Conversation with Robert H. Stambaugh

By José Manuel Alcaraz

JMA: It seems that HR is continually being influenced by fashion and new "easy to consume trends." What can we understand by "Human Capital?" Is it not just another fashion? What can be said to be its main contribution to our field?

RHS: Over the past four or five years, more and more people have been "discovering" what has been termed "human capital (HC)" by consultants, human resources information systems vendors, and practitioners alike. At one level, "HC" is a lot more than a fad – it's a reflection that we've moved from a world where financial capital was scarce and workers were seen as an expense to a new world where there's plenty of financial capital, but where people with skills, knowledge, and expertise are the scarcity. That's the knowledge economy, and managing human capital is the way we deal with this new reality.

At the same time, you raise an interesting question about fads and fashion, and I think there's a risk that a lot of HR people will adopt the trappings of HC approaches without really thinking through its implications. We'll see vendors stampeding to create a HC image, and we'll see increased consultant emphasis on HC models. You'll really have to look closely to see what's real and what's just the old HR with a HC veneer.

Programs and practices that settle for the superficial view won't last – they'll crumble in a few years. On the other hand, the programs that really address the value of the knowledge in companies – and the people in whose heads the knowledge resides – will last. In the medium-and long-term, the biggest contribution we will see from these programs is an alternative way of looking at people as assets, in which we continually invest and then obtain value from over time. Human capital approaches are a counterweight to short term, immediate profit approaches to management.

JMA: What is the main influence of Dave Ulrich (specially his four HR roles model) on HR management and HRIS?

RHS: At a basic level, Dave has influenced the field in several fundamental ways. First, he's showed HR and its critics how we can continue to carry out our old responsibilities while *simultaneously* taking on several new roles that mesh with the needs of the 21st century organization. It's no longer an "either-or," hard versus soft management problem; it's both. His "four roles" approach becomes a viable foundation for HR planners and managers as well as for HR's customers. It's the new common ground we all occupy and on which we are going to be building new approaches to HR. Second, he's done this in a way that incorporates mainstream business approaches – hard facts, metrics, payback analyses, and the like, so his message has become acceptable to CFOs and line managers.

JMA: A few years ago[1] Dr. Ulrich marked an important milestone in HR with his work on intangibles. What is his main contribution to our field?

RHS: Well, I think we need to understand first that Dave's pioneering work with the four roles model gave him a level of legitimacy in the HR and business community that few others can claim. He's proven his "business" acumen, so he's able to say some things that lesser authorities can't. With his "intangibles" focus, he's taking another step and saying, "Look, the old metrics and the old way of managing aren't enough anymore, and the investment community is recognizing this with the way they value companies in the stock market – so we have to start managing HR in a way that mirrors what investors care about. They want profit, but they also want continuity, and management stability, and employee strength, so just as HR has learned to quantify what it does; now it has to "unlearn" in a sense and create new ways of reporting on qualitative issues.

JMA: What should be the balance between the "hard" and "soft" HR issues?

RHS: It's going to be different for every company, depending on management styles, culture, investors, and external factors like competition and regulatory requirements. If you're running a manufacturing concern, there will probably be an emphasis on the hard side – because you need the "numbers" to feed into productivity calculations and other parts of an ERP framework. If you're a financial institution or a pharmaceutical business, you'll have a higher need for creativity and generating new knowledge, so HC, "soft" measures will be the focus.

But at the same time, this doesn't mean we can ignore the other side of the equation. The best HR operations will use metrics to explain and situate soft issues – and vice versa. I'd advise HR professionals and managers to become familiar with the ideas of Leif Edvinsson, Tom Stewart, and other HC pioneers. You don't have to copy their approaches, but you need some back-ground and options to create your own response to the new demands.

JMA: According to Ulrich and Smallwood, Vision, Opportunity, Incentives, Impact, Community, Communication, and Entrepreneurship are the key issues leaders need to develop to build commitment. To what extent can HRIS be useful to help HR build people commitment?

RHS: I'm really worried about what we can do and what we are actually doing in the commitment area. It seems to me that we have become so focused on the bottom line, on ROI and "business approaches" to our workforce problems that we may be losing the legitimacy in workers' eyes that we need to contribute to commitment issues. Frankly, a lot of employees have become very cynical about their employment situation. In the U.S., at any rate, we have a situation where employers want more productivity all the time, and they get it mainly by forcing fewer people to work harder and longer without a great deal more pay. That's a short-term approach that works while the economy is slow, but I've seen studies that suggest between two-thirds and three-quarters of corporate employees will be looking for a new job when business conditions improve.

