Guidebook to:

The Human Capital Advantage

A CURRICULUM FOR EARLY STAGE VENTURES

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SECTION 1

Introduction
Increasing evidence indicates that start-ups should develop their human capital strategies before their first hire. But given other priorities – including short-term financial pressures, lack of knowledge and/or investors emphasizing other needs – both entrepreneurs and investors give this topic cursory treatment at best.

The Hitachi Foundation (THF), which was active from 1985 through the end of 2016, focused on business practices that both measurably improved economic opportunities for low-wealth individuals and enhanced long term business value. THF's Good Companies at Work program identified and profiled close to 100 mature businesses, primarily in healthcare and manufacturing, whose innovative people strategies underpin company success. While there are many differences across sectors, one thing these companies (referred to as “Pioneer Employers”) share is their recognition that delivering top-quality products and services that meet or exceed customer demand starts with their people. These companies outperform their peers and provide strong returns for workers, shareholders, and communities.

The Foundation’s Entrepreneurship at Work program, informed in part by the practices of the Pioneer Employers, began introducing earlier stage entrepreneurs to the need to not only focus one’s business externally (products, sales, customers, investors) but also internally (workforce, operations, management, culture). The program also noted that having conversations with entrepreneurs about operational excellence cannot occur without holding a comparable set of discussions with investors.

In May of 2015, THF convened a group of practitioners and thought leaders to brainstorm approaches to encourage early-stage entrepreneurs to incorporate people-strategies into their businesses, and ways to best encourage investors to assess and promote these strategies. Shortly afterwards, THF engaged Broughton Consulting, LLC to develop The Human Capital Advantage: A Curriculum for Early Stage Ventures.
DESIGNED FOR EARLY STAGE ENTREPRENEURS

In the fall of 2015, THF and Broughton Consulting began working with the Village Capital 2015 U.S. Health Cohort, a group of 12 early stage entrepreneurs focused on health solutions designed to bridge the “health-wealth” gap. The ventures took part in a 3-month program designed to help the businesses scale and become investment ready. Entrepreneurs also had opportunities to build relationships with mentors, potential investors, customers, and stakeholders. The program culminated with two of the ventures receiving investment capital.

THF and Broughton Consulting engaged with the cohort, testing components of the Human Capital Advantage curriculum once a month for those three months. Feedback from this group was critical in enabling us to design curriculum content and delivery mechanisms with the needs and temperament of early stage entrepreneurs at the forefront. Kevin Davis of Rebound Technologies also provided key early feedback on content, and leaders from...

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Management practices and nuts and bolts

The Human Capital Advantage Curriculum is comprised of five modules which contain a mix of management best practices (e.g., an intentional focus on organizational culture, participatory management practices, emotional intelligence 101), and more nuts and bolts information about specific practices (such as hiring, onboarding, providing better than basic benefits, and building a learning organization).

Fluid and adaptable

The curriculum is highly fluid and may be adapted based on the needs and stage of the particular cohort being trained. It is applicable to all businesses, but contains optional content specifically geared towards businesses that employ hourly/ frontline employees. It is written with a U.S. focus, but can be adapted to an international audience. An overview of the
CONTENTS OF GUIDEBOOK

This Guidebook to The Human Capital Advantage includes the following:

• Making the case about why focusing on operational excellence and human capital early in a startup’s life cycle can be a strong competitive advantage
• Specific guidance for trainers on how to use the curriculum
• An overview of the curriculum at the time of publication (recognizing that the curriculum is fluid and will change and evolve as it is used)
• Additional resources for trainers and investors

five modules, guidance for their use, and a snapshot of their original content can be found later in the Guidebook.
SECTION 2

The Human Capital Advantage
Why create a curriculum encouraging early stage entrepreneurs to invest time and resources in their human capital strategy early in their life cycle, when they are consumed with concerns such as proof of concept, customer acquisition, and raising capital? Because the world is changing at an exponential rate, and organizations need to be able to change, adapt, and innovate equally fast in order to maximize their chances of surviving and thriving. Traditional top-down management systems, which were critical during the past 100 years in maximizing efficiency and standardization, must be updated to allow innovation to flow from the bottom up. As Gary Hamel, professor at the London Business School and director of the Management Innovation eXchange (MIX) says in his 15 minute MIX lecture titled Reinventing the Technology of Human Accomplishment the three major challenges facing organizations today are:

1. How can you build a company that can change as fast as change itself?
2. How can you create an organization where innovation is the work of everybody, all the time, every day?
3. How do you create an organization where people are willing to bring you the gifts of their initiative, creativity and passion?

Meeting these challenges may seem daunting, but Hamel is optimistic. As he says in the same lecture, “For the first time since the Industrial Revolution, you can’t build a company fit for the future without building one that’s fit for human beings.” That is, organizations must be more like humans, who are extremely adaptable and resilient. Characteristics of successful organizations, according to Hamel, include:

- Openness/transparency
- Meritocracy
- Flexibility
- Collaboration
- Innovation
- Engagement
- Accountability
- Learning from the fringe

This is what the Human Capital Advantage Curriculum is designed to address – a new way of doing business that engages employees fully at all levels and allows organizations...
The Human Capital Advantage

Increasingly, data shows that companies that have strong human capital and operational excellence practices have a competitive advantage and are more able to compete over the long term. Yale professor James Baron studied several hundred high-tech Silicon Valley startups from the mid-1990s until 2002 and found that it is much easier to get the culture and human resources blueprint right early in the life of a venture than to go back and try to change it later. Even more significantly, firms that established a strong and healthy culture from the beginning had a better chance of long term survival. Finally, firms that had a culture of engaging all employees for the long term (which he called “commitment” firms) performed better and endured longer than those that focused rewards on a few star performers at the expense of the rank and file (called “star” firms).

