

# The Top 10 Quotes from HR's Biggest Conference of the Year



*We packed up the Soapbox and headed out west this week, absorbing all things HR at the big Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) annual conference in Las Vegas. Even if you were in attendance, with more than 200 concurrent sessions it's impossible to take in even a fraction of the wisdom being doled out by speakers. Here are some of the more interesting words the Soapbox heard this week:*

**1. All You Need is Love.** "If you forget the details of every (employment) law, remember that it all boils down to one thing: treating your employees the way you'd like to be treated ... If you don't want employees to leave and you don't want them to sue you, love them." - *Mark Toth, chief legal officer, Manpower Inc.*

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**2. Note Takers, Take Note.** "During interviews, take notes on a separate piece of paper, not on a resume, not on an application. Those should be pristine documents." - *Michael Cohen, partner, Duane Morris LLP*

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**3. Know the Difference Between Feedback and Coaching.** "They say millennials love feedback. No, they don't ... No one wants feedback. We want attention and, in particular, coaching attention. Don't tell me where I stand. Help me get better." -- *author Marcus Buckingham, founder TMBC* (He encouraged managers to conduct regular "light touch" check-ins with employees, asking them, "What are your priorities this week?" and "How can I help?")



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**4. Silver Lining of the New Overtime Rules.** "If you have employees who are improperly classified under the current regulations, this will be your lowest risk time to change those exemptions because you can blame it on the government ... Your message is that we're making this change because the government has changed the classification rules ... So these (new regulations) are not just a burden, but a golden opportunity." - *Tammy McCutchen, principal, Littler's Workplace Policy Institute*

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**5. Focus on Financial Wellness.** "What we used to see is employers doing financial education on the retirement side. Now we see a lot of employers doing their education to help employees with their day-to-day financial management." - *Linda Robertson, senior financial planner, Financial Finesse, Inc.*

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**6. Onboard with a Purpose.** "For most millennials, the onboarding process seems like a game of Chutes and Ladders. It feels arbitrary, ill-timed and uncoordinated. It's such a lost opportunity ... because most employees decide whether to stay with an organization within the first six months." - Amy Hirsh Robinson, principal, Interchange Group

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**7. Want Innovators? Hire Optimists.** "The No. 1 trait that CEOs say they want from employees is innovation. You've got to find the people who are innovators ... and there's a direct correlation between optimistic people and innovative people. So look for optimistic applicants and then create an innovative culture." - Lenora Bresler, owner Bresler Training

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**8. Identify Your Blind Spots in Hiring, Managing.** "The road to unconscious bias is paved with good intentions ... You must develop the capacity to shine a flashlight on yourself. Practice 'constructive uncertainty.' Slow down, take a pause and pay more attention to your decisions." - Howard Ross, author of Everyday Bias

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**9. Best Documentation: An Email to Yourself.** "The purpose of documentation isn't just to document the performance problem, it's to document the conversation with the employee ... I always want managers to send themselves an email after they meet with an employee and document what was discussed." - Karen Michael, Karen Michael PLC



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**10. Coach K on managing athletes and employees.** "One of the key goals (with either) is to make sure everybody feels important—everybody." - Mike Krzyzewski, Duke University basketball coach

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And one bonus quote as a reward for reading to the end ...

**11. Pay For Success, Not Survival.** "Having general or across-the-board pay increases is the worst waste of money that I'm aware of. It's paying for aging in place ... People will respond to rewards. But don't reward A if what you really want is B." - Robert Greene, CEO of Reward Systems Inc.