

CHRO Conversation

Katie O'Connell Jones

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Video Length 27:50

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rrTKhB7Olb8&feature=emb_logo

Topic	Time
<p>Since HR is at the forefront of dealing with the people issues in 2020, such as the pandemic and the social justice issues, where do you think HR can make the biggest difference?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Helping the leadership team look openly and honestly at what is working well, what is not working well, and where there are changes needed• Pandemic was time to look at business continuity plans, risk management, and viability of succession plan• Ensure talent, succession plans, performance management processes, and development plans are realistic for all of your talent needs going forward	<p>0:49</p>
<p>It sounds like you had an opportunity to help the people within the organization but also a responsibility to help your fellow executives work through all this...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yes, and this was also an opportunity for the leadership team to be vulnerable together• Everyone is learning how to have a safe place together and also how to present a concise, connected, strong face to employees and stakeholders	<p>2:45</p>
<p>As the CHRO, was it a critical role for you to help keep the voices aligned and looking strong? Where is the line between sharing the vulnerability of the executive team versus putting on that strong face to give confidence to the employees?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We elected to be transparent that we were learning and growing together, but we were confident in our ability to lead the organization through this<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Also confident employees would be successful, safe, productive, and paid• It was a delicate balance of being forthright and authentic without scaring people	<p>4:30</p>
<p>As a successful woman, in industries that are not often known for success of women, do you have suggestions as to how we as a society can do a better job of making the playing field more even for everyone, and that opportunities are there to reach the top of the organization?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There has been a lot of progression over last two years, catapulted by Me Too and public expectation that there be diversity on leadership teams and the board• Believe businesses and leaders want to do the right thing• Opportunity for individuals to be more informed consumers first• Being a more informed individual will help me be a better leader in the business place	<p>7:14</p>
<p>When there is that CEO transition, does the CHRO play a particular role in helping the new CEO into that role? And what does that help look like?</p>	<p>10:46</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that incoming and outgoing CEO have a mutually agreed upon transition plan • Ensure that the new CEO is not underestimating the loyalty employees may have for the departing CEO • Be transparent and aware of what changes they're looking to see and what they want to preserve • CHRO can help a CEO be cognizant and prepared for fact that it can be a lonely role 	
<p>On that loneliness front, is that a CHRO thing also?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Started encouraging other senior level c-suite leaders to engage in a forum or group with others like them outside of the organization because she understands loneliness firsthand • HR knows things you can't share or need to share in a way that is anonymous but brings awareness to an opportunity 	14:24
<p>What should the CEO and CHRO be doing to build an effective, highly functioning executive leadership team (ELT)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All members of the ELT are responsible for the effectiveness, productivity, and efficiency, and the brand of the leadership team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Believe the CEO and CHRO have the closest connection and opportunity for co-owning that • Help new CEOs be really clear about accountability and expectations • Communication is critical, being upfront with preferences can go a long way 	15:58
<p>Are there some characteristics that would be able to describe a successful ELT? Do those that are most effective and efficient have some things in common?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust, respect, well-developed EQ skills 	18:46
<p>Does the CEO need to select people to their ELT that have those skills? Or is that something the CHRO can help the members develop?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EQ skills to a degree can be developed and enhanced, but also some people have it or they don't • HR can really help by making certain that these are capabilities or skills that are deemed important in succession planning, talent development programs, and talent selection and assessment processes 	21:14
<p>During your career, you've had a number of HR experiences in a variety of industries. What are some of the similarities in high HR roles across these fields and what are some of the differences?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common themes include realistic development plans, realistic succession plans, ensuring you have something actionable, ensuring there is room for change, ensuring you have alternate plans • Continuing to build the brand of the business of HR • Everything HR brings forward directly floats back to strategic business plan • Difference by industry is really understanding your consumer 	23:11

Notable Quotes:

“We [HR] do tend to be the moral compass, at times, for the organization...”

“Look in the mirror first. It starts with me. And I think if I’m more aware and informed, that’s going to carry over into my professional life.”

“I think it’s really valuable if a CEO joins some type of a CEO forum or roundtable, where they can be surrounded by others in a similar situation, where they can have another safe place...”

“There is always the opportunity for brand evolution of an HR business leader, for the reputation that HR has within the organization and with external key stakeholders. So ensuring that HR is continuing to be very business savvy and knowledgeable.”

Discussion Questions:

- 1. What can HR do to lead during a crisis?**
- 2. What can individuals do to achieve career success?**

Company	CHRO	Topics
PRA Group	Katie O’Connell Jones	Succession planning, leading in crisis, executive leadership team, success of women