There's not much commitment from management, and employees are responding in kind. At a time when we really need their full attention and allegiance, we're doing all kinds of things that make them less trusting and less willing to contribute.

The other anti-commitment force we're contending with in the U.S. is a pronounced shift toward "outsourcing" jobs to overseas providers. Even companies that used to be seen as "good employers" are sending jobs overseas.

So what can HR do to build or at least maintain commitment? I think the only answer is to be honest, fair, and very, very vocal. We need to use business logic and metrics, but in a way that lays out all the arguments for and against workforce investment and attention. I'm not saying we have to represent employees or be their advocates – but we have to measure their value, quantitatively and qualitatively, and make sure our metrics are factored into management decisions.

Here's a U.S. example: We have a company called Wal-Mart that's an absolute juggernaut in the retail world, but it pays its employees very poorly and its HR problems are monumental – locking workers in stores at night, hiring "illegal alien" workers, falsifying employee time records, for example. But Wal-Mart makes tons of profit. We also have a smaller competitor to Wal-Mart, Costco.

Now, Costco's turnover is less than a third of Wal-Mart's. Its labor and overhead costs are about half of Wal-Mart's. It gets twenty percent more profit per employee from its workers. Morale is high at Costco – and less so at Wal-Mart. Sounds great, doesn't it? Not to analysts like Deutsche Bank's Bill Dreher, who's quoted in a recent Economist as saying that "At Costco, it's better to be an employee or a customer than a shareholder." Dreher is reacting to the fact that Costco pays better wages and offers more employee benefits – money that could be siphoned off and given to investors. To anyone who understands anything at all about human capital or about how we engender commitment in a business, that's just an inane comment, because in a year or so, all the goodwill Costco had built up would be gone, and no one can compete with Wal-mart on cost alone.

HR has to collect its facts and analyses and say, "Wait a minute – if we cut salaries, turnover will increase by some factor, and customer satisfaction will decline, and we'll sell less and make less money – and so on. And it's only with HRIS assistance and, in some instances, leadership that organizations can capture, store, and analyze the information that feeds this kind of thinking. We have to be better and faster at obtaining more and more information, some from management, some from employees – via portals, self-service, questionnaires and data warehouses. And we need to develop the reputation as the business source for unbiased interpretation of the information – we have to get management's trust as well as buy-in from employees themselves.

So you see, the answer to "what can we do" is to constantly deliver the data that allows anyone to play devil's advocate when the financial "experts" come up with a new idea. When we do that, we let the facts – and the intangibles – speak for themselves. Management and employees may not always like what we say, but they will accept rational arguments. But we have to understand the business, and have the facts, and be able to link them to company and personal employee goals.

JMA: Concerning accountability, facilitating strategy, measures, consequences and feedback, may be some of the most critical issues HRIS needs to ask itself to support some of the HR most exciting challenges. Any thought concerning this?

RHS: Yes – here's another area where we need to be relentlessly honest in delivering and interpreting information everywhere in the company. As soon as we hear about a strategy, HR needs to decide on two sets of measures: one related to the goals, costs and benefits of each strategic initiative in terms of human capital and HR activity, the other on terms of measurement of contributions people – individually and in teams – are making toward achieving the goals.

For example, if a new strategy indicates opening a new plant in a new location, we need to weigh in with the costs – hiring the right people, relocating key managers, fine-tuning wages to reflect local business conditions, controlling for turnover, and so forth. We have to do this both in financial terms and in a qualitative sense. Once we develop a cost estimate (and for the non-quantitative items, a risk assessment), we need to have it approved by the management team.

Then, we need to build a set of measures – metrics – that identify how we're doing in delivering according to the estimates. We need to publish the results weekly or, at a minimum, monthly. And our metrics need to point fingers – when we see a business unit that isn't performing, we need to highlight the poor performance. When we see a group that's exceeding expectations, we need to find out why, and then spread the word about their tools and techniques. Quite frequently, the explanations for poor performance are things like poor management, a cut in resources, turnover, or a change in direction. We need to recalculate our metrics each time something significant happens, so management can see where impacts are.

JMA: If HR is successful in recruiting, "firing" and paying, they will be allowed to engage in other value-added activities. How can HRMS help them with these "administrative" tasks?

