H@RM

The transformation of an HR director to CHRO

During the last few weeks you have read the blog on H@RM's quest, HR director of Superdogfood. You may have recognized his thoughts, the evolution of his behavior and the transformation. We described his character and challenges between tongue and cheek in the light of a management fable. However, the transformation of H@RMs department and career development are close to reality.

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1. H@RM is desperate

H@RM is the HR Director of SuperDogFood. The market for SuperDogFood is growing rapidly and the company has international aspirations. These have been known for some time now. H@RM is informed during the board meeting that SuperDogFood is intending to open a factory in China in the near future. The aim is to appoint Dutch colleagues in key strategic positions for the new plant.
H@RM feels management breathing down his neck. He is not prepared for this. Management needs insight into the entire HR landscape within the next 24 hours: who are the hipos, who are the successors; which employees meet the necessary competencies; L&D plans? H@RM is worried. How am I going to fix this? Always those damned figures!
When leaving the boardroom, he hears the CFO comment to the CEO: "What's the added value of H@RM's HR department? He should have seen this request coming from far?
H@RM will not be able to provide the data within the next 24 hours. To what extent is the comment of the CFO justified?

2. H@RM is angry

"Oh hells bells," grumbles H@RM annoyed with himself. "I am responsible for the largest cost centre of this organisation. How dare that accountant insinuate that I am not in control. It cannot be that bad. We have a process and a system in place for each step in the HR-cycle; salaries are paid on time; 95% of the reviews are processed on time in the system; We can pinpoint our high potentials. Okay, it can sometimes be a bit puzzling and time-consuming. But he was resistant to invest in HR systems. I have the challenge to keep all plates in the air. All he needs to do is to ensure that debit and credit are balanced. As if he is always looking for alignment."
To what extent is H@RM right?

3. H@RM goes on the offensive

H@RM shows his teeth and assumes that the best defence is a good offense. After the initial shock, he makes his case with the CEO. “It’s not doable to get the data in time. The IT systems are not adequate: they are fragmented and disjointed. It will take more time to collect the data and to match the pieces to the puzzle. I cannot be held accountable for this. We need to postpone this deliverable by a week. My HR team will certainly have do overtime to get the information available.”

“Sorry, no can do,” states the CEO. “It is strategically important to have the data asap. Get the job done!”
H@RM tiptoes away with his tail between his legs.
To what extent is H@RM right?

4. H@RM is aware

H@RM wakes up sweating. He has dreamt that he is climbing a mountain with the board members. H@RM is in front and does not realize that they have taken another turn. He arrives at the summit sweating and not realizing that he is alone. With a smile on his face he looks around, but to his shock and horror he sees his colleagues standing on the other mountain. A deep gully separates them, and it looks like the gap will only get deeper and wider.
To what extent do you recognize the gully between HR and the business described by H@RM?

5. H@RM thinks, things must change

H@RM has had a rough night. He gets up and looks at himself in the mirror. His thoughts are a tsunami of questions. Why have I not included the expansion ambitions to China in my HR plans; How mature is my department; Is my Talent Strategy a building block of silos; Are we doing what the business is requiring for us to do; Where is my dashboard; Do I have the right skills in my department to close the gap; What are we doing, how do we actually perform and what are the results? H@RM has a moment of self-reflection and is slightly ashamed. His peers in the industry have given him the impression that they are miles ahead. H@RM realizes things must change. But how?
To what extent does your HR organization benchmarks against the model?

6. H@RM holds the reins

H@RM has gained insight. He is currently offering the business compliance driven HR services. This is not what you call 'future proof'. "I really have to start approaching things differently. My colleagues on the board are right. There are many opportunities within HR to support the business strategy, but we have to get cracking as soon as possible." Today H@RM has to bridge the gap between HR and the business. His power to be innovative and think outside-the-box has never let him down. He is bright-eyed and bushy-tailed and ready to face the challenges in the world! What should be his strategy?
Which first step should H@RM take?

7. H@RM investigates

H@RM grabs his crystal ball. Does he see the outlines of the answers to all his reflections during the last few weeks? The full picture still remains a bit foggy, and he sees various themes popping up: Strategic Workforce Planning; Integrated Talent Management; Governance; HR Analytics; Strategic Business Partner. Maybe this is the Holy Grail?
H@RM reads Kotter: "The iceberg is melting. Well, one thing is obvious we need to change our way of working, not tomorrow but today! There is no time for delay. H@RM has a light bulb moment and starts looking at where the shoe pinches in his own HR department.
H@RM reads Ulrich. Aha, the four HR roles. Indeed, we need a strategic business partner. Yes, that's the solution! Or perhaps not? H@RM is a bit confused.
What should H@RM do?
Which roles are missing within your HR organisation?

8. H@RM assesses the connections

H@RM has a light bulb moment. He takes "a picture" of the current situation in order to assess the gap between HR and the business. H@RM looks at the extent in which the HR strategy is derived from the business strategy. Show me an HR Pyramid representing five levels: strategy, organisation, systems, processes and infrastructure. This is the golden bullet to meet the current and future demands of the CEO?
The business must cooperate, of course just a small detail… How do they perceive the future? After all, the CEO wants a future-proof Talent Strategy.
To what extent is your HR and Business strategy aligned?

9. H@RM is knocked off his socks

H@RM is knocked off his socks! The picture does not look too good and the HR landscape shows complexity. He sees a huge gap. The HR strategy is not in line with the business strategy; a good HR Dashboard is missing; skills are lacking in his department, such as governance, data analytics and marketing; his staff is not speaking the same language as the business; and last but least the business doesn't embrace Talent Management as their responsibility.

The HR department is not efficient and an integrated IT system is lacking, so data cannot be shared. Data must be drawn from a variety of systems. Decisions are taken on the basis of gut feeling rather than on core data. "Now I understand why my team is overloaded!"

To what extent should the business feel responsible for Talent Management?

10. At last H@RM receives applause!

After digesting the impact of the HR pyramid last week H@RM starts-up a dialogue with his own HR department and the business. He is interested in their thoughts on integrated talent management and HR becoming a true business partner. He gets them to start working together? H@RM is confident: Success is a choice! He creates a presentation on his journey during the last 9 weeks; becoming aware of the sense of urgency to transform his HR department and developing a true business partnership. He evaluates this with his colleagues. They are very enthusiastic and they jointly determine where the priorities lie for the coming years in order to close the gap.

To what extent are the priorities in your organization supporting the business strategy and the development of HR?

11. H@RM celebrates success

In 2017 H@RM is viewed as a true peer and he proudly bears his new title of CHRO. He is also regarded as one of the successors of the CEO. SuperDogFood increased its competitive position due to a well-run Chinese factory. H@RM's department is showered with compliments. Life is beautiful!

H@RM reflects: 'Imagine if I had never taken the photo'. To what extent is your HR strategy future proof?

H@RM invites you as an HR colleague to take a picture of your HR organisation by completing the HRSonar survey. You will receive a summary report of your personal HR Pyramid free of charge.

Read more about HRSonar on the product page and download the summary of a full HRSonar report.