According to Baron and his co-author Michael Hannon: “The field of competitive strategy teaches that for something to be a source of competitive advantage, it must be relatively scarce and difficult for competitors to emulate. This appears to be just as true in the arena of human resources strategy. Perhaps one reason for the relatively good performance of our Commitment model firms is precisely that it is a blueprint that runs counter to the conventional wisdom, which pronounced it unworkable in Silicon Valley in the late-1990s. The signals a company sends by championing the Commitment blueprint are especially powerful in a world in which relatively few companies are sending those signals.”

But can this strategy be used in the service industry, which is known for paying low wages and offering indifferent or even poor customer service in order to keep prices low? MIT professor Zeynep Ton calls that a “bad jobs strategy” and demonstrates that there is an alternative – service firms that invest in employees and in operational excellence in order to provide great customer service – and are more profitable as a result. Ton studied four service industry firms that exemplify this “good jobs strategy:” QuikTrip, Costco, Trader Joe’s, and Mercadona, a Spanish grocery store chain.

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To quote Zeynep Ton: “These companies provide jobs with decent pay, decent benefits, and stable work schedules. But more than that, these companies design jobs so that their employees can perform well and find meaning and dignity in their work. These companies, despite spending much more on labor than their competitors do in order to have a well-paid, well-trained, well-motivated workforce, enjoy great success. Some are even spending all that extra money on labor while competing to offer the lowest prices, and they pull it off with excellent profits and growth.”

These companies also enjoy much lower employee turnover and the resulting savings in recruiting, hiring, and training new employees (50% to 200% of that employee’s annual salary, according to the Society of Human Resources Management).

**Human Capital as a Strategic Focus**

Early stage ventures are generally able to adapt quickly, with team members wearing multiple hats. But as they grow, they tend to adapt existing command and control, hierarchical management structures that are no longer optimal for the pace of global change. By encouraging a new way of managing early in the life of a venture – one that sees human capital as a strategic advantage rather than merely an administrative task – that venture may be able to avoid the ossification that could stifle its competitiveness later in its lifecycle.

In a 2012 internal survey, alumni of Village Capital (at that time a global network of more than 400 entrepreneurs – now many more), cited talent acquisition and retention as their number one barrier to growth, surpassing financing. “Through interviews and surveys, we have consistently seen that firms view human capital as a reactive need instead of as a distinct vertical of their business. Likewise, HR is often perceived as a division of a department, instead of as a core strategic priority.”

The majority – 78 percent – of organizations surveyed for the report did not have a dedicated human resources professional. Even more – 90 percent – considered human resources to be an administrative rather than strategic function. The report concluded that “Given its importance, the community of practitioners who support entrepreneurs

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needs to prioritise human capital as much as it has historically prioritised financial capital.\(^5\)

They can learn from large companies such as Google, which are increasingly making human capital a strategic focus, realizing that hiring and retaining top talent and creating an environment that supports them is the only way to build an organization that can continuously innovate.\(^6\) Google and others are investing in analytics to determine who to hire, how to retain them, and why they leave. According to a report from Deloitte University Press, issues of retention and engagement are now second in priority for business leaders, behind the challenge of building global leadership. “The balance of power has shifted from employer to employee, forcing business leaders to learn how to build an organization that engages employees as sensitive, passionate, creative contributors. We call this a shift from improving employee engagement to a focus on building an irresistible organization.”\(^7\)

**Better for Investors**

Investors also benefit from encouraging a focus on human capital from the beginning of a venture’s lifecycle. Data shows that ventures with strong human capital practices (or those that initiate self-funding human capital interventions) may be up to 40 percent more profitable for investors over time than those without. In most cases, investors would benefit from a more comprehensive human capital due diligence prior to investment, including asking questions such as, “Are employees fully engaged? Is the organization structured efficiently? Is management effective in both transformational and transactional influence? Do we have too many employees or too few to achieve business objectives? Are there too many, insufficient or poorly designed HR programs?”\(^8\)

A coalition of 25 diverse global investors representing $2.6 trillion in assets, called The Human Capital Management

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6 Dr. John Sullivan, “How Google Became the #3 Most Valuable Firm by Using People Analytics to Reinvent HR,” ERE Media, February 2013, [https://www.eremedia.com/ere/how-google-became-the-3-most-valuable-firm-by-using-people-analytics-to-reinvent-hr/](https://www.eremedia.com/ere/how-google-became-the-3-most-valuable-firm-by-using-people-analytics-to-reinvent-hr/)


Coalition, has begun engaging with large retailers and other companies on questions of human capital management that directly impact financial returns. The group cites the “increasing volume of research demonstrating the link between levels of employee engagement and share-price performance of public companies” as their motivation.9

The coalition has also been influenced by a major report released in the spring of 2015 by the Pensions and Capital Stewardship Project at Harvard Law School and funded by the Investor Responsibility Research Center Institute. Titled “The Materiality of Human Capital to Corporate Financial Performance,” this report is an analysis of 92 studies that examined the relationship between human resources policies and financial outcomes such as return on equity, return on investment, and profitability. The majority of the 92 studies found a positive correlation between employee training and human capital policies and investment returns.10

The report concludes that “there is sufficient evidence of human capital materiality to financial performance to warrant inclusion in standard investment analysis. However, we also find that doing so remains a challenge for a number of reasons. These range from the fact that companies do not provide investors with comparable data to a lack of consensus over which combinations of policies have the most impact on financial outcomes.” The report concludes with suggestions on standard ways companies can report their human capital practices, in an attempt to overcome some of these challenges.

