



WORDS ON WISE MANAGEMENT

Should you be an HR leader?

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Whether you are a salesperson or a CFO, you should be thinking about the people in your organization. You may think, “I’m in sales, why should I care about the people in my organization?” or “I’m the CFO, numbers are my thing, not people,” but you are dead wrong. It’s part of your job to think about your organization and its employees.

Even if you don’t formally manage others in your organization, you are most likely a leader of people, and as a result, you *must* know enough about HR to perform your job optimally. Whether you work in sales, finance, or some other department, knowing about the basic elements of HR shows employees that you value them. While numbers are certainly important, equally—or perhaps even more—important is how well versed in HR “stuff” your managers are. Therefore, no matter what your title, you should be an HR leader.

Leaders know stuff

“How does the compensation structure work here?” or “What is the compensation philosophy of this organization?” are questions that great leaders have a response to, other than just telling the inquisitive team member to ask someone in HR. Do you know what your organization’s compensation philosophy is? Pay is something that everyone cares about and something you should be able to easily explain when asked.

Another question you may be asked is “What is the organization’s performance management strategy?” It actually may come across as “Why didn’t I get the top rating or a bigger raise on my review this year?” If you can’t differentiate for someone exactly what the top rating looks or sounds like, then how

are you capable of writing an airtight review? If it happened to you, wouldn’t you expect your boss to be able to give you a solid explanation of how he saw things? Your team expects the same thing. It’s important to understand how to explain and differentiate performance strategy.

It’s not just Millennials who are interested in learning and growing at your organization. Do you have some sense of the career paths or learning opportunities that are available in the organization? If you aren’t proactively assisting your people in their learning and career path exploration, you need to start doing it. They expect you to have their best interests at heart.

Comfort level

“I’m pregnant and I need to see about FMLA or other leave. How does that work?” is another question you are likely to encounter. We know the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) can be tricky to navigate and HR will definitely be involved, but your team members are looking to you for comfort and expect you to at least have some knowledge about how it works. Your people want you to be able to explain the basics of FMLA leave or how your organization’s leave policy works—and they deserve that much. If they ask and you aren’t comfortable answering, then get comfortable. After, you can send them to HR for more information.

So, back to our original question. Do you still think that knowing these things is HR’s responsibility, or is it part of your job as well?



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