RHS: I think this is a key issue for the future of HR! The immediate issue is making sure we provide the people who make the hiring and firing decisions with all the information they need in a timely manner. Not just the information we think they need, but what they tell us they want – no questions asked, no "process engineering." The first step is just delivery, and once that's in place, we can go back and question approaches and practices, and optimize things.

So the second step is improving these processes. Human resources information systems or HRMS experts can make significant contribution here, too. A word of caution, however; there's no one best way to hire or pay people. Every business unit is going to have unique conditions, and in the fast-paced, ever-changing business climate of the future, improvements need to be personalized or they will not be accepted. We make the mistake of trying to fine-tune things up front, then deliver them. It needs to be the other way around.

Now, once we've addressed these two areas, the really critical step is to begin suggesting "big picture" improvements, not waiting for an invitation to participate in value-add actions. When I worked at Intel years ago, one of the key concepts we taught not only our new managers and supervisors but also our individual contributors was that when you see something that's not being done or not being done correctly, the first thing you do is fix the problem. Then, you worry about who should be responsible or involved – there's just not time to wait when something isn't working. I'd like to see HR adopt that stance – and when we get entangled in a "turf war" because we're doing someone else's job, I bet most executives would step back and say, "Wow, I never knew those HR folks had the nerve to do this!"

In HR and HRIS, we also have to leverage our special position at the crossroads of Finance, IT and HR. We have to listen, analyze and synthesize, and then come up with completely new metrics and programs that allow other parts of the organization to see things in new ways. If we don't, we become another overhead function, and we will become the next target for outsourcing.

JMA: Concerning HR development, to what extent can HRIS help measure, as well as create, learning platforms/ knowledge management systems for organization capabilities building?

RHS: My answer here will not be very popular with most vendors and consultants!

Basically, I think we should create opportunities and locations, physical and in e-space, where our employees can talk to each other and share what they learn, as soon as they learn it, and discuss how to modify and apply those learnings. We have to build electronic equivalents of the water cooler or department coffee pot, where people can exchange ideas for a few minutes. This doesn't take what vendors call workflow, and it certainly doesn't require "knowledge management" software, at least as we understand knowledge management in HR today.

We need to understand that the old 80/20 rule – the Pareto principle – is still at work in current business settings: 20 percent of the people have 80 percent of the knowledge we need to "manage;" further, only 20 percent of the knowledge we need is explicit – most real knowledge, at least the kind of knowledge that creates a company's intellectual capital or competitive advantage, is tacit knowledge. No matter what the knowledge management vendors tell you, it can't be specified, codified, or distributed on demand. Lew Platt, the old CEO of Hewlett-Packard, was talking about this when he said, "If only HP knew what HP knew!"

Dave Snowden, in the UK, has been studying this issue for years, and he makes several very important points: first, we know a lot more than we think we know (and are able to discuss if someone asks us a question); second, we can discuss a lot more than we can write down, and third – most importantly – we don't know things until we need to know them!

Think about that for a moment – it's completely the antithesis of what we do with knowledge today! One of the really critical issues in knowledge management is right there: what we know, and the people we turn to when we don't know, are in essence, real-time. They differ a little every day. They shift based on the challenges we face, and the manager who asks for help, and who is absent from the office that day. They evolve based upon how and how well we did the last time we faced a similar problem. This is why I am a little suspicious of standards and definitions and "best practice" processes – they are change resistant, in an era where we need to be more ready to embrace change.

What this means for HR and HRIS is that we have to do more than specify and codify and "manage." We need to create conditions where people can get to know one another and exchange ideas and be included in "solution networks." This goes against engineering practice, so I'd say we have to be ready in HRIS to be an advocate for loose/tight or tangible/intangible. We need parallel paths for most HR activities – the standard path the vendor or consultant recommends, and the personal path that we take when we encounter new challenges. Human resources information systems need to be tuned into the non-standard approaches, because when they work, we want to make them available as options for everyone.

JMA: Concerning change management (and speed): What are some of the keys for helping change? And what's wrong with process engineering? Which may be more useful approaches?

RHS: Okay – process engineering first! There's nothing wrong with it when we use it in the right settings – processes that don't change and won't change; processes that we want to keep as they are. Most of payroll fits that description, and so does leave processing, managing employee benefits, and things like that. But where we think there may be change – recruiting, where we go from trying to hire a few great people to bring in a lot of "okay" people, then to a downsizing mode, we need more flexibility than "streamlined" processes allow.

