

***Targeted Benchmarking on  
How Companies have Created Their HR Learning Curricula***



CAHRS Partners have the opportunity to benchmark with other partner companies on HR topics of interest. The benchmarking is typically conducted with 5-7 other CAHRS Partners selected by the company that initiated the request. The CAHRS office identifies the appropriate connections at selected companies and the benchmarking company then schedules 1:1 phone calls to explore their questions.

Examples of recent requests include: Sponsorship Initiatives, Organization Designs and Structures, Diversity Metrics, Talent Management Practices, Competency Models and a variety of HR Policy Questions (i.e. Relocation, Cost of Living, Airline Mile Usage, etc.).

CAHRS partners find this more qualitative approach to benchmarking very valuable for revealing novel insights and practices, as well as for building their network. At the conclusion of the process, the benchmarking company shares an anonymized summary of their findings with the participating companies and CAHRS, who then makes them available so all partners can benefit from the learning.



## **Focus of Benchmarking -**

Our focus was specific to gaining insights on the different approaches and practices companies are using to grow the capabilities of their HR function – both HR functional capabilities and leadership capabilities.

Company Industries that participated in Benchmarking: Food Processing, Restaurant, Chemicals, Computer Hardware.

## **Key Insights**

- The content provided by CAHRS was the most critical we received and pivotal to how we took our first step, in addition to the additional research you provided in support. I am specifically referring to the white paper and deck you shared that reviewed the different areas of responsibilities and how some of them mapped to COE specialties and others mapped to HRBPs. In our listening sessions we heard across all levels and roles the need for guidance on how to create a development plan that supports HR functional development. Our people want guidance on the different HR areas and capabilities they should be thinking about in order to identify best approach – formal and experiential - that would help them grow. We also wanted to have a short-term solution and didn't want to conduct extensive research on best competency model as there are so many of them.
- During our benchmarking I learned how some companies are moving away from very detailed competency models where levels and behaviors are articulated in detail. They found that the more robust models are helpful when career mapping, formal assessments etc. However, less is more when framing a learning journey and as a tool a learner can leverage to guide their development. Using a guide that is more intuitive and not so overwhelming was a significant point for us especially as we are getting started.
- We also learned about the various differences in approach for HR Development –
  - A couple companies provide fully dedicated curricula for their HR teams that spanned levels. In addition, they leveraged off shelf offerings while adapting the solutions to reflect the nuances of their organizations and created custom solutions to reflect HR at their company. It was a several year journey to create and implement the curricula.
  - And, equally a couple companies didn't have any dedicated and unique curricula for their HR team. Their HR team would utilize the more broadly provided leadership development solutions and resources available enterprise wide in their organization and then utilize external HR partnerships for more specific functional support such as SHRM as example where they could also receive continuing ed credits.

- For those companies who didn't have a fully dedicated curricula for HR, they shared how their HR teams would be first to participate and engage when they deployed development solutions across their organization. In addition to enhancing their learnings, this approach also helped to inform the HR team prior to a launch so that they can promote and discuss the development solutions more effectively with their business providers. There was a lot of alignment on how often HR teams don't engage in solutions at early onset and those that do it have found it to be very impactful for HR and the business leaders who see HR leading from the front on key initiatives versus catching up later on it.
- When asked about key topics to consider in learning journeys – I heard a broad range from specialty areas (compensation for example) to strategic thinking and how to consult with business leaders as the constants and then to continually refresh given what is trending externally such as Digital skills, new ways of working. Again, some of the more relevant topics related to macro-economic conditions were offered to leaders outside HR also.