

# THE AGENDA®

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## HR Career Development in the New Future of Work

WELLNESS

BELONGING

CULTURE

LIFE/WORK BALANCE

COLLABORATION

CRISIS MANAGEMENT

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# Building a Crisis-Proof HR Career

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*Originally written in English*

*A mindful shift in mindset and practice will allow HR professionals to nurture a career that thrives both in crisis and stable times.*

HR is at a crossroads. Meander along as is and become irrelevant or refocus on key competencies and rediscover our seat at the C-table.

The recent crisis has highlighted several shortcomings in the HR profession and has accelerated the need for an urgent recalibration of the entire function.

HR professionals need to move away from what has become a “traditional” reactive position in the organization to a more proactive one. The function itself needs to shift away from being transactional to being more consultant-like.

The business-facing group, business partners, need to develop and build on consultancy-like skills.

Given that HR professionals are already in their roles, their “skills development” needs to focus on learning new skills, breaking away from the poor skills/habits, and getting refresher training on the right skills that have been forgotten or never been used. One-to-one mentoring, group training, and a shift in performance management to include demonstrating these skills as a key deliverable objective can all help hone these new, necessary skills.

Determining these skills – the capacities you need to be an effective HR professional with a crisis-proof career in the 21st century – is the first step.

To build and maintain a successful HR career both in a steady-state environment and one in crisis, HR professionals need to develop and perfect the following skill sets:

## Business Acumen

HR needs to have a keen understanding of the organization’s objectives and strategies, what the industry is doing, and where we stand from a competitor’s perspective.

HR is responsible for aligning human capital with the strategy and objectives of the organization. Therefore, understanding the underlying business, its objectives and the market in which it operates is paramount to achieving this. How can HR be aligned with the organization if it has no idea what the organization wants to achieve and the internal and external challenges it faces?

## Agility & Adaptability

Today, more than ever, we see the speed at which internal and external events can impact business with little to no notice at all.

HR professionals need to have the agility of mind. They need to be able to utilize that agility to shift policy, process and direction of HR to quickly adapt to external changes or threats and help the organization navigate them. Often, it’s the quickest to adapt that come out of a crisis best.

## Commercial Nous

HR can be seen as stubborn and unable to see the commercial reality of a situation.

Having commercial nous allows HR to consider things from the business perspective. Rather than saying NO, they can reassess their position and become part of the solution, not the problem.

## Data-Driven, Future-Looking

HR are custodians of tremendous amounts of data, yet the only

analysis we see is backwards-looking. HR would develop reports of historical events, summarizing the headcount, turnover, post-activity feedback and the like. But it's the practice of using data analytics as a predictive tool that will define the HRs of the future.

Getting into the data and analyzing it to identify trends and patterns can enhance business discussion. Sharing data, getting insights from it and showing how it may play out in the future can guide the business in making more informed decisions.

### Consultancy Skills

Many still see HR as a support function rather than a value-add. The HR professional of today needs to bring strong consultancy skills to the table. They need to identify the issues and then engage the internal centres of excellence or external 3rd party vendors to solve the issues at hand, applying a methodical consultancy cycle approach to dealing with the business.

### Business Mindset

Running HR as a function rather than a business leads to a negative perception internally by HR staff and externally by the broader organization. A function simply exists, while a business has purpose and objectives, demands accountability and is driven by success.

Running HR like a business means the HR professional must have a broad understanding of the service offering (what are we in business for). They must understand how HR brings together all these services, what the components are and how they are utilized to support the broader

organization. They need to understand the finances of HR – the costs to run HR, how expenses are allocated and how much they are charging for their services. In a crisis, understanding your numbers makes tough decisions easier.

### Collaboration

Since the beginning of time, societies have survived by working together, yet the prevailing practice is that HR continues to work as individuals.

To successfully deliver an end-to-end solution to human capital issues, HR needs to work as one. The HR professional, in this case, needs to have the skills to collaborate with the various components of HR to formulate holistic business solutions.

HR can't be a spectator on the sidelines; we must be in the game, positively influencing the outcomes. To get there, we need HR leadership training. 🇲🇵



*George Akle, the founder of GOVERNHR™, is a thought leader in human resources structural and procedural governance. With over 20 years of experience, he has served as head HR for Southeast Asia, regional HR COO and regional HR business partner, leading large-scale HR transformations, regional payroll and HR operations for 17 countries across the Asia-Pacific region. Today, George provides virtual HR director support services to organizations across the region. He shares his insights into HR themes through blogs, webinars, YouTube videos and as an HR event speaker.*



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