



# WorldLink

Linking people management professionals around the globe

## Employment and Employability in Latin America: Creating a New Work Culture

By Fernando Ariceta Bombet

Almost without exception, employers in Latin America face the same difficult issue: a huge gap between the number of open positions and the number of skilled workers who can fill them. It is not a problem of job quantity—almost all countries in the region are enjoying their lowest unemployment rates in a decade. Rather, the problem is a lack of job seekers who have the minimum qualifications to fill the vacant positions.

As president of FIDAGH, I feel qualified to speak on behalf of private and public employers in Central and South America, as our experiences as an association, and my own as a consultant to international companies in the region, offer insights into what business leaders are thinking about and dealing with daily.

One thing they have in common is their desire to be included in the debates their governments are having about ever-evolving employment development policies. Although many countries are actively working to close the skills gap through new policies and regulations, many employers feel that this addresses only part of the problem.

From FIDAGH's point of view, the best way to improve the employment situation is to begin with social policies as opposed to job policies. Governments must analyze, identify and recommend new approaches that confront long-standing cultural patterns in our communities. These sometimes-damaging norms affect the employability of people—especially the most marginalized, such as young people, women and minority groups. Discrimination is still a barrier to the education and experiences people need to become valuable contributors to 21st century Latin American economic growth.

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## 50 Years of FIDAGH

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Federación Interamericana de Asociaciones de Gestión Humana—FIDAGH.

On November 22, 2013, the city of Rio de Janeiro will be the stage for the long-awaited FIDAGH Seminar, an event that will bring together some 150 leaders who represent the Latin American organizations of people management.

Promoted by Associação Brasileira de Recursos Humanos (ABRH), the seminar will celebrate 50 years of FIDAGH, which today comprises the national associations of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.

The seminar will allow for attendees to discuss trends, opportunities and information related to the competitive and common scenarios of people management in Latin America. We look forward to seeing you at the Sheraton Leblon ([www.sheraton-rio.com.br](http://www.sheraton-rio.com.br)). For more information, please contact Isabela Randis by telephone at +55-11-3138-3420 or by e-mail at [Isabela.Randis@abrhnaional.org.br](mailto:Isabela.Randis@abrhnaional.org.br).



20 Years of Dynamic Change: The Evolution of Human Resource Management in Bolivia



Skills Shortages Cloud Bright Employment Prospects



Innovation: 21 Questions to Challenge You



Be in Touch: The Power of Networking in People Management



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## Pillars of Work Culture

To talk about employment and employability comprehensively, we must begin with the concept of work culture. I am sure that all of you understand the concept of organizational culture, defined as the assembly of **regulations, values and behaviors** shared by the majority of organization members. We can define work culture the same way, with these three elements shared by the majority of the workforce community members.

With regard to **regulations**, almost all Latin American governments have created legal frameworks supporting a positive work culture. What is more essential now is to focus on encouraging basic values in the workplace. This will require governments to work very hard to legislate and systematically construct a social framework that supports the **values** that equalize and democratize opportunities for all workers. This must be a central pillar of labor relations.

It is evident that during the last few decades we have let these values slip, and all social actors are responsible—communities, families, employers and educators. We must correct this by creating policies that support education in workplace values.

Which values should we recover? These are the ones I believe are essential:

- Having respect for human rights and human dignity.
- Having respect for authority.
- Taking responsibility for ensuring that the work is done well.
- Taking responsibility for ensuring that the work of team members is supported.
- Building trust and confidence among co-workers and between employers and employees.
- Being honest in all interactions.

The third main component of a positive work culture is **behaviors**. It is common to find both workers and employers engaging in harmful behaviors. Harmful behaviors distort and damage the workplace climate and can have a chilling effect on labor relations. Frequently, an attitude problem is at the root of such behavior. Negative attitudes and displays of ongoing dissatisfaction create a toxic work atmosphere

characterized by a lack of respect for the labor relationship.

Again, these issues of behavior can be addressed through education in workplace values. As employers and business owners, we should urge our political leaders to promote such education. It can be done through legal instruments related to educational and cultural policies that reach through communities—not only children but also, most critically, young people and adults. They should be taught the lifetime benefits of treating others equally and well, respecting authority, and practicing honesty and integrity. They should learn that while it is true that work is dignifying, it is also true that work must be done with dignity.