I think the key element in change management is watching for things that don't go as scheduled or planned, then learning from them instead of forcing things back onto the predefined path. If we have any respect for the people in our organizations, it should manifest itself in believing that they know what they need more than outsiders and engineers know: instead of investing enormous sums of money in one big program that will be outdated before it's completed, shouldn't we be a little more nimble? I guess I'm saying that we need to think of change management as an ongoing process itself, and a key part of the HRIS repertoire, not as an assignment or activity that ends when we deliver a process or product.

JMA: Concerning collaboration, which are some of the main challenges and opportunities we are facing? Maybe social networks and HR systems are opening up new opportunities.

RHS: This is the single most important concept for us to understand and apply for the remainder of the decade! As I said earlier, we're in an environment that changes constantly. That means we are being confronted on a daily basis with new challenges that we don't really understand and that we're not always equipped to address on our own. At the same time, we're in an environment where things move very fast – so we don't have time to study and formalize and apply an elegant solution when we run into something new. Last, we're in a cost-conscious environment, where money for training and learning isn't readily available – even though management keeps saying how important those things are!

If you're confronted with that set of constraints, you use a high-level version of outsourcing: you consciously decide you can't know or become an expert on everything HRIS needs, so you come to an understanding with people in the company (and with outside consultants, too) that you're going to count on them to either have answers to a particular range of questions or to be willing to spend time with you jointly exploring possible solutions. That's collaboration. We've always done it, but with the potential of the Internet, we can do if cheaper, faster, and better than before.

I should also mention that there's a whole new class of software out there called, depending upon who you ask, either social network analysis or organizational network analysis – SNA or ONA. You can use these tools to graphically map who's actually or potentially part of a collaborative environment in your organization. The SNA/ONA framework shows you what Etienne Wenger calls "communities of practice" – those are the places where knowledge resides in a company, or if the knowledge isn't present at all, it's the interactions – the collaboration – in these communities that creates the knowledge and spreads it around. Think about it this way: if you're advising a company who to keep and who to terminate during a merger, the accepted approach says to look at overlapping roles and responsibilities and get rid of the least productive. But if you use SNA, you may discover that the least productive person in the organization is actually the one employee everyone talks to – the traffic cop, the coordinator, and the catalyst. Get rid of them and you risk a precipitous decline in departmental productivity, or worse.

JMA: Why haven't we completed the transition to a true "big picture" view of the business that allows us to enter into a dialogue with non-HR administrative staff or line personnel? Which could be some steps for this challenge?

RHS: Maybe the basic question is "whose big picture?" or "whose view of non-administrative work?" I'd say that Ulrich and others have given us the tools and the frameworks for looking through new lenses at the big picture of HR and workforce composition. I think we have a better and better idea of how businesses work – both finance and operational issues. Frankly, I think where we're still disconnected is in understanding the external environment and how things there impact management needs and behaviors. At a lesser level, we keep apologizing for ourselves, and that never leads to acceptance at peer levels.

Here's an example: I was working with an Australian financial institution recently, and we were exploring alternative definitions of "superior customer service" for HR's relations with its internal management clients. I asked several people how many of the HR representatives could talk comfortably about how a change in U.S. interest rates would impact hiring and business conditions in the South Pacific. Guess what? Two out of about 30 people had good answers, but there was no vehicle anywhere in HR to allow them to share their understanding with other parts of HR!

Bottom-line answer: we need to get our internal big picture in order first, sell it to our immediate customers, and then advertise the results. In the Australian situation, I recommended developing and circulating a quarterly (then, once accepted, monthly) HR digest or forecast of "world issues" and potential HR impacts – both for information purposes and to start dialogues with customers. Once we demonstrate knowledge and interest, we will be invited to a lot more parties.

JMA: Or, from a measurement perspective, what do we really need to measure in HR?

RHS: First, we have to keep measuring a few key components of the traditional metrics portfolio – headcount, turnover, perhaps employee morale. But even those measures need to be updated – we need graphics and comparisons, discussions about exceptions, projections of current trends and costs. We don't need page after page of statistics, summaries and roll-ups.

Most of the familiar metrics, though, never get used or even read. I usually tell clients that they should pick at most 10 "standard reports," and except for that small set, implement a practice of discontinuing other analyses after they've been in place for six months. After all, if you haven't learned anything in six months, you're unlikely to learn something in the next year or so. If you have learned something, then redesign the reports to build on what you know.

