



Adapting to the “Never Normal”: Examining the Impact of COVID-19 on HR Executives’ Competencies

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted workplaces and forced organizations to adapt to new ways of working. HR executives have played a critical role in guiding their organizations through these changes. But we know little about on how the competencies required to do so effectively may have shifted. To investigate the impact of COVID-19 on HR executive competencies, this study used a comprehensive list of 45 competencies identified in previous research conducted by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). Three surveys were administered during and after the pandemic to assess changes in the perceived importance of these competencies. The surveys data were analyzed longitudinally to examine the changes in HR executive competencies over time. Our analysis shows a significant impact of COVID-19 on the perceived importance of competencies, and some competencies, such as “Know how to work in a global context” and “Managing talent engagement and retention”, have become more important in the post-pandemic era. These findings have important implications for organizations as they navigate the “never normal” and for HR executives as they continue to develop their competencies and expertise in a rapidly changing environment.

Keywords: Change Management, HR Management, Organizational Behavior, Organizational Resilience