September - October 2005

hrSPECTRUM

Center for Advanced Human Resource Studies

Research Highlight

HR: Partner or Guardian

On September 14, 2005, Delta Airlines filed for bankruptcy, but its problems began long before that. After deregulation, globalization and information technology eroded its customer base and increased operating expenses. In 1993 Delta Airline launched Leadership 7.5, a massive workforce transformation designed to maintain the flailing airline's profitability by boosting revenues and cutting costs. The strategy—proposed and executed by the airlines HR leaders—called for Delta, long recognized for outstanding customer service and employee retention, to replace highly experienced employees with lower-paid, contingent workers.

Leadership 7.5 returned the airline to profitability in less than 18 months. However, Delta's new workers lacked experience, skill and commitment. The airline's service plummeted and its customers fled. Labor unions have been knocking on the airline's door and its employees began to respond. Delta's revenues now lag its competitors, and more than 60 percent of its top executives have left for other companies.

The Delta saga crystallizes a key challenge facing all HR leaders today: how to influence corporate decision making without sacrificing professional ethics. According to ILR professors Pat Wright and Scott Snell, HR execs can rise to the challenge—if they help their companies to create value, promote value and live their values.

"It's not a simple task," says Wright. "Top management now holds HR responsible for bottom-line results and measurable value. Without a strong understanding of their company's business drivers, even experienced HR leaders can undermine their company's long-term survival to generate short-term profits."

Globalization, for example, enables an organization to boost profits in at least two ways: by expanding the market for its products and services, and by hiring lower-priced workers in overseas markets. "This sword cuts both ways," says Wright. "As overseas airlines similarly globalize, they compete for each others' customers. It's harder for each of them to maintain current business and acquire new customers."

New technology can help companies improve current operations or launch new businesses, according to Wright, but it's expensive. "More important, it won't work unless the company and its employees are ready and willing to change how they've done business in the past," he says.

Commoditization—forcing companies to operate at their cost basis—results from these multiple pressures, according to Wright. "Low-cost-service providers now dominate almost every industry and price is the primary factor in buying decisions," he says. In the new commoditized marketplace, Delta faces Southwest, Jet Blue and ATA; ToysRUs faces Wal-Mart and HP faces Dell, according to Wright.

Companies typically combat commoditization—and boost their bottom lines—by paring HR expenses, since payroll typically comprises their biggest production expense. "Tactics for HR cost-cutting include compressing salary increases, shifting health care cost premiums to employees, and outsourcing production to a cheaper overseas," says Wright. "When companies are really in trouble, they often lay off expensive U.S. staff."

Although HR cost-cutting can improve the bottom line in the short term, it often threatens a company's long-term viability, says Wright.

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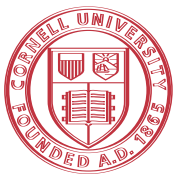


Cornell University

HR Company Profile

Diageo

Mark Reid, Senior Vice President of HR Solutions, laughs when he tells of past MBA recruiting trips for his company. "When the Diageo banner was up, no one came to our booth but when we used the Guinness beer logo, we had lots of visitors." Diageo may not be a familiar name to some, but you know Jose Cuervo, Smirnoff, Johnnie Walker, Baileys and other premium spirits, beers and wines that comprise the Diageo portfolio.

The name itself is another good story. It comes from "dia," Latin for day and "geo," Greek for world. To the Diageo team that means *every day, around the world, people are enjoying their brands*. It is not an atmosphere of all play and no work though. This global company, which has experienced significant mergers and acquisitions over the past few years, has its share of human resources challenges.

Mark, a twenty-five year HR veteran from various manufacturing, service and consumer goods companies, leads the HR Solutions team from his office in London. He outlines the three imperatives of the company's organization and people strategy. "Our strategy is really a business strategy that includes talent, rewards and recognition, and organizational effectiveness. Fundamentally, we have moved away from managing people as an asset to truly leading them as a core competency of the business."

His next comment makes anyone want to apply for a job. "At Diageo, we want to enable people to be as wildly productive as possible, releasing their potential to grow our business." That means getting rid of bureaucracy and processes. It is a strategy that must be working. In North America for instance, strong top line growth together with overhead reduction, delivered organic operating profit growth of 11% by this June. Volume grew 4% and Diageo gained share in the U.S. across all three categories—spirits, wine and beer.

