the real importance and focus that organizations are placing on their people and employee engagement and recruitment and all those things by putting somebody into a position as a VP or Head of HR who is interfacing directly with the CHRO, sorry, with the CEO and is a member of the executive team. So we don't have to hear about what the organization wants or the executives leaders need after the fact or later on via email or as they're walking by the office, because we're in those executive conversations. And I think that is really important that we continue being part of those as we move past the pandemic and beyond.

Zoe Haimovitch: [00:04:57.37] What is the name, the title name of the most senior HR role in your organization? Was it interesting? We wanted to see how HR people call themselves and what is their title, and we took all the data and divide it into the answers that included human resources versus the answer that included people. So we can see that the most common are Chief Human Resource Officer and Chief People Officer. There is a 3% Chief Talent Management Officer. I find that very progressive and new and other is all kinds of different names that do not have the necessary, necessarily human resources or people in them. So I put them all together in one category. So overall, 52% HR, 37% people. What is the naming convention? Jess, do you know who chooses HR or who chooses people? Is this industry-dependent?

Jessica Miller-Merrell: [00:06:00.70] I think that in many cases it is. We have been doing this series on our podcast, the Workology Podcast since really the pandemic began where I just wanted to talk to heads of HR. And we have done over 50 podcast interviews with different heads of HR who were directly reporting to the CEO, the COO and executive level. So they're in those conversations. And what I have found, antidotally, is that Chief People Officer tends to be in industries like tech that are a little bit more progressive in, in nature. But Chief Human Resources Officer might be more in manufacturing or real estate or some of these other industries and spaces. I think that there's a move to move beyond resources because it feels stiff and it doesn't necessarily reflect that. At the end of the day, it's the people component of so much of what we do. And that's why we're moving towards, in my opinion, this new role of People Officer, and we're going to see this number grow. Tech is the beginning and it's going to creep into other industries and places.

Zoe Haimovitch: [00:07:17.44] Mm hmm. So it's not. Human resources is almost like an old way of calling it. So we're thinking. You're thinking it's the direct, the direction is people. It makes sense.

Jessica Miller-Merrell: [00:07:27.70] Personnel was 1.0. Human resources 2.0. People is 3.0.

Zoe Haimovitch: [00:07:34.17] Mm hmm. Okay.

Jessica Miller-Merrell: [00:07:36.19] Now, we've been seeing a lot of job resignations recently. I know you probably have. Maybe you have jumped to a new place. So this next excerpt is one from our question about how long HR experts are staying in their roles at their current organization.

Zoe Haimovitch: [00:07:54.97] Another interesting question we wanted to know, as was how long have you been with your current company while you're answering this survey? And I realize that HR pros participated in the great resignation in a big way. If I look at HR pros versus the rest of the world that we've been researching and learning, this is a huge percentage of people that have been with their company less than a year, 25%. I mean, this isn't, these answers were collected Q1, so that's like, you know, in 2021 and 2022 and then, you know, 2021 to 2020. So you can see that we have 37% that have been in their company less than 18 months and another 6%. And it's very interesting that HR people, you know, to me as a professional, when HR leaves, that's not a good sign for my company, you know, and HR leaders have made the change during and after the pandemic. And do you feel that HR professionals are switching companies more nowadays? Jessica, what do you think?

Jessica Miller-Merrell: [00:09:10.17] I am seeing so many of my HR peers under six months, under 12 months in their roles on LinkedIn. We do a lot of research for the Workology Podcast for our CHRO podcast series. And as we're reaching out or looking at different individuals to interview for the podcast, the number of people who have been with their new organization six months is, I would say, 40% of, of the people that I'm connected to on LinkedIn. I will also say that our, we have a newsletter that goes out weekly to heads of HR, it's our senior HR newsletter list and our list has, we can see, because when you change jobs, right? Your email changes. And so our list has turned over 40%. So people are changing jobs. I also think that, you, HR people as well as other individuals in general, they're not just changing jobs once. They're changing jobs twice. So maybe you made a decision to move to a different organization, but you got a better offer or that other place that you're interviewing came through and you felt like it was a better fit. So I'm seeing HR leaders just like the general employee population, switching jobs multiple times. I don't know how many of you have done that. If you have made a switch more than once during the pandemic, put a two in the comments and let us know. I, I, there's nothing wrong with it, but it definitely makes it a challenge for the People Department to be able to be strategic when the head of HR leaves.

