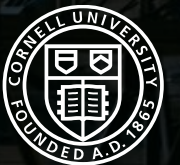


# HR BUSINESS PARTNERING IN THE MODERN WORKPLACE

Prepared By: Ashley Hamilton and Ryan Odibo

**ILR School**

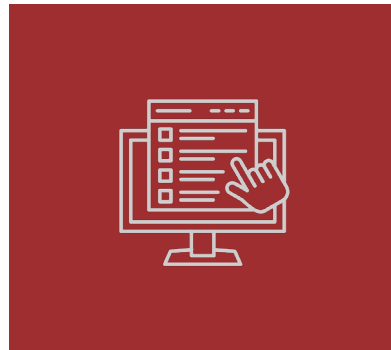


# RESEARCH PROCESS & SOURCES

Today's findings were derived from a four-month deep dive into theoretical and real-world applications of the HRBP role. Sources included:



**Literature Review**



**CAHRS Practitioner Survey**



**CAHRS Working Group Session – The Modern HRBP: Raising the Bar**



**CAHRS Partner Meeting – Unpacking the HR Business Partner Role**

# HR BUSINESS PARTNERS ARE OMNIPRESENT ACROSS ORGANIZATIONS AND WHILE THE ROLES CAN VARY, THERE ARE FOUNDATIONAL COMMONALITIES



The way a HRBP role functions within a firm is contingent on the relationship culture within the organization and Line Managers' readiness for the partnership. While the organizational culture and Line Manager readiness may vary, there are fundamental competencies and challenges faced by nearly all HRBPs.

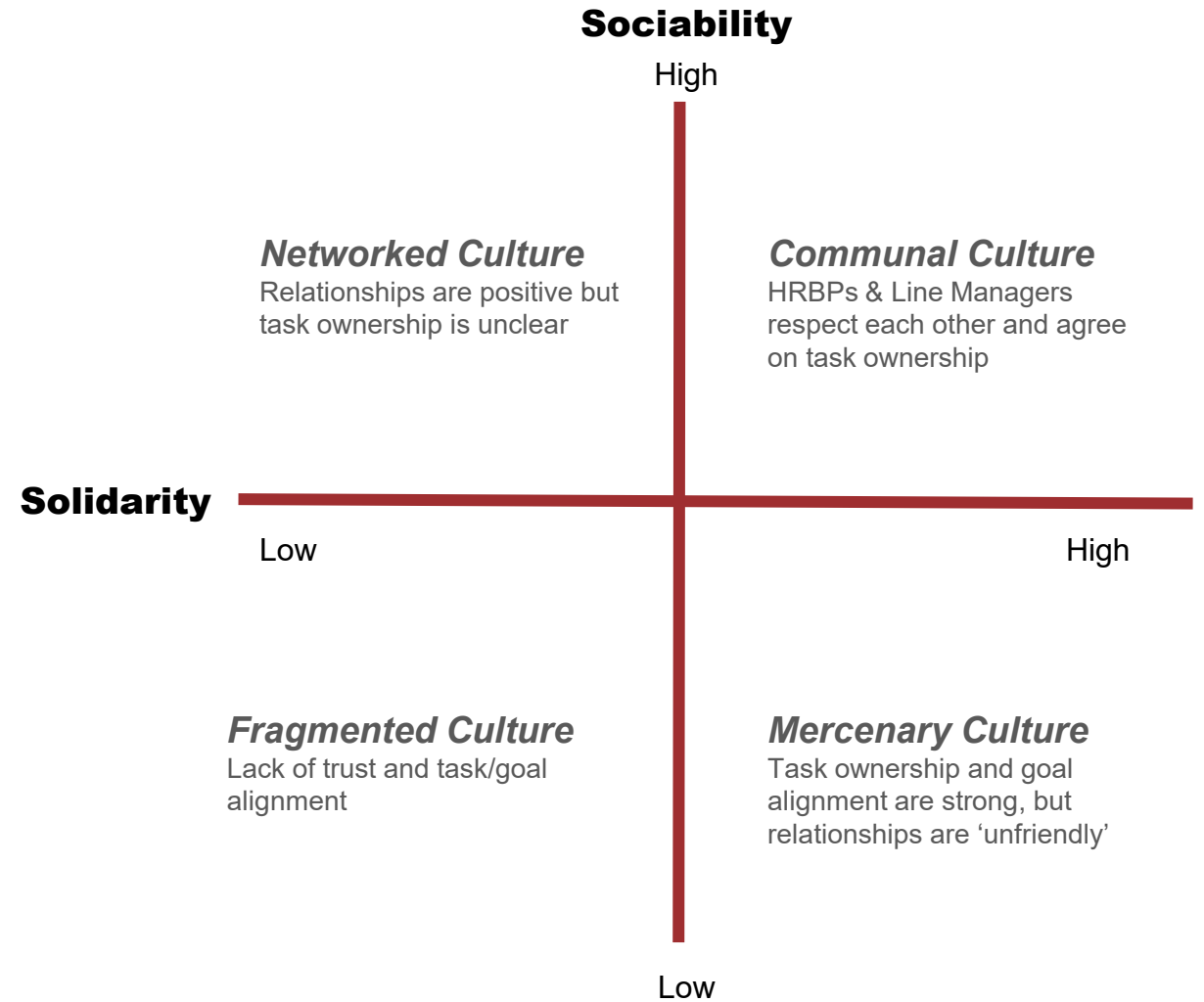
# CENTRAL TO THE SHAPE OF A HRBP ROLE IS THE ORGANIZATION'S RELATIONSHIP CULTURE AROUND THE INTERPLAY OF RESPECT AND TASK/GOAL ALIGNMENT BETWEEN HRBPS AND LINE MANAGERS