To accomplish this HR strategy, the function is a blend of centralized and decentralized units. The strategy and HR solutions group are centralized and HR business partners are decentralized, located within the businesses. The numbers demonstrate the commitment to being integrated with the day to day operations: 95% of the HR staff is an HR business partner or serving in HR Solutions.

"Our philosophy around HR is really about enabling and developing a diverse talent pool to out perform our competition," says Mark. Because of the merger and acquisition work, stability has been an issue. "The three imperatives evolved out of the need to bring stability and focus on growth of both our people and our business."

Mark is realistic about Diageo's model. "We have 20,000 people located in 85 countries and we do business in over 180 territories. There has to be a significant amount of flex in the model, and roles vary significantly by country," he says.

Challenges notwithstanding, Diageo's business is poised for spirited growth and its human resources organization, with its passionate focus on developing talented people, will continue to play a vital role in this dynamic company. hr

Diageo joined CAHRS in 2005, the 'Company Profile' series feature a Corporate HR view of new CAHRS sponsors.

HR Company Profile

GrupoNueva

GrupoNueva is a leading Latin American strategic holding with a strong Swiss heritage. It's comprised of two primary businesses, Masisa that mainly through its own forests in Latin America produces and markets wood products internationally and, Amanco which builds and sells light construction and water management systems in the region.

"Around twenty percent of our sales are in the U.S. so it is quite likely that our wood products will find their way toward helping rebuild from the regrettable disaster that has affected so many along the U.S. coast," comments Leo Schlesinger, the Chief Human Resources Officer and Executive Vice President of GrupoNueva, headquartered in Santiago, Chile.

He faces challenges with his HR function that are not unlike other organizations. The roughly 500 member, decentralized HR and Services team faces a somewhat typical set of issues. "HR has largely functioned in a traditional manner, focused primarily upon administrative tasks and we are now transitioning to higher level strategic functioning," says Leo. Given that, its current priorities involve building a high performance team, solidifying and integrating its unique culture, building a global talent pipeline, and to support all of that, transforming the HR function to be aligned with business priorities so it can support an international business.

But in this strategic holding company with forestry and construction materials operations in fifteen countries and 17,000 employees, there are some unique differences based upon its 'Corporate Responsibility' and 'Sustainable Development' business model. What sets GrupoNueva apart is its commitment to this operating philosophy. "Our founder, Stephan Schmidheiny, was instrumental in the creation of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, an organization that today assembles some of the world's 170 most important enterprises. It developed concepts such as ecoefficiency and designed a strategic business vision of sustainable development. That model of operating—which seeks to ensure that our focus incorporates not only the maximization of shareholder value, but also the responsibility for minimizing our environmental footprint and social impacts, to be mindful of the needs of all of our stakeholders throughout our value chain, to work on the development of sustainable livelihood strategies for the region's poorest, to seek alliances and workable partnerships with the civil society and governments, and to operate with the highest ethical and transparent standards—is constantly reinforced by our Board, our main shareholder (ViVa) and especially by Julio Moura, our CEO. Leo explains, "We must challenge the status quo and incorporate this way of doing business and this culture into our acquired companies." Then the challenge is not only to ensure every aspect of the HR function is operating strategically, but also that it supports and integrates GrupoNueva's philosophy into its execution.

"I know all of this sounds quite altruistic," Leo says, however at GrupoNueva we make it crystal clear that this operating model does not equal to philanthropy. We are a successful company that is a market leader in most of its lines of business. This is clearly tied to the financial success of the company. Net consolidated sales for 2004 reached U.S. $1,241 million, with a growth of 24% over 2003, and net profits grew from U.S. $123 to $266 million, an excellent 216% increase.

One of the recent tasks of GrupoNueva's HR organization has been updating the executive incentive plan through the incorporation of the 'Economic Value Added' methodology in its metrics and creating a robust talent pipeline process to ensure the appropriate leaders are aligned, as this environmentally and socially conscious global company continues to grow. "Many HR procedures that you take for granted in the U.S. are new here," Leo says. While elements of its HR processes seek to catch up to similarly sized companies in other countries, GrupoNueva remains a role model for profitably doing business with a strategic focus on the environment and social issues. *hr*

GrupoNueva joined CAHRS in 2005, the 'Company Profile' series feature a Corporate HR view of new CAHRS sponsors.

