

# 12 CHARACTERISTICS ESSENTIAL TO DOING HR *like a* BOSS

In late 2018, I unknowingly began my journey to become an author. It was an overcast and cold fall evening back at my alma mater, Kent State University. I had created a presentation about what it takes to do HR Like a Boss and was sharing this new idea about HR with group of business students. Five years later, I am excited to have my first book, HR Like a Boss, published by SHRM Books on October 24, 2023. One of the coolest parts of writing my book is the countless conversations that I have had with incredible Human Resources professionals about what it takes to do HR in an amazingly awesome way. From those conversations, I compiled a list of characteristics essential to doing HR Like a Boss. Here is an excerpt from my book with the HR Like a Boss characteristics:

## **Takes Ownership**

Be enterprising and embrace responsibility for everything that you can influence in your HR role and the business. Look beyond to see where you should make an impact and embrace where you could make an impact. Instead of being hands-off in areas that aren't necessarily in your job description, get involved where you can make a difference. As an HR professional, be a model for your organization and take responsibility. Owners can't rely on excuses as the buck stops with them—do the same and develop and implement solutions!

## **Loves What They Do**

You must love what you do, and in HR, this includes working with people! HR is a profession that not only requires an understanding of the dynamic between employees and the employer, but that you love them both and are passionate about making the best workplace possible, despite human flaws.

## **Leads by Example**

A leader is not only someone who others gravitate to and follow but, more importantly, exemplifies and models the behaviors that serve as an example of doing things the right way. A leader gets the most out of their people to transcend and elevate the organization.

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## Thinks Strategically

A strategic HR professional considers a large range of factors when considering changes that would impact their company and its people. Being strategic means seeing the big picture and the long-term ramifications of acting versus not acting. Being strategic means examining in-depth the potential outcomes before acting.

## Shapes Company's Vision

HR must understand the why of your business and effectively, clearly, and concisely communicate the vision of your company in both the written and spoken word. Doing HR Like a Boss requires you to create clarity where confusion may exist when standards are not clear or accountability to a company's core values seems misaligned.

## Acts Ethically

An upstanding, ethical individual possesses a moral compass with a purposeful true north. To be a trusted HR professional, you must be transparent and honest. Doing HR Like a Boss requires trust, openness, honesty, and transparency in all of your activities.

## Demonstrates Resiliency

The world and its circumstances are ever-changing and evolving. HR professionals must be resilient and agile to adapt when things change. HR professionals understand the dynamic between an employee and an employer and recognize that every possible real-world situation doesn't have a solution found in an employee handbook. Every situation is not black and white; doing HR Like a Boss requires being exceptional at working in the gray areas of work and life.

## Lives with Authenticity

It is easier to develop relationships and establish trust when you are truly real and trustworthy. An HR professional needs to be genuine, real, and sincere to maximize relationships with employees and peers.

## Explores Emotions

Marc Brackett, Ph.D., author of *Permission to Feel*, encourages people to be an "emotion scientist," which is someone who is comfortable and capable with their own emotions and has heightened self-awareness. Just as importantly, these high EQ people are mindful and aware of other people's emotions and can mix empathy and facts as each situation warrants.

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## Focuses on Purpose

An HR professional should be intentional—with their work and how they carry themselves. A clear and evident answer behind actions reveals the actions' what and why—being purposeful starts by focusing on the why mindset and recognizing the greater good that your employees and company can offer to society and your community.

## Learns Constantly

Within each professional relationship, from long-term with a CEO to short-term with a candidate in an interview, the best HR professionals are curious. Don't stop asking great questions—listen, evaluate, and follow up to ensure you understand the answers! Approach each conversation as an opportunity to learn.

## Exudes Confidence

Be professionally defiant and don't assume "it can't be done," but rather find a new and creative way to achieve business goals. You will need endurance and persistence, but what can't be done just hasn't been accomplished . . . yet.

**I wonder what you think about these characteristics. Are there too many? Are there obvious characteristics that are missing from this list?**

**My hope is that the list caused you to reflect on your role and passion for Human Resources. Ultimately, that reflection caused you think about what it takes to do HR Like a Boss, and you are inspired to continue to pour your heart into making an impact on your employees, organization, and community.**

**Until next time, let's continue to aspire to do amazingly awesome HR.**



*Learn more!*