

Announcing the 2015 National Academy of Human Resources Ram Charan HR Essay Contest

Tuesday, March 31, 2015 – The National Academy of Human Resources (NAHR) announces the 2015 NAHR Ram Charan HR Essay Contest. We are requesting essays from university undergrads and graduate students globally majoring in Human Resources, Industrial/Labor Relations or related fields for the following topic:

Public Policy – To Be or Not To Be in the Game?

You are a relatively new employee in the HR department of a multi-national company, with thousands of employees located at multiple R&D and manufacturing facilities in the United States, Germany, and China. You picked this company, in part, because of its locations outside of the United States, with the hope that you will someday earn an international assignment.

Late one afternoon the Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO) comes to your cube, clears off a chair, and sits down. She's there to give you an assignment.

“You know that we've got employees scattered around the world. In each of the countries where we have a presence and, in some cases in each location, there are different sets of employment laws (for example, federal 'leave' laws can be different than state 'leave' laws in the U.S.). Historically, we've simply relied on attorneys, both internal and external, in each country to make sure we were in compliance with whatever the laws and regulations might be. This means we're often reacting to the changes in laws, policies, and trends, sometimes rushing to be sure we're in compliance. Some of these changes require significant work on our part to change policies and handbooks, train managers on changes, update system applications and reports...the list of implications goes on and on. Think about the time we've spent in the United States on the new health care mandate or the draft “one company, one union” bargaining rules approved by the German Cabinet last year.

Recently, I've begun to wonder if this is the best strategy. We've been surprised on occasion when new laws are put into place, often discovering too late that the new law makes it more expensive or more difficult to operate in a given country or location. We've also seen that some simple changes could have been made to the law to make it much easier to administer. Multiple laws in multiple jurisdictions mean that our compliance costs continue to escalate without a corresponding increase in value being added to the business or to the shareholders. Additionally, sometimes these policies

make us and other companies less competitive in the global environment, which is not good for us, other companies or the countries in which we do business!

Here's what I'd like you to do. Please prepare a paper outlining options for how we, as a multi-national enterprise, might become more involved in the development of public policy. Prepare an option paper of no more than 20 pages that outlines some of the considerations in this matter and that offers recommendations based on your analysis. For this purpose, if you want to dig deeper into one country or one policy (such as U.S. immigration reform) and use it to further explain your recommendations if you so choose, go ahead and do that but don't lose sight of the complexity of our operations in multiple geographies. Some dimensions of the question that you might consider include:

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of becoming involved in the process?
- Is such involvement even a possibility for the countries in which we operate?
- How would we decide which issues we would become involved with and how would we determine a corporate position?
- What are the risks and advantages from the public being aware of our efforts?
- How would we mitigate the risks and enhance the advantages?
- Are there other global companies or other organizations or associations that are doing this and, if so, should we partner with any of them?
- Who from our organization should get involved and why?

You don't need to be constrained by these questions and I certainly don't want you to boil the ocean on this. Let's reconvene in three weeks to discuss."

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The deadline for submission of essays is August 1, 2015.

Cash prizes of \$20,000, \$10,000, and \$5,000 U.S. will be awarded for the three best essays.

The essays should be a minimum of 5 to a maximum 20 pages, double spaced, 12 point font. The essays must be submitted by email (PDF format) to:

info@nationalacademyhr.org
Attention:
Jill B. Smart
President, National Academy of Human Resources

The essays will be evaluated and judged by a panel of distinguished HR professionals who are Fellows of the National Academy of Human Resources. NAHR is an honorific organization where individuals and institutions of distinction in Human Resources are recognized for exceptional professional achievement by election as "Fellows of NAHR". In addition, NAHR

further the HR profession through the Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO) Academy and other philanthropic and educational activities.

The criteria for evaluating the award will be:

- Addresses the topic
- Provides original thoughts
- Adds value
- Readable and persuasive
- Based on academic or other research with references

Essays for the NAHR Ram Charan HR Essay Contest can be submitted directly by students with or without a faculty sponsor/adviser. In the latter case, the faculty sponsor/adviser will provide a brief statement (i.e., less than 100 words) about why he/she is serving in this capacity, and will attest to a statement included as part of the Contest stating that “I have played no role in writing this essay and will not share in the financial award should this student’s essay win such an award.”

There is a maximum of 3 authors per essay. Winning authors must split the award.

Please visit www.nationalacademyhr.org to read full contest details.

The winners of the essay contest will be announced at the NAHR annual installation of new Fellows on November 5, 2015 in New York City.

The awardees will be paid expenses to attend the ceremony. The presentation will be made to the award winners by the Chair of the NAHR, Kathleen S. Barclay, Senior Vice President, Human Resources, The Kroger Co.; and Richard W. Hallock, Chair of the NAHR Foundation/Retired Executive Vice President, Occidental Petroleum.

Dr. Charan, for whom the award is named, is a world renowned author, speaker and business advisor. For more than 35 years Dr. Charan has consulted with some of the world’s most successful leaders and companies. Dr. Charan is a Distinguished Fellow of the National Academy of Human Resources.

Please direct inquiries to:

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