Call for Papers:

HRM Special Issue*: Workforce Analytics*

Guest Editor: Mark Huselid

Research on the impact of HR management policies and practices on firm performance has a long history in the social sciences. For much of this time both scholars and practitioners have focused on assessing the impact of HR *function* activities. What is new and potentially important in the current environment is a shift in emphasis from assessing the activities performed by the HR *function* to developing a better understanding of the productive outcomes associated with the *workforce*. More specifically, the focus has shifted from assessing the *levels* associated with a particular workforce attribute (e.g., what is our cost per hire?) to understanding the *impact* of the workforce on the execution of firm strategy (e.g., how might an increase in the quality of our project managers affect our new product cycle time?).

Driving these changes is the recognition by both scholars and practitioners that for many firms more effective workforce management represents a substantial and unrealized business opportunity. Both the empirical research as well as practical experience would suggest that most firms exhibit a workforce "information and management failure," in that the most expensive organizational investment (many firms routinely spend between 50% and 70% of their revenues on direct and indirect workforce costs) is often the least well measured and managed. Fortunately, the availability of significantly enhanced data and informatics have made many new types of workforce analytics not only feasible but also relatively inexpensive to perform.

The emerging field of *Workforce Analytics* has the potential to make a number of importance contributions to the ability of managers to proactively execute their firm's strategy. But capitalizing on these opportunities means that leaders (both HR and line) will need to develop a comprehensive understanding of *how* the workforce contributes to their strategic success – and this understanding will then need to be reflected in the workforce metrics and analytics that they develop and deploy. From a conceptual perspective, effective workforce analytics should reflect a move from *descriptive* to *inferential* statistics, and these analyses should help us understand: How can we more effectively execute strategy through our workforce?

The goal of this special issue of *Human Resource Management* is to showcase the latest thinking, research, and practical advances in the field of workforce analytics. We encourage authors to submit conceptual, empirical, and/or case-based research papers which employ a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches. Suitable topics include but are not limited to:

- The advent of *big data* has helped to create many new and novel approaches to predictive analytics, from fields as disparate as healthcare, bioinformatics, physics, astronomy, homeland security, and social media. What might the field of HR learn from these advances?

- Workforce measures and analytics are intended to provide answers to questions. How can firms identify and prioritize their key strategic questions about their workforces?

- How can firms identify and quantify the strategic capabilities – bundles of information, technology, and people – that facilitate the execution of firm strategy? How does the performance of the workforce – especially in strategic positions – help to enhance these capabilities within a given firm or sample of firms?

- How can firms prioritize their workforce investments through a greater understanding of economic returns associated with investing in specific jobs or employees?

- What are the most effective approaches to the design and implementation of workforce measurement systems or scorecards? How can new data visualization and reporting advances facilitate the rollout of these systems?

- How will the workforce react to significantly enhanced measurement and monitoring? Will these trends increase or decrease perceptions of fairness and equity?

- Big data is frequently defined in terms of volume, variety, velocity, variability, veracity, and complexity. What challenges and opportunities for HR leaders and line managers are created by access to such data?

- How can firms create an infrastructure and culture to ensure that metrics and predictive analytics are being used appropriately? How might these metrics be used to help ensure managerial accountability for the workforce?

- What skills and competencies are required for the *development* of effective workforce analytics? How do these skills and competencies differ for those tasked with the *interpretation* of these analytics? What is the best way to develop these skills?

- How can we equip both HR and Line managers to use data and analytics to improve the quality of workforce decision-making?

Authors interested in submitting manuscripts for consideration for this Special Issue should submit manuscripts by December 31, 2015. For more information, please contact:

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