

HR Department Benchmarks and Analysis 2007: Executive Summary

from The Bureau of National Affairs: HR professionals are regularly challenged to show how the internal data they track is relevant to their organizations' broader strategic goals. Similar challenges apply to the use of external benchmarking data. Simply comparing a company's results with those of surveyed organizations is rarely sufficient to make a convincing case to senior leadership. This report provides a comprehensive analysis of what results mean for HR departments and their organizations.

HR is Poised to Increase Capacity

In recent years, as the economic recovery and sustained business growth have buoyed organizations' financial performance, many HR departments have also benefited. This year's survey findings reflect broader economic trends in a number of areas. A prime example is that the median HR staff ratio -- the number of full-time equivalent HR staff for every 100 employees served -- is up from figures reported between 2002 and 2004. Increases in the staff ratio suggest that HR departments have added proportionately more staff in recent years than have organizations overall, thus potentially freeing up HR professionals' time for other activities.

HR Measurement and Technology Go Hand in Hand

Few would argue with the supposition that management's confidence in the human resource function depends, at least in part, on HR's ability to accurately and reliably measure its activities and contributions. The survey results provide additional evidence to support these views. HR departments that regularly engage in measurement and planning activities across a range of areas -- staffing, compensation and benefits, training and development, and succession planning, to name a few -- are more likely to report "full" or "substantial" involvement in key business decisions than those that measure less regularly. Equally important, HR departments that use measurement and planning tools regularly tend to have larger HR budgets, relative to total operating costs, than those that measure less consistently. It is no secret that HR's ability to measure effectively and to support strategic, data-driven initiatives can be greatly facilitated by human resource information systems (HRIS). Nearly three-quarters of employers surveyed, both large and small, report having an HRIS in place. [Read more >](#)

HSAs Grow by 43 Percent Over 2006 Figures, AHIP Says

About 4.5 million Americans were covered by health savings accounts as of January 2007, a 43 percent increase from a year ago, a health insurance industry trade group reported April 2.

HSAs were offered to the public beginning in 2004 as a result of a provision in the 2003 Medicare prescription drug law, and the number of Americans covered by them has grown each year since, the trade group America's Health Insurance Plans said.

About 1 million people were covered by HSAs by March 2005, and 3.2 million by January 2006, AHIP said in an analysis. AHIP found that more than a quarter (27 percent) of those purchasing HSAs in the individual market were previously uninsured, and that almost half of those enrolled in such plans were over the age of 40. [Read more >](#)

What's New at bswift:

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SHRM 59th Annual Conference & Exposition

June 24-27, 2007
Las Vegas Convention Center
Las Vegas, Nevada

Booths #1016 & 1018

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News Briefs:

New Tool Identifies Executive Compensation Issues

Compensation planners have another tool for identifying executive compensation issues, courtesy of WorldatWork, an association of HR professionals focused on attracting, motivating, and retaining employees. [Read more >](#)

Rich plans managing costs, tacking towards CDH

A survey of employers in Detroit shows that even companies with rich health benefits continue to do a good job managing costs. Growing interest in CDH options in these benefit-rich employer communities shows that movement is continuing to grow as well. [Read more >](#)

Case Study:

Dentsply International: "Our expectations continue to be surpassed. bswift personifies what it means to be a well-functioning ASP." [Read more >](#)