

## How to avoid the top 3 mistakes that HR professionals unknowingly make when wanting to be **Heard, Understood & Valued...**



Let's start with a question.

*What is the most important thing HR can provide for the leadership team within their organisations?*

- a. The knowledge or skills in becoming better leaders
- b. Insights into how to improve the personal or professional competence of their team members
- c. A feeling of belonging and purpose in their work and the organisation
- d. All the above
- e. None of the above

If you think the answer is D, you are thinking along the same lines as I did many years ago. However, the correct answer is E, which leads us to mistake number one.

**Mistake Number One:** *Focussing on employee needs first, not the business and external customer needs first.*

HR often focuses its efforts, activities, and inputs on the employees within their organisations rather than on business outcomes. This is totally logical given that HR is predominately taught to focus their efforts on employees. However, looking into the research that Dave Ulrich and the RBL Group and the CIPD have conducted over the last several years. You soon realise that HR is not just about the internal customer.

Thinking back to the question above, *What is the most important thing HR can provide for the leadership team within their organisations?* And to give you more clarification on the correct answer which is... **How does HR help the leadership team build the organisational capability that allows it to compete and win in its marketplace?** Let us now move to mistake number two and provide you with more insights into mistake number one.

**Mistake Number Two:** *Focusing on building individual or position competence over team and organisation capability.*

Let us consider for a moment highly successful sports teams such as football, netball, baseball, rugby, basketball etc. The one thing all these teams have in common when it comes to winning games is the importance of the team's structure over talented players within the team. In other words, well-organised teams will consistently outperform and win over talented individuals. Or, put in an even simpler example, think about the impact your fist has over the impact of your individual fingers.

Furthermore, reflecting on the disruption that the recent pandemic has had on organisational structures, it becomes even more important for HR to consider how it partners with its leadership team in building team and organisational capability over developing individual talent and competence. In the words of the late and all-star baseball player Babe Ruth, *"The way a team plays as a whole determines its success. You may have the greatest bunch of individual stars in the world, but if they don't play together, the club won't be worth a dime."*

Lastly, linking back to the correct answer to the question, *What is the most important thing HR can provide for the leadership team within their organisations? i.e. how can HR help the leadership team build the organisational capability that allows it to compete and win in its marketplace, ought to now makes more sense and you can relate to how it can create a dialogue that leads to HR being heard, understood, and valued.* Let us now explore the last mistake HR makes unknowingly.

**Mistake Number Three:** *Demonstrating HR value through input and activities over outputs and outcomes.*

This third mistake is one I see made repeatedly no matter where the HR team is located in the world. Furthermore, it is an easy mistake to make when HR is busy producing and or implementing policies and procedures around recruiting, onboarding, developing, engagement, change etc., to keep up with the demands of the business.

However, what matters most is not how much input and activities HR produces it is the outputs and outcomes of their input and activities that matter most. I think it is safe to say that most of you reading this will be thinking, "oh yes, Omar, I know this and reading this is a good reminder for me". On the other hand, some of you may be thinking, give me more detail on what you mean by inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes.

Inputs are the essential HR functions and fundamental elements that drive workforce performance. The activities convert and guide the HR inputs towards high-level outputs through HR processes and activities. Outputs add measurable value to the organisation and are the result of practical HR activities. Finally, outcomes are the measures of the quality of outputs and the resulting impact at a business level from the combination of inputs, activities and outputs. The question to ask yourself is, are you input and activities focused or output driven and outcome focused?

You see, when HR is comfortable demonstrating value through inputs & activities, it will create what I call the So What factor in the minds of its leadership team and could leave them thinking... "it's great that HR is busy, but So What value have they created for the business? or So What... how do all the HR inputs and activities help me be a more successful leader and or help the business achieve its objectives?" In conclusion, if HR professionals want to be heard, understood and feel more valued, then avoiding these top three mistakes would be a great place to start.

**Mistake Number One:** *Focussing on employee needs first, not the business and external customer needs first.*

**Mistake Number Two:** *Focusing on building individual or position competence over team and organisation capability.*

**Mistake Number Three:** *Demonstrating HR value through input and activities over outputs and outcomes.*

Wishing you all the HR success and if you have found this report insightful DM me at [omar@elt.ae](mailto:omar@elt.ae) to discuss how I can help you achieve "Hyper HR Delivery" that produces Disruptive Organisational results...

Warm Regards

Omar