



**PDF Complete**

Your complimentary use period has ended.  
Thank you for using PDF Complete.

[Click Here to upgrade to Unlimited Pages and Expanded Features](#)

Ontario's HR association made waves recently when it debuted a new three-level HR designation to replace the current model, as outlined in our exclusive cover story in the Nov. 3 issue.

When it was unveiled, Bill Greenhalgh, CEO of the Toronto-based Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA), called it a game-changer.

The new Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) is now an entry-level certification and does not require a degree (unlike the CHRP recognized by the other provinces).

A test of employment and workplace law knowledge has been added to the HR functional competencies knowledge exam. And by 2016, CHRP preparation will include a Job Ready Certificate program.

The Certified Human Resources Leader (CHRL) does require a degree and assessments will include tests of knowledge, an application of knowledge of functional competencies and employment and workplace law.

To earn the Certified Human Resources Executive (CHRE), candidates must have acquired core executive-level competencies in areas such as governance, business strategy and executive compensation based on experience or through an exam.

The response so far has been incredibly good, according to Greenhalgh. Within hours of launching the new designations, about 200 people contacted the HRPAs to see how they could apply for the CHRE and about 500 people have called in to see how they can be reinstated, he said.

Marcia Buchholz, associate vice-president of HR and CHRO at the University of Calgary, applauded the move, saying it raises the bar for HR professionals.

While the changes at HRPAs may cause some minor confusion for those looking to transfer membership to another province, overall the attempt to continue to enhance the CHRP designation will behoove the HR profession.

The move makes sense, according to Caroline Fellin, a recruiter at Everest Management in Toronto.

Its great, she said. I truly believe that as business has evolved and the HR function has evolved, then this too has to evolve with it.

The old CHRP didnt have enough of a business focus, said Fellin, and hopefully the competencies will be streamlined.

So if you are hiring a senior person and you are asking for the (new) senior designation, then at least you know theyve demonstrated the competencies that theyve indicated, she said.

While its debatable whether a professional designation should require a university degree, college students will benefit from the CHRP requirements, said Sarah Gayer, HR consultant and founder of Sare and Associates in Toronto.

These people who dont have the experience and dont have a degree, itd be an easier way for them to get a job because theyd have the designation.

Its opening that door up again for people who have certification courses or a diploma program, said Allan MacKenzie, program chair of management at McMaster University in Hamilton.

At that level, many of them would be involved in recruiting or payroll or health and safety and thats a starting point - you dont necessarily need a degree to do that type of work.

The new process will give members a designation with a nominal amount of experience and validate what theyre able to do, said Greenhalgh.



Your complimentary  
use period has ended.  
Thank you for using  
PDF Complete.

[Click Here to upgrade to  
Unlimited Pages and Expanded Features](#)

hire someone with the designation - whether it's CHRP, L or E - they'd have a  
of.+

is a good thing, according to Roma Thorlakson, chair of the board at the Human  
(M) in Winnipeg.

However, member response to the new designations so far has been mixed.

"We have many that like that kind of tiered approach," she said. "There's some, of course, that are very opposed."

It's questionable whether three levels is right for the profession, and the new process will be time-consuming and require more work, said Gayer.

"If you want to have an entry-level designation, then have the entry-level designation and then the CHRP."

MacKenzie is also confused by the change, he said.

"Get the fact that we had a CHRP and we had a senior designation but I'm not sure about three levels of designations. As somebody with a CHRP designation, my assumption was that I was going to be working, and I do work, at the level that would be seen as the leader one now. So it's quite surprising."

But the range of the CHRP was from entry level to senior executives, so organizations weren't sure what it meant, said Greenhalgh.

"The problem is not with the new designation suite, the problem is with the way the CHRP was originally positioned and it migrated and got a bit fuzzy over the years, and the new designation suite is designed to correct exactly that."

In other professions, there are different associations that certify at different levels of practice, said Greenhalgh.

"There isn't a junior association below the professional HR level - we've covered the whole spectrum," he said. "That's why we had the problem with the CHRP, because it was trying to cover too much ground."

Having headed up the Certified General Accountants Association of Canada - which has worked to have common standards and eliminate market and stakeholder confusion - Anthony Ariganello, CEO of British Columbia's Human Resources Management Association (HRMA), said he was surprised by the three levels.

"Why would we want to cloud the market with several designations and then having to explain what the differences are...? It's confusing," he said.

"Our resources would have been better spent working with the business community, working with our various stakeholders to promote the fact that we are a designation and that this is the one that should resonate."

With the HRPAs calling the CHRP an entry-level designation, and the other provinces equating it to the intermediary level, it remains to be seen whether this will be a challenge for employers, said Thorlakson.

"Those are all the things that we have to look at. That's what the provinces are now saying we have to do. One of the challenges will be how do we review their designations, does it compare to ours?"

The name change will definitely complicate things, said Gayer.

"The CHRP is known because it's been around so long so they'd assume somebody who has a CHRP is somebody they should be contacting - but now the CHRP is just entry level, no degree," she said. "If I say to somebody 'I'm CHRL,' they'd say, 'What's that...?' If I have a CHRP from another province, now it's being diminished."

MacKenzie is not about to stop using the CHRP designation.

"That's really the only recognized one out there in HR."

For now, it's about putting both on a resumé, said Fellin.



Your complimentary  
use period has ended.  
Thank you for using  
PDF Complete.

[Click Here to upgrade to  
Unlimited Pages and Expanded Features](#)

just put (CHRP and CHRL) on.+

id Greenhalgh.

keep the existing one for their life · they can use it as long as they want.+

There are also concerns about the costs involved with the new requirements. But many people will be grandfathered into the new designations and may actually have more exemptions because university courses are in line with the educational component built into the new designations, he said.

Overall, this is not going to make any difference to the total cost of getting the designation and, in fact, in many cases, people will find it a lot cheaper · they get exemptions right away.+

#### Will other provinces adopt Ontario's model?

What remains to be seen is whether the other provinces adopt the HRPAs model or choose another path, under the Canadian Council for Human Resources Associations (CCHRA)s initiative.

For B.C., its too early to say, said Ariganello.

am a believer... that we need to do whats right for the profession and the members collectively, not just in one province,+he said.

am just disappointed that (the HRPAs) would have proceeded in this way, on their own, without consultation with the rest of the provinces as to whether this makes sense.+

Any development in the HR profession is worth at least looking at, said Thorlakson.

This (is) a great opportunity to have some dialogue with our members. It gives them a chance to get educated on what were the plans for the designation. And so we are, at this point, having that dialogue and hoping to get feedback.+

In 2012, a professional analysis study brought about recommendations on how to move the CHRP designation to a level four, said Thorlakson, and the CCHRA is going to want to continue the work its started in that area.

Theres a saying that says, When you want to go fast, you work alone and when you want to go far, you work together.qSo, based on that, I think it is taking us more time because were co-ordinating efforts across Canada,+she said.

We feel that our strength is we provide a designation that has the voices of many provinces.+

People can either stay with the existing CHRP, which is 20 years old and in need of change, or they can use ours as the basic framework and have some discussions about how we might move forward jointly and come up with a designation suite that everybody happy with,+ said Greenhalgh, adding the HRPAs been absolutely clear+with the other provinces about its plans.

Our whole goal in this whole thing has been all around the designation. Its got nothing to do with money, its got nothing to do with anything but having a designation thats valued, credible, validated in (the) same way based on a national standard · thats our intent.+

© Copyright Canadian HR Reporter, Thomson Reuters Canada Limited. All rights reserved.