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HR CERTIFICATION INSTITUTE STUDY FINDS ONLY 1-IN-3 COMPANIES HAVE ADOPTED STRATEGIC TALENT MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES

*Competitive Talent Advantages Must Come From Company-Wide Strategies
Driven by Deeper HR, C-Suite and Line Management Collaboration, Research Concludes*

ALEXANDRIA, Va., May 22, 2017 – Business leaders are calling for more business-driven talent and human resource management strategies, but company-wide commitment and support is still lacking, finds a new HR Certification Institute® (HRCI®) study, **Strategic HR Emerges as a Company-Wide Priority**.

At companies where strategic HR initiatives have been adopted, 87 percent of HR leaders and 88 percent of non-HR C-suite executives and line managers, collectively, said they were satisfied with the results. But less than 1-in-3 HR leaders reported that strategic HR initiatives have been adopted at their organizations.

"HR professionals must take the lead, but organization-wide support is required for success," said Amy Schabacker Dufrane, Ed.D., SPHR, CAE, and CEO of HRCI, the premier organization that provides HR credentials for HR professionals who have demonstrated mastery in the field. "HR practitioners must continue to commit to transforming the profession to add more business value, but equally essential are the roles that C-suite leaders and line managers play."

HR is still not viewed as a strategic contributor at many organizations. Only 13 percent of HR leaders at companies lacking strategic HR initiatives said their companies are "very" or "extremely" committed. C-suite executives and line managers at these companies are slightly more optimistic, perhaps due to a lack of deeper understanding about what strategic HR entails, with 21 percent of C-suite and line manager respondents, collectively, responding that their companies are "very" or "extremely" committed.

The study asked HR respondents to identify the practices that would give HR more bottom-line influence. The top five:

- Strategic hiring of candidates with skillsets that add to the future growth of the organization.
- Using total rewards to add value to and invest in greater employee performance.
- Enhanced departmental employee performance tracking to identify low and high performers.
- Measuring HR performance by company-wide key performance indicators, not just HR metrics.
- HR working with senior organizational leadership to integrate mission and purpose across all divisions and job roles.

Overall, 74 percent of HRCI credential holders who are HR professionals support strategic HR initiatives, whether implemented or not at their organizations; 60 percent of non-HR C-Suite and line managers support a shift to strategic HR practice.

"Emerging HR practices require the courage and conviction from all business partners to innovate new ways for people to raise performance goals," Dufrane said. "The good news is that the C-suite and line managers are ready for new HR ideas that create competitive advantages."

Interestingly, the research found that the terms "Human Capital Management (HCM)" and "strategic HR" are essentially viewed as interchangeable. In fact, many respondents expressed a preference for "strategic HR" as the preferred term for practices that add business value.

The research, conducted by Brightline Strategies, an independent, third party research and communications firm, concludes that the road to greater strategic HR success will require HR to shed traditional actions and initiate more activities as a strategic business unit, adopt new technologies to advance and amplify HR's strategic business role, improve on overall business awareness, and embrace basic business and finance knowledge to analyze data for better talent strategies. The C-suite, the research concludes, must shed biases of HR as a cost center and embrace more objective and measurable value that HR can bring to the boardroom. Non-HR employees must play more important roles in driving HR strategy.

"The findings raise some interesting questions for HR professionals and their business partners," Dufrane said. "What is the right mix of HR technology, HR outsourcing and in-house HR expertise to add more strategic value? How does the C-suite, line management and HR work together to drive business outcomes? How can HR better address the needs of both internal and external stakeholders? The best answers to these questions will gain the most sustainable competitive advantages."

About HRCI

HR Certification Institute® (HRCI®) is the premier professional credentialing organization for the human resource management profession. For more than 40 years, HRCI has set the standard for HR mastery and excellence around the globe. An independent nonprofit organization, HRCI is dedicated to advancing the HR profession through developing and administering best-in-class certifications including the Professional in Human Resources (PHR®) and the Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR®). All HRCI credentials are recognized as the most rigorous, meaningful and grounded professional certifications that demonstrate competency, real-world practical skills and knowledge in the field. With HRCI credential holders in more than 100 countries around the globe, HRCI ensures, strengthens and advances the strategic value and impact of HR. Learn more at www.hrci.org.

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