CAHRS Executive Roundtables 2005

Sponsors Meet HR Students

Cornell ILR students and HR Executives from twenty corporations gathered August 23, 2005, at one of CAHRS' most popular events—the 9th Annual ILR Orientation and CAHRS Executive Roundtables. Once again there was a waiting list for HR executives wanting the opportunity to interact with future HR professionals beginning their graduate studies at Cornell.

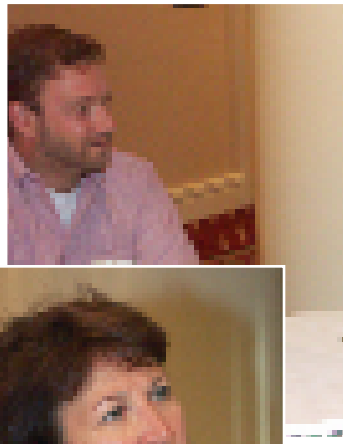
Since 1997, the CAHRS Executive Roundtables have offered our sponsor company representatives an opportunity to come together with ILR Graduate and select Senior students to exchange questions and ideas about the field of HR. They discuss the most important issues facing individual companies, the skills needed by future HR professionals, and what companies look for in recruiting entry-level professionals. This year's session focused on how to align HR with corporate strategies and how HR should play a critical role in the overall business. The executives' speeches and talks have provided students with perspectives far beyond what they will learn from books. In the meantime, the students' insights have been impressive to the executives.

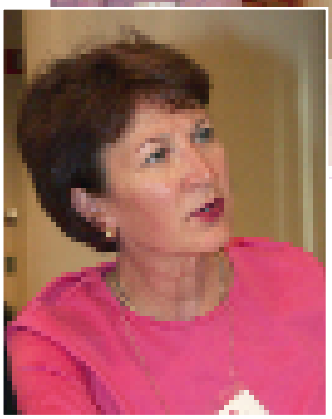
About eighty students attended our CAHRS Executive Roundtable session. Corporations that were represented at this session are CIGNA, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Merck & Co., IBM, GE Consumer & Industrial, UTC, Xerox, Citigroup, YUM! Brands, Honeywell, General Mills, Wal-Mart, Shell Chemical, Raytheon, Tyco International, Air Products and Chemicals, Altria Group, Terex, Johns Mansville, and ALCOA.

The annual agenda includes lunch, the roundtable sessions, and a reception where students and executives are able to converse in a more informal setting. The executives are encouraged to set out information on their company, and students leave resumes for the executives to look over.

Executives wishing to participate in next year's roundtables should respond quickly to the invitation that comes out in the spring. hr

