Vision 2020: A Road Map For People Management in Latin America

By Jeannette Karamañites

Early in 2015, the Board of Directors of the Interamerican Federation of People Management Associations (FIDAGH) and its Advisory Board met in Panama City, Panama, to map out a strategic vision, mission and objectives that will guide its support for Latin American human resource associations for the next five years.

From that meeting emerged Vision 2020—a set of principles and values that we believe will improve the practice of people management in Latin America into the future. Vision 2020 aims to position FIDAGH as the lead human resource institution for Latin America and, at the same time, create a unique brand that will represent our region.

The federation will achieve this by studying and analyzing new ways of thinking about and managing people and by promoting best practices and models of excellence in human resource management. FIDAGH is well-positioned to roll out Vision 2020 through its member national associations, which together are immersed in all of the current people management issues in Latin America.

Vision 2020 began with a meeting one year ago in Santiago, Chile, where the presidents of each of FIDAGH’s member national associations, representing 15 countries, discussed and debated their expectations of the federation. Their ideas were shaped by FIDAGH’s leadership—with help from consultant Sergio Tertusio of Panama’s ADEN International Business School—into Vision 2020, which sets out a vision, a mission statement, and a set of values and objectives for FIDAGH and its members.

Vision

The federation’s vision for the next five years is to be recognized regionally and internationally for its contribution to developing and strengthening national associations, generating new trends and ideas, and promoting state-of-the-art practices in human resource management.

Mission

FIDAGH’s mission is to lead and represent its member national associations in training human talent, increasing productivity and competitiveness, and developing and strengthening labor relations and social responsibility of organizations and institutions in Latin America, with due respect to each country’s culture and diversity.
Values
Vision 2020 identifies five key values that must guide institutional behaviors in the coming years. These values—leadership, innovation, team building, ethics and representation—are central to FIDAGH’s work to support and empower the people management profession in Latin America.

One of the most important values we identified is ethics—this is why FIDAGH has a code of ethics that details expected behavior for people management professionals. This code extends not only to FIDAGH’s Board of Directors but also to all presidents, directors and even partners. Another key value is the ability to honorably and effectively represent the profession, which is closely linked to leadership and compels FIDAGH and its members to constantly promote the ongoing development of the profession.

Objectives
Either directly or through its affiliates and strategic partners, FIDAGH will promote and develop key relationships, evidence-based knowledge, best practices and models of excellence in human resource management in all its manifestations and dimensions. Vision 2020 focuses on several processes and activities that will enable us to meet three strategic objectives: Sponsor, Build and Integrate.

Sponsor. To strengthen institutional alliances, FIDAGH will:
- Promote stronger institutional partnerships with governments, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), academic institutions, business federations and other stakeholders.
- Maintain the highest level of participation in the World Federation of People Management Associations (WFPMA).
- Assist member national associations of FIDAGH in the development of best practices to share and interact with other associations or nonprofit organizations.

Build. FIDAGH will support its member national associations by:
- Encouraging and helping member associations to practice good governance.
- Ensuring its permanent availability to support member associations in developing their projects.
- Monitoring compliance of Vision 2020 objectives.

Integrate. To support members and to solidify its role as Latin America’s lead people management institution, FIDAGH will expand its knowledge database in the following areas:
- Analysis and research on people management topics and trends in the region.
- Professional HR certification.
- Academic research in people management topics.
- Best practices.
- Management practices for national associations.

Financial Management. FIDAGH’s objectives for financial management and marketing are to:
- Achieve revenue through sponsors.
- Create profitable products and services.
- Identify funding opportunities through NGOs and international organizations.
- Position FIDAGH as the premier organization for HR matters throughout the region.
- Improve product positioning.
- Identify opportunities for member national associations to attract revenue.
- Position FIDAGH and its members to attract sponsors for research and other programs.

As a next step, FIDAGH will create working groups to begin executing the actions and activities for Vision 2020, which will be carried out in close partnership with member associations.

Vision 2020 is our road map to a great future for the people management profession in Latin America. FIDAGH is excited and ready to take the lead on this journey.

Jeannette Karamañites is President of FIDAGH and Human Resources Director for the Panamanian law firm of Arias, Fabrega & Fabrega.
Talent Managers Face Shifting Politics, Unsteady Economies

By Lisellotte Ortega

The dramatic political, economic and demographic shifts we are experiencing in Latin America challenge talent managers to step back and look at the big picture.

