

# HR In 2025

## I How HR can help shape the future

By Tom Haak

Recently, I was interviewed as part of a research into “HR in 2025”. This was an interesting conversation, and in the article, I want to capture some thoughts I had, before I forget them (and before I change my mind..). It is by no means my intention to summarise the interview, the researchers can do a better job, and I am looking forward to the report that will be published somewhere this fall.

### Three considerations when researching HR in 2025

#### 1. There Is Not One HR

There are many types of organisations, and there are many different forms and shapes of HR. What organisational shape does fit best with the goods or services an organisation is delivering to its customers? In 2025, many organisations will still be shaped rather traditionally, and this shape will fit well with what they have to do. There will be organisations that cannot be so easily classified, as they seem to be constantly shaping and quickly adapting to the challenges and opportunities they are facing. The workforce cannot be easily identified, as it is a mix of people



on the (a) payroll, cloud workers, people working at universities and suppliers. Geography is another dimension to take into account, as well as the nature and size of the business. Different kinds of HR will be needed for different organisations.

Many advanced bigger organisations are kind of splitting

HR into several parts, into HR operations, HR architecture and specialised services. So it is not one HR, but several HR's we are talking about.

#### 2. HR Can Help Create the Future

It is difficult to talk about the future of HR without influencing the future. If many of the thought



leaders and leading practitioners have similar views, and the views are shared in a report “HR in 2025”, this report will (if it is good) influence the future. Are thoughts on the future that are shared by many people necessarily the most promising thoughts? I have read many reports based on surveying CHROs and CEOs, and the outcomes were often kind of middle-of-the right (“Talent management will have high priority, also in 2025”).

HR can and should help create a better future.

In the Dutch “Het Financieele Dagblad” I read a profile of [Judith Wiese](#) who has been appointed as [CHRO and Board member of Siemens](#) per October 1, 2020. HR at Siemens would be an interesting case to follow in the period 2020-2025. In her new position, Judith Wiese is able to influence the future of HR in Siemens and also broader. With nearly 400,000 employees globally Siemens can be an example for many.

If Amazon (900,000 thousand people in the workforce) would decide it would focus more on the wellbeing of its employees, besides focusing on the interests of the customers and the shareholders, this could have a huge impact on the future of HR.

### 3. HR Spearheading Corporate Social Responsibility

This year I read “[She Said](#)”, by Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey, and “[Super Pumped – The Battle for Uber](#)” by Mike Isaac. Both books feature super bullies (Harvey Weinstein and Travis Kalanick). Interesting: in both books, the HR professionals in the organisations do not play any role. HR is absent. The legal departments play a role, but also a very dubious one, as their main focus is on avoiding issues and protecting the bully. This is clearly an opportunity for HR. The expectations of clients, employees and candidates are changing. They are looking at organisations to contribute to the required changes in society. If organisations are tolerating toxic

workplaces, it will be difficult for them to play the required role, and it will harm their business. Spearheading CSR will be high on the list of opportunities for HR, is my expectation.



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