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Will 2011 Be the Year Human Resources Adopts Corporate Social Responsibility?

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For most human resources professionals, 2010 wasn't the best of years.

As companies cut numbers and pink slips became *de rigueur*, the HR departments bore the brunt of the dirty work. Elaine Cohen, who has spent over 20 years in senior leadership positions with companies like Procter & Gamble and Unilever, and recently authored *CSR for HR: A Necessary Business Partnership To Advance Responsible Business Practices*

(http://www.vault.com/wps/portal/usa/blogs/entry-detail?blog_id=1462&entry_id=12124), writes:

“The effects of the Global Financial Crisis left many corporate headcount gaps, leaving those who remained doing twice as much in half the time for less reward and barely any recognition. It doesn’t really matter what the size of your business is or where you are in the world, because the ripple effect has, as we close out the decade, reached just about everyone.”

But Cohen doesn’t stop there.

According to her, HR professionals could have transformed 2010 into an uplifting and collaborative time for their employees. Detailing the three biggest HR challenges of 2010 as **development, retention and engagement**, she argues:

“HR managers have grappled with administering layoffs and restructuring businesses, rather than considering the alternatives to the Pavlov response of broad-scale dismissal letters.”

In fact, she continues, in 2010 HR made no significant advances in any of these respects. For example:

- “Attention to new demographics and the rise of the millennials, the (GenY) fastest growing section of the workforce which wants a sustainable workplace (http://www.vault.com/wps/portal/usa/blogs/entry-detail?blog_id=1462&entry_id=12013), has not driven new HR recruiting practices or employer branding emphasizing sustainability.”
- “Despite an HR Manager having been beaten to death by angry employees (<http://edition.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/asiapcf/09/23/india.vp.beaten/index.html>) in late 2009, things didn’t change much in 2010.”

Yet, now more than ever, we need an enlightened HR approach—and one that encompasses corporate social responsibility. So, how can human resources managers—vital for driving innovation, collaboration, ambassadorship and professional development across companies—rejigger traditional skill sets and seek to redefine their organization’s strategic growth?

Let’s begin with an outrageous resolution: To empower people by building a new platform that legitimizes the HR voice in the executive meeting room

(http://www.vault.com/wps/portal/usa/blogs/entry-detail?blog_id=1462&entry_id=12374).



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