Charlene Parsons, CIGNA

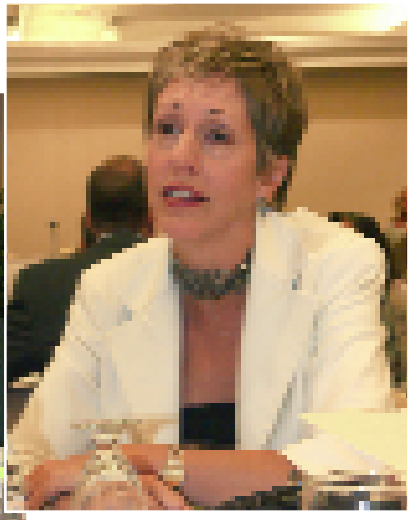




Sue Oliver, Wal-Mart Stores

Mary Anne Robinson, Honeywell

Beth Flynn, General Mills



Anne Byerlein, YUM! Brands

John Jefferson, Shell

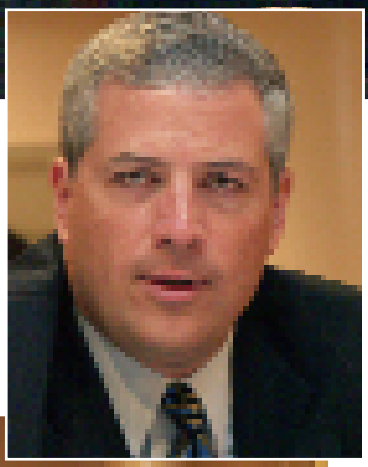
Kevin McManus, BMS

Paul Jarrell, Alcoa

Senior HR Panel

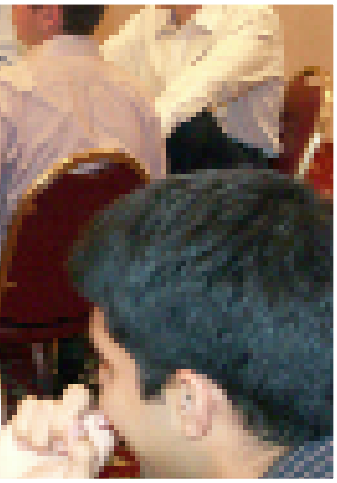
Ken Murphy, Altria Group

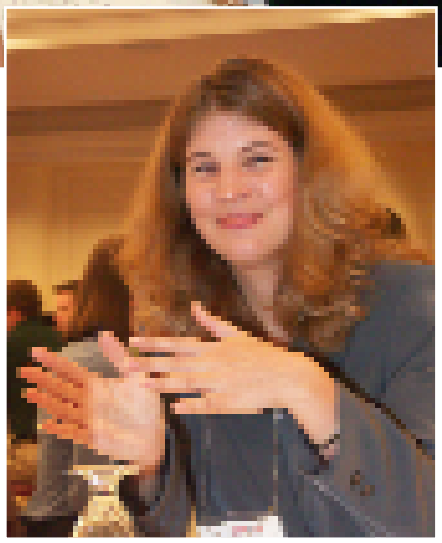
Rich Lovely, Tyco Fire & Security



Brad Greene, GE Consumer & Industrial

Steve Hardardt, Johns Mansville





Kristy Kucharczak, Raytheon

Bill Flatley, Citigroup

Executive Education Advantage

HR Strategy

On September 25-30, 2005, ILR's Executive Education offered its course, "HR Strategy: Creating Competitive Advantage through People," for a group of twenty HR executives from a wide range of companies from across the U.S. and the world. The course is designed for middle to upper level HR executives to develop skills achieving tighter integration between business and human resource strategies in the context of appropriate organizational infrastructures.

The HR Strategy Group

Participants and faculty noted that the week-long session was particularly valuable because the diversity of the HR Executive participants led to great discussions, a sharing of knowledge and best practices, and differences in perspectives. There was an especially strong representation of international companies, with participants coming from Great Britain, Canada, Germany, Russia, the Netherlands, Saudia Arabia, Peru, Australia, and Tanzania.

Professor Chris Collins served as the program lead for the week, and he worked with Professor Scott Snell, Director of Executive Education, to design a development program that followed a model of total immersion. This teaching method enables students to learn and apply a wide range of models to become more adept strategic partners and develop valuable tools for strategic action within their own companies. Professor Patrick Wright, Director of CAHRS, was also part of the design and teaching team, as were Tom Bechet of Bechet Consulting and John Murabito, Executive Vice President at Cigna.

Many participants felt the highlight of the program was working in small syndicate groups applying concepts of the course and their ideas to an existing strategic issue. Each participant chose an existing challenging project from their own organization, and worked to apply the concepts in an actionable way. The combination of intense interactions within the classroom, syndicate group work conducted in the evening, and off-site events experienced by the participants made for the creation of new friendships, and support networks that will continue to have learning benefits long into the future.

For more information regarding ILR Executive Education programs and custom programs, log on to the Executive Education web site at: www.ilr.cornell.edu/execed, or contact Mary Adie at 607-255-6075, or via email mea36@cornell.edu.

HR: Partner or Guardian

Continued from Page One

"Without experienced talent, an organization loses its ability to innovate and develop products, keys to long-term success in today's economy."

Wright says HR leaders can demonstrate their function's value quantitatively and qualitatively by doing the right things and doing the right things right. "This means focusing on activities that create the greatest value and executing them with perfection," says Wright. "It also means managing the HR function as a business—serving customers as well as building HR capability." They must also balance their company's strategic, ethical, legal and financial values.