In addition to taking human capital into account before and during an investment, some investors are also looking at a different model. Rather than the traditional venture capital model of investing for five years or so, helping the company maximize its growth, and then encouraging an exit event such as sale of the company, these investors are following the evergreen model. In this model, investments are structured to provide ongoing cash distributions rather than an exit. The Tugboat Group, founded by longtime investor Dave Whorton, is a group of investors with this focus on evergreen investments. They are affiliated with The Tugboat Institute, a group of entrepreneurs dedicated to building companies

that have great cultures, strong human capital practices, and are built to last.\textsuperscript{11}

From all this activity, it’s clear that there is increasing evidence for investors of all sizes that paying attention to a company’s human capital practices can be a good strategy for maximizing returns. For investors looking for guidance as to how to do this, this Guidebook provides a section on Resources for Investors that includes links to due diligence checklists and term sheets that take human capital into account.

SECTION 3

Guidance for Trainers Using The Curriculum
HUMAN CAPITAL: A KEY COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE
Why invest in people
Culture and core values
Leveling up D next hires

RECRUITING, ONBOARDING, CULTURE BUILDING
Expanding the talent pool
Communicating core values clearly

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT
Continuous improvement
Giving and receiving feedback

COMPENSATION, BENEFITS, SHARING EQUITY
Budgeting for human capital investment
Sharing equity broadly

THE HUMAN CAPITAL ADVANTAGE: A CURRICULUM FOR EARLY STAGE VENTURES

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The Human Capital Advantage Curriculum is highly fluid and may be adapted based on the needs and stage of the particular cohort of entrepreneurs being trained. It is applicable to all business sectors, but contains optional content specifically geared towards businesses that employ hourly/frontline employees. It is written with a U.S. focus, but can be adapted to an international audience. The curriculum is organized in five modules as follows (see overview on pages 20-21 for more details):

**Module One** is the foundation of the curriculum. It makes the case of why an early investment in human capital can be a key competitive advantage and helps entrepreneurs: identify their core values, begin to focus on creating a participatory culture, identify the next five big organizational milestones and the requisite hires/investors/partners needed to accomplish these things, develop an initial human capital vision, and practice pitching that vision.

**Module Two** builds on work done in Module One to identify entrepreneur core values and determine next hires. Elements covered include: hiring for culture fit, developing strategies to build a diverse organization, learning how to effectively onboard and mentor new employees, and clearly and consistently communicating core values.

**Module Three** focuses on compensating and incentivizing new employees through better than basic benefits, investing in employee wellness, developing smart profit sharing plans, sharing equity broadly (if applicable), and thinking about how to allocate equity fairly among startup partners.

**Module Four** provides entrepreneurs with tools to: build an organizational culture of learning and continuous improvement, create high performing teams, give and receive feedback, communicate well and manage conflict, and effectively manage employee performance.

Finally, **Module Five** addresses how to lead in a collaborative and participatory way. It includes a leadership style check in, basic principles of emotional intelligence and humble inquiry, and an introduction to the practice of open book management.
Early feedback from the Village Capital 2015 U.S. Health Cohort was key in designing a curriculum that meets the needs of early stage entrepreneurs. The curriculum features minimal but sufficient traditional lectures, a review of current practices at the beginning of each section, short case studies of mostly early and mid-stage companies to which entrepreneurs can relate, participatory exercises, and useful tools that can be applied right away.

Each of the five modules offers 45-60 minutes of pre-work, including articles and short videos. This ensures that participants begin with a common understanding of the upcoming module elements and a common language. The backbone of the curriculum is a Leveling Up worksheet that carries through the entire curriculum. This worksheet enables entrepreneurs to capture what they’ve learned in each module and set goals for their organizations.

Hands-on exercises include:
• Identifying core values
• Hiring for culture fit
• Understanding unconscious bias and the role it plays in hiring
• Budgeting for better than basic employee benefits
• Allocating equity fairly (and broadly)
• How to cultivate a learning organization
• Leadership style (online quiz)
• Emotional intelligence (online quiz)
• Leadership goal setting
• Practice articulating human capital strategy to investors, new hires, and other partners

Using the Curriculum

The Human Capital Advantage Curriculum is designed to adapt to the needs of individual entrepreneur cohorts. Combined, the five modules represent about 15 hours of training (each one takes 2.5 to 3 hours to deliver). The modules could be delivered in five sessions over a period of time, or trainers may wish to focus on only one. It is also possible to pull out sections from several of the modules and deliver them in a customized manner.