From generational differences to increased government controls, navigating the changing world of work will require talent managers to redefine their practices and sharpen their skills for managing employees, organizational cultures and work environments.

The Interamerican Federation of People Management Associations (FIDAGH) asked leaders of each of its member national associations, representing 15 countries in Latin America, about the main concerns talent management professionals in this region have.

Before we review their answers, it is important to understand some differences and similarities between countries, the political realities in the region, and the significant changes Latin American labor markets are experiencing.

On the political front, Argentina is currently in the middle of a very complicated election process, overshadowed by a weakened economy and a government that struggles with its credibility. In Colombia, the government is negotiating peace with the guerrilla group FARC, so far without success. Nicaragua and Ecuador have approved indefinite presidential re-elections.

Many Latin American countries are facing new economic uncertainty. Chile’s rate of economic growth is declining because of falling copper prices, and Venezuela’s economy is contracting rapidly after crude oil prices dropped 50 percent over the past year. Guatemalan migrants, facing dwindling remittances from their struggling home country, are returning from abroad with few prospects. Corruption scandals in Brazil, Guatemala and Panama are contributing to economic deceleration.

Labor markets and workplaces are in flux. In Argentina, Chile and other countries, labor efforts are underway to secure collective bargaining rights and give unions more power to push for better wage agreements and salary increases. In the Dominican Republic, Guatemala and Panama, unions are pressing for minimum salary increases of 30 to 40 percent, which will greatly impact the private sector.

Of all the Latin American countries, Venezuela is facing the most significant workforce changes. In 2012, the government approved a new labor law without any consideration in the National Assembly. The legislation established workers’ councils, taking what many deem a socialist approach to giving employees more control over the companies where they work. Implementation of the law has been delayed, generating anxiety in both employers and trade unionists who fear it may be another instrument for the state to exert control over both unions and private employers.

To effectively pilot through such challenging waters, talent managers need to be very creative, using innovation to redefine practices in managing skills; gaining employee commitment; and recruiting, evaluating and developing employees.

In addition, the Venezuelan government established groups of “militia workers” to monitor worker production while also serving as armed government protection. Nationalized state enterprises, seized and/or confiscated, are paralyzed or producing at very low capacity, generating economic losses for the state. Nevertheless, late last year, the government increased wages for public employees by 32.25 percent. Finally, as of May 2015, job outsourcing in Venezuela is prohibited. Companies have had three years to absorb outsourced workers into their payrolls; those who missed the May deadline face criminal penalties.

Against this complex and colorful backdrop, it may be surprising to learn that our survey of member national organizations revealed that most countries are experiencing the same top three concerns: recruiting and talent retention, labor reforms, and hiring technical talent.

Other challenges identified by the survey results are talent management, corporate social responsibility, labor relations, career planning and succession, ethics and values, diversity, and generational tensions.

Looking at issues of talent management specifically, the main priorities respondents identified were creating a supportive work environment, managing employee engagement and commitment, and developing leadership. Respondents noted that in the near future, managing the coexistence of multiple generations in the workforce will be a focal point as well.

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Finally, talent managers must develop the capacity to measure and monitor the work climate, simplifying processes and using qualitative methods to help employees find their best fit within the organization so they can achieve their highest levels of productivity and engagement.

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Lisellotte Ortega is Past President of the National Association of Human Resources Professionals of Panama and current FIDAGH Permanent Executive Secretary.
Latin American countries face several structural and demographic challenges that have a direct impact on people management. In almost every case, meeting these challenges requires the development of a qualified, trained and engaged workforce prepared to increase productivity and competitiveness in the region’s companies and industries.

In the education sphere, Latin American universities are unable to keep up with market demand for skilled and professional workers. Today’s careers require new competencies, so MBA and postgraduate programs are more in demand by professionals of all ages and career stages. This state of affairs requires new management models that will not only open more places for professional education but also encourage companies to develop their own talent.

In organizations, the way leaders work has to be revised. They must be more active in developing team members, looking beyond internal company dynamics to local and global scenarios of leadership to analyze how leaders could better contribute to business.

New generations, especially the Millennial generation, should be a focal point for professional development today because they have so much to offer. They bring a new mental model of increased connectivity and interactivity, and they bring to organizations the concept of more flexibility and less bureaucracy along with the desire to work in teams. Younger workers have a strong interest in understanding the different parts of the businesses where they work. They consider communication and feedback to be essential tools for their successful professional performance. They appreciate when companies invest in their development and when managers understand the essential needs of their generation. For them, quality of life and work are inseparable.