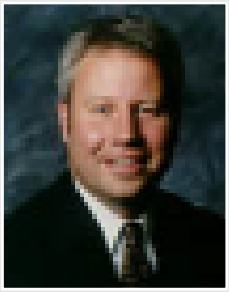
"With vision and courage, HR leaders can integrate these value systems and sustain their company's long-term viability," says Wright.

For more information regarding this research please contact Dr. Pat Wright via email: pmw6@cornell.edu, or Tel: (607)255-3429. This article references research from the CAHRS Working Paper #04-11, which can be found on our web site: www.ilr.cornell.edu/cahrs/paper.html

In The News

Marcia Avedon

Marcia Avedon Elected Company Director for Lincoln National – CAHRS Board Member Dr. Marcia Avedon was elected by the shareholders of the Lincoln National Corporation to serve a three year term as company director. Dr. Avedon presently serves as Senior Vice President of Human Resources for Merck and Co., Inc., where she holds company-wide responsibilities for human resources. She also sits on the advisory board for the ILR School at Cornell, Rutgers University, and the Board of Directors for the Jersey Battered Womens Services. Lincoln Financial Group, a wealth accumulation and protection business, has consolidated assets of over $116 billion and annual revenues exceeding $5 billion. The company provides a variety of financial services, including annuities, life insurance, retirement plans, college savings plans, mutual funds, managed accounts, institutional investment, financial planning and advisory services.



Chris Collins

Chris Collins Featured in Workforce Management – Dr. Chris Collins' recent study regarding college recruitment, has found that just as companies have wrongly assumed that students are blank slates when it comes to recruitment, students have wrongly assumed working for companies is like working in the environment their commercials portray. Throughout the recruitment process, students have preconceived notions about prospective employers from the companies' consumer advertisements, campus publicity and classroom exposure. Further, Collins found that the most significant influence on a student comes in the form of social-networking through his or her interactions with professors, peers, and career services staff. In his research, Collins has also found that companies should use different sources and convey different messages depending on the strength and nature of their existing product and employer brands. For example, he found that companies with weak or non-existent product and employer brands were more likely to attract larger and more qualified applicant pools through the use of general messages, through low involvement recruitment sources such as display ads and posters, or sponsoring an event on campus. Dr. Collins is an Assistant Professor of Human Resource Management in ILR. He earned his Ph.D. in Organizational Behavior and Human Resources from the University of Maryland. Dr. Collins' research interests include strategic human resource management, firm innovation and knowledge creation, employee recruitment, and employment brand equity. For further information on this featured article and research, you can view the complete feature on the publications site at: www.workforce.com.

CAHRS
Center for Advanced Human Resource Studies

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GCIU 1073M

AstraZeneca Strategically Thinking

ILR Executive Education

The AstraZeneca Group

Cornell CAHRS Sponsor Penny Stoker, AstraZeneca's Vice President of HR for the U.S., has a clear vision for her HR leaders, and that is to embrace strategic thinking as a foundation for HR contribution to the business. During the week of September 19-23, twenty-one HR executives from AstraZeneca convened at the former DuPont family residence, Brantwyn Estate in Wilmington, Delaware. Although the setting was at a beautiful estate and a marvel of Georgian elegance in the wooded countryside of the Brandywine Valley, the atmosphere was anything but laid back. These executives rolled up their sleeves and worked throughout the week with CAHRS faculty to focus on the drivers of strategic decisions at AstraZeneca, their foundation for value creation, and the financial implications of HR investments. By the end of the week, the team had developed an integrated action plan for HR's enhanced contribution to business performance.

CAHRS Director of Executive Education, Professor Scott Snell worked with Ms. Stoker's HR Leadership Team, including Simon King and Kimberly Wipf, to design a week of development that blended on-line collaborative learning, face-to-face interaction, and engagement with line executives on real-time strategic business challenges. Professor Patrick Wright, Director of CAHRS, was also part of the design and teaching team, as were Chuck Snow from Penn State University, and Wayne Cascio from the University of Colorado.

