

## Transforming HR from Policing to Inspiring – A Culture of Care

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### **A Less Traditional HR Roadmap**

I come from a large corporate background where the traditional HR function, my role, was an operational necessity. Two years ago, I had the privilege of joining a much smaller organization, Health Monitor Network, with roughly 150 employees in total. When sheer volume of employees is not an issue, it is certainly easier to adopt a different way of doing things. They call me Chief People Officer.

### **Be Smart AND Nice**

Now, some HR leaders may disagree with what I am about to say, but I believe being smart and well educated without emotional intelligence does not create a long-term employee, leader or colleague. I say this from experience, having become a student of hiring for Emotional Intelligence (EQ), for every level from entry to C-Suite. When an organization hires solely or largely based on finding the smartest, most well-credentialed talent possible, you get very smart people from great schools. However, without leveraging the ability to probe for EQ, this opens up the potential to hire people who lack any semblance of emotional intelligence. They couldn't navigate a room, apply empathy to others, be self-aware or controlled in their demeanor, or read people if their life depended on it. That is when I formed my mantra regarding hiring. You have to be smart, and you have to be nice. And nice is more important than smart! There, I said it.

### **Performance**

But you also must perform. I consider myself a performance coach. We look to hire the right combination of smart and nice, and I then have the privilege of developing and engaging great, talented people to drive our mission.

And lest you think nice and business-driven are mutually exclusive when it comes to performance and success, think again. You can be a consummate business professional...and still be a nice human being. In fact, when you are nice, you bring that into the workplace. As a leader, treating people with kindness and respect makes them want to work with you and be more willing to push themselves to excel for the organization. You bring a heightened sense of relationship building, trust, and empathy to your colleagues and clients.

### **Be Yourself**

Of all the survey questions and answers that led to our second consecutive Great Place to Work honor, the one that really spoke to me was that 94% of our employees surveyed cited the ability to be themselves as one of our greatest workplace attributes.

We must be doing something right.