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Another frequent theme being discussed in Latin American human resource circles is the growth of “green jobs.” According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), this emerging career path is defined by “decent jobs that contribute to, preserve or restore the environment, be they in traditional sectors such as manufacturing and construction or in new, emerging green sectors such as renewable energy and energy efficiency.” Green jobs are a growth area in the region, and many international development organizations are funding this area. Human resources has a large role to play in creating a workforce ready for these jobs.

Brazil has been a standout in the green jobs arena, not only because the country has the largest natural reserve in the world—the Amazon Forest—but also because, according to ILO data, more than 3 million green jobs have been created, accounting for about 7 percent of Brazil’s formal employment.

In companies themselves, green workplaces are gaining in popularity, which requires our profession to prepare employees for new types of work instruments, operational processes and people management strategies—such as going paperless and enabling telecommuting.

At the Interamerican Federation of People Management Associations (FIDAGH), it is our responsibility and desire to study these shifting scenarios so that we can work harder to support our organizations. Our success will help make people management a top priority in our region’s education and business environments.

Leyla Nascimento is Vice President of FIDAGH and President of the Brazilian Human Resources Association.
A Passion for the Profession

By Lisellotte Ortega

Confucius famously advised, “Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life.”

Human beings are able to feel a vast range of emotions, but we commonly experience just a handful—happiness, anger, stress, peacefulness, anxiety, confidence and love, among a few others.

In our profession, we hear about one emotion very often: passion. We say that in an organization, passion is what drives people’s ambition and inspires them in whatever they do. Passion, we tell each other, is a key component for success.

Is it really true? WorldLink asked several undeniably successful people—former presidents of the Interamerican Federation of People Management Associations (FIDAGH)—about their own feelings and emotions regarding the people management profession. Here’s what they told us:

“We [as human resource professionals] feel an unconditional commitment and the will to add and multiply. On the bridges we have built, our name is not engraved in stone. It doesn’t really matter; we can live in anonymity, with the mere satisfaction of knowing that we have contributed for others to achieve and go further.”

—Horacio Quiros, 2007-2009 FIDAGH President

“We made a career choice—to believe in people and their potential. We believe in contributing so that they can develop their potential and performance as well as their careers, and thereby change businesses and even nations. People and their differences constantly dare us to understand their ways of thinking, feeling and acting, which is a daily challenge we leaders must be prepared for. We will succeed as long as we believe in our divine mission—to support the development of those who really want to develop.”

—Cassio Mattos, 2003-2005 FIDAGH President

“I feel inexplicably entwined with this discipline, almost like in a ministry. I am especially exhilarated when I am able to see how strategic actions are transforming customer satisfaction in organizations I work for. With their leadership, human resource managers who are aware of their role can promote cultural change, make processes move, elicit appropriate behaviors, guide growth toward competitiveness, discover best practices and be the best allies senior management can have to achieve their goals.”

—Eladio Uribe, 2001-2003 FIDAGH President

“The rationale driving the human talent leader is characterized by achieving a number of objectives with diverse priorities while strictly adhering to ethical principles that should always guide human actions. As professionals, we have to do three jobs: meet the objectives of the organizations we work for; train and develop people in ways that improve their working and personal lives; and contribute to the formation of future leaders. It is not enough to be a leader—we must cultivate leaders where we find them. Meeting our goals is strongly correlated to the effort, passion and conviction we put into what we do. And therefore, we must do what we love. This benefits institutions, society and the advancement of good governance.”

—Carlos Aldao Zapiola, 1993-1995 FIDAGH President

Lisellotte Ortega is Past President of the National Association of Human Resources Professionals of Panama and current FIDAGH Permanent Executive Secretary.
Three years after its creation, the New Employment Opportunities (NEO) alliance is improving the employability of poor and vulnerable youth in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Launched in 2012, NEO is a groundbreaking multisectoral partnership of major corporations, civil society, academia and the public sector that offers job training and placement services to young people throughout the region. When it began, 1 in 5 young people in Latin America and the Caribbean were neither at work nor in school. Today, the initiative is on track to achieve its target of reaching 1 million youth with work preparedness programs by 2022, according to its founders, the Multilateral Investment Fund (a member of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Group), the International Youth Foundation and five of the region’s leading employers: Arcos Dorados, Caterpillar, CEMEX, Microsoft and Wal-Mart. The IDB’s Social Sector division has played a key role in bringing government agencies into the partnership.