Back in August, faculty and executives engaged in an interactive webinar to launch the program, discuss its focus and flow, as well as provide executives guidance for preparing strategic business cases with their line counterparts. The business cases were used by executives throughout the program to ground the learning in real business challenges, engage one another in smaller syndicate groups, and apply their ideas in an actionable way. "This form of learning," says Professor Snell, "makes a powerful impact on the participants as they become 'consultants' to each other while developing valuable tools for strategic action both as individuals and as a function."

Overall, the program continuously emphasized the theme that HR leaders need to think like business people first and HR professionals second. Only by balancing these two perspectives can HR leaders hope to maximize their contribution within AstraZeneca. Professor Snell maintains that "HR is in a unique position, because it's one of the few areas that touches virtually the whole business." Snell says, "It is no longer just about 'having a seat at the table,' it is about contributing to the overall strategic capability of the company."

By all accounts, this is well under way at AstraZeneca. As Snell noted, "The amazing thing about these people is they wouldn't stop until they had a clear plan for action after the program. They were a delight to work with, and we will continue on with them as partners through follow-up webinars and discussions."

This time together was not without some good fun, however. On the first evening of the program, participants had the occasion to share their culinary skills with peers as they prepared a gourmet dinner under the direction of a professional chef at "Celebrity Kitchens" in Wilmington. One of the most notable highlights of the week, as stated by many of the participants, was the opportunity to network with each other and to work in smaller teams. The off-site setting and intense interaction experienced by the group made for the creation of new friendships, and more productive professional relationships they know will carry over to their overall AstraZeneca responsibilities.

"The workshop provided insights for how companies—with clarity of purpose, who were able to truly align their organization's people behind this vision—were consistently more successful than those companies which did not," says Simon King, HR Executive Director for AstraZeneca. These insights and weeklong learnings will allow the participants to be more effective while working with their 'Business Leaders,' to not only shape the people strategy but also the fundamentals of their business. AstraZeneca's week was followed up by a two day session of over 100 of their HR employees who began applying some of the learnings, especially with respect to developing measures to understand the business impact of their decisions, and to drive a high performance and ethical culture. hr

For more information regarding ILR Executive Education programs and custom programs, log on to the Executive Education web site at: www.ilr.cornell.edu/execed, or contact Mary Adie at 607-255-6075, or via email mea36@cornell.edu.

SAVE THE DATES

CAHRS Fall Sponsor Meeting

HR Challenges For Achieving Rapid, Profitable, and Sustainable Organizational Growth

November 9-10, 2005 • Statler Hotel, Ithaca, NY

Meeting Information

With recent global economic expansion, many corporations, some of which experienced reengineering initiatives and downsizing in the 1980's and 1990's, are now experiencing rapid organizational growth. However, unlike in the past when the focus was on top-line growth with markets rewarding such firms with unusually high valuations, this time the emphasis is on achieving a more sustainable and profitable growth.

In the quest for a more enduring growth trajectory, organizations are facing certain critical human resource challenges. Apart from the most visible and salient issue of talent acquisition and retention, organizations are confronted with increasing complexity in the entire continuum of people processes.

Be sure to check our web site for updates.

WORKING AGENDA

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2005

6:00-7:00 pm
Reception

7:00-9:00 pm
Dinner

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2005

7:30-8:30 am
Breakfast - Welcome

8:30-8:45 am
Introductions
Pamela Stepp, Managing Director, Cornell CAHRS
Patrick Wright, Director, Cornell CAHRS
Scott Snell, Director, Executive Education, Cornell CAHRS

8:45-9:30 am
"From Ego to Opportunism and from Pride to Hubris: Executive Pitfalls in Growing"
Patrick Wright, Director, Cornell CAHRS

9:30-10:15 am
"Strategic Growth"
Michael D'Ambrose, Executive Vice President, HR, First Data Corporation

10:15-10:30 a.m.
Break

10:30-11:10 am
"HR Issues in M&A Growth"
Jim Williams, Corporate Vice President, HR, Danaher Corporation

11:10-12:10 pm
Panel Discussion, "Preserving and Building Organizational Culture in a High Growth Environment"
Wal-Mart Stores Invited
Starbucks Invited

