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The Lonely Executive

How can a Strategic Human Resources Professional ease the challenges of managing from the top?



by **Neil B. Zambik**
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You are sitting alone at your desk. It's late in the day. Most of your employees have gone home to enjoy the evening and forget about work. You finally have a chance to take a break from the hectic daily life of an executive. It's the first opportunity to again worry about the bigger issues that you and your company are facing. It all rests in your hands and you quickly realize, it's true, it really is lonely at the top. Have you ever had these thoughts?

As your thoughts turn to the issues you have to deal with, you wonder if your achievements of becoming an executive and earning a good salary are really worth the stress and responsibility. You know the employees of the company expect you to be:

- An incredible leader
- A strong strategist
- A great decision maker
- A person who is always looking out for the best interests of the employees and the company **AND**
- A person who ensures a strong bottom line for the organization...

BUT

You feel you can't discuss your feelings, fears, and thoughts with anyone in the company. People might think that you are not as strong as they thought you were or may not be capable of doing the job. Also, getting true, open, and honest feedback from others in the company is difficult as they always have a vested interest in how they reply to your questions. You may not get the "full truth" from them.

So, who can you turn to when you're faced with situations like:

- Complex people issues
- Organizational changes and restructuring
- Hiring or termination of a key executive
- Productivity decreases
- Competition taking significant market share
- Sale of the company
- Determining what issues to deal with first.

A Strategic Human Resources Professional can be your answer.

Whether inside your organization or externally, a strategic HR professional can be:

- A non-biased listener who can help you clearly define the issues you are dealing with and begin to develop a solution with you
- A coach that can help keep you on track when you get distracted with day to day crises

see **Strategic HR** page 2 >

< Continued from page 1

Ways to utilize a consultant as a Strategic Human Resources Professional

Have a free initial meeting with the consultant to determine if there is anything that he or she can assist you with.

If you decide to proceed, there are many different ways to utilize the consultant for best value for the organization. Here are some ways for your consideration:

- On a project basis
- On an hourly basis
- As a part time HR manager
- As a mentor to an internal HR person
- As an executive coach

"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader."

John Quincy Adams

"Time is neutral and does not change things. With courage and initiative, leaders change things."

Jesse Jackson

The Strategic HR Professional is your friend at the top

- A good sounding board for reviewing and confirming your own thoughts and ideas
 - An experienced business person who has successfully worked with executives and helped them with similar issues in the past
 - A person with a strong business mind and the ability to know how to effectively work with all levels of the organization to help resolve issues
 - Someone who can remain totally confidential and create a safe environment for sharing your fears and weaknesses
 - A business friend who can support you and empathize with you in a confidential manner.
3. As you start to see the value that can be added by this person, continue to increase the level of sharing to more complex and complicated issues.
 4. As rapport and trust in the HR professional's expertise is gained, continue to utilize the person as a confidant, a business friend, and a coach.

In summary, almost all decisions in any organization affect the people in some way or another. Whether it be education issues, communication issues, job changes, etc., people are often affected by decisions the executive makes.

Next time you are sitting alone at your desk late at night and struggling with how to tackle some key issues, don't feel that you have to deal with the problem all alone. Call a Strategic Human Resources Professional to help ease your burden.

What are the steps to developing this type of relationship with a Strategic Human Resources Professional?

1. Meet with the person to establish rapport and test to see if there is a strong connection.
2. After rapport has been established over a period of time, share some lesser concerns with the HR professional to gain trust and understanding of how the person can assist you.



Are you feeling lonely at the top?

If this edition of **People Insights** struck a chord with you, it may be time to consider working with a Strategic Human Resources Professional. Please feel free to contact the President, Neil Zambik, for a free initial consultation. In addition, **People Insights, Inc.** can also provide strategic Human Resources and

innovative People Development programs and processes for your business. Neil can be reached at:

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