Each module contains:
• A detailed agenda with advance work for the entrepreneur and timing for each section
• A **PowerPoint presentation** with extensive notes that serves as the foundation of the module (note: each PowerPoint presentation also includes an appendix with additional slides on specific content that can be used if relevant to the particular cohort being trained)

• **Hands-on worksheets** and exercises

Factors to consider when deciding which modules to use as well as the additional content in the appendices include:

• Stage/number of employees at firms being trained
• Whether firms have/will have hourly employees
• Amount of time available to provide training

**Advance Preparation**

**Facilitator:**

• Review the overview of the five modules to determine which content is the best fit for the cohort of entrepreneurs to be trained
• Review the materials recommended in the agenda for the content you are about to deliver (note: additional materials on each topic may be found in the Literature Scan)
• Review the PowerPoint slides for the content you will be delivering (note: there are resources in the notes pages of many of the slides to aid facilitators in delivering the content)
• Think through the agenda and the timing for each segment, noting that each module generally takes 2.5-3 hours to deliver
• Email the pre-work articles/videos to the entrepreneurs who will participate in the training several days in advance so that they have time to review these materials
• Make the hands-on exercises available to entrepreneurs the day of the training, in either hard copy or electronic format
• Ensure that you have access to a laptop, projector and screen for the training session
• *Note: facilitators should plan to pay copyright fees for the use of the various cartoons in the PowerPoint presentations*

**Participants:**

• Review the pre-work materials in advance of the training session (estimated time to review is 45-60 minutes)
• Arrive ready to engage
Role of Facilitator

During the training, the facilitator has several roles. One is to serve as a content expert, knowledgeably delivering the material covered in the PowerPoint slides. Reviewing the advance material is essential, as is studying the case material to be able to present it in an engaging fashion. Another role is to ensure that participants are actively engaged in the material and with each other. The majority of the time should be spent not in lectures but in discussion. During the exercises, the facilitator should circulate the room, checking in with participants/groups to respond to any issues that arise (participants will sometimes ask questions one-on-one that they may not feel comfortable asking in front of a group). In addition, the facilitator should try to ensure that all participants have an opportunity to share their opinion, drawing out quieter members as appropriate. Finally, the facilitator should ensure the training runs according to the schedule, bearing in mind that small adjustments in the timing may be necessary.

The remainder of this Guidebook consists resources for trainers, including: resources for investor; a literature scan of useful books, articles, and videos; and a snapshot of the Human Capital Advantage Curriculum at the time of development.
Human Capital Advantage Curriculum Overview

HUMAN CAPITAL ADVANTAGE CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Module One: Human Capital: A Key Competitive Advantage

- Why investing in human capital is a critical component to competing, innovating, and providing excellent customer service in the fast-changing global economy
- Why culture matters
- Core values exercise
- Exercise on next 5 big things and skills/hires/advisors needed to accomplish those
- Articulate vision for investing in human capital to new hires and investors
- APPENDIX
  - Review of human capital best practices

Module Two: Recruiting, Onboarding, Culture Building

- Hiring for culture fit
- Pursuing diversity for strength
- Effective onboarding and mentorship
- Intentional focus on culture
  - Recognition and rewards
  - Developing a culture of appreciation
  - Celebrating success and having fun
- Communicating core values clearly and consistently
- APPENDIX
  - Hiring and supporting those with barriers to employment

Module Three: Compensation, Benefits, Profit Sharing/Sharing Equity Broadly

- Budgeting for human capital investment
  - Better than basic benefits for startups
  - Investing in employee wellness
- Profit Sharing/sharing equity broadly
  - Employee ownership: broad-based stock options, SARs
  - How to allocate equity fairly in a startup company
- APPENDIX
  - Innovative scheduling practices for workplace stability
  - Effective profit sharing
  - ESOPs for exit and engagement
Module Four: Learning And Development

- Creating a culture of learning and continuous improvement
  - Cross training
  - Creating high performing teams
- Giving and receiving feedback
  - Managing conflict
  - 360-degree reviews
  - Development plans and career ladders
- APPENDIX
  - Pay for skills/measuring training ROI
  - Teaching soft skills (attendance, professional dress, conflict resolution)
  - Partnering with educational providers

Module Five: Reenvisioning Leadership

- What kind of leader are you?
  - EQ 101 and online test
  - Servant leadership and the art of humble inquiry
- Participatory decision making
  - What structures work?
  - When is it appropriate and when is it not?
- Open book management: an operating system to help your business scale while teaching everyone to think and act like owners
  - Overview
  - Key components
- APPENDIX
  - Additional slides on emotional intelligence
I. SAMPLE TERM SHEET LANGUAGE

- **Impact Terms Project** (covers many areas of interest to impact investors)
- **World Positive Term Sheet**
- **Echoing Green SEEDIIT Term sheet**
- **One Planet Investments ITS Integrated Term Sheet with impact goals**
- **Mission Investors Exchange** (must join for access to sample documents)
- **Y Combinator sample legal documents**
- **National Venture Capital Association model legal documents** (more standard terms, but may still be useful)
- **Angel Capital Association Knowledge Center** and particularly the video podcasts for new angel investors

II. SAMPLE DUE DILIGENCE QUESTIONS

- Engagement Strategies Media: **$2.6 Trillion Investor Coalition Sees Link Between Human Capital Management and Shareholder Return** (includes some of the Human Capital Management Coalition's due diligence questions)
- Solange Charas, Pitchbook: **Should we quantify the impact of human capital? Returns can be 40% higher** (includes some due diligence questions)

III. MEASURING IMPACT

- **Global Impact Investing Network** (a variety of resources for impact investors)
- **B Corporation** (rigorous standards of social and environmental performance, accountability, and transparency)
- **B Analytics/GIIRS Ratings** (GIIRS Ratings are the gold standard for impact measurement in impact investing)
IV. USEFUL ARTICLES