Those individuals who do not or cannot live the values that promote a mature community and a mutually supportive coexistence should understand that limited resources will not be wasted on their advancement. Inclusion and integration in the work culture is something we all must be worthy of before we can claim it.

## Setting the Example

Finally, as for the state's role as employer, it is not good governance to promote positive employment policies and better labor relationships if leaders do not act as examples. However, few Latin American public bureaucracies have been able to create good work cultures for their employees. They have not seriously faced the cultural challenges before them and have instead treated public workers simply as machines who supply services.

From the President to the newly hired young person in a public department, everyone must be equally responsible for creating a desirable work culture by exhibiting exemplary values and behaviors.

In conclusion, to reduce the gap in skilled workers vs. positions available, we must focus on social policies, values education, going back to the basics, working in the heart of our societies—in schools, homes and workplaces—and building a new social framework that will support healthy, sustainable economic development in our countries. **WL**

Fernando Ariceta Bombet is president of FIDAGH.

# 20 Years of Dynamic Change: The Evolution of Human Resource Management in Bolivia

By Adriana De Souza, Ph.D., and Faviana Olivera Barron, MSC

Today's social environment has led organizations to move away from traditional ways of doing things and has required them to adapt and adjust in ways never before considered. Changes at the technological, economic, political and social levels have brought about a completely different business dynamic. Understanding that context and then crafting policies that foster human capital allows organizations to adjust more quickly and more effectively, but this remains the greatest people management challenge.

Bolivia has evolved a lot in the last 20 years in the area of human resource management (HRM). We have seen growth in the profession, and the people who lead are better prepared. There has been a transformation in how human resource functions are viewed: The role of “form-filler” has been replaced by the role of strategic partner. The number of companies with specific HRM functions has grown. The number of national and international consulting companies specializing in HRM has expanded significantly, as has the supply of tools available to them.

The change process was gradual and included several milestones that, when taken together, transformed organizations. For example:

- A good number of master's degrees and specializations, including in the area of HRM, became available. As a result, the labor force in Bolivia in general is better prepared.
- Several internationally renowned business schools opened, including the INCAE, ADEN and IAE. They are able to quickly develop seminars and courses that are connected to the real needs of the market.
- Several international companies have conducted important national seminars, including Disney Culture, Martha Alles and Starbucks.
- Journals specializing in management have played a fundamental role in Bolivia's transformation, both because they were well-read by company leaders and because of the high quality of the content. In addition, many of the country's weekly business journals today have a section on human resources or frequently publish news and features related to human resource themes. Outstanding publications include the *Bolivian Business Journal*; the *New Economy*; and the Money and Finance supplement of *El Deber*, the largest-circulation newspaper in the country.

Perhaps most critical was the establishment in 2006 of ASOBOGH, the Asociación Boliviana de Gestión Humana, which is a member of FIDAGH. ASOBOGH has generated much momentum around its annual international conference, which draws professionals from all parts of Bolivia and beyond to reflect on their work and be inspired by experts and colleagues in the field.

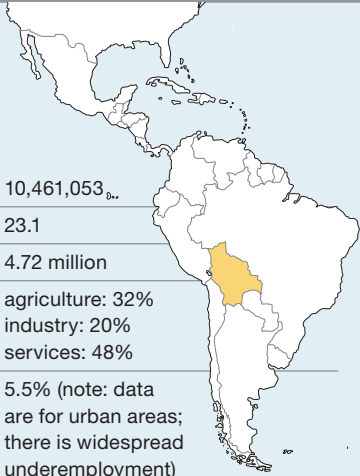
## The Modern Model of HRM

Another important milestone in Bolivia's HR development occurred in 1991, when Mario Cuevas, human resources manager at Banco Sol, developed a project that was unique due to its emphasis on creating a workplace culture oriented to HRM. It was probably the first integral and comprehensive HRM model in the country, and many of the professionals who were part of Cuevas' team at the time blossomed into the first true HRM specialists. Their work has led to improved employee performance across companies and projects.

In addition, the large flow of multinational companies to Bolivia in the late 1990s brought several strategic tools—such as management training programs; young professionals programs; and selection systems based on competency, assessment and experiential training techniques—that transformed the management of human capital.

