



**Human.
Resources.
Consulting.**

February Newsletter



“I am convinced that nothing we do is more important than hiring and developing the right people. At the end of the day, you bet on people, not on strategies.” – Lawrence Bossidy

February 1, 2021

Hello friends and hello February.

Each year I develop a theme that helps me and my team focus our efforts on a precise goal, or through a particular lens, and this year our theme is Why HR Matters (more than ever).

While some think of HR as the people you bring in to deal with conflict and general bad news (and that’s accurate – the capacity to manage through crisis is a core competency for HR), the flip side of that coin is that HR also adds value in helping leadership achieve their business goals by bringing out the best in their people.

With all the ways organizations have had to embrace flexibility over the past year – with their people and policies – it’s fallen on the shoulders of HR professionals to keep employees safe, content and engaged. It requires empathy, creative problem solving, clear communication in many directions and, as we understand so well at KMA, patience and the ability to stay calm no matter what is happening externally.

The KMA team brings a rich and nuanced perspective to this as they are in the field (metaphorically if not literally) every day, tackling the HR issues that are bubbling to the surface. I asked them to share why they believe HR matters, and here are some of their responses.

Julie Banta: I feel that HR is the light in this time of darkness. It is the steady hand that helps companies navigate through these stormy waters to safety. HR professionals are heroes!

Barb Gabri: I think HR matters now more than ever, especially in the area of leave management. Companies who may have had a handful

of leave requests per year find themselves drowning in medical, family, and emergency leave requests. Mishandled, these can cause risks to the employer and discontent in the workplace. They take considerable time and skill to manage properly.

Amy Harkins: There are SO many distractions from getting meaningful work done these days – work/life balance and family needs, medical leaves, career stagnation, challenges with co-workers, change and the unknown, not knowing the “rules of the game” (handbooks and job descriptions), staying compliant with so many ever-changing laws, rules and regulations. We in HR face these issues head on for our clients, taking the stress off both the employer and employee. We also help employees stay healthy, to thrive and develop and be the best at their game – both at home and at work.

Gina Hayes: Our clients have new questions about hiring. Questions about working remotely or interviewing in person. Questions about the job market. Questions about employee retention and new benefits. Recruiting during a pandemic is new for our clients and WE CAN HELP. 😊

Kara Kitchen: Right now, employees are being asked to think in new ways and work differently. HR matters more right now because they need to address all these employee needs. An organization is only as good as its employees.

Holly Lancaster: I think HR is more important now than ever because a company’s resources for their humans are needed more than ever now. Most companies are suddenly managing a fully remote workforce, and being remote changes the day-to-day dynamic of a company. The resources needed to keep people feeling connected, appreciated and informed is more important than ever.

Diana Matthews: HR has always mattered, but now more than ever! HR comforts those employees who have lost a loved one or co-worker due to COVID 19. HR provides training regarding the new leave laws and tracks the leaves due to COVID 19, all while remaining compliant. HR is called upon to lay off workers, recall them, replace them and recruit them. HR is the psychologist, sounding board and friend to those encountering mental stress during one of the most difficult times in their lives. HR MATTERS!

Evelyn McCarthy: I would definitely say that leave management has been front and center. HR has proven its value in helping employers navigate leave requests in a time with constantly changing legislation and managing a more flexible workplace to accommodate employees’ personal needs.

Rhoda McVeigh: With covid and social and political unrest, 2020 was

the year HR professionals became recognized as the workplace “first responders.” And just because 2020 is over, the pandemic and its impacts are still very much with us. So, it’s critical that HR continues to guide leaders through actively supporting our employees’ health, safety and wellbeing. In 2021, we can expect to continue being confronted with unique challenges inside and outside our workplaces, and we will continue to lead people through these challenges with compassion. Because...HR matters.

Michelle Prejean: Clients need HR now more than ever because the rules and regulations are changing and are more uncertain than ever. Not only are we in a pandemic where, often, we don’t even know what we don’t know, but we also have a new administration in place. HR will continue to ask the right questions, dig for the right answers, and keep employers compliant with it all.

I hope this gives you some food for thought, and if you’re an HR professional, that it validates you and the role you're shouldering during these unprecedented times. To me, HR has always mattered because, ultimately, people matter.

Thanks for reading!

Kim Anania
President and CEO
KMA Human Resources

Here’s what else we’re up to:

She’s Brilliant! Contributors

[Chief Janine Roberts](#)

[Katy Rand](#)

[Kristin Guibord](#)

Upcoming Webinars - Please Join Us!

Join us for Lunch and Legal Conversations with Preti Flaherty

Part 1: The Crisis of the She-cession and How Employers Can Address it

Laura Rideout of Preti Flaherty will join Rhoda McVeigh of KMA on Tuesday, February 2nd, from 12:00-1:00

[Register here](#)

**Part 2: The Future of Work: Assessing the Long-Term Impacts of
COVID-19 in the Workplace**

Michael Messerschmidt of Preti Flaherty will join Rhoda McVeigh of
KMA on Tuesday, March 2nd, from 12:00-1:00

[Register here](#)

Visit our website

Follow us on LinkedIn