NEO currently has programs running in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. These efforts cover a wide range of services, from online learning in Brazil to career counseling and job placement in Panama. By the time they are completed, current NEO projects will offer employability services to a projected 382,000 youth, and the initiative continues to expand.

“NEO is improving job opportunities for young people in a region where 32 million youth are neither at work nor in school,” said IDB President Luis Alberto Moreno. “Thanks to our work with companies, governments and civil society, we are making a difference in 10 countries.” He added that new programs are getting underway in Brazil, Chile, El Salvador, Jamaica, Peru and Uruguay this year.

Businesses in the region benefit from NEO projects by gaining access to new sources of training that meet their needs, access to a more qualified workforce, increased productivity, a conduit for greater influence on public policy and recognition for their social responsibility. “This project is beneficial to both youth and employers because of the win-win relationship,” said Aida Josefina Puello, president of the Dominican Association of Human Resources and Central America and Caribbean Area Vice President of the World Federation of People Management Associations. “Businesses are able to obtain more qualified and talented employees who have greater commitment and therefore work more productively with better results. NEO projects will continue to bring more and better training programs to communities that put youth on the career ladder, and, in the end, the local and global community will benefit from a more sound and professional society and an improved job market.”

“One of the obstacles to achieving inclusive economic growth is the imbalance in the development of labor and life competencies—something that is having an impact on the young,” said Panama’s labor minister, Luis Ernesto Carles. “That’s why we value the implementation of NEO in Panama as a specific contribution to increasing employment in this segment of our country’s population.”

After hearing about NEO at her church, 21-year-old Mileidy Urrutia Mosquera took part in a cash registry training course at Luis Amigó University Institute in Apartadó, Colombia. “They told me what it was about and that [the local NEO project] had tailor-made courses. So I signed up for the course and now I’m grateful for the opportunity I was given. I got this job thanks to NEO and the training they gave me, and now I can help out at home. I was very lucky because [through] NEO I found this supermarket and got some work experience. By chance, somebody resigned after I started my work placement and they hired me instead.”

Over the next five years, NEO’s goals are to strengthen the capacity of 200 job service providers; prepare 500,000 poor and vulnerable youth (ages 16 to 29) for the labor market, and ensure that 50 percent or more of the youth trained are young women; mobilize 1,000 companies to offer internships and employment opportunities for youth; and achieve job placement rates of 50 percent for program graduates.

So far, more than US$98 million has been approved for NEO projects. To learn more about NEO, visit http://youthneo.org.

In addition to reaching hundreds of thousands of young people directly, NEO has mobilized hundreds of companies, public-sector agencies and nongovernmental organizations to join the alliance. By the end of 2014, 2,000 companies had committed to offering internships and jobs to poor and vulnerable youth, and 159 service providers had committed to improving their education services.
Around the Region

Argentina
Tech training
In a move to further expand Argentina’s technical workforce, the Ministry of Education aims to bring computer programming courses to almost every college across the country and to create a network of new IT schools. Although more than 98,000 graduates and 11,000 postgraduates are being added to the country’s skilled workforce every year, there is a shortage of training programs to meet the demand posed by the 3,600 IT firms now operating in the country.

Brazil
Job protection
In July, the Brazilian government launched the Program to Protect Employment (PPE), which aims to slow down the rise of unemployment and the deepening of the country’s recession. The program allows companies in economic distress to negotiate a reduction in employee working hours and salaries to reduce labor costs, with the government subsidizing a portion of the employees’ lost wages. The PPE intends to help employers avoid the high costs of layoffs, but participation in the program requires companies to go through a complex approval process, including obtaining approval from the employees’ assembly, the union and governmental authorities.

Colombia
Transgender win
Colombia has begun allowing its transgender citizens to legally change how their name and gender are registered on government identification cards without undergoing intrusive physical and psychological examinations to prove their sex. Having accurate government identification cards will enable transgender Colombians to more easily apply for employment, housing and health care; open bank accounts; and vote.

Costa Rica
Startup support
New legislation to support small businesses in Costa Rica lowers income tax for startup companies for their first three years of operation. In their first year, businesses will pay 0 percent of ordinary taxes, rising to 25 percent and 50 percent in years two and three. Small, medium and micro enterprises, as well as individuals, can apply, and the government expects about 100 companies to use the benefit. The plan aims to simplify burdens on new companies, which will in turn enable them to hire more employees and grow faster without a costly initial tax burden.

