



Introduction

Being a human resource professional can sometimes mean spreading yourself fairly thin in terms of focus. As masters of multi-tasking, HR professionals need to organise, negotiate and communicate with various levels within their organisations, manage conflict and problem solve, all while being seen as the last bastion of bureaucracy.

Put mildly, HR professionals face a number of obstacles in their role, key among them being how the rest of the organisation views them. In less strategic situations, HR is seen as the policing arm of executive management, sometimes with their role being closely aligned with personnel and administration functions that can be viewed in different ways within the organisation dependent upon the 'value' that is seen.

However, behind the scenes, HR is constantly working to improve the work environment, create new programmes and generally improve situations for employees. So when employees in an organisation question the value of the HR function, how can a HR executive effect real change and become a truly effective influencer? It all comes down to **Communication, Credibility, Creation and Collaboration.**

HR Manager



HR Executives



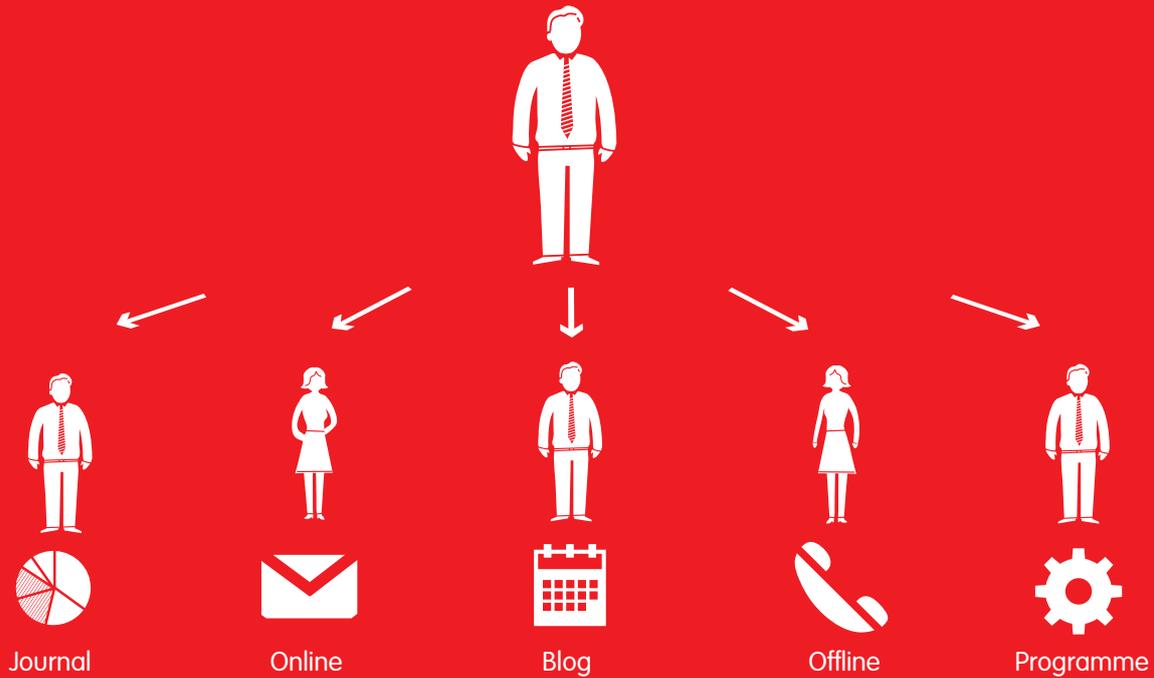
COMMUNICATION

One area in which HR executives occasionally stumble is in communicating within their organisations. Says Callum Laing, CEO of Entrevu Training Pte Ltd, "When I speak to HR Managers, I sometimes hear about how when they get a programme signed off by the management, they send out an email to the employees but realise that the e-mail may not have been opened. One thing I have noticed is that if you are struggling to get employees engaged in a project, it helps to be able to pitch it really effectively."

Pitching, or communicating, an idea often depends largely on whom the audience is and what is personally and professionally important to them. Sometimes, HR Professionals will put forward an idea in its most basic terms, only communicating what it is about - but not communicating the value that it brings. If the HR Professional wants employees buy-in on a programme, they need to provide a clear understanding of what the tangible benefits are.

"When you look at someone who has a great pitch, they will not be giving the same pitch to everyone. A big part of pitching is to be aware of who your audience is, what it is they are looking for, what their needs are and to pitch it in terms of what it gets for them." says Laing

"Just understanding who your audience is, what matters to them and then taking them through that process, is a good start."