## Solidarity

"relates to the need to create a shared understanding of tasks/goal"

## Sociability

"how partners in the relationship get along in terms of friendliness and mutual respect"



# THE CORE RESPONSIBILITIES OF HRBPS: FIVE KEY BUCKETS



## Thought Partnership

Ex: Collaborating with a line manager to consider modifications to the people strategy to bolster the implementation of a business strategy



## Strategic Insight

Ex: Deciphering people analytics and making suggestions to improve retention and internal mobility



## Change Management

Ex: Translating and tailoring corporate change management initiatives to apply to a specific team



## Administration

Ex: Handling grievances or questions



## Crisis Management

Ex: Making recommendations on how to navigate running the business at the onset of the pandemic

# HRBP EXPECTATIONS VS. REALITY: NAVIGATING THE GAPS

## EXPECTATIONS

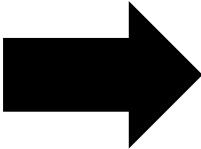
**Proactive Strategic Alignment**  
Anticipate workforce needs and develop HR strategies that seamlessly drive business success.

**Seamless Change Management**  
Effectively structure transitions while preparing and guiding teams with minimal disruption

**Comprehensive Organizational Insight**  
Deeply understand strategic goals, industry trends, and the competitive landscape to proactively contribute to decisions.

**Flawless Compliance and Systems Execution**  
Manage HR processes with impeccable accuracy and efficiency

**Crisis Leadership**  
Confidently guide the organization through disruptions with innovative, employee-focused initiatives.



## REALITY

**Firefighting vs. Strategy**  
Reacting to immediate operational demands often overshadows long-term strategic planning.

**Resistance to Change**  
Teams may resist transitions, requiring HRBPs to focus more on conflict resolution than strategic implementation

**Fragmented Insight**  
Balancing day-to-day tasks leaves little bandwidth to deeply analyze industry trends or competitive landscapes.

**Process Hurdles**  
Administrative tasks, compliance issues, and system inefficiencies consume significant time and energy.

**Crisis Overload**  
Unpredictable disruptions demand constant reactivity, leaving limited time for forward-thinking initiatives.

# KEY COMPETENCIES FOR HRBPS: FOUNDATIONS OF SUCCESS



## **Business Acumen**

The ability to quickly ingest a business situation and the corresponding financial circumstances to make recommendations that holistically promote alignment to business objectives and success, with specific emphasis on bringing workforce expertise



## **Data Proficiency**

Understanding and comfortability identifying appropriate key performance indicators, sourcing data, analyzing outputs, and formulating actionable insights from the data



## **Technology Proficiency**

Understanding and comfortability staying abreast on changing technology trends and exploring ways tech can optimize workflows to create capacity

# KEY COMPETENCIES FOR HRBPS: DRIVING STRATEGY



## Sensing

The ability to keep a pulse on the inner workings of an organization and the shifting tides of the employee experience through direct and indirect feedback loops, and then advocating for the integration of key employee feedback into strategy



## Systems-Minded

A mindset that examines situations from a holistic perspective that addresses the complexity and interplay of the internal and external forces on an organization



## Scalability

The ability to develop and recommend strategies, processes, and systems with potential to contribute to the organization's growth and evolving needs.



## Prioritization

The ability to identify and focus on the most critical initiatives that align best with the organization's goals: addressing both short term demands and long-term objectives



# KEY COMPETENCIES FOR HRBPS: SOFT SKILLS



## Relationship Building

The ability to connect and build trust with others that leads to optimal collaboration. Leveraging the network effect of this skill to be a connector in the organization across HR and different functions



## Written & Verbal Communication

The ability to clearly and concisely communicate key messages across multiple modalities and the ability to tailor the messaging to be relevant to different stakeholders

# KEY COMPETENCIES FOR HRBPS: THE UNDERLYING GUIDING PRINCIPLE



## **Courage/Pushing Back**

The confidence to advocate for a perspective that may not have been considered or may be less popular to provoke conversation and holistic exploration of an action and its potential outcomes

# CONNECTING COMPETENCIES TO ROLES: PRIORITIZING WHAT MATTERS MOST

	Business Acumen	Systems-Minded	Prioritization	Scalability	Data Proficiency	Courage	Technology Proficiency	Relationship Building	Written & Verbal Communication	Employee Advocacy
Thought Partnership	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light
Strategic Insight	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light
Change Management	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light
Administration	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light
Crisis Management	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light

**LEGEND:**



# POTENTIAL AREAS FOR FUTURE EXPLORATION



**Need for Role  
Definition  
Standardization**



**Measuring HRBP  
Strategic Impact**



**Technology to Free  
Up Capacity**



**HRBP Community of  
Practice**

# THANK YOU

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# UPCOMING CAHRS EVENTS

## CAHRS Virtual Working Group | New Developments in Structured Interviewing

- January 15, 2025: 12:00pm (ET)

## CAHRScast | What Issues are Top of Mind for HR Leaders Heading into 2025?

- January 29, 2025: 1:00pm (ET)

**View and register for CAHRS events at**  
**[ilr.cornell.edu/cahrs](https://ilr.cornell.edu/cahrs)**

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