Break: [00:10:59.74] Let's take a reset here. We're listening to some excerpts from a webinar that we did in partnership with HiBob, and we are sharing in this webinar and in this podcast information about our first-ever HR Benchmark Survey. So this is the first time we are sharing. If you want to take part in the survey, it will be updated quarterly. I'm really, and HiBob, we're interested in trends, information and resources about the evolution of the Chief People Officer, the VP of HR, the Senior HR role at an organization. So you can go to HRBenchmarkSurvey.com. That's www.HRBenchmarkSurvey.com. This time I'm joined by Zoe Haimovitch. She's the Senior Director of Communications and Strategic Projects at HiBob.

Jessica Miller-Merrell: [00:11:47.54] Our next excerpt in this podcast is about what functions do HR professionals do, because you and I know there's a lot that we do as HR leaders, but I'm always interested in what we see ourselves as actually doing. What do we perform in our jobs? For many, it seems so obvious it's hiring and firing, but it turns out that it's not so obvious and that human resources experts could be doing a lot more. I know if you're in an HR role, you know that you're doing more. But our peers outside of HR, they are very much going to be surprised. So we're sharing with you everything that you do and what your daily responsibilities and priorities are like as a senior leader of an organization within HR.

Zoe Haimovitch: [00:12:37.63] I asked HR people, or we ask HR people, what actually do they do? What do they lead? What kind of initiatives are in their responsibilities? And it was very interesting to see the numbers and the number of initiatives led by HR managers. We can see that HR teams have 11 areas of responsibilities on average, and I just want to go through a few because it's like, it's in the nineties. Why is this in the nineties? It means that most people answer this as something they are leading, ok? The HR group, they're leading onboarding, they're in charge of onboarding, culture and employee engagement, recruiting, employee experience, performance management, benefits, learning and development, talent acquisition and compensation management. These are all in the nineties. That means that 90% of the people who answered our survey wrote all of these things that they are, are initiatives that they lead every day ongoing. This is part of their job. So many strategic tasks here. And then diversity, equity, and inclusion is at 78%. Workforce planning, sometimes called headcount planning. So this is a very strategic role. Employer branding. This, I bet they do with marketing and it's a very important task. And then 57% payroll. So this is not what I remember about the HR profession. If I would have asked this five years ago, I would think everybody would have said payroll. Right? But this is what these are the initiatives that they lead. And do you think this was common pre-pandemic, 11 areas that they're leading on average?

Jessica Miller-Merrell: [00:14:34.48] Not in the nineties, certainly. Everybody, every few comments in here that says "we work hard," "I am tired," "screenshot this slide." Yes, if your leadership team does not understand all the different balls that you're juggling, the spinning plates that we have to keep spinning, this is the example for everyone. These are all the things that we're charged with. And I would say if we ask the same thing for maybe the finance team or operations marketing, for example, I was talking to a marketing professional this week and I told them, I said, HR teams have 11 areas of responsibility. For marketing, how many areas of responsibility do you have? And it's probably 5 to 7. So it's, it's definitely not 11. I, I'm not surprised by this. I definitely think it has grown. You can see that onboarding and culture and engagement and my mind and then recruiting are the top three. And if we think about what we're experiencing right now and the great resignation, we are hiring people. And so we want to keep them, right? And so engagement and retention is incredibly important. But also when we do lose someone or we're adding new headcount, we have to be able to find those people. And it's incredibly challenging right now to be able to do that. It doesn't mean that pay equity or compensation isn't important. What this means right now is that our top three priorities are right here. I'm interested to see what happens with next quarter's results as we kind of have been in this great resignation for a period of time, how that might shift, maybe benefits might creep up. Annual enrollment is on its way for, for many of us here, it will be. I mean, I'm really looking forward to the next results over time so that we can be able to see how things shift. Is it related to a time of year? Is it related to what's going on economically in our global economy? Or is it, is it something else entirely?

