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## **NEW ECONOMY, NEW OPPORTUNITIES: FOUR WAYS EMPLOYERS CAN TAKE ADVANTAGE OF CHANGING CONDITIONS**

### **The Reality – Economic Turbulence**

Although the economy seems to be improving, turbulent conditions are still forcing companies to implement cost cutting measures. Over time, such cost-cutting has left many organizations with a weakened workforce infrastructure. Training programs have been eliminated, recruiting functions minimized, compensation is more complex and essential compliance issues may be given a low priority. While some costs can be trimmed, other necessary expenses like benefits have skyrocketed.

### **The Recovery – Expanding Opportunity**

Judging from previous recessions, the economy will continue to stabilize and eventually begin to grow again. Companies which have been adversely affected by profit loss and workforce downsizing will once again see profits grow and their workforce increase in size.

As this occurs, employers will have a unique opportunity amidst the ending of a recession. Skyrocketing unemployment has resulted in a large and diverse pool of potential employees seeking work as the recovery continues. For a company to attract the most qualified of these workers, it needs to ensure its workforce management infrastructure is effective, compliant, attractive to current and potential employees and competitive with similar organizations.

*How can your company take advantage of this opportunity? Consider the 4 steps below:*

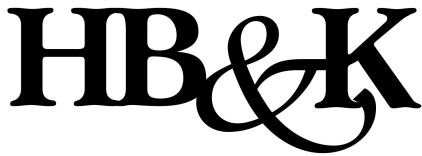
#### **1. Employee Compensation & Benefits**

Those companies which prepare now for economic recovery through effective compensation/benefits planning and management will find themselves attracting and retaining top talent as the impact of the recession eases and hiring again becomes competitive. In addition, smart planning now ensures employers remain compliant with complex federal/state regulations and competitive with the market.

#### **2. Technology & Recruiting**

Companies which utilize technological venues (Facebook, Monster, etc.) to reach potential employees are going to have an advantage in a recovery environment where there will be increased competition in seeking, finding and retaining top talent. Furthermore, utilizing multiple routes for recruitment is often faster and more affordable than traditional methods.

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### **3. Employee Relations**

The economic turbulence has adversely affected our workforce directly and indirectly. Employees' sense of "employment stability" has been shaken and is a source of stress for many even after they are hired. This can have significant impact on their personal and professional endeavors and often is not noticeable by employers until it becomes a serious problem. Companies which offer open lines of communication, employment counseling and stress management initiatives can minimize the impact of employment related stress and thus improve productivity.

### **4. Training & Development**

Very rarely in the modern workplace do the knowledge, skills and abilities needed for a position remain static. As training and development are often the first expenses cut in a recession, they should be among the first to be re-implemented in a time of recovery. Companies which prepare their existing and potential workforce for the opportunities of the economic recovery will find their retention and recruitment continually improving.

### **Conclusion**

Without a doubt, the economy will recover and unemployment will eventually shrink. Employers who planned ahead will be better positioned to attract first tier employees as hiring begins to heat up. Small investments now in training and infrastructure improvement can help build a strong work force ready to compete in the new economy. Please contact HB&K's HREM team for additional information and guidance.

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