- Aner Ben-Ami, Transform Finance: Square peg, Round Hole: Innovating Finance For Social Enterprises
- Larry Beeferman and Aaron Bernstein, Investor Responsibility Research Center Institute and Harvard Labor and Worklife Program: The Materiality of Human Capital to Corporate Financial Performance
- TONIIC: The 7-Step Framework (see particularly Step 3: Conducting Due Diligence and Step 4: Getting to Deal Terms
- Daniel Epstein, Huffington Post: Beyond Debt and Equity: My Love for Quasi-Equity
Human Capital Advantage Curriculum Literature Scan

I. GENERAL

- The Hitachi Foundation: Business Action Guide Series
- The Hitachi Foundation: Doing Well And Doing Good: Pioneer Employers Discover Profits and Deliver Opportunity for Frontline Workers
- Zeynep Ton, MIT Sloan School of Management: The Good Jobs Strategy
- Anne Claire Broughton, SJF Institute: Employees Matter: Maximizing Company Value Through Workforce Engagement
- Kenneth R. Thompson, Ramon L. Benedetto, Thomas J. Walter, and Molly Meyer: It’s My Company Too: How Entangled Companies Move Beyond Employee Engagement for Remarkable Results
- Jim Baron and Michael Hannan, California Management Review: Organizational Blueprints for Success in High-Tech Start-Ups: Lessons From the Stanford Project on Emerging Companies
- Gary Hamel video: Reinventing the Technology of Human Accomplishment

II. SET THE STAGE FOR SUCCESS

A. Leadership Best Practices

- HBR: Don’t Let Power Corrupt You
- Inc. Magazine: 20 Things Truly Great Bosses Do Every Day
- Edgar Schein: Humble Inquiry: The Gentle Art of Asking Instead of Telling
- Harvard Business Review: If You're Not Helping People Develop, You're Not Management Material
- Edgar Schein: Organizational Culture and Leadership
- Robert K. Greenleaf: The Servant as Leader
- Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership: What is Servant Leadership?
- Inc. Magazine: 7 Secrets of 'Servant Leadership' That Will Lead You to Success
- S. Chris Edmonds: The Culture Engine
B. Emotional Intelligence

- Forbes: Emotional Intelligence: EQ
- Forbes: Five Ways to Lead with Emotional Intelligence -- and Boost Productivity
- HBR: The Focused Leader
- Mind/Shift: A Simple Exercise to Strengthen Emotional Intelligence in Teams
- International Coach Federation: Emotional Intelligence Exercises
- LinkedIn Emotional Intelligence slideshow by Dr. Manard Brusman
- HBR: Can you really improve your emotional intelligence?
- HBR: How Emotional Intelligence Became a Key Leadership Skill
- MindTools: Emotional Intelligence in Leadership

C. Hiring for culture fit

- The Hitachi Foundation: Business Action Guide: Hiring For Culture Fit: Zappos
- Sheila Margolis: Hiring for Culture Fit
- Bridgespan Group: Making the Right Hire: Assessing A Candidate’s Fit with Your Organization
- New York Times: Guess Who Doesn't Fit in At Work?
- Inc. Magazine: Soft Skills are Hard to Assess. And Even Harder to Succeed Without.
- Fast Company: These 7 Questions Will Help You Hire The Best Person For The Job

D. Pursuing diversity for strength

WHY

- Huffington Post: 5 Companies That Are Betting Big On Diversity
- Center for American Progress: Top 10 Economic Facts of Diversity in the Workplace
- Scientific American: How Diversity Makes us Smarter
HOW
• Pat Wadors, Harvard Business Review: Diversity Efforts Fall Short Unless Employees Feel That They Belong
• Boris Groysberg and Katherine Connolly, Harvard Business Review: Great Leaders Who Make the Mix Work
• TechCrunch: Prioritizing Diversity in 2015
• Wall Street Journal: How to Increase Workplace Diversity
• Fast Company: How This Company Transformed its Dismal Diversity Numbers

E. Avoid bias in hiring
• Business News Daily: Is Subconscious Bias Affecting Your Hiring Decisions?
• The Muse: 5 Keys to Hiring the Best Candidate—Not the One Your Brain Wants to Trick You Into Picking
• Ron Haynes, LinkedIn Pulse: 5 Common Hiring Biases and How to Minimize Them
• CDO Insights: Proven Strategies for Addressing Unconscious Bias in the Workplace

F. Hiring those with barriers to employment (ex-con, LMI, differently abled)
• WorkNet Solutions: 6 Ways to Overcome Any Employment Barrier
• MRDC: Four Strategies to Overcome Barriers to Employment
• The Week: Should Small Businesses Hire More Ex-Convicts?
• Inc. Magazine: Why You Should Hire More Ex-Cons: Former gang leaders and drug dealers have the potential to be your star employees
• HuffPost Impact: 22 Years Later, Time to Get Serious About the Americans With Disabilities Act
• Small Business Administration: Hiring People With Disabilities
• Bloomberg Business: A New Push to Hire The Disabled

G. Effective onboarding and mentorship
• Start-Up Study Group: A Step-by-Step guide to Onboarding New Hires
• The Hitachi Foundation: Business Action Guide: Effective Onboarding and Mentorship: Cooperative Home Care Associates
• Forbes: The Onboarding Experience Matters to Your Future Employees
• Inc.: 3 Ways to Supercharge Your Onboarding Process
• Society for Human Resource Management: Onboarding New Employees: Maximizing Success
• Chron: The Advantages of Mentoring in the Workplace

