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WORKFORCE
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EDITION

Kurt Landon,
Founder & CEO,
Enspira

ENSPIRA

PEOPLE, PROCESS, AND
TECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN HR
EXPERTISE

\$15



ENSPIRA

Countless organizations across the globe are grappling with the inability to have a sound HR infrastructure that integrates people and processes to effectively develop and sustain employee engagement, retention, and performance management. The situation can be even more complicated with smaller organizations and nonprofits. With limited funding, they often cannot afford to partner with an HR consulting firm, and their problems go unresolved for years. For nonprofits, the complexity is not constrained to resources alone. They need to manage payroll tax burden, measure and improve the performance of volunteers, and comply with stringent regulations to ensure the safety of additional workers.

Kurt Landon* and the Inception of Enspira

As an executive and entrepreneur with 25 years of senior business and HR leadership experience, Kurt Landon has extensive knowledge of talent and people-related issues firsthand. His broad worldview, outgoing personality, and professional background has always driven him to seek out new opportunities. Coming out of college with an Italian Language and International Economics undergraduate degree, he wasn't

PEOPLE, PROCESS, AND TECHNOLOGY- DRIVEN HR EXPERTISE

By Hanna Wilson



We have clients ranging from publicly-traded companies with thousands of employees to startups with eight employees. We believe Enspira's proprietary methodology helps create personalized, mission-aligned solutions for our clients.



Kurt Landon,
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afraid to take a first job as a software engineer in a large firm, where his interest in technology grew. Later, he moved to the human capital management strategies consulting arm of the firm, where he led various technology implementations and large-scale human capital projects for healthcare and a variety of other industries.

Throughout his career, he held diverse HR leadership positions, living and working in and outside the U.S., which enabled him to experience unique cultures and gain extensive talent management expertise. He also earned an advanced degree in Global HR Leadership. In light of such rich experiences, he realized that organizations could not be successful optimizing and transforming their talent management and HR capabilities without a sound congruence among people, process, and technology. This led him to establish Enspira, a holistic and innovative HR consulting firm in 2018.

Today, California-based Enspira offers a wide range of services, including performance management, talent strategy and planning, employee engagement and retention, manager capability and effectiveness, diversity and inclusion, and HR function transformation and optimization, to enhance and foster the employee-organization relationship. Enspira's team collaborates with clients and works in liaison with any leader of an organization, enabling small and large caps and nonprofits to overcome the challenges pertaining to HR processes without making a considerable amount of capital investment. "We generally converse with CEOs or HR leaders. However, for some budding companies that do not have dedicated HR teams, we engage with the person who is responsible for HR operations," says Landon, Founder and CEO of Enspira. "Making money is not Enspira's top priority. Instead, we care about building long-standing relationships with our clients by delivering value, a superior and collaborative work experience, and HR solutions that work for them in their organization," Landon adds. This secret sauce has helped Enspira grow 10 times its current client base in less than two years. Currently Enspira serves approximately 25 clients across multiple industries. Additionally, they have added top talent and more than tripled their workforce in the last two quarters to meet client demand.

Right to Speak Comes with a Duty to Listen

Keeping client satisfaction at the core of its business, Enspira finds a myriad of ways to create value for its clients and ensure the effectiveness of its solutions. "Listening to clients with utmost sincerity and patience is the key to achieving this goal," Landon says. Enspira holds a nimble team of experts who render personal sessions with almost every employee of the client to have an authentic and real-time understanding of how the company works, its culture, and goals. In one instance, while working with GreenLight Fund—a nonprofit organization—Enspira interviewed every single member of

the staff to gain a comprehensive understanding of the organization's talent-related opportunity areas.

By including people in the process and valuing their opinion, Enspira starts to build engagement from the very beginning. Coupled with this, the adept listeners can discover the thread that connects several segregated issues. "The Enspira team doesn't just report out what we have heard," said Landon. "Our robust process requires that we listen for nuance and probe for what's not being said to derive key insights that feed into our tailored recommendations." For example, the low-



We bring credibility, flexibility and a 'we can make it work for you' philosophy that creates value for our clients and deliver HR solutions that work.



performance issue is not always an outcome of employee resentment. Oftentimes, it stems from an organization's inability to deliver strategic communications to the right members, build productive teams, and draw comprehensive succession plans. Enspira's team understands these aspects, which ultimately amps up the effectiveness of their solutions.

If listening is the first constituent of Enspira's approach, the second one is philosophical alignment sessions. Traditionally, while opting for a sound technology solution to solve in-house HR issues, companies used to focus only on the final design of the solution. Such an approach often proves to be impractical and unrealistic as it can have little or no connection with key priorities, goals, and unique expectations of a business.

Enspira solves these quandaries through philosophical alignment by allowing key stakeholders of a company to discuss, debate, and navigate varied aspects of a given topic—be it performance management, talent strategy planning, HR function optimization, or employee engagement. This fosters better alignment between stakeholders or executive teams regarding the purpose of a solution. Additionally, the philosophical alignment stage is a crucial element for diversity and inclusion. Different ideas from different members are taken into account while making the solution robust

and effective. For example, when Sigilon Therapeutics, a Massachusetts-based biotech company, decided to design their first performance management model, Enspira brought Sigilon's diverse leadership team around the table. The team discussed how they could use a performance management system to attract and retain top talent to advance their goal of developing novel cell therapies to treat chronic diseases such as hemophilia A and type 1 diabetes. Using this session as a starting point, Enspira helped Sigilon by designing a compelling performance management solution.



