

Speaker 1: You're listening to the HR Bartender Show, a casual place to talk about all things work. Here's where you get practical advice about how to be a better employee, manager, and leader in today's workplace. So grab your favorite beverage, pull up a stool, and join us in the conversation. The bar is always open. Now, here's your host, Charlene Lauby.

Charlene Lauby: Hi everyone. Thanks for being here. I'm your host, Charlene Lauby, author of the blog HR Bartender. Before we get started today, I want to take a moment to thank our founding sponsor, Ultimate Kronos Group, also known as UKG.

Speaker 3: To be a powerfully productive business, you need powerfully happy people. Two leaders in workforce management and HR have joined forces to become UKG, Ultimate Kronos Group. With comprehensive HR solutions, they'll help you create more meaningful connections within your workforce, that will make your people smile. UKG. Our purpose is people.

Charlene Lauby: Thanks again for joining us. We're recording a mini season of the HR Bartender Show, with the focus being on talent and technology. And I am super excited to have not one, but two guests. Julie Develin and Chas Fields are Senior Partners with UKG's Human Capital Management Advisory Group, and in their roles, they advise UKG customers on all things HCM, which is why I wanted to speak with them today. In addition to the roles with UKG's HCM Group, Julie and Chas are co-hosts for the Workforce Institute's People Purpose Podcast, which I know you're going to want to check out, so I'll be sure to include a link in the show notes.

Welcome. Thanks for being here. Now, before we get started, I want to talk about your new job with the People Purpose Podcast. So Julie, tell us a little bit about it, and then I'm going to ask Chas to sort of give the pitch on why people should listen.

Julie Develin: Absolutely. We're very excited to be here today. Thank you so much for having us. And I guess I'm speaking for Chas, too, but I'm sure he'll speak for himself in a second.

Chas Fields: I was going to say, I'll thank her too, but thanks.

Julie Develin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. So yeah, a little bit about the People Purpose Podcast. When we're thinking about organizations, Chas and I both believe that people really need to be at the center of every organization's strategy for success. And we both know from our experience, this is hard to do. So we spend a lot of time on the road, talking to HR audiences, talking to businesses, and other groups, about how to really optimize their employee experience and their HR processes and practices. We keep hearing over and over again at the end of our speeches that we do, "How do we stay in touch with you? How can we learn more?" Right? So Chas and I thought, "Well, what better way to stay in touch with folks than to do a podcast, to start a podcast?" And, we just talk a lot about HR trends and HR

experiences that we've had. And we wanted to do something a little bit more than social media, so that's why we started the podcast.

Chas Fields: Yeah, it's really great. Charlotte, thank you so much for having us. We really, really appreciate you, and all the effort that went into this. Here's the deal. Why people should listen? Julie, I'm going to brag on her for a second; 17 years of experience in HR, long time VP. I've spent a lot of my career in consulting, working with companies in change and change management, thousands of companies. It's kind of crazy to even say that now. And the reality of it is, we navigate such a multitude of situations beyond HR, to the front-line employee, all the way to executive level leadership, right?

So I think people should listen because we're talking about realness, real challenges, with real examples, from experiences that not only that we've had, but we get to tap into a host of companies to say, "Well, have you thought about this?" Or, "Tell us a little bit about this? Have you considered this?" Right? So we're essentially talking work all the time, and we love doing it.

Julie and I are very, very close; we're really great friends. She had mentioned some of the conferences we speak at together. And we want people to feel as though they're a part of the conversation, where we can also joke, stretch the limits a little bit, laugh, and really give people a safe space to be vulnerable about what's going on at work. So yeah, we want you to tune in.

Charlene Lauby: Awesome. Well, one of the episodes that people want to tune in about is your recent episode about recruitment, which is why we're talking today. Me, personally, regardless of what's happening with the unemployment rate and the jobs report, organizations are, and they have been for some time, struggling to find qualified talent. So Chas, I'm going to ask you first, and then Julie, I hope you'll join us in the conversation. What's the first thing that organizations should think about doing, in order to start getting candidates in the door?

Chas Fields: Ah. How much time do we have? No, I'm kidding. It's a great question. There's so much competition today, that businesses, which haven't done the work leading up to this. Let's think about pre-pandemic, Charlene. It was a struggle to retain top talent, right? It was a struggle to attract top talent. Then COVID hit as a nation, all this stuff, right? At this point, they want to ensure that they have competitive benefits, solid wages, work-life balance. That's kind of a step behind at this point. Everyone needs to really start someplace, and our gut reaction is typically to, "Hey, we're going to throw money at the problem." And money, it does help. Let's be real. It does help. But, what we're hearing is that money isn't the only factor. And it's not the only important factor on employees and in people's minds.