H. Support for life issues, especially for those with barriers

• The Hitachi Foundation: Business Action Guide: Effective Onboarding and Mentorship: Cooperative Home Care Associates
• QSRWeb: How helping employees reach financial stability will help your restaurant

I. Better than basic benefits for startups

• Forbes: Should Your Startup Offer Employee Benefits?
• Ben Mueller, Namely: Employee Benefits 101: An Employer Guide For Growing Companies (Part One)
• HealthCare.gov: How the Affordable Care Act affects small businesses
• Entrepreneur: The Basics of Employee Benefits

J. Investing in employee wellness

• Jennifer Shaefer, SHRM: The Real ROI for Employee Wellness Programs
• Nick Thornton, BenefitsPro: Wellness programs showing benefits for lower-income workers
• Stephen Miller, SHRM: Startups More Likely to Offer Wellness Programs
• Chris Orchard, Harvard C.H. Chan School of Public Health: The Business Benefits of a Healthy Workforce
• Harvard Business Review: Use Behavioral Economics to Achieve Wellness Goals
• Harvard Business Review: What’s the Hard Return on Employee Wellness Programs?
• Inc.: How to Build a Wellness Program
• Wall Street Journal: How to Set Up A Wellness Plan
• Inc.: Wellness Programs that Work for Small Businesses
• Tony Schwartz: The Way We’re Working Isn’t Working

**K. Innovative scheduling practices for workplace stability**

• Business Know-How: Increase Productivity and Retention of Entry Level Employees
• Harvard Business Review: Why “Good Jobs” Are Good for Retailers
• New York Times: A Push to Give Steadier Shifts to Part-Timers

**L. Finding and Keeping the Best People**

• Lolly Daskal, Inc.: 7 Reasons the Best Employees Quit, Even When They Like Their Job

**M. Communicating the company’s values clearly and consistently**

• S. Chris Edmonds: The Culture Engine
• The Hitachi Foundation: Business Action Guide: Communicating the Company’s Values Clearly and Consistently: Tasty Catering
• Harvard Business Review: Make Your Values Mean Something
• Huff Post Business: Why Should Companies and Employees Have Shared Values?
• Fast Company: Culture Eats Strategy for Lunch
• Benedictine Center for Values Driven Leadership Video: How to Build a People-Centered Culture from the Ground Up – Tasty Catering
• Benedictine Center for Values-Driven Leadership Video: Use Your Core Values To Drive Decision Making: Here’s How - Tasty Catering
• Jim Collins: Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make The Leap ... And Others Don’t
N. OBM: Know and Teach the Rules

- The Great Game of Business: Why is Choosing A Critical Number So Important?
- Ari Weinzweig: Ten Rules for Great Finance
- Jack Stack and Bo Burlingham: The Great Game of Business: The Only Sensible Way to Run a Company
- John Case: The Open Book Experience: Lessons From Over 100 Companies Who Successfully Transformed Themselves
- SRC Video: The SRC Story
- NCEO Video: Mini Film from We the Owners: Employees Expanding the American Dream

III. INVEST FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

A. Structuring clear career ladders

- Metalforming Magazine: Case Study of Oberg Industries
- AboutMoney: Performance Development Planning
- PayScale: Create a Career Path to Retain Employees
- Inc. Magazine: Is There Really a Skills Gap?: 10 million unemployed. Yet employers' No. 1 problem is finding the right talent.

B. Developing a learning organization

- Nick Fox, LinkedIn Pulse: The Five Commandments of Effective Training & Development for Startups
- Deloitte and Aspen Institute: A Guide to Upskilling American's Frontline Workers
- Inc. 5 Reasons You Should Be Investing in Employee Development
- Peter Senge: The Fifth Discipline: The Art & Practice of The Learning Organization
- Inc.: 5 Keys to Building a Learning Organization
C. Cross training

- Houston Chronicle: Cross-Training in Business
- Forbes: Cross-Training: Your Best Defense Against Indispensable Employees
- Area Development: Cross-Training: Creating and Implementing a Successful Plan
- Inc. Magazine: Cross-Training

D. Pay for Skills

- Reliable Plant: Study shows skill-based pay works well for manufacturers
- Houston Chronicle: Developing an Effective Employee Training Program
- Society for Human Resource Management: Skill-Based Pay

E. Teaching soft skills (attendance, professional dress for low-wage workers; conflict resolution, other non-technical skills for everyone)

- Inc. Magazine: Soft Skills are Hard to Assess, And Even Harder to Succeed Without.
- Fast Company: Eight Career Skills You Need To Be Competitive in 2016
- Fast Company: 4 Soft Skills That You Need to Learn
- Fast Company: These 7 Questions Will Help You Hire The Best Person For The Job
- Jennifer Pritchard, Seattle Jobs Initiative: The Importance of Soft Skills in Entry-Level Employment and Postsecondary Success
- Winton Pitcoff, NHI Shelterforce Online: Developing Workers: Community-Based Job Training Brings Families Out of Poverty
- Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta: Collaborative Efforts: Colleges and Nonprofits Partner to Enhance Workers' Skills
- Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta: The Soft Skills Gap
F. Conflict resolution/communication skill