When the Bolivian government enacted the Statute on Public Officials in 1999, it included human resource practices and policies that were unknown and even strange to many companies in the

## Bolivia Fast Facts



Population	10,461,053 <sup>ba</sup>
Median age	23.1
Labor force	4.72 million
Labor force by occupation	agriculture: 32% industry: 20% services: 48%
Unemployment rate	5.5% (note: data are for urban areas; there is widespread underemployment)
Youth (ages 15-24) unemployment rate	9.2%
Agriculture products	soybeans, coffee, coca, cotton, corn, sugarcane, rice, potatoes, Brazil nuts, timber
Industries	mining, smelting, petroleum, food and beverages, tobacco, handicrafts, clothing, jewelry

Source: *The World Factbook*, 2013.

private sector. The statute was developed with the direct collaboration of Mario Blanco, a renowned management consultant and professor at Bolivian Catholic University.

In the early 2000s, new forms of hiring selection processes were introduced in several public entities through projects funded by the World Bank and supported by several consulting firms specializing in HR, such as PricewaterhouseCoopers and Berthin Amengual PA & Partners. Juan Carlos Zuleta Calderon, a representative of the World Bank, described the approach in his article “The Competitive Hiring of Public Officials in Bolivia: A Positive Experience.” He pointed out that a study on anti-corruption practices in the National Tax Services published by the World Bank in 2007 showed that instituting both competitive hiring practices and the payment of incremental salaries to officials was crucial for successful institutional change.

Such practices did not remain confined to the public sector. These new selection processes are rigorously practiced today throughout various industries and include assessment techniques that demonstrate candidates' potential through simulated situations that allow their behaviors to be observed in action.

In addition, Great Place To Work opened operations in Bolivia

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in 2007, followed by similar consulting companies such as Leading Employer.

Despite the growth in HRM, its independence as a profession, the fact that many professionals work in a company overseen by an HRM team, the existence of a strong national association, the proliferation of many consultants and the availability of material, there are still challenges ahead and proficiencies to master. For example:

- Many executives are still skeptical about the strategic role HR can play in achieving organizational objectives.
- Many HR professionals are still unaware of the need to know the fundamentals of their organizations' businesses in order to act strategically.
- Organizations must establish performance indicators that truly reflect the organizational effectiveness in a comprehensive manner. When these indicators are poorly conceived, they hurt the ability of the organization to operate effectively and holistically.
- HR professionals must be prepared to support the processes of organizational change in more-effective ways, especially when a change of attitude is necessary.
- HR professionals must develop the ability to negotiate, mainly with labor unions, to achieve a win-win situation that produces tangible results.

- There is a need to develop effective internal communication, which functions as a management tool that enables employees to work more effectively toward shared goals.
- There is a need to create leadership aligned to the organizational culture and to ensure that the organizational culture becomes a facilitator of the organizational objectives.

At the end of the day, we typically spend more of our waking time at work than anywhere else. If we don't feel motivated and inspired to give the best of ourselves, our quality of life is reduced and the work shrinks to simply accomplishing tasks and waiting for payday.

Life is much more: It is a feast of colors, full of dreams and goals. Many times, work is the arena where we carry out our life's goals. More than that, it is the place where we accomplish self-realization, not only professionally but also personally. It is the platform from which we contribute a little bit of ourselves to achieve a better world. WL

Adriana De Souza is a human resources instructor and practitioner who is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in social psychology at the University of Granada-Spain. Faviana Olivera Barron is a psychologist specializing in human resources and the current president of ASOBOGH.

## Skills Shortages Cloud Bright Employment Prospects

By Martha J. Frase

Employers in most Latin American countries expect to expand their workforces in the coming quarter, with exceptional growth anticipated in Brazil, Panama and Peru, according to a new survey from the global workforce consultants ManpowerGroup.

Meanwhile, the job market continues to falter elsewhere in the world, the report concluded: Europe is slipping deeper into recession and unemployment, while a dwindling outsourcing business for India is contributing to a slump in employment there.

But in Brazil, for example, more than 35 percent of employers expect to add to their workforces, while just 7 percent expect to trim payrolls and 57 percent expect to maintain current staffing levels.

"Brazil still has a strong outlook, despite slowdowns in most sectors and regions," said Jonas Prising, president of ManpowerGroup. "Panama and Peru's labor markets are also dynamic, with the former's manufacturing sector buoyant even as work on Panama's canal reconstruction project is winding down."

Employers in Argentina and Costa Rica reported the weakest hiring prospects among Latin American countries surveyed.