People were working before the pandemic. They chose to remain on the sidelines today, or are worried about flexibility. And now, having to go back, being blocked into a specific schedule, when they don't know what's going to

happen with COVID or their kids' schools. Myself, being a dad, who knows what that's going to look like, right? These families have budgeted or functioned on a reduced income over the last 18 months, so what's a few more months until they have something that's more certain, right?

So businesses really need help, and look at offering a combo of different things. They need to look at workplace, right? The employee, are they going to feel safe if they walk into the workplace? And that's not just physical safety, that's psychological safety. They've got to offer accommodating schedules, and finding a way to live up to that promise. We talk a lot about hybrid work. That's going to require a lot of really rethinking the typical ways that schedules are even made. So a manager sitting in the back office, saying XYZ employee is going to work nine to three today; and a more competitive wage is going to certainly help, but I'm here to tell you that's not the fix or the cure-all. Jules?

Julie Develin: Yeah. We don't have enough time to talk about the nine to three or nine to five workday, also. I think that's a whole topic for a different podcast. But at the same time, to what Chas said, businesses, we need to start looking long-term. They can just start thinking long-term. And when we think about industries, we think about manufacturing. There's so many industries like manufacturing that were struggling to recruit prior to the pandemic, because of a skills gap. You're trying to recruit because of the skills gap, trying to close that; they're just simply unappealing to today's newer generation. So millennials, Gen Z, as HR professionals, we have a lot of work on our hands, because we have to really look at our immediate talent gaps. Not just that; we need to do that quickly; we need to make sure that we're looking at these gaps, and filling them quickly.

But we also have to think about the culture of the company, our employee experience, our overall employer branding; all of these things are important. They need to fit together, in order to provide that experience that we're looking for. So, if HR doesn't start in these areas, all the hard work that we did as a profession to recruit people to our companies, it'll be for not, right, when they tender their notice, if you will.

I agree there are some quick wins that businesses, they can score in the short-term to make themselves more appealing, like accommodating schedules, expanding their benefits, ensuring people feel safe at work, and so forth. But work really should begin right away, on a long-term strategy as well.

Charlene Lauby: I'm glad that both of you mentioned long-term. I don't want to turn this episode into everything about pandemic recruiting.

Chas Fields: Right.

Charlene Lauby: I know that we're still facing challenges with the pandemic, and we're probably going to say the word pandemic for months in the future. But some of the issues that you're talking about have been issues for quite some time. I know it's hard

to remember, but with the unemployment rates a year and a half ago, where what, in the high threes, low fours.

Julie Develin: Yep.

Charlene Lauby: So a lot of the things that you're talking about, in terms of what do employees want, what to candidates want, psychological trust, workplace flexibility, Julie, your comments about the skills gap. Those are all things that we were talking about 18 months, two years ago.

Julie Develin: Yeah. Yeah. It's interesting. I do a talk, where I ask folks in my audiences to think back prior to March of 2020. And I said, "Do you even remember those times?" And I talk about the trends that were set to be a thing for the year 2020. Everything that was still set to be a trend is still in play today.

So it's interesting; but to use a sports analogy, the best defense is a good offense. This means that we can't really be focused exclusively on things like just recruiting. Businesses need to make sure that they're also taking care of employees, the employees that they currently have. We think about the long-tenured employees, those who have a lot of experience, maybe those folks that have special skills, or even the all-important institutional knowledge. And this is going to help slow down a potential revolving door, where you're trying to get people in faster than they are leaving.

I think there's a few ways we can look at the recruiting process itself, and the first is to leverage technology. And okay, yeah, of course, leverage technology, right? We're talking about a "help wanted" sign in the window. That's not really good enough these days. Every business that I see when I drive down the road has a "help wanted" sign, or even a billboard. We, as businesses, as recruiters, we have to cast a wide net, and there's a lot of HR software out there that can really help aggregate job listings to job boards or places like LinkedIn. Think about Facebook; even Facebook has a job board today.

You should think about your application, as well. If you need a high volume of applicants, should your applications really take 10 minutes to complete? Or can you get the critical information you need with just a couple of questions. Today's generation, they have a very short attention span, and they expect to get things very quickly, so they don't want to spend hours filling out a job application. So odds are, you're going to lose a lot of candidates who decide that taking the time is not worth the hassle.