- Houston Chronicle: [How to Improve Communication Skills in the Workforce](#)
- Forbes: [5 Keys of Dealing with Workplace Conflict](#)
- Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, Ron McMillan, and Al Switzler: [Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High](#)

G. Measuring training ROI

- ASTD: [Return on Investment (ROI) Basics](#)
- Houston Chronicle: [How to Calculate ROI for Training](#)
- SkilledUp: [How Top Companies Make The ROI Case For Employee Training](#)
- Fortune Magazine: [Company training programs: What are they really worth?](#)

H. Enhance customer service through process redesign

- Inc. Magazine: [Fred Wilson: 8 Rules for Managing People, According to an Engineer](#)
- McKinsey & Company: [Bad to Great: The Path to Scaling up Excellence](#)
- Entrepreneurial Insights: [Making Your Business More Competitive With Business Process Engineering (BPR)](#)

I. OBM: Structuring and Playing Mini-Games

- The Great Game of Business: [MiniGames Handbook](#)
- Video: Great Game of Business: [Using Mini-Games for Motivation](#)
- Benedictine Center for Values-Driven Leadership Video: [Better Bottom Lines Through Open-Book Management – Tasty Catering](#)
J. Partnering with educational providers

- Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta: Collaborative Efforts: Colleges and Nonprofits Partner to Enhance Workers' Skills
- Barbara Kiviat, The Atlantic: The Big Jobs Myth: American Workers Aren't Ready for American Jobs
- Samantha Drake, University Business: Where the Workers Are
- Corporate Voices for Working Families: Business and Community College Partnerships: A Blueprint

K. Tools for intentional culture building

- Bain & Co.: Building a winning culture
- S. Chris Edmonds: The Culture Engine
- Delivering Happiness: The Culture Muscle Part II: Building a Program to Strengthen Your Core Business
- FIR Network: EE Voice #4: How Do You Strengthen Your Company's Culture?
- Mashable: 5 Startup Founders Reveal Their Best Company Culture Tips
- Fast Company: 8 Rules For Creating A Passionate Work Culture
- Talent Culture: Create A “Small Company” Culture Anywhere
- Entrepreneur Magazine: Build a Culture of Ownership at Your Company
- Richard Sheridan: Joy, Inc.: How We Built A Workplace People Love

Spark Business IQ: Open-Book Management: How Employees are Helping Improve Profits
Slate Magazine: We Spent What on Paperclips? Open-Book Management Lets Every Employee Look at the Company's Accounts

Human Capital Advantage Curriculum Literature Scan
IV. GET TO HIGH PERFORMANCE

A. Developing high performing teams

• Jacob Shriar, OfficeVibe: 10 Lessons Learned Studying A High-Performing Team
• The Hitachi Foundation: Business Action Guide: Developing High Performing Teams: High Plains Community Health Center
• HBR: Team Building in the Cafeteria
• Six Sigma: High Performance Teams – Understanding Team Cohesiveness
• Inc. Magazine: Building and Leading High Performance Teams
• Hitachi Foundation Video: Care Team Redesign: High Plains Community Health Center
• Hitachi Foundation report: Doing Well and Doing Good

B. Managing Remote Workers

• Corey Wainwright, HubSpot: How to Make Remote Work Actually Work

C. Participatory decision making

• The Hitachi Foundation: Business Action Guide: Cultivating a High Involvement Workplace: New Belgium Brewing
• Alan G. Robinson and Dean M. Schroeder: The Idea-Driven Organization: Unlocking the Power in Bottom-up Ideas
• Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, Ron McMillan, and Al Switzler: Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High
• Edgar Schein: Humble Inquiry: The Gentle Art of Asking Instead of Telling
D. Enabling better individual decisions

- Inc. Magazine: 8 Tips for Empowering Employees
- Ari Weinzweig: Zingerman's Guide to Giving Great Service
- Ari Weinzweig: A Lapsed Anarchist's Approach to Building a Great Business

E. Empowering and engaging the front line

- Hitachi Foundation Video: Care Team Redesign: Union Health Center
- Hitachi Foundation Report: Doing Well and Doing Good
- Smart Customer Service: Empower Customer-Facing Employees to Engage Customers
- Inc. Magazine: How to Move Beyond Traditional Employee Feedback

F. Creating great customer service by putting people first

- Harvard Business Review: Creating Sustainable Performance
- Fast Company: Why Treating Your Employees Fairly Can Actually Boost Your Profits
- McKinsey & Co. & Disney Institute: The Secret To Delighting Customers? Put Employees First

G. 360-degree reviews

- The Hitachi Foundation: Business Action Guide: Peer Reviews: Optimax
- About Money: 360 Degree Feedback: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly
I. Scaling culture with growth

- ZingTrain: [A New Approach to Performance Reviews](https://www.zingtrain.com/blog/new-approach-to-performance-reviews)
- Buffer Open: [We Don’t Have Performance Reviews at Our Startup: Here’s What We Do Instead](https://www.buffer.com/blog/no-performance-reviews)
- The Center for Entrepreneurial Innovation: [Startup Lifecycle Series: Part Four: Growth and Scale](https://www.entrepreneurialinnovation.org/courses/startup-lifecycle-series-part-four-growth-and-scale)
- Ari Weinsweig, Zingerman’s: [Five Steps to Building an Organizational Culture](https://www.zingtrain.com/blog/five-steps-to-building-an-organizational-culture)