Although the future for many companies seems to be brightening, ongoing skills shortages still plague many Latin American employers, and there are no easy answers.

The results of ManpowerGroup's 2012 Talent Shortage Survey found that employers in the Americas report greater levels of difficulty filling jobs than the global average, with 71 percent of employers in Brazil struggling with this issue.

The skills shortage is putting a damper on the optimism of the region's chief financial officers. The findings of the most recent Latin America Business Outlook survey from Duke University, the Brazilian business university Fundação Getúlio Vargas and *CFO Magazine* show that CFOs with pessimistic outlooks are outnumbering optimists by two to one. They are primarily concerned about attracting qualified employees and the impact that is having on profit margins. As a result, many survey respondents reported plans to increase worker training. A majority of Latin American CFOs also noted that business corruption remains an impediment to growth. Still, Latin American CFOs are more optimistic than their counterparts in every other global region.

### IT Troubles

Not surprisingly, skills shortages are most acute in Latin America's information and communication technology (ICT) industry. This is quantified in a new report commissioned by the U.S. networking



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company Cisco. There will be a shortage of nearly 300,000 ICT professionals in the region by 2015, the study warns, potentially limiting countries' ability to adopt new technologies. These figures represent a skills gap—calculated as a proportion of total demand—that will rise to 35 percent in 2015.

“As Latin America experiences the rapid emergence of new technology trends like cloud, mobility, video and the Internet of Everything, this skills gap presents a real challenge for the region’s economic development,” said Jordi Botifoll, president for Cisco in Latin America.

Increasing the number of skilled ICT professionals should be a priority to accelerate economic growth, improve productivity and create new jobs, the study concluded.

### Women: A Secret Weapon

Women have been pivotal in shaping and improving the region’s development over the past decade, but they remain a severely under-leveraged resource in Latin America.

Significantly, the gender wage gap needs to be addressed. When comparing men and women of the same age and educational level, men earn an average of 17 percent more than women in Latin America. This wage gap has been decreasing in recent years but at a slow pace, according to *New Century, Old Disparities*, a new Inter-American Development Bank study that compares surveys of representative households in 18 Latin American and Caribbean countries.

According to the household surveys, women hold only 33 percent of the better-paid professional jobs in the region, which include those related to architecture, law or engineering. In these professions, the wage gap between men and women is significantly higher—58 percent on average. These jobs require quantitative skills, and, despite women’s progress in education (they lead men by half a year of education on average), women tend to focus on careers like psychology, teaching or nursing, where those skills are not developed.

Having more Latin American women in the workplace isn’t just an issue of equality—it’s also good for business. “Research shows that companies with a high percentage of women fare better than competitors,” said Monica Flores, regional managing director for ManpowerGroup Latin America. A multitude of studies have backed this up. An August 2012 Credit Suisse report found that when companies have at least one woman on their boards, they perform significantly better than companies that don’t. Stocks of large companies that had women on their boards performed 26 percent better than those that didn’t. Yet 60 percent of Latin American companies’ boards do not have a single female member.

“To tap into this vital talent pool, businesses should act now to update their outdated people management practices and work models to offer women the flexibility they need to achieve their potential,” Flores asserted.

### Unlocking the Region’s Potential

Educational institutions alone do not have the knowledge, reach or resources to overcome skills mismatches, unlock Latin America’s vast human potential and develop the region’s talent pipeline. Employers need to step up and be proactive and collaborative in developing skilled talent for the future.

“To succeed long term, Latin American employers and educational institutions need to work together more closely to develop programs that effectively train and ‘upskill’ the regional talent pool,” Flores said. “Targeted government funding needs to support and incentivize those programs that are closely aligned with current and future business needs, and focus on specific outcomes to simultaneously tackle unemployment and address talent shortages.” **VL**

Martha J. Frase is editor of *WorldLink*.

## FIDAGH Member Meetings 2013

FIDAGH is made up of 15 associations, each representing one country in Latin America.

These associations are very active and carry out training activities for the continuous improvement of their associates. In addition to monthly meetings, they hold an array of seminars, workshops, conferences, symposiums and national congresses.

This year, FIDAGH celebrates its 50th anniversary. The important event will take place in Rio de Janeiro in November.

Please mark your calendars for FIDAGH’s 50th anniversary celebration and other exciting national events coming up in 2013.

