

Overheard at SHRM: Highlights from the Annual HR-palooza

This year, America's largest annual gathering of HR professionals rolled south to the Big Easy, as 15,145 HR and business leaders attended the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) 2017 conference in New Orleans from June 18-21. Here are some of the leading thoughts from the dozens of thought leaders at the podiums:

COMPENSATION & STAFFING



PAY YOUR EMPLOYEES 'UNFAIRLY.' "A great software engineer is worth 1,000 times an average one ... The problem is that if you're good at your job, you get a couple big raises and then you flatline." (Bock suggests a 50% pay spread for top employees) ... It's going to feel wrong, but unless you do this your competitors are going to pick off your best people." – *Laszlo Bock, former VP of people operations at Google*

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INVISIBLE EMPLOYEES. "We still have a lot of managers who aren't believers in virtual teams. They think 'If I can't see you, you're not working.' So that means we need to help leaders with their performance management and use of technology." – *Giselle Kovary, president, n-gen People Performance*

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PERFORMANCE = PAY. "Base pay increases do not motivate anyone. Variable compensation rewards are the best way to embed true performance pay into your organization." – *John Rubino, president, Rubino Consulting Services*

COMPLIANCE & EMPLOYMENT LAW

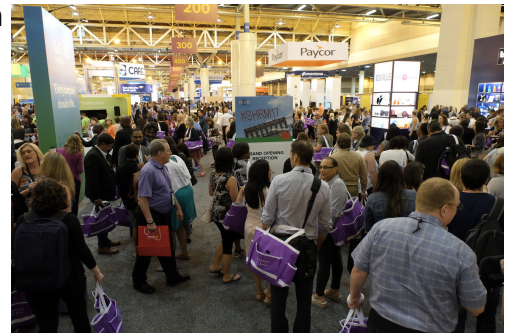
THREE MAGIC WORDS. "'Legitimate business reasons' are the three greatest words in the English language for HR. Having legitimate business reasons and good documentation will save you ... that's what the courts want to see." – *attorney Kelly Dobbs Bunting, Greenberg Traurig*

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OT CHANGES STILL ON HOLD. "I'm guessing we eventually will get an increase (in the overtime salary threshold) probably between \$35,000 and \$38,000 ... but it could be well into the end of this year or early next year before we have any idea what happens with overtime." – *attorney Tammy McCutchen, Littler Mendelson*

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SOCIAL MEDIA IN HIRING. "The problem with looking at applicant's social media is I find too much information ... we recommend that if you do look at it, look much later in the process, after the person has the job offer, so you aren't making the determination based on race, creed or color." – attorney Lester Rosen, *Employment Screening Resources*



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IMMIGRATION DOCUMENTATION. "With the current administration's focus on immigration compliance, there's never been a more important time to be sure your workforce has proper immigration status, and that your I-9 files and other immigration documentation is in order." – attorney Becki Young, *Hammond Young Immigration Law*

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WHAT'S CONSIDERED 'FAIR'? "Can you show that the employee knew the rule, received warnings, was given an opportunity to correct the behavior and still violated the rule again anyway? ... If so, a jury will usually perceive that as a fair process." – attorney Penny Wofford, *Ogletree Deakins*

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CONSIDER YOURSELF NOTIFIED. "'Notice' is one of the most important words for HR compliance. Did you put the employee on notice that there is an employment deficiency ... It serves as Exhibit A at trial." – attorney Allison West, *Employment Practices Specialists*

STRATEGY & MANAGEMENT

HIT 'PAUSE' ON MEETINGS. "Think about taking a meeting break. Make it an event—a focused effort that lets everyone be more intentional about the time we're spending in meetings." – Rob Rebele, *Wharton People Analytics, University of Pennsylvania*

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A LEADERSHIP CULTURE. "I like taking a shower. If you only do it once, you'll stink ... You need a culture built around leadership development," – Joe Urbanski, *COO at Total Solutions Group*

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EXPLAIN THE BIG PICTURE. "There's the 'know-how' in a business but also the 'know why,' and we often miss in delivering that piece to our employees." – Devin Lemoine, *president Success Labs*

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YOU ARE YOUR BRAND. “HR has a brand. We need to recognize it, own it and make it a visible, relevant aspect of who we are and what we do for organizations.” – *Steve Browne, executive director of HR, LaRosa’s Inc.*

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GET TO KNOW YOUR VENDORS. “Cultivate a personal relationship. Schedule meetings with vendors during slow periods of your business cycle. Meet with them in person if you are making a business trip to their city. Don't just talk to them when there is a problem or at contract renewal time.”-- *Matthew Kaiser, managing director of Lockton Benefit Group.*

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A SILENT STRATEGY? “There’s a real problem when 95% of employees are unaware of or do not understand their company’s strategy. HR can and should fix that problem, because finance can’t and won’t.” – *Kevin Cope, president, Acumen Learning*

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BRAG A BIT ON LINKEDIN. “Women don’t showcase their talents on their LinkedIn profiles as well as men. Shame on you! It’s important to put your best foot forward.” – *Pat Wadors, senior VP of global talent at LinkedIn*

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DO THE RIGHT THING. “Funny thing about doing the right thing for the right reasons—it will always come back to serve you, as a leader, as a department and as an individual.” –*Kat Cole, a former HR specialist who rose to become president of FOCUS brands (Cinnabon, Carvel, etc.)*

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BIG DATA, BIG GAINS. “If you use analytics and data science to improve your HR decisionmaking, you will be 20% better than you are today,” – *attorney Zev Eigen, Littler*