So after you do have a candidate, hopefully that's engaged in the process, you need to look also at communication styles. For example, I know a lot of my friends don't like to talk on the phone very much these days. Do your candidates want to talk on the phone for every update? Or maybe they want to go through email, or maybe they just want a text message, right?

I'd also encourage businesses to really think about who they are recruiting and hiring. And we know for a fact that women, that minorities, they've been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, in terms of workplace involvement and things like unemployment. And while there's a lot of urgency to hire, we need to be really thoughtful about how we rebuild our workforce. And it goes to the theme of intentionality that I speak of a lot when it comes to HR. We need to be intentional, and we need to look at how we rebuild our workforce, how we bring everyone back to work. And when we do that, we need to make sure that we're giving a focus to equity. We need to make sure that's part of the process.

Charlene Lauby: Julie mentioned the technology aspect, and I want to dive into that just a little bit further. I think that the key to effective recruitment is looking at the numbers. If there's a function in human resources that can be numbers-driven, it's the recruitment function. I know for me personally, when I think back on my career, I was a generalist for a really long time. And I learned a very valuable lesson, because at some point, this generalist, my boss looked at me and said, "I want you to be in charge of recruitment for the corporation." And all I knew about recruitment was the hiring part: you interview candidates, and you extend job offers. And I didn't realize how much strategy was really behind the recruitment process.

Julie, you mentioned earlier, when we were talking about workforce planning, being able to bridge those skills gaps. When you look at recruitment, there's a real opportunity to work with the numbers, and put a plan in place. And technology can help you do that. So, Chas, I want to bring you into the conversation. Let's talk about a couple of things that HR teams can do to leverage all the data that they potentially have in front of them.

Chas Fields: Yeah. So Julie, you both have had paid some great points. You've got to remember that the recruiter, too; and you remembered this Charlene, you were the first person that this individual is going to interact with. So you have to be a critical element in the process too, by knowing what the job entails, what the company's doing. There's just a lot that goes with that; and data does drive some of that decision-making and helping the organization. And the answer really to the question, Charlene, is it depends so much on the maturity of the HR department at any given business. Okay? Data really is a huge currency in 2021. We're actually doing a talk at SHRM National this year about data. It's perfect timing, right?

But when it comes to making decisions at the organization, that's how it really helps to excel in engagement with your people. They're able to introduce a program, evaluate its impacts on the business with numbers, and then really calibrate or be agile, we use that term a lot, simply by looking at the numbers. And it's like, "Yeah, every company aspires to be at that point, but we're not there yet." And what we would tell you is, "That's okay. A lot of companies just don't know where to start." Right?

And at the same time, we also know a lot of HR teams don't always have the buy-in from senior leadership to make the investments necessary to get to this goal. That's a whole nother hurdle, right? But what we'd like to tell folks is, "Think about metrics. They're going to help to build that business case, to get you to the next level." Okay. "Start small. You don't have to start reeling in a big fish if you're an HR department of one, especially." Right? "Start small."

If you're an organization that is still using pen and paper or basic Excel files, you should be able to look at those new hire numbers, and make some determinations around how many days it should take to fill an open head count, or how much time it takes to make that head count proficient in the job that they're actually doing. Right? Or the cost to train them, or what percentage of new hires and turnover within the first 30, 60, 90, 120 days, right? All of these are simple to measure.

All of a sudden, you're in a situation with the CEO, and you tell them, "Hey, that 20% of new hires have turnover within the first 90 days. And that business has essentially wasted hundreds of thousands of hours training this individual." Which we all know, hours is time, and time is money. And now we're at a hard dollar loss, because that individual left, right? So I've never been in a meeting where a CEO is, or anybody for instance, is saying, "Hey. We're going to save you a lot of money if we change the way that we do things. And here's why." Right? They'll no longer just look at it as a person, and a body to fill that position. But they're going to want to know how to continue to stop losing money, right? And to invest in those individuals, in that recruiting process.

So from this point, once you have executive buy-in to get that investment, you need, you jump, right? It's time to do it. It's time to find a solution that's going to allow you to look across the entire business, and evaluate the performance, and lean on that data, to understand if what you're doing is working or not. And that starts with just the small fish we talked, about measuring the small things.

