



Roadmap to Strategic HR: Turning a Great Idea into a Business Reality

Ralph Christensen

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"Foreword by Dave Ulrich "It is easier to conceptualize, conceive, and write about utopia than to actually make it happen. Thirty years ago, when some of us chose to go into academics and live more in the world of ideas, Ralph Christensen chose to go into the world of practice. To be honest, he was then and is now one of the best 'thinkers' in the profession - and he has shown repeatedly that he can turn ideas into action." (Dave Ulrich, from the Foreword). For decades now, human resources professionals have sounded the drumbeat of change: HR must transform itself from an administrative function into a strategic business partner. But it has been said so often, for so long, and with so little concrete, real-life information on how to actually achieve this new mission, that the message often sounds like a wouldn't-it-be-nice scenario. But it isn't. More and more traditional HR activities are being farmed out to service centers, external vendors, and line managers. The work of HR is changing, and more and more professionals realize that to succeed in the future they must be part of the team that makes important business decisions.

"Roadmap to Strategic HR" is a sorely needed prescription for achieving strategic focus in complex organizations. Drawn from the author's more than 25 years of experience and insights as an HR practitioner at Hallmark and other companies, the book outlines a 10-step, results-oriented plan for making the transition. It helps you integrate top-quality tactical work with innovative internal systems - talent systems, training systems, reward systems, or work processes - that will meet the strategic business demands of your organization.

Easy-to-read, thought-provoking, and packed with real-world examples of what worked and what didn't at Hallmark, "Roadmap to Strategic HR" helps you: boil down the reams of research and concepts into a comprehensible plan you can successfully implement; understand the business realities that are driving change, including employees afraid for their jobs, and demanding and scarce customers; compress the multitude of HR activities into five fundamental processes: workforce planning and staffing, learning and development, organization development, performance management, and employee relations; examine each of the five processes through a powerful strategic lens; resolve the tensions between HR specialists and HR generalists. Build a real partnership between the frontline managers and HR staff; identify the competencies required of HR professionals who assume the crucial role of "organizational architect"; and recognize the roadblocks and political landmines that might lurk along the way. The connection between people issues and business success is irrefutable. As the author so aptly puts it: "Talent is the engine behind the creation of all value."

"Roadmap to Strategic HR" is the most succinct, most practical book available for strengthening the link between people and value - for building a department that drives excellence throughout the organization - and for honing your department's focus so that it stays locked on the marketplace and the business strategy."

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