### FIDAGH 2013 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

#### AUGUST

- ▶ Guatemala   **GUATEMALA – AGH**  
Human Resources Congress  
August 1-2
- ▶ Uruguay   **URUGUAY – ADPUGH**  
Human Resources Congress  
August 7-8
- ▶ Costa Rica   **COSTA RICA – ACGRH**  
Human Resources Congress  
August 13-14
- ▶ Brasil   **BRAZIL – ABRH**  
Human Resources Congress  
August 19-22
- ▶ Chile   **CHILE – CERH**  
Human Resources Congress  
August 21-23
- ▶ Bolivia   **BOLIVIA – ASOBOGH**  
Human Resources Congress  
August 29-30

#### SEPTEMBER

- ▶ República Dominicana   **DOMINICAN REPUBLIC – ADOARH**  
Human Resources Congress  
September 4-6
- ▶ Colombia   **COLOMBIA – ACRIP**  
Human Resources Congress  
September 5-6

#### OCTOBER

- ▶ Paraguay   **PARAGUAY – APARH**  
Human Resources Congress  
October 12
- ▶ Perú   **PERU – APERHU**  
Human Resources Congress  
October 16-17

#### NOVEMBER

- ▶ Ecuador   **ECUADOR - ADGHE**  
Human Resources Congress  
November 7-8
- FIDAGH 50TH ANNIVERSARY SEMINAR**  
November 22

# Innovation: 21 Questions To Challenge You

By Aida Josefina Troncoso

**Innovation means doing things differently, exploring new paths and taking risks. However, there must be some reason for it—and that reason is often simply because the challenge of changing something is so big.**

The greater the challenge and need for commitment, the greater the energy behind the effort to innovate. And whether the challenge is simply a matter of improving one life or benefiting everyone globally, innovation is always driven by matters that touch the hearts of people involved.

Stimulating innovation is a learned skill. It requires the ability to ask questions that encourage thought, imagination and conversation about future possibilities for improvement. This is how the seeds of innovation are planted.

**Here are some big questions that can help focus on big issues:**

- What is missing in our world?
- What would make our clients, internal or external, exclaim “wow”?
- If we had a magic touch and could make anything happen, what would it be?
- Wouldn't it be great if we ...? Or, wouldn't it be awful if we had to ...?
- What does this organization desire to be? If in two years we were celebrating our success, what would need to happen?

This is an opportunity to discover new territories. **When approaching a problem, ask questions that lead somewhere—toward new information, people, resources or ideas:**


- How can we find new information about this topic?
- If we could change one thing about it, what would it be?
- Who might have a completely different perspective or new information about this project?
- What, at the core, is the most basic element of this problem?
- What is something that absolutely cannot be changed?
- What resources might we be overlooking?
- With whom could we partner to be more effective?
- How could we do it differently (better, bigger, faster, smaller, more fun)?

Now is the opportunity to fill in the blanks. **Ask questions that expose gaps of thought:**

- What assumptions are we making?
- What are we giving permission to do?
- What rules have we never questioned?
- How is this changing the world?
- What are our weaknesses?
- What remains to be emphasized?

**The last step is to ask questions that explore the emotional connections:**

- What are we doing with our beautiful and precious life?
- What's in this project that will wake us up in the morning full of enthusiasm?

Everything starts with an idea, and the best way to have a good idea is to generate lots of possibilities behind it. Although each person is creative by nature, the ability to develop ideas and to connect many different concepts can be enhanced through training and practice. The powerful questions above will help you begin. 

Aida Josefina Troncoso is vice president of FIDAGH.



## Be in Touch: The Power of Networking in People Management

By Fernando Ariceta Bombet

**Most of my colleagues who are reading this article—members and leaders of national HR associations—share with me the same reasons for being part of their national HR associations and, by extension, FIDAGH and the WFPMA. Clearly the most important reason is to be part of a contact network—which really means to be in touch.**

We all seek spaces where we can share experiences, opinions and knowledge with people around the world who have the same interests, expectations and skills as we do in managing human resources in our organizations.

I invite readers to consider what happened when you joined FIDAGH. During the first period, you probably participated in meetings, activities and conferences. But very soon you may have realized that you expected and needed something more—to stay involved with your colleagues in between these events.

We don't always need to be in the same physical space to satisfy the desire to be in touch. Thanks to the Internet, we can maintain very close, useful and permanent contact, as much as we wish, even while we are located far from one another.