Charlene Lauby: Do you have a favorite metric? If you could tell an HR department, both of you, if you could tell an HR department, "You need to calculate this one thing." If you can only do one thing, what would it be?

Julie Develin: Turnover by manager.

Charlene Lauby: Okay.

Julie Develin: I think that tells you a lot. So you can look at turnover as a whole, but let's also take a look at turnover by manager. And that can also really give you a really key picture into maybe why folks are leaving, could be a common denominator. When we have a lot of turnover, we do like to look for common denominators. Is there a reason that people are leaving? Is there something specific? And when you can break it down by manager, I think that then you can start to have

conversations with the manager about, "Hey. Why are people leaving?" And you have to make sure that that person is in the right role. Let's put it that way.

Chas Fields: Yeah. And that's so true. I'm actually going to quote, a study that SHRM did. They did a study that said on average, it's three to six months of a person's salary to recruit and train for that position. Right? So assuming I make \$60,000 a year, that's \$30-\$45,000 of an investment to get that person through the door, to their job, to actually do the job proficiently. What that stat doesn't include, and I find it really interesting, Charlene, is that it doesn't include the money lost in whatever that individual is producing over that three to six months. Right?

So now we just have this huge gap, where if you want executive leadership buy-in, walk in with that stat, and say, "Look." Taking what Julie said, "We've got XYZ managers who have 40% turnover. Here's how much it's costing us. We've got to do something different here." Right? And to me, it's 100% finding that common denominator, and it typically falls within managers. And more importantly, asking that individual in the onboarding process, what their experience was like, and you can start to fit those puzzle pieces together.

Charlene Lauby: I used to work for a company that we did manager interview training, when managers would come. When managers are starting to interview, we would train them on how to do a good interview.

Chas Fields: Right.

Charlene Lauby: But the icebreaker activity to interview training was calculating cost per hire. So we had a spreadsheet, and we would go through, and show managers how to calculate cost per hire; not because they were going to do it, but we wanted them to know every little thing that gets included in the cost per hire calculation. And then we would have a conversation, and this kind of leads up to my last question, have a conversation about the financial impact of the decisions that they were getting ready to make. So if the costs were hire was, let's say, I don't know, \$5,000, then we would talk about how much \$5,000 means to the organization. And so, it was a great opportunity to sort of put a dollar figure on that decision-making process.

Julie Develin: Yeah. When you can actually see it and quantify things like that, I think it makes a big difference when it comes to execution. Chas?

Chas Fields: And managers start to see that it's not just about the day-to-day that they participate in. They truly are now vested into the decisions that they're making when they're hiring for teams, or cross-hiring. \$5,000 is a lot of money. And if I looked at it as a manager, and I think, "Oh man, if I drag my feet on this, it goes to \$7,500 and then \$10,000. What's the company going to think of me then?" It just puts a different perspective on, "Hey, look. You are an important component of this decision-making process, and the quicker that we can do this, the better off for everybody." Right?

Julie Develin: Definitely.

Chas Fields: It kind of brings up when Julie was talking about her favorite metric, the manager turnover piece. After you calculate cost per hire, you can hand managers a turnover report, and then ask for them to project how much money they've spent all year. And so I want to bring us to our last question together, because we could talk about recruiting all day long. But I want to end with a conversation about retention, because to me, it makes no sense to spend all of these company resources to bring somebody into the organization, only to have them leave within a few months. So, Julie first, what's one thing that an organization can do to help with employee retention?

Julie Develin: When I get in front of HR audiences, and we have discussions on HR topics and trends, there's usually always something that I come back to. What I call it is "HR superpower." I believe we all have a superpower in HR, and that superpower is something we can pass on, and it's something that we can leverage ourselves in times of trouble, and times of positivity. And that is our superpower of listening.

Now, I say it so simply, and you're saying, "Oh, well, of course. Of course we should listen." It's more than just that. Listening in a way that's intentional, and listening in a way that shows empathetic leadership and empathetic managing, if you will, I think that that's more important today than it has ever been, based upon where we are in our world of work.

So that needs to happen from pre-hire to retire, the listening. It needs to be at a regular cadence, and it needs to be where there's actual action taken behind the feedback that's given. Because if I ask employees, if I say, "Oh, I want to listen to your concerns." Great. I can listen to those concerns all day long. But if I don't do something with what they tell me, or if they don't see any action going into place, then they're going to think that those concerns just we're out there, living in a vacuum somewhere, and that they don't matter. And then that's going to not help with retention. It's going to make folks feel like they don't matter, like their considerations aren't taking into account, and that the company doesn't care about them.

