

ROBERT M. KOWALL

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HUMAN RESOURCE / LABOR RELATIONS SENIOR EXECUTIVE

EXECUTIVE PROFILE

Senior executive with an outstanding background of leading human resources for public and private sectors, including a Fortune 500 company and a government entity. Recognized for formulating and executing programs that support and enhance strategic goals to achieve bottom line results. Significant experience in the startup and redesign of Human Resource Departments, including consolidation of acquisition activities. Highly skilled at troubleshooting and turning around expensive Workers' Compensation and General Liability problems. Talented at seeing the big picture and a sense of urgency, coupled with excellent vision, negotiation, and leadership skills. Academic credentials include a Master of Arts in Industrial Relations.

NOTABLE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Recognized for creating models and benchmarks that have been utilized by companies throughout the U.S.
- Persuaded an influential group within a government infrastructure to make co-pays and contributions towards their medical benefits program.
- Served as spokesperson for several contracts and clerk agreements for a statewide retailer covering 10,000+ employees. Obtained work rule flexibility, which resulted in over \$1 million reduction in costs of labor annually while holding wage increases to a reasonable level.

CORE COMPETENCIES

Strategic/Tactical Planning ♦ Goal Setting ♦ Creating Positive Cultures ♦ Succession Planning ♦ Project Management ♦ Executive Team Building ♦ Executive Recruitment ♦ Training/Development ♦ Labor Relations ♦ Federal State/Employment Law ♦ N.L.R.B. ♦ Union Avoidance Programs ♦ Diversity ♦ Managing Multi-Site Organizations ♦ Workers' Compensation/Risk Management ♦ Safety ♦ Operations ♦ Board Level Presentations ♦ Political Savvy

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

NORTHLAND COUNTY, New York, NY

Deputy Director of Human Resources, Mar 03 to present

Responsible for employee relations (union/non-union), and negotiations for union contracts. Manage medical benefits and pensions, organizational development, and training. Lead five direct reports and over 4,000 employees.

- Collaborated in developing a Leadership Academy for potential leaders of Northland County.
- Developed policies for sexual harassment / intimidation and workplace violence, which won approval by the Board of Commissioners of Northland County.
- Persuaded the Command officers of the Northland County Sheriff's Department to make co-pays and contributions towards their medical benefit programs.
- Successfully negotiated union contracts and employee issues with Northland County Deputies (1,000 members), Northland County Courts, Northland County Health Department (Children's Village), Nursing Home, and Parks and Recreation.

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ABC COMPANY, New York, NY: \$25 billion public retailer.

Vice President of People Resources and Services, 6/95 to 4/02

Directed all areas of human resource management and labor relations. Managed a \$5 million budget, seven direct reports, and 70 indirect reports. Led performance management systems and diversity programs for 15,000 employees. Reported to the CEO and President.

- Created the Clerk “TRAP” program (Turnover Reduction Action Plan), which reduced turnover by 7% (\$850,000 cost reduction the first year of implementation).
- Promoted employee satisfaction, retention, and productivity by developing and piloting an *Associate Segmentation Study*. Results generated a powerful profile utilized for assessing appropriate candidates during the interviewing process, in addition to the necessary attributes/strengths for selecting successful Store or Customer Service Managers.
- Created and implemented a “*Return to Work*” Center for employees injured on the job. This state-of-the-art program was duplicated in other divisions and studied by outside companies and municipalities. The program resulted in lost time plummeting by over 75% during the first year of operation. Interest was so high that a video was produced as an educational tool.
- Authored a labor/employee relations manual for store management, which assisted them in maintaining solid working employee relations within a union environment.
- Formulated a diversity program, which included a college recruitment effort that resulted in a 44% participation rate in store management of minorities, including females.
- Reduced customer accident rate to 2.9 per one million customers. Utilized (MIOSHA certified) safety managers and other programs to accomplish goals.

Director of Human Resources, ABC Stores, 6/90 to 6/98

Managed a \$2 million budget to support development needs and major growth during these years. In charge of four direct reports and 40 indirect reports.

- Directed Human Resource activities after acquisition of Cambridge Company by ABC. Redesigned entire Human Resource function, including labor contract consolidation and staffing of all administrative departments. Successfully merged all outside services.
- Reduced Workers’ Compensation and General Customer Liability Claim expense from a high of \$15 million in 1990 to \$7 million by 1998.
- Developed succession-planning programs for executives as well as store level managers.
- Created a store management training program for existing as well as new management that supported the enormous growth of the 1990’s

Director of Personnel, Bradley Store, 11/83 to 6/90

Managed a \$500,000 budget and supervised five employees. Reported to Vice President of the Detroit Division of ABC.

- Established working relationship with the union: *Stopped grievances and arbitrations.*
- Implemented morale programs, which changed dissatisfaction within the company.
- Trained all management in employment laws (wage and hour, sexual harassment, and union relationships).

PRIOR EMPLOYMENT ABC Company (6/75 to 11/83)

Held various store management positions, including Customer Service Manager. Promoted to Labor Relations Manager in 1982.

EDUCATION

Master of Arts in Industrial Relations, University of Michigan

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, Wayne State University