In addition, we can maintain these virtual contacts over undefined periods, through huge distances, simultaneously, in real time and between the four cardinal points of the globe. But once we have established these individual connections, you may wonder what the advantage is of being part of our associations. Is it still necessary to be a member of something official?

We association leaders must ask ourselves, “What is the ‘formula’ for keeping members united around our institutions and international organizations when they are able to connect without us?” If we cannot answer that question, it is time to quickly take appropriate action to change the way we manage our associations—to transform them, promoting radical changes that create new, more-valuable forms of integration, association and sharing among colleagues.

Of course, I believe that having face-to-face encounters is important. So, consequently, we must organize at least one annual international congress and one or two annual national congresses. But this alone is not enough to maintain the interest of our associated members and to help us remain at the top of their minds.

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## Argentina

### Domestic worker benefits



Domestic workers in Argentina are now eligible for new benefits, including fairer wage terms, restricted working hours, unemployment compensation, maternity leave and holiday pay. When the new law passed in March, more than 1 million domestic workers—most of them women working in private homes—were integrated into the formal economy. The new law requires employers to register domestic workers for social security. Currently, more than 80 percent of workers in private homes are not registered and are unprotected against unfair dismissal and for work accidents.

## Brazil

### Full employment reached; IT sector creates most jobs



The unemployment rate in Brazil dropped to a 10-year low in 2012, to 5.5 percent. Data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics show that the percentage of jobless workers has fallen 6.9 points since 2003, indicating that Brazil is experiencing full employment.

Brazil's IT sector provides the largest portion of new jobs for degree holders, according to the Applied Economics Research Institute. In the last three years, 16 percent of the skilled jobs created were in IT, followed by nursing, PR, advertising, pharmaceutical and secretarial positions.

## Chile

### Miners' wages highest; pension reforms



Chileans working in the mining industry earn the highest salaries in South America and the sixth highest in the world, according to global recruitment firm Hays. Chilean mine employees earn an average salary of US\$97,537. Brazil's locally hired employees came in second at US\$76,800, followed by miners in Peru (US\$73,100), Colombia (US\$61,100), Bolivia (US\$52,300) and Argentina (US\$41,600).

In June, the Chilean government unveiled a pension reform plan to encourage savings and postpone the retirement age for those who want to keep working. The change came after reports that many workers who had invested in private pension plans had suffered losses. The reforms aim to create more competition among plans, enable higher returns by lifting some investment restrictions and encourage workers to contribute more during their working years.

## Costa Rica

### Most innovative



Costa Rica is the most innovative country in Latin America, according to the 2013 Global Innovation Index (GII). Of 142 countries surveyed, it ranked 39th, up from 60th in 2012.

The GII report noted that the country's upgraded ranking this year is due to improvements in infrastructure, human capital, public institutions and "business sophistication," as well as achieving a higher score in the production of knowledge and technology.

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Our associations and federations must transform themselves into strategic professional contact networks—more virtual than physical, more open than closed, more plural than singular, and including different HR sectors instead of excluding them.

We must learn about the successful use of social networks and transform our associations and federations into portals of professionalism, where our colleagues can find all the knowledge, experiences and information they need to flourish in their positions. Through interactive websites, all hyperlinked, associations can provide not only professional intelligence but also blogs for discussing,

## Honduras

### 'Model Cities' regulations



The Honduran National Congress has passed a law to regulate the Employment and Economic Development Zones (ZEDEs). These zones, called "Model Cities," were created as distinct areas for business investment and have rules that are different from those in the rest of the country. The new law authorized the establishment of courts with exclusive jurisdiction that may take on legal systems or traditions of other parts of the world, provided that they ensure equal or better constitutional principles for human rights protection. The law also clarified that ZEDEs are still subject to the constitution of Honduras and to the national government on issues of sovereignty, the application of justice, territory, national defense and foreign affairs.

## Nicaragua

### Canal on fast track



Nicaraguan officials are fast-tracking construction of a transoceanic shipping canal through the country connecting the Pacific Ocean and Caribbean Sea. The controversial \$40 billion project is being developed by the Chinese consortium HK Nicaragua Canal Development Investment. It is expected to take 11 years to complete and will create 40,000 construction jobs. The developers will pay Nicaragua \$10 million annually during the first decade, and the project is expected to eventually double the per-capita gross domestic product of the country.