So I would say when we're talking about helping with employee retention, that's the first thing to do, come up with a strategy around communication, but make sure communication includes listening.

Charlene Lauby: Terrific. Chas?

Chas Fields: That's all great stuff. Charlene, you know this, we did some research at the Workforce Institute called The Heard and the Heard Nots, which you participated in. And there was a lot of good information that came from that, just simply talking about trust, right? "Do you feel trusted in the workplace? Do you feel like you can do your job, and you're equipped with the things that you need?" There was just a lot of great information in that.

And kind of going off of Julie's point here, in that research we did, 34% of employees would rather quit or switch teams, than voice their true concerns with management.

Julie Develin: It's crazy.

Chas Fields: Right? So now we go back to this greater retention strategy, right? To say, "Where did we mess up as an organization, to let employees feel as though they can't even address their concerns of what's going on in the workplace? And then they leave."

So to me, not only is it listening, but it goes to that action piece. Julie came up with this great quote, and we were just talking. Where were we, Julie? We were in Austin, and we were talking. And she goes, "Feedback as HR is currency. And then taking that currency, and choosing to invest it into your organization, or choosing to invest into better strategies or retention or recruiting, or whatever that is." Right?

And I think what this statistic that I shared just a few seconds ago was talking about, was the inaction, right? So we have to take that feedback, and then create an action plan, and prove to our employees, "We really do care about the work that you're doing. And more importantly, we care about you as an individual, and as a person. And let us show you that by creating a great experience, and making sure that we listen to you, making sure that we take action, and the host of other things that HR is faced with day in and day out."

Charlene Lauby: I love that. Feedback is HR's currency. I've always said that the worst thing organizations can do, is ask people for their opinion, and then not do anything with it.

Chas Fields: It's awful, isn't it? I still don't get that, but yeah, it's awful.

Julie Develin: Yeah. And so many times, folks will put out surveys, but the surveys will be reactionary instead of proactive. It's too late. You've already lost the employees at that point. Right? So making sure that you're doing things like that, and asking for that feedback on a regular cadence is important.

Charlene Lauby: Well, I want to thank both of you for being here today, and sharing your experience and expertise with us. If you're listening in, I know you're going to want to connect with Chas and Julie, so I'll be sure to drop their contact information in the show notes. And after the break, I'll come back to share with you my takeaways from this great conversation. Stay tuned.

Speaker 3: To be a powerfully, productive business, you need powerfully happy people. Two leaders in workforce management and HR have joined forces to become UKG, Ultimate Kronos Group. UKG creates comprehensive HR solutions, designed to make employees happier, and build more meaningful connections

within your workforce. They've even done that for themselves, being recognized as one of the top places to work. And UKG's 12,000 employees help thousands of businesses build better cultures every day. When you're ready to make your people happier, UKG is ready to work for you. UKG. Our purpose is people.

Charlene Lauby: Thanks again for listening to the conversation with Chas and Julie, where we were talking about recruitment and technology, and bringing people into the organization. My big takeaway from today's conversation was really focused on using technology to give people what they're looking for. Julie made the comment about individuals applying for jobs. And it reminded me, when we think about candidates applying for jobs, first of all, can they apply in a way that's easy for them? Can I see a posting on my phone, and be able to immediately either share it with somebody that I know is looking for a new opportunity, or be able to apply myself? And if I do apply myself, is there an opportunity for me to do that quickly? Or is it going to take 20 minutes of trying to figure out how I can apply online using a mobile device?

I think organizations really have to think about how they're bringing people into the company, using technology, and mirror it to the experiences that we have as individuals right now. When it comes to our personal lives, I can buy shoes, and make a bank deposit, and I can do all sorts of great things using my phone. Can I apply for a job?

And that kind of brings us to the second part. And I know, sometimes when we think about bringing people into the organization, we don't necessarily think about all of the other functions, in terms of engagement and retention. We just think about the process of hiring. But that second piece of delivering what people want, in terms of the employee experience. Is there an opportunity for us to use technology in a way that allows us to bring people into the organization, and create feedback mechanisms, allow employees to collaborate with one another? And we're going to explore those themes in future episodes, so I hope you'll stay tuned, as we spend more time talking about talent and technology. Again, I'm Charlene Lauby, host of the blog HR Bartender. And thank you so much for tuning in. I look forward to seeing you next time.

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