Jessica Miller-Merrell: [00:16:37.30] Now for this last excerpt, we are asking you, the HR listener, the HR practitioner to step into the perspective of the executive team. So I'm asking you to step into that executive

C-level role and I want you to answer this question. How important do you think that role of HR is to the business success? In this final excerpt, we're going to be talking about what you think, those who completed the survey, HRBenchmarkSurvey.com, said. What does the executive team think of you and how important or unimportant your role is as an HR leader? Is it tied to business success? Let's listen in to what the answer was in our survey.

Zoe Haimovitch: [00:17:21.88] We asked. In the next slide, we asked from the perspective of the executive team, how important is the HR function to the business success of your company? And I was very interested to see what HR, how HR people feel about the executive team, how they treat HR. What do they think the HR function is? How is it affecting the business success of the company? And we see that, that HR is important for business success. It's not just a side profession or a side occupation. It's part of the business. It's a real part of the business. And the way I see it is that it seems like senior leadership are now acknowledging the impact of HR and business success. And we will be following this over time. Right now, the average was 4.1. I really think it should be five. I know it sounds a bit ambitious, but it shouldn't be in question. You know, looking back at other few levels, it took them time to have a position too. CMOs, Chief Marketing Operators were not, you know, the C-level that everybody listened to until they started having data and saying what their impact is. And, and I think that now the CPO, the CHROs have that level of impact as well. Do you agree that senior leadership are now acknowledging the impact of HR? I mean, when you talk to them, do you feel that HR, HR has a business impact?

Jessica Miller-Merrell: [00:18:55.72] This is a tough one because my answer is kind of no. It's, I feel like we are rating ourselves higher than what our executive team would rate. I would love to do like an NPS where we send this out to 200 CEOs and say, what do you really think of HR? And just have one question where we do the same, rate HR 1 to 5 in terms of their importance to the business success of your company, to see what they, what they really, really think of us. I do think that executive leaders think that, they know that HR is important, but I still think that we have this PR problem. If I, if you've been in HR a little while, the Fast Company article comes to mind about how everyone hates HR. I think a lot of people still think that we're only responsible for hiring and firing, so we really have to sit in these executive conversations, talk about the business success, be focused on financial statements and the overall impact of the business so that when, and I would love for us to do a mini survey with CEO sometime to ask this question, we can, we can compare. I do think that this number is different depending upon the size of the organization. And it will be interesting for us to see with more data as we get it, because I see Cori here, she says, or he, 45 employees, but then I see someone else in the next, Mindi, they have 90,000 employees. So the executive team conversations and the face time you get with executive leaders from a 45 person company to a 90,000 person organization, completely different. So I love that we have such diversity in terms of organizational size in our survey results, but also attending this webinar, it's, I just absolutely love it.

Zoe Haimovitch: [00:20:49.72] So you say we have a PR problem?

Jessica Miller-Merrell: [00:20:52.52] I do think so. I do think so. And that's why we're talking in here. That's why we're doing this research. I want us to be able to see over time and for you to be able to pull that data vertical or by organizational size, which is why we need more survey results, research results from you so that we can present you with this information. And then you can go into the boardroom and say, my peers

have this happening. Here's the business case, here's how, here's my plan, our plan for HR, how we can help support you. Here's the revenue that we can project that we're going to be able to bring in by doing X, Y, Z. You're speaking the language of your executive leaders. They're crazy to, to leave money on the table like that.

Closing: [00:21:35.92] This time on the webinar, I'm going to tell you, I could have talked about this for another hour and a half. It was so much fun. The community was so engaging on this webinar and it went by like crazy, crazy fast. I enjoyed sharing the results with you. I know that Zoe and HiBob absolutely enjoyed sharing the results with you too. We still have so much more information inside of this survey. So if you go to HRBenchmarkSurvey.com, complete the survey. We are releasing the entire first-quarter results of the HR benchmark survey, but it's only available to HR leaders who complete the survey. So, head on over to HRBenchmarkSurvey.com. Complete that survey. We will be sharing that information with you very, very soon. The plan is to uncover the trends. We are going to be updating this information quarterly for you so that we can better understand the evolution of human resources and how it continues to grow and evolve, and support the strategic business needs of maybe your organization, certainly mine, and thousands of others who have taken our HR benchmark survey. Thanks to you for listening.

Closing: [00:22:50.79] This podcast is for the disruptive workplace leader who's tired of the status quo. My name is Jessica Miller-Merrell, and until next time you can visit Workology.com to listen to all our Workology Podcast episodes.