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## Meet the CHRO of the Future

by Chris Corwin

New corporate titles are springing up in the healthcare C-Suite. Flash back just five years ago and consider how many (or few) people held the title of Chief Population Health Officer, Chief Innovation Officer or Chief Digital Officer yet they are growing in popularity today. Chief Culture Architect, [Workforce Engagement Champion](#) or Succession Planning Advocate are not commonly used on a name badge either, yet they describe important responsibilities vested in the Chief Human Resources Officer.



Earlier this year, InveniasPartners interviewed healthcare CHROs to gauge how the role is evolving. In a white paper titled [The Changing Role of the Healthcare Chief Human Resources Officer: Current Realities and Future Directions](#), Founding Partner [Curt Lucas](#) and I described how healthcare CHROs are stretching their reach beyond traditional functions to become true business partners for the CEO and their C-Suite peers. In our opinion, healthcare CEOs increasingly view CHROs as valued strategists who scrutinize plans, projects and programs from the perspective of talent.

Case in point: An integrated delivery system contemplates construction of a series of four outpatient facilities. Demand for services exists in the geography according to the CFO and clinical leadership. The CHRO asks if the necessary talent is available to deliver quality patient care. During due diligence phase, the CHRO introduces the topics of retention, satisfaction and performance to propel the conversation beyond immediate need for talent recruitment. Determining whether (or not) the enterprise has the ability to develop and manage a bigger team going forward becomes a critical part of the investment decision.

*"Finding the right talent means working with the talent already on board," says [Vic Buzachero](#), my colleague at InveniasPartners who has served as CHRO for Scripps Health. "The key is to redeploy or move around talent to facilitate clinical and business performance."*

The initial talent development strategy was to position Scripps as a destination workplace where executives, managers, clinicians and employees could maximize contributions to system success while growing their careers. This approach led to the deployment of lean process improvement throughout the organization.

And the results have been impressive: Scripps has recognized a more highly engaged staff, along with reduced noise levels on units, quality outcomes improvements, lower patient dissatisfaction scores and enhanced staff satisfaction and engagement. According to Vic, today "Management isn't telling, but coaching. Healthcare executives and managers can try to increase performance from the top down, but they won't achieve change. Only when you involve staff can you boost and sustain clinical and business performance."

Five years ago, an article in Forbes pointed out a trend of [silly C-Suite titles](#). Perhaps a new title will emerge for CHROs in the future. If so, I hope it something serious and substantial like Chief Performance Officer as CHROs create a kind of ripple effect across the organization and among other executives within the C-Suite. What titles can you imagine?

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