## Panama

### Global logistics hub



Panama is undertaking major infrastructure investments to consolidate its position as a global logistics hub, according to a new report by Latin American business consultants BN Americas. In addition to the expansion of the Panama Canal, with new ports and container terminals to handle traffic, the country is working to become a connection hub for travel and trade to attract investment and create jobs. The Panama City airport is being positioned as a regional hub between South, Central and North America, and the city is also preparing to revamp urban transport with its first metro system in early 2014. By 2020, some 500,000 new jobs are expected to be created.

## Venezuela

### Wage and hour law



Employers in Venezuela must now comply with the new wage and hour law established one year ago under Venezuela's employment law reform act, known as the Organic Law of Labor and Workers. The law imposes new restrictions for work hours and days of rest, among other important provisions. It also prohibits any form of outsourcing aimed at committing fraud or circumventing the new labor laws. The one-year window of implementation closed on May 7, and employers are expected to have implemented all changes to their practices to comply fully.

Sources: *The Argentina Independent*, Randstad, ZDNet, BN Americas, *Global Times*, Tico Times.net, *Honduras News*, *The Guardian*, Mondaq, *Latin Business Chronicle*.

analyzing and sharing ideas and best practices, and for developing new concepts, new tools and new theories.

By being strategic about how we link and network, WFPMA, FIDAGH and all of our HR associations have the opportunity to access and manage extremely valuable HR knowledge from around the world that will help in fulfilling visions and missions. At the same time, this opportunity will help us to retain our associates and affiliates and give them ample reason to join us and become deeply and creatively involved. So be in touch. [WL](#)

Fernando Ariceta Bombet is president of FIDAGH.

# THE WORLDLINK HR CALENDAR

**August 19-21, 2013**

HRIZON2013, the AHRI National Convention and Exhibition

**Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre  
Sydney, Australia**

Website: [www.ahri.com.au](http://www.ahri.com.au)

**September 11-12, 2013**

48th AMEDIRH International HR Conference and Exhibition

**World Trade Center  
Mexico City, Mexico**

Tel: +52 55 5140 2219

Website: [www.amedirh.com.mx](http://www.amedirh.com.mx)

**September 25-27, 2013**

50th PMAP Annual Conference

**Philippine International Convention Center  
Manila, Philippines**

Website: <http://pmap.org.ph/content/events/registration/>

**September 26-28, 2013**

3rd APFHRM Annual Regional HR Conference and 32nd NIPM Annual National Conference

**Kala Academy  
Goa, India**

Website: [www.nipmnationalconference2013.com/nipm.php](http://www.nipmnationalconference2013.com/nipm.php)

**October 3-5, 2013**

47th Congreso Internacional AEDIPE

**Meliá Sevilla  
Seville, Spain**

Tel: +91 420 06 12

Website: [www.aedipesevilla2013.com](http://www.aedipesevilla2013.com)

**October 10-11, 2013**

Annual National Conference Forum for Human Resource Management

**Salzburg, Austria**

E-mail: [armand.kaali-nagy@opwz.com](mailto:armand.kaali-nagy@opwz.com)

Website: <http://personal.opwz.com>

**October 17-18, 2013**

International HRD Conference

**Le Meridien Hotel, Mauritius**

E-mail: [hrdconference@hrdc.intnet.mu](mailto:hrdconference@hrdc.intnet.mu)

Website: <http://hrd-conference.com/>

**November 1, 2013**

Annual All-Russian HR Forum

**Moscow**

E-mail: [nsk@kadrovik.ru](mailto:nsk@kadrovik.ru)

Website: [www.kadrovik.ru](http://www.kadrovik.ru)

**November 3-6, 2013**

Institute of People Management 57th Annual Convention

**Sun City, Northwest Province,  
South Africa**

Tel: +27-11-716-7503

Website: [www.ipm.co.za/content/2013\\_ipm\\_annual\\_convention.htm](http://www.ipm.co.za/content/2013_ipm_annual_convention.htm)

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## WORLDLINK

welcomes news stories, announcements of events and ideas for articles. These should be accompanied by a telephone number and e-mail address.

Martha J. Frase  
Editor, *WorldLink*

E-mail: [Martha@frasecommunications.com](mailto:Martha@frasecommunications.com)

## NEXT ISSUE

The next issue of *WorldLink* will feature the Asia Pacific Federation of HRM and HR news in the Asia-Pacific region.

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