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## **White Paper# 9: Who Am I? The Role of Human Capital in the Global Workplace**

The workplace that we all survive in has changed dramatically over the past several decades. Today, our workplace could just as likely be governed what happens next door as it is by changes half way around the globe. As we enter this global workplace, the nature of the role of an organization's human capital assets has also changed just as dramatically. This white paper in our white paper series, discusses the role of human capital in the global workforce and what it means for our organizations going forward.

So who am I? As part of your organization, I am the hourly worker on the factory floor. I am the executive in the corner office. I am the creative mind in your marketing department. I am the customer service representative who works to solve your issues with customers and clients. I am the driver that keeps your organization in existence. I am the non-owned corporate asset that fuels the global marketplace's perception of who and what your organization is all about. The question posed as we continue, is how did I get here and what are the implications for the organization. In order to understand who I am, we need to look at the changing roles as we progressed from the agricultural era to the current information age. When we do so, we will see a natural progression over time. So join us on the journey as we identify who I am within your organization.

### **Agricultural Age (1700 -1800)**

My journey begins back in the time of the beginning of this country. I am more than likely working the farm with fellow family members or neighbors. I learned the value of working collaboratively as we all had a goal to reach as far as the farm was concerned. I was concerned with what went on in my immediate area and really did not pay much attention to what went on outside of my little world. If I was involved in a larger commercial organization, I would be part of what is now called second growth level companies. I worked alongside a maximum of less than one hundred employees. I judged organizations on how well they functioned within models like the Quaker Business Model. The organization's goal was to see that I was able to gain the very best for me and my family that I was capable of obtaining. I was taught by the organization that wealth generated solely for personal gain was wrong.

### **Industrial Age (1800 – 2000)**

I began to think that the world was larger outside of my little piece of the globe. I decided that the farm was no longer the best use of my talents. I moved to the large cities that were sprouting up all over the globe. I exchanged the hard life on the farm for your organization paying me a minimum wage. My only thought was to better provide for myself and my family. I exchanged working the farm as a team, for being just a number and working your factory floor. My world changed from being part of the community to one centered on the job you gave me. I was expected to do what I was told and when I was told to do it. I was no longer that team member but expected to punch a time clock and work prescribed set hours and locations. As you moved me up in the organization I was paid a wage that was fitting with my stature within the organization. This meant that my ability to hold a job was dictated on management deciding whether to hire or fire me. I was an expense on your balance sheet. What I did or did not do was not as important as whether the management saw the benefits of the investment in my position.

## **Information Age (1970 to Present)**

The world has changed and so has my role. We don't make as much in the way of materials as we used to do. I am the source of marketplace competitiveness and innovation. I am now valued by the organization through what I dream, or what I can conceive. My world has changed in my outlook. I no longer center my value on the neighborhood or my job; instead I value the role I play in the global workplace. I am the employee who represents the DNA of your organization. While hard to specify my place within your organization, I am definitely not an expense item any longer. You choose to cut my services at the jeopardy of the sustainability of the business. I represent the accumulation of knowledge from the organization. I have seen organizations offer me early buy out to reduce expenses only to go out of business because my creative mind was not there to assist you in existing.

## **Human Capital Model**

We recognize that my role has changed. We recognize that we are no longer just a representative of an item on the balance sheet. So if we are now a vital part of the organization and in fact are now corporate assets, however not owned by you what does this mean for your organization?

This new role as a non-owned corporate asset creates a new set of paradigms for our organizations. These new paradigms change the role of human capital in your workplace and in the global workplace. Failure to recognize these paradigms can be detrimental to the future. The remainder of this white paper will look at those paradigms in more detail.

### **Paradigm #1: We don't employ talent**

If you recognize that we are in fact a corporate asset, then you need to also recognize that you don't employ us. You lease our services with the understanding that if you do not understand our new role or fail to change from the old model, we will take our services elsewhere. This means we need to recognize what I am asking for. I expect that we will be appreciated for what we bring to the table. I expect the organization to remember that we are humans not a number.

### **Paradigm #2: We need to engage our talent to sustain the organization**

I expect that you as an organization will understand that we want to be engaged in our jobs. I just don't necessarily want to do it on your terms. I expect to be appreciated as a person, not just a number in some payroll system. I expect that you will understand my needs both in the workplace and outside in the real world.

### **Paradigm #3: We need to create a work environment that enhances the individual**

I expect my organization to value my contribution. I expect that the old chain of command may not work in the global environment. We expect to work once again as part of a collaborative team rather than that of a hierarchical model. I want to be appreciated for what results I generate and not be confined to a rigid work schedule which may be work in a unrealistic model that says we are working when we are not. I am functioning in a new work model characterized by such things as results only work environments. I am engaged because I have the ability to construct my personal model of the workplace environment.

**Paradigm #4: We need to have TOTAL management buy-in**

I recognize that the organization needs management to assist in running the position of the organization within the workplace. But I also expect my managers to recognize that their talent needs are not met by a management style that is based on micro management. I expect management to be in total agreement with the new model of our role within the organization. They are expected to agree that we are no longer just an expense but the reason why the organization exists.

**Paradigm #5: I expect that my creative efforts will be appreciated**

I am compensated by what I can dream. I am compensated by what role I play in the organization innovating new products or processes within the global workplace. Instead of downplaying what I suggest as something we have done before and did not work, I expect the organization to give our ideas a fair hearing. I expect the organization to demonstrate that they recognize that the creative juices I bring to the table help the future of the organization.