As I said earlier, we also need to focus on what isn't expected and what isn't average, and not with an agenda of "fixing it." I don't think any report package or set of metrics should be distributed by HRIS without an attached discussion of meaning and explanation of key values. That's the kind of measurement mindset that gets noticed by management.

JMA: Metrics should go beyond counts and amounts and focus on impact and outcomes?

RHS: Oh yes! Absolutely! But even here, there are several levels of what we have to do. First, there's the basic impact analysis phase: for example, we don't just report turnover percentages – we attach cost analyses to the reports, so management and supervisors can see what this month's departures of key people did in terms of lost revenue, lost training investment, and so forth. That's a fairly easy starting point, and once management sees it, we can get a dialogue going and improve our measurements, too.

The next level of analysis involves taking the basic costs and then going one or two steps farther. When I was at Intel, one of the things I learned when I prepared presentations for upper management was that someone in the audience would always ask "why" not once, but two or three times in a row. We used meetings as a means of uncovering what wasn't obvious – what had to have some interpretation or knowledge attached. So, using the turnover example, we need to ask questions like "did the unexpected surge in turnover come from one division? One manager? One geographical unit? In the month following a new salary scale? As a reaction to a competitor's raids on our staff?" and so forth.

Now comes the key part – looking not at what has happened, but in identifying situations or metrics that set off alarms – if the turnover continues, if we start to lose previously identified key staff, if whole teams of people quit. Are there other business units like the one with problems, and if so, should it be put on a "watch list?" We measure and report on items like that every week or so. We also want to know what happens if the trend continues – when do we start actively looking for replacement staff or increasing salaries?

Finally, if we're really good, we create scenarios ahead of time that offer managers a "what-if" framework that they can play with in advance, so they'll be ready if a turnover problem arises. We build controversial analyses – let's say, the full cost of an employee, including all our investments in them. To use Intel again as a an example, we used to tell managers who were ready to hire a new employee that they were making a million-dollar decision, given the average employee tenure and the average pay, benefits, training, and so on. We should be offering propositions like that for our managers now.

JMA: It seems that we need to measure our HR policies and see their direct impact on business. Are we maybe coming up with a new measurement framework/techniques? Do we need a new approach?

RHS: I think a new approach will emerge over time. We can certainly start publicizing situations where we make a difference, where we save money, where we avoid problems. But I am a little unsure about a more formal approach at this point, especially for use in the company as a whole. In HR certainly, we should start to come up with more personal measures, goals and objectives – like the number of times a client asks for our assistance, the time it takes to respond, and so forth.

JMA: How do we need to think about the alignment of IT systems with strategy?

RHS: Another tough question! The answer to this one merits a full day seminar, because there are so many different ways to look at both strategy and alignment.

I've always considered strategy to be the set of actions and the rationale we employ today as a means of creating a situation or achieving some goal at a point in the future – usually two or three years ahead in our current, fast-paced environment. The ROI associated with strategic decisions seldom fits conveniently into a six-month or annual planning cycle. Other people in HR, like John Sullivan, the recruitment guru, see "strategic" as synonymous with having an impact on the annual report's bottom line: they force the analyses to fit a shorter time frame.

If you accept John's definition, then alignment means focusing on supporting this year's or next year's business plan. At the risk of introducing politics into the interview, I think this is a little like George W. Bush saying we'll invade Iraq and "you're either with us or against us." In other words, you're "aligned" with us!

But if you take the longer-term definition, we ought to be looking at hardware, software, and business practice to see if what we have now or plan to acquire in the future will strengthen our organizations' future ability to compete. Are we going to be adding staff? Then strategic and alignment mean building systems for growth and promotion, making sure our systems can handle increased loads, and more. Will we be downsizing? Then our systems need to focus on leveraging current staff skills and increasing automation. Going back to the political analogy, maybe we should be thinking not so much about winning a war, but about what the world will look like after the war and what we want to do then.

This longer-term approach is harder because it is not as easy to quantify and, therefore, not so easy to sell to management. Some people say that because it's long-term and intangible, it won't be acceptable to corporate management, but I think it will work if we have already shown that we're business partners who produce the metrics and participate in the ways we have been talking about here.

JMA: How can we build a good relationship between the HR executive and the CIO/CEO?