Holistic, Client-Focused Design, Implementation, and Support

After the stages of listening and philosophical alignment that lays the foundation, Enspira architects a customized and data-driven solution for its clients. The process is fast and methodical to ensure optimal outcomes at the right time.

Enspira allows clients to validate the design as well as key assumptions to align the solution with unique client requirements, without overburdening it with unnecessary features and functionalities. Landon mentions, “we have clients ranging from large publicly-traded companies with thousands of employees to startups with eight people. This has honed our capability to determine the sophistication of a solution, depending on the structure and requirements of an organization.”

After the design phase is over, unlike many of its competitors, Enspira does not walk away from their clients. Instead, the firm provides end-to-end support and training, and they monitor the progress, measure success, and continue to collaborate with clients until they achieve desired outcomes. Enspira does all the heavy lifting, including the creation of change management materials and easy-to-use templates and tools for its clients. This saves a considerable amount of time for the HR leaders.

A Win-Win Situation for Every Client

Such a unique value proposition has helped Enspira garner a legion of clients in a short time. Every story of Enspira's client engagement is a compelling account of its unique approach. Take its first-client, Purple Carrot, for instance. As a fast-growing plant-based meal kit delivery service provider, Purple Carrot decided to invest in a more dedicated manner to retain and motivate employees. Working in liaison with the client, Enspira built a comprehensive career development model (CDM) for them. With a set of skills, knowledge, and behaviors necessary for all roles in the company, this framework provided Purple Carrot employees with a clear idea of the leveling, titling, and promotion process.

Additionally, leveraging this framework, employees—irrespective of their role or position—could understand where they are standing in terms of effectiveness on critical success factors (i.e., competencies) as outlined in the career development model and what they needed to do to move to the next stage. “We completed this work with just three consultants and at a fraction of the cost of what larger consultancies typically charge for this level of service,” Landon adds. Most importantly, in Purple Carrot's engagement survey, this collaboration was cited as one of the most influential measures that the company undertook with a positive impact on engagement, retention, and career development. Purple Carrot has expanded its scope of work with Enspira to engage them for another year of dedicated service to continue to improve the employee experience within the company.

Backed by the prowess of such success stories, Enspira has plans to sharpen its capabilities to address the growing pain points of different market segments and different-sized companies, including financial services, healthcare, government, sports, technology, and retail. “I'm proud of the world-class, diverse team of nearly 30+ human resources and business experts at Enspira ready to meet our clients' needs,” said Landon. Some recent hires include: Jenna Cohen with 15 years of hands-on experience in human resources and nonprofit program management to grow its Nonprofit Practice; Crystal Riley with a unique combination of global human resources, financial services, and business experience to build Enspira's Financial Services Practice; Jennifer Axmacher with a 25-year technology consulting track record to serve as President of Enspira Technology Solutions, a new division of the company; and Vickie Maurer, an HR career professional with deep healthcare experience in strategic talent management, organization design and development, change management, and leadership development will spearhead Enspira's Healthcare Practice. Additionally, given the growing demands for creating an inclusive work environment, Leesa Hill will lead Enspira's Diversity & Inclusion and Learning and Development Initiatives and Jennifer Woods with more than 20 years of HR experience, will work across various clients and establish the firm's sports industry presence. “In an effort to serve a broader clientele, our team also has decades of professional and educational experience outside the U.S., an area of future growth and expansion for Enspira,” said Landon. 

**Kurt Landon was formerly known as Kurt Serrano. In honor of his recent marriage, he changed his last name.*

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Top 10 Workforce Management Consulting/ Service Companies - 2020

Changing work dynamics in the emerging industry have drastically transformed the way the workforce is managed across sectors. Traditionally, workforce management (WFM) has remained a staff function and the exclusive responsibility of the human resources (HR) department, but lately, it has evolved into a necessary business strategy. This has led to the association of the HR function to the organization's strategic goals. Having said that, it is time now to take a look at what 2020 brings in for the WFM space.

Today, HR is pivoting in an employee-centric direction, delivering superior experiences that add value to a company's most precious asset—its people. Employee engagement that was deemed as an interesting concept at the beginning of the last decade is now an obvious business goal. Organizations are investing extensively in employee engagement as they move toward people-first culture. High engagement levels imply reduction in voluntary turnover, fewer sick days, lower absenteeism, and ultimately, higher productivity.

Artificial intelligence (AI) and automation is helping HR platforms become increasingly efficient by simplifying and speeding up the clerical HR tasks like benefit and payroll administration, recruitment, onboarding, and

performance reviews. This enables HR personnel to focus more on strategic WFM activities. Besides, with an increasingly mobile work environment, employees want maximum convenience and minimal protocols around scheduling. To that end, employers are implementing more communication and audiovisual tools such as live chat, cloud-based meeting software, and video calls to enable the employees to work from remote locations.

Following the newest trends, a variety of organizations are now seeking best-of-breed WFM solutions and services to decode HR challenges and streamline talent acquisition and retention processes. To help companies strengthen their WFM capabilities and simultaneously enable growth in the industry, HR Tech Outlook has compiled a list of the top 10 WFM solution providers and service companies. The enlisted organizations are transforming the HR operations and processes at the convergence of several disruptive technologies. Besides, this edition also comprises insights from thought leaders in the sector on the industry trends, best practices, recent innovations, and their advice for the aspiring CIOs.

We present to you HR Tech Outlook's "Top 10 Workforce Management Solution Providers – 2020" and "Top 10 Workforce Management Consulting/Service Companies – 2020."



Company:
Enspira

Description:
Offers a wide range of HR consulting services, including performance management, talent strategy and planning, employee engagement and retention, manager capability and effectiveness, diversity and inclusion, and HR function transformation and optimization

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