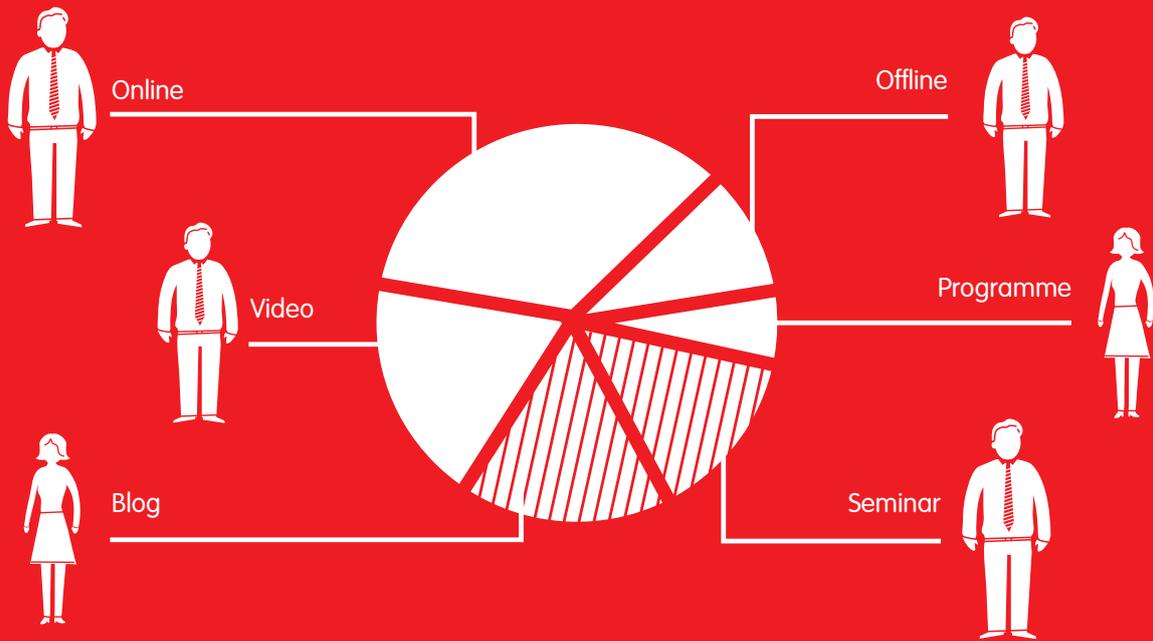
CREDIBILITY

In order to make change internally, one has to have influence and one way to do that is to be recognised externally. This can be done in a number of ways, including writing for industry journals, online publications or blogs. While most people assume that everyone knows what they know, the fact is that each individual's experience is unique and HR professionals who have been in the industry for 10 to 15 years are sitting on a wealth of experience and often don't even realise it.

The challenge is in identifying what is unique about your experience and then capitalising on it. In a 2013 survey by Sandler Training, it was found that 62% of the respondents spent only an hour a day 'selling themselves', despite understanding that it was a key factor to getting ahead in business¹.

“The idea is simply about taking all the things that you’ve learnt over the years, all the things you love about your industry, things that you would teach someone coming into your industry for the first time and then publishing on a regular basis.” says Laing

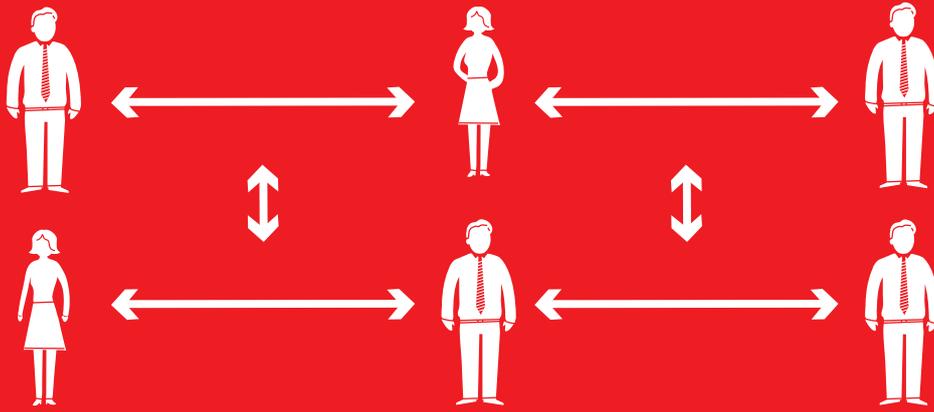
“This demonstrates their authority in the marketplace and demonstrates their authority within an organisation. It just makes whatever you are saying more credible, because it’s backed up by that experience.”



CREATION

In most situations, when HR launches a new initiative, the most common communications medium is via an email that tells people what the initiative is without providing any incentive for them to become engaged. However, taking an idea and turning it into a product, such as a video tutorial, an online training or seminar programme - one that will perhaps provide participants with an accreditation - makes it much more appealing and engaging for employees, increasing the probability that they will participate.

According to a 2012 case study from the Institute of Management Technology in Ghaziabad, India, Productisation often intensifies the transfer of knowledge and enables the division of work. It will also lead not only to better competitiveness, but also open possibilities for better management. The producer knows better what they are selling and the customer knows better what they are purchasing².



COLLABORATION

At its core, HR has always been about communication and collaboration. If there is an initiative that needs to be introduced, it needs to have the backing of the right people. Both internally and externally, partnerships are integral to success. However, before anyone will collaborate with you, they need to know who you are. Fortunately, in today's ultra-connected world, it has never been easier to raise a personal or professional profile. Through the use of social media, traditional media and internal communications channels, HR professionals can easily create videos on YouTube or share information on Slideshare, connect on Google+ or LinkedIn and build a profile and following based on an area of expertise. These all create a reason for the right people to want to collaborate with you.

“If you want your ideas to spread, you have to be out there, you have to put your hand up and let yourself be visible and seen.”

“There are so many tools now to raise your profile. You're trying to build a reputation so that when you suggest something to the employees or to the C-Suite, then people say, yes, I trust you, or I value you, based on what I've seen you do in the past.”

Once you have built that reputation for yourself, then it is time to bring in the key people in the organisation that you need to partner with or get on board in order to bring authority to your idea or plan. It has been said that there are no silly ideas if you have the right partners. It doesn't matter what you're trying to change within the organisation, if you've got the backing of CEOs and/or department heads, that idea could get approved more quickly because you've got the right partners on board.

Equally, even the best idea in the world will not become a reality if only one person believes in it. The right partnerships allow whatever you're doing to leverage and go that much further and in many cases of successful businesses, it can normally be traced back to a point where they were able to partner with somebody else which allowed them to reach the next level.

This article was inspired by “Key Person of Influence”, by author Daniel Priestley. Organised by Entrevu Training in Singapore, ‘Key Person of Influence’ focuses on five key elements that prominent people are doing more effectively than anyone else to make themselves more influential within their industries.



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