RHS: Building a relationship with a CIO takes regular communication about what we in HR and HRIS are doing, why we're doing it, what we intend to measure to define success, and what we think the price will be. In other words, there should be "no surprises." It also takes understanding the same things about IT – how do they measure success? How much can they afford to spend to support us?

You can see that HRIS plays a pivotal role here – we understand how to create measures, we understand how to design and measure projects, we know about technology cycles, and so forth. So HRIS managers have to show by example that they support IT, and they have to be the translators who explain IT actions to the rest of HR.

It's harder to build that relationship with a CEO, both because we don't have as much opportunity to interact with them, and we don't know as much about their challenges and problems. What's key to acceptance, however, is living up to the promises we make, delivering support to all members of the executive staff team, and developing those big picture metrics. If our metrics have any insights and meaning, the head of HR will use them, attribute them to us, and we'll gradually develop a better relationship there.

JMA: Which should be some of the most relevant competencies and skills of the HR team?

RHS: Here's another area where terminology and current practices makes a big difference. Vendors and consultants will talk about defining competencies with a great deal of precision, measuring and tracking who has or develops competencies, evaluating people in terms of how well they match up with some ideal competency map or checklist. Ten years ago, that approach made sense, because our companies were full of individual contributors, and we had lots of people in jobs that were interchangeable. But now?

Now, we outsource, co-source, and use consultants and temporary employees. We don't need lots of people who have the same competencies; in fact, duplicating them doesn't deliver very good ROI on our human capital. What we need is the ability to bring together the right set of competencies, wherever necessary, at a moment's notice. So when we start talking about relevant competencies and skills, we are really talking about the collective competencies of a group instead of about competencies and roles at an individual level.

Given that, the things that are relevant look very different than our traditional lists of competencies, which, by the way, are still important. We need contributors who understand different learning styles – Daniel Goleman's "emotional intelligence," for example. We need people who can convey meaning in multiple ways: what Steve Denning describes in his book *The Springboard*, about storytelling or narrative as a means of conveying complex learnings. We ought to be looking for people who are very comfortable and at home with ambiguity and thinking about the future. We need comedians who can lighten the tense atmosphere in teams under a looming deadline. We need business analysts, risk managers, people with marketing and advertising experience, and we need people who can "sell" our products to managers around the country.

This sounds overwhelming and expensive, but that's only true if you think about all these competencies as separate headcount in our HR department. However, if you think about them as "virtual" staff that you can hire here and there for a few weeks as needed, you'll see that we can expand our definitions. Maybe we need to develop and publish lists of experts, but that's just a temporary measure: if we start people thinking this way, they will use the Internet and their own social networks to build their own connections.

JMA: What do CEOs want us to be? What are they expecting from HR and HRIS?

RHS: Every CEO has a different view here. Some are activists – they want to be involved. Others are "technophobes" and want the minimal contact with IT and HRIT. You'll probably have to test a lot of approaches before you find one that's appropriate in a particular company. I do think there are a few key issues.

First, they expect us to be up to date with technology and to tell them what elements of new technology have promise or constitute threats, in what timeframe, and why. They don't want long discussions – just a page or two, or a short PowerPoint session. Remember, these are the folks who got to the top by reading between the lines and trusting their intuition as much as looking at sets of numbers. They'll make the decisions, if we present the issues.

Second, they expect honesty. How much will a business decision take to implement? What are the risks inherent in a new program or a downsizing? What are our competitors doing? What do our employees think of us? Even if the news we bring is bad news, I think they expect us to be professional and deliver the truth, sometimes with metrics and sometimes with metaphor.

ENDNOTES

1 Dave Ulrich and Norm Smallwood. *Why The Bottom Line Isn't! Creating Value Through People and Organization*. Wiley, 2003.

Robert H. (Bob) Stambaugh, 1946-2005, was co-founder of IHRIM and the IHRIM Journal, president of Kapa'a Associates, served as the IHRIM San Francisco Bay Area Chapter director and president and served four terms as a member of the IHRIM Board of Directors. In 2000, he received IHRIM's highest award, the Summit Award, for his lifetime contribution to the HRIS discipline. Mr. Stambaugh was the author of more than 100 reviews and articles and editor of the IHRIM Press book, 21 Tomorrows, and he contributed many feature articles to the Journal and wrote a regular bimonthly column called "Visions of the Future."More information about Bob Stambaugh and his contributions to IHRIM and the HR information systems industry can be found at ***http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bob_Stambaugh*** *and* ***www.ihrim.org****.*

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