ILR CAHRS

Cornell's Center for Advanced Human Resource Studies

Targeted Benchmarking on Employee & Labor Relations Continuous Improvement

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.

CAHRS Benchmarking Summary
Employee & Labor Relations Continuous Improvement

Four companies participated in this benchmarking effort as part of the CAHRS program. Stakeholder conversations focused on organizational models towards Employee Relations and intelligent automation initiatives. This stakeholder exercise aimed to provide key insights that could help understand various approaches to Employee Relations and in particular, various approaches/initiatives vis a vis Intelligent Automation as applied to Employee Relations work.

In the sections below, the summary responses aim to provide an overview of each structured interview topic and were collected from representatives of these organizations from February 2021 to May 2021. The responses have been deidentified to protect the identity of the respondents and the organizations involved.

1) *Organizational Structure and Approach to Employee Relations Work*
Of the four (4) respondents, two (2) had centralized models and two (2) had hybrid models. The key distinction was the type of work conducted by Employee Relations. For instance, one of the respondents only handled complex Employee Relations investigations while another respondent did not handle Employee Relations investigations at all. Others had more centralized intake models for Employee Relations matters. Three respondents indicated that Employee Relations handled performance and discipline matters. In contrast, one respondent only handled performance matters rather than discipline matters as well.

2) *Intelligent Automation Initiatives in the Employee Relations context*
Of the four (4) respondents, three (3) did not have a present focus on Intelligent Automation, but one respondent had launched a Virtual HR assistant that is designed for more general HR inquiries and questions (rather than being specific to Employee Relations matters). While Intelligent Automation may not necessarily be a focus in Employee Relations for the respondents at this time, all of the respondents use data systems to both track Employee Relations cases and to use for analytical purposes and for sharing metrics and insights with HR business partners. Future state goals for the respondents appear to be focused on further exploring possibilities with Intelligent Automation for automating Employee Relations metrics collection for predictive analytics purposes.