Ecuador
Happiest expats
People who live and work abroad have ranked Ecuador as the best country for expats, according to an annual global survey conducted by InterNations. This year’s survey of 14,400 expats living in 64 countries found that Ecuador retained the top spot for the second year in a row. The overall ranking was determined by a host of categories, including satisfaction with life in general, leisure options, ease of settling in, cost of education and child care, finding friends, and travel options.

Peru
Magnet for workers
Peru has transformed from an exporter of labor to a magnet for thousands of immigrants from around the world, according to the latest government figures. Both the country’s National Migration Department and the National Institute of Statistics and Information confirm that immigration increased by almost 800 percent between 2004 and 2014. During the first six months of 2015, foreign engineers filed the most applications seeking to work in Peru (8,045), followed by laborers in different sectors (5,504), company administrators (1,748), managers (966), technicians (800), economists (557), pilots (515) and accountants (449).

Paraguay
Japanese legacies
Paraguay’s descendants of Japanese immigrants are proving an attractive draw for Japanese companies moving into Latin America. The number of Japanese descendants in Paraguay stands at just 7,000—compared with 1.6 million in Brazil and 90,000 in Peru—but those fluent in Japanese are being actively sought because Paraguay is recognized as having one of Latin America’s highest Japanese-language levels. The increase in job opportunities for Japanese-Paraguays is boosting the numbers of children learning Japanese, and new Japanese-language schools are opening across the country.

Uruguay
Social consciousness
Uruguay has earned the No. 1 ranking for the second straight year in the 2015 Americas Quarterly Social Inclusion Index. The index monitors public policies and highlights gaps in equality and social protection across countries in Central and South America and the United States. Variables include equitable access to jobs and goods and the protection of civil and political rights. Uruguay was recognized for its support of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights and access to formal jobs. It continues to improve in the amount of GDP spent on social projects and financial inclusion. The United States ranked second on the index this year, followed by Argentina.

Venezuela
Student numbers decline
Venezuelan public higher education institutions have recorded a decline in the number of students enrolling in undergraduate programs. Researchers at the Gervasio Rubio Rural Pedagogic Institute noted that fewer Venezuelan students are showing interest in higher education, preferring instead to earn money quickly in the country’s “parallel economy”—small-scale drug trafficking, smuggling and black market product sales. The researchers blame the current economic situation in the country, which places many young people at a crossroads between college and working for cash to fulfill the immediate needs of their families.

HR CALENDAR

October 22–23, 2015
49th AEDIPE National Congress/27th EAPM Congress on HR
Hotel Balneario Resort Las Arenas, Valencia, Spain
E-mail: info@aedipe2015.com

November 3–5, 2015
APFHRM Regional Conference
Orchid Country Club, Singapore
Website: www.apfhrm.com

November 4–5, 2015
CIPD Annual Conference & Exhibition
Manchester Central, Manchester, UK
Website: www.cipd.co.uk/events/annual/conference

November 24–25, 2015
Hong Kong Institute of Human Resource Management Annual Conference and Exhibition
Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre
Website: www.hkhrm.org/index.php/pe/annual-conference

November 25, 2015
Portuguese Association of People Management 48th National Conference
Lisbon, Portugal
Email: global@apg.pt
Website: www.apg.pt

June 19–22, 2016
SHRM Annual Conference & Exposition
Washington, D.C.
Website: annual.shrm.org

September 7–8, 2016
AMEDIRH 51st International Human Resources Congress
Centro Banamex, Mexico City
Email: contacto@amedirh.com.mx

October 20–21, 2016
WFPMA 16th World Congress on Human Resource Management
Istanbul, Turkey
Website: www.wfpma2016istanbul.org

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS OF THE WORLD FEDERATION

AHRC (28)
AFRICAN HUMAN RESOURCES CONFEDERATION
Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe
President: Hicham Zouanat, Morocco

APFHRM (15)
ASIA PACIFIC FEDERATION OF HRM
Australia, Bangladesh, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam
President: Musharrof Hossain, Bangladesh

EAPM (28)
EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR PEOPLE MANAGEMENT
Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom
President: Izy Béhar, France

FIDAGH (15)
INTERAMERICAN FEDERATION OF PEOPLE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATIONS
Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela
President: Jeannette Karamanites, Panama

NAHRMA (3)
NORTH AMERICAN HRM ASSOCIATION
Canada, Mexico, United States
President: Henry G. (Hank) Jackson, United States

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WORLDLINK welcomes news stories, announcements of events and ideas for articles. These should be accompanied by a telephone number and e-mail address.

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