



# Why Is It So Important for HR Managers to Score, Too?

Many organisations consider sales employees to be their top scorers, the employees who drive the business forward. After all, sales growth, whether of products or services, is a key concern for all leaders – and it should be. Without sales growth, business would be nonexistent, and no organisation of any size would be able to survive and thrive for any length of time. Consequently, it is commonly accepted that the impact of the sales team on an organisation’s success is critically important to its long-term viability.

HR professionals, on the other hand, are comparable to goal keepers in a football team. They are not generally expected to score a goal, even though, in rare cases, goal keepers may actually do so. But this perception is erroneous, as HR professionals are the ones who support the whole team and stand at the last line of defense as well as help discover, hire, develop, and support the right people, with the requisite skills that the company needs to score (succeed).

Although scoring is very critical for any given job, be it in support, operation, or sales roles, the key problem revolves around the agreed definition of what scoring means when it comes to HR.

## Clarity Is Key to Scoring

Consider sales positions. Although it is becoming more and more complicated and complex, defining what scoring means for sales is, nevertheless, easier compared to other roles. What determines bonuses, promotions, and merit increases is clear, mutually accepted, and easily agreed upon in many organisations. For example, any positive or negative change in terms of agreed scores has a direct impact on a sales person’s total rewards package, potential career growth, and even an employer’s ability to retain that sales person.

With regard to HR positions, particularly HR managers, the definition is not as clear. Is it about the cost of running the HR function? Ratio of HR professionals to employees? The time to hire a new employee? Cost per hire? Engagement rating? Etc., or other parameters that contribute successfully to the organisation’s business growth? Leadership teams should make an unbridled effort to improve the scoring definition for HR roles so that these key employees earn a similar perceived value when it comes to scoring in their organisation.

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role) without  
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### Five Tips for Ensuring HR Team Players Can Score, Too

As an HR professional, you need to be proactive, understand the vital part you play in the company's growth, success, and – at the same time – take control of your career. The following tips may be helpful in clarifying your situation and how you can score.

**1) Never accept any HR role (actually, any role) without knowing how you are expected to score.** One of the biggest problems in HR is that not everyone is clear about how HR roles should actually score. There is no point in trying to do your best if not everyone above you, around you, and below you in the hierarchy clearly understand how you are going to score. Ultimately, you will find yourself in a situation where you spend more time trying to explain to others how well you are doing than actually trying to achieve anything! This scenario is a no-no. Don't do it.

**2) Understand how others are going to help you to score.** If you naively believe that you are expected to score alone, you should accept that you are not in the right place or organisational culture to score. No one – no one individual – can win a game alone, manage a company alone, or grow a business alone. You should first determine how others - colleagues, line managers, leadership – are going to help you score. Only then can you make it crystal clear to others, as well, and get their confirmed understanding, agreement, and commitment on how they are going to help you to score.

This cooperative effort means that your performance parameters need to be linked to theirs, and theirs to yours, in a way that is clear and measurable. If not, forget about scoring. You will end up perceived as someone on the periphery, and perhaps just a nice person who seems to help others. As an HR manager, this place is absolutely not where you want to be or how you want to be perceived.

**3) Focus on getting the right people to help you score as a team.** No football team has consistently won games based on a single player. Think about the most recent World Cup, where amazingly talented players could not save their teams alone, with the result that their teams were eliminated early in the tournament. So, don't think that you or anyone else alone will be the hero, outperform, and save your organisation year after year. Although a powerful and inspiring myth, it is far from the reality of today's business environment. However, getting or helping other leaders to find the right people to score is probably the most strategic thing you can do in your organisation. In turn, it will help you to score, too!



**4) Stay relevant.** Even though this point is key, many people don't understand what it means. Staying relevant does not mean you should only be close to top management, hoping that others will perceive you as a top scorer (not to mention that not all top management teams are top scorers, either). It means that you make sure you remain, and are perceived as, a top scorer, even though you might change your team one day. Other employers or teams will still seek you out as a scorer, regardless of your context.

**5) Practice, practice, practice.** This point may be self-evident. However, if you don't practice what you preach, you cannot expect to score as consistently as possible. You should focus on being out there practicing what you learn every day, what you want to improve to be better than today. Show others that you can contribute and help grow your business in ways that are creative, innovative, and sustainable. Let them see that you want to taste the same successes and be recognised for the scores you have achieved.

#### **What It All Means**

The bottom line is simple. People generally only remember and value the individuals who score, but not those who help others score. As an HR professional, you need to score consistently so that you remain in the game. You also should ensure that others around you understand, agree, and accept how you score because what you do is fundamentally important and extremely relevant to the growth potential of your organisation. For HR to remain strategic, insightful, and be one of the key drivers of business, we need to bring more transparency around how HR – and, in effect, the entire organisation – actually scores.

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