12:15-1:30 pm
Lunch

1:30-3:00 pm
Panel Discussion, "The Implications of Rapid Growth for Employee Engagement"
Jack Ryan, Senior Human Resources Manager, GE Aircraft Engines
Ted Hoff, Vice President of Learning, IBM
Steve Price, Vice President, Americas Human Resources, Dell

3:00-3:15
Break

3:15-4:45 pm
Panel Discussion - "Innovation Led Growth & Implications for Human Resources"
Valerie Ditore, General Manager Human Resources, Microsoft
David Nachbar, Senior Vice President, HR, Bausch & Lomb
Novartis Invited

4:45-5:00 pm
Program Wrap-Up
Pamela Stepp, Managing Director, Cornell CAHRS
Patrick Wright, Director, Cornell CAHRS
Scott Snell, Director, Executive Education, Cornell CAHRS

5:30-7:00 pm
Reception

All Events are at the Statler Hotel

An On-Line Registration Form is available at: www.ilr.cornell.edu/cahrs/fall2005registrationform.html

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CAHRS EVENTS CALENDAR

2005 - 2006

TNT Custom Program: HR Leaders ..... October 9 - 14, 2005 Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Talent Management Working Group ..... October 21, 2005 New York, NY
CAHRS Executive Briefing Profiling TYCO ..... October 24, 2005 Princeton, NJ
Talent Management Working Group ..... November 4, 2005 Greenwood Village, CO
Hosted by Michael D'Ambrose, First Data Corporation
CAHRS Fall Sponsor Meeting ..... November 9 - 10, 2005 Ithaca, NY
HR Challenges for Achieving Rapid, Profitable,
and Sustainable Organizational Growth
SHRLOE Symposium ..... November 11, 2005 Ithaca, NY
"Mergers & Acquisitions: Maximizing the Value of the Deal"
TNT Custom Program: HR Leaders ..... November 13-18, 2005 Amsterdam, The Netherlands
CAHRS European Initiative Meeting ..... December 7, 2005 The Hague, The Netherlands
Hosted by Hugh Mitchell, Shell
Talent Management Working Group ..... December 16, 2005 New York, NY
Talent Management Working Group ..... January 5, 2006 Bad Hamburg, Germany
Hosted by Willem Lammertink, Johns Mansville
CAHRS Spring Sponsor Meeting ..... May 10 - 11, 2006 Ithaca, NY
CAHRS Spring International Sponsor Meeting ..... June 27 - 28, 2006 Amsterdam, The Netherlands
ILR Orientation and CAHRS Executive Roundtables ..... August 22, 2006 Ithaca, NY
CAHRS Fall Sponsor Meeting ..... November 1 - 2, 2006 Ithaca, NY

ILR Executive Education & Events

American Express Custom Program: Global HR ..... September 15 - 16, 2005 New York, NY
AstraZeneca Custom Program: HR Leaders ..... September 19 - 23, 2005 Wilmington, DE
HR Strategy: Creating Competitive Advantage ..... September 25 - 30, 2005 Ithaca, NY
Through People
TNT Custom Program: HR Leaders ..... October 9 - 14, 2005 Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Talent Management ..... October 27 - 28, 2005 New York, NY
Managing for Impact: HR Metrics and Firm Performance ..... November 3 - 4, 2005 Arlington, VA
TNT Custom Program: HR Leaders ..... November 13 - 18, 2005 Amsterdam, The Netherlands
American Express Custom Programs:
HR Execution ..... November 30 - December 1, 2005 New York, NY
HR & Bottom Line ..... January 19 - 20, 2006 New York, NY
HR Leadership ..... February 2 - 3, 2006 San Francisco, CA
TNT Custom Program: HR Leaders ..... March 19 - 24, 2006 Amsterdam, The Netherlands
TNT Custom Program: HR Leaders ..... April 23 - 28, 2006 Amsterdam, The Netherlands
HR Transformation: Partnering to Achieve ..... April 30 - May 5, 2006 Ithaca, NY
Functional Excellence
Shell Custom Program: Strategic Business Partners ..... May 14 - 19, 2006 Houston, TX

For more information, contact Jo Hagin at 607/255-9358 or email: jap7@cornell.edu, or visit our website at: www.ilr.cornell.edu/cahrs/Calendar.html

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