**Paradigm #6: I expect that my workplace will be free from hostile work environments**

I understand that my role is to enhance the organization. I cannot achieve that role when I have to be concerned with whether other employees or the organizational management create an environment where actions or treatment place me in an adverse position. I come to work to explore the unknown. I come to work to explore the possibilities that we have not even imagined as yet. I do not come to work to be berated, made ridiculed of, or to be slighted. I expect management to put a stop to it by model and actions.

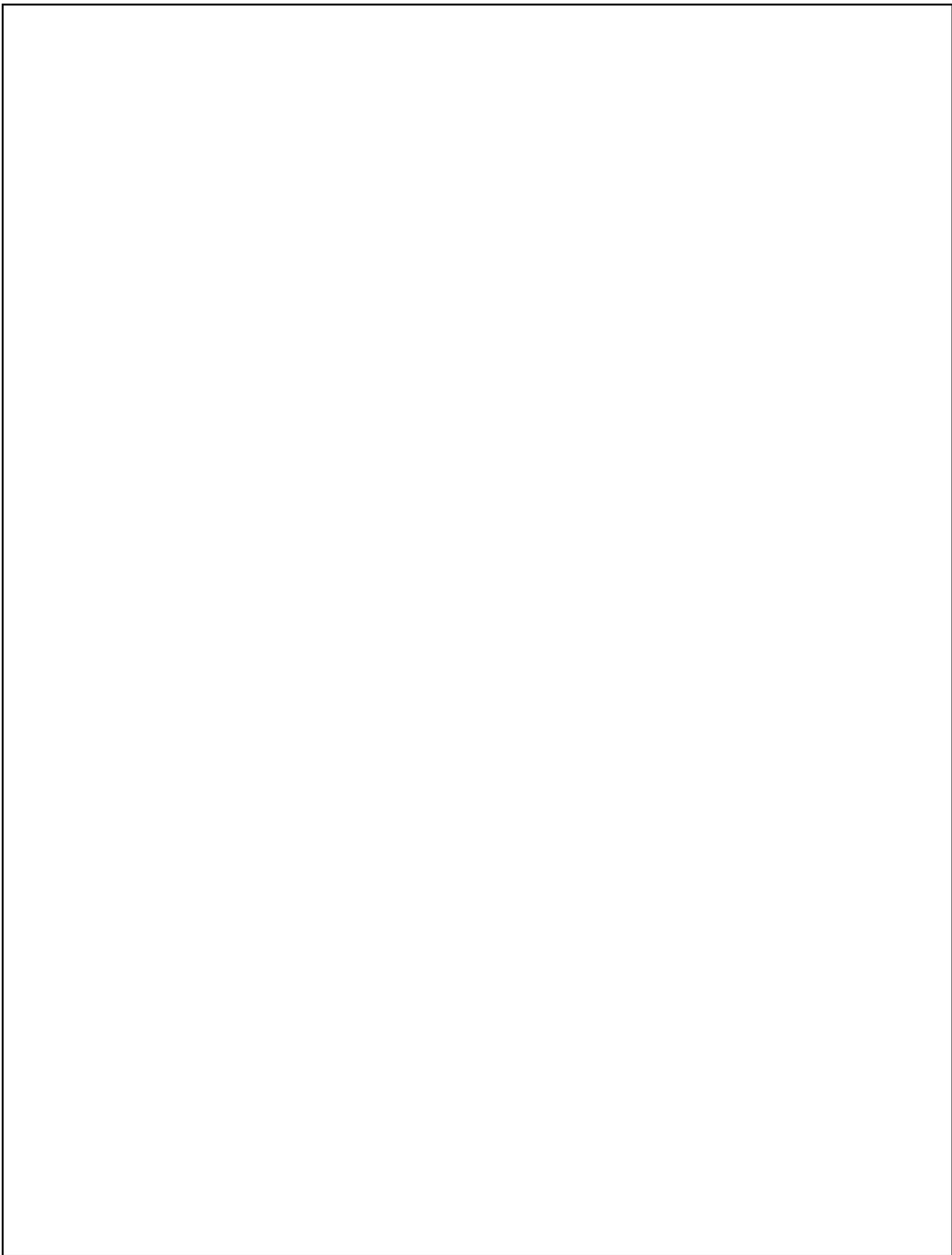
**Paradigm #7: I expect my workplace to be free of violence and drugs**

As we have previously stated we come to work to enhance the organization. We do not come to work to have to be on the constant vigil on whether my fellow employee is coming to work under the cloud of possible hostile actions. I expect the organization to limit the potential for outsiders to deliver violent actions in the workplace.

**Paradigm #8: I expect that my work environment will be free from discrimination**

I am an important part of the future of the global workplace. I produce things by the use of my creative assets. That is what I expect the organization to recognize and appreciate. I do not expect the organization to judge me by my appearance, my sex, my age, my skin color or physical attributes. I expect that my advancement within the organization will not be judged on any of these areas.

The global workplace is not what the workplace was like in the agriculture age, although some of the rules of the game were the same. The global workforce is not what it was when I was judged on the basis of what I made or produced. The global workplace now values me on what I can dream and think about. It values my contribution to the effort to collaborate and innovate new processes to change the way the marketplace values an organization. I am not expecting anything more than respect and belief in my value to your organization. We realize that we have created new paradigms which may run contrary to the beliefs of some organizations; however we are asking you as managers to come to 21<sup>st</sup> century in your operating philosophy. We can learn to work well together we just need to do so under different rules.



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