H. OBM: Follow the action and keep score

- Inc. Magazine: [Keeping Score](https://www.inc.com/keep-score.html)
- Jack Stack and Bo Burlingham: [The Great Game of Business: The Only Sensible Way to Run a Company](https://www.amazon.com/Great-Game-Only-Sensible-Way/dp/0060008185)
- SRC Video: [The SRC Story](https://www.srcvideo.com)
- NCEO Video: [Mini Film from We the Owners: Employees Expanding the American Dream](https://www.nceo.org/video/mini-film-from-we-the-owners)

I. Scaling culture with growth

- ZingTrain: [Recipes for Organizational Success](https://www.zingtrain.com/blog/recipes-for-organizational-success)
- Fast Company: [How Facebook Keeps Scaling Its Culture](https://www.fastcompany.com/3027527/how-facebook-keeps-scaling-its-culture)
- Kate Harrison, Forbes: [Startups Need To Scale Corporate Culture During Rapid Growth To Survive](https://www.forbes.com/sites/katherineharrison/2016/04/21/startups-need-to-scale-corporate-culture-during-rapid-growth-to-survive/)
- Center for Entrepreneurial Innovation: [Startup Lifecycle Series: Part Four: Growth and Scale](https://www.entrepreneurialinnovation.org/courses/startup-lifecycle-series-part-four-growth-and-scale)
- Ari Weinsweig, Zingerman’s: [Five Steps to Building an Organizational Culture](https://www.zingtrain.com/blog/five-steps-to-building-an-organizational-culture)

V. RECOGNIZE IT AND REWARD IT

A. Incentivizing continuous improvement

- Inc. Magazine: [Keeping Score](https://www.inc.com/keep-score.html)
- Jack Stack and Bo Burlingham: [The Great Game of Business: The Only Sensible Way to Run a Company](https://www.amazon.com/Great-Game-Only-Sensible-Way/dp/0060008185)
- SRC Video: [The SRC Story](https://www.srcvideo.com)
- NCEO Video: [Mini Film from We the Owners: Employees Expanding the American Dream](https://www.nceo.org/video/mini-film-from-we-the-owners)
• Inc. Magazine: How to Tap Employee Ideas
• Forbes Magazine: Google’s Secrets of Innovation: Empowering its Employees
• American Express Open Forum: Tap Into Your Employees’ Hidden Talents
• Inc. Magazine: Don’t Ask for Big Ideas Unless You’re Prepared for Them

B. Effective profit sharing

• The Hitachi Foundation: Business Action Guide: Effective Profit Sharing: Marlin Steel
• The Hitachi Foundation: Marlin Steel – From Bagels to Boeing [video]
• Willow Creek Consultants: Build Success With Effective Bonus Plan
• Inc. Magazine: How to Build a Profit Sharing Plan
• Inc. Magazine: The Problem with Profit Sharing

C. Nonfinancial recognition and rewards

• Bob Nelson, PhD: 1501 Ways to Reward Employees
• Inc. Magazine: 101 Super Effective Ways to Reward Your Employees
• OfficeVibe: 25 Of The Best Employee Perks That You Need To Have
• Fast Company: Low-Cost Ways to Show Employees They’re Highly Valued
• Ari Weinzweig, Zingerman’s: A Culture of Positive Appreciation

D. Celebrating success and having fun

• The Hitachi Foundation: Business Action Guide: Celebrating Success and Having Fun: Zappos
• Inc. Magazine: 11 Easy Ways to Make Work Fun
• LifeHack: 10 Ways to Make Your Office Fun to Work in
• Entrepreneur Magazine: Celebrate the Good Times
• Houston Chronicle: How to Celebrate Success in the Workplace
E. Employee ownership: broad-based stock options, SARs

- Beyster Institute at Rady School of Management: [Beyster Startup Toolkit: Sharing Equity Ownership](#)
- National Center for Employee Ownership: [Employee Stock Option Fact Sheet](#)
- National Center for Employee Ownership: [Stock Options, Restricted Stock, Phantom Stock, Stock Appreciation Rights (SARs), and Employee Stock Purchase Plans (ESPPs)](#)
- National Center for Employee Ownership: [Phantom Stock and Stock Appreciation Rights (SARs)](#)
- CNN Money: [How to Handle Employee Stock Options](#)
- Harvard Business Review: [Every Employee An Owner, Really.](#)
- Startup Podcast on [How to Divide an Imaginary Pie](#)

F. ESOPs for exit and engagement

- The Hitachi Foundation: Business Action Guide: [ESOPs for Exit: King Arthur Flour](#)
- National Center for Employee Ownership: [Using an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) for Business Continuity in a Closely Held Company](#)
- National Center for Employee Ownership: [How an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) Works](#)
- Forbes Magazine: The Better Exit Strategy: [ESOPs Satisfy Business Owners and Preserve Their Legacy](#)
- Journal of Accountancy: [The ESOP Exit Strategy](#)

VI. COMMUNITY IMPACT

A. Building Ethical Supply Chains

- Inc. Magazine: [Make Sure You’re Not Running a Sweatshop](#)
- Instant Shift: [If You Outsource, Outsource Ethically](#)
- IMPO: [11 Questions to ask a Contract Manufacturer Before Partnering](#)
- Harvard Business Review: [In Defense of Responsible Offshoring and Outsourcing](#)
The Hitachi Foundation and Broughton Consulting would like to thank a number of individuals whose feedback strengthened and focused the Human Capital Advantