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The Healthcare CHRO as Champion of Engagement

by Curt Lucas

Today more than ever, CHROs must engage the entire healthcare workforce—from veteran clinicians and senior executives to therapists, security guards and dietary workers—to fulfill strategic business and clinical goals while driving a culture of innovation. As CHROs design and define what workforce engagement means in their organization, they must consider their own power and influence to mobilize and inspire their team to thrive amidst massive change in the healthcare industry.

At [ModernHealthcare's](#) upcoming [Workplace of the Future conference](#), my InveniasPartners colleague [Vic Buzachero](#) (pictured) joins a panel that will explore the evolving role of the CHRO. Along with human capital leaders from Tenet Healthcare and Providence Health & Services, Vic will help debunk myths and reveal stark realities facing healthcare CHROs.



In speaking with Vic, I expect their topics will include the traditional role of talent acquisition and assessment as well as culture building and creating an employer brand. We anticipate the panel will also explore how CHROs can accelerate clinical and business performance, drive succession planning, champion mission, and advocate for diverse leadership and teams.

I suggest that the timely insights and perspectives of Vic and his panel colleagues will be consistent with the research of InveniasPartners, which was presented in a white paper earlier this year. Partner [Chris Corwin](#) and I discuss findings from interviews with CHROs across the country and our outlook in [The Changing Role of the Healthcare Chief Human Resources Officer: Current Realities and Future Directions](#).

"Culture is what makes the difference. Attracting the best talent means being the best workplace in healthcare, if not the world," commented Vic Buzachero in the paper. "Healthcare organizations that emerge as destination workplaces don't need high-cost recruitment programs because people are drawn to the environment and culture."

Equally important, CHROs need to secure early buy-in and ongoing support from C-Suite colleagues whose words and actions promote employee engagement daily and build trust and credibility among the workforce. Transparency is vital. CHROs must convince a range of healthcare professionals that the organization will recognize, discuss and respond to concerns. Employees want executive leaders who minimize roadblocks to their delivery of quality patient care and help accelerate progress on the research agenda of academic medicine.

A CHRO responsibility that is often overlooked is how these leaders function as agents and brokers of engagement solutions. That means CHROs are making tough judgment calls about the value of traditional human capital areas that have a direct impact on the engagement of today's workforce as measured by best place to work assessments such as [ModernHealthcare's annual poll](#).

Technology-enabled engagement is a key driver of organizational change that begins during recruitment and continues through onboarding and employee development. Organizations regularly share news, guides, achievements, position vacancies and best practices by offering training via online courses, webinars and tutorials. CHROs are fully embracing collaboration tools like video conferences, shareable documents and online presentations-all of which offer opportunities for greater workforce engagement.

One growing priority for CHROs is online learning, which supports development of a knowledge-sharing culture while offering a lower-cost alternative to live conferences. Don't get me wrong - we're still excited about the ModernHealthcare conference and we plan to cheer on Vic as he steps to the stage. It's time to listen and engage as Vic and other innovative CHROs are changing the dialogue to explore fresh ideas on the quality, value and impact of the learning experience.

Thanks to ModernHealthcare for bringing leaders together to focus on the workplace of the future - one that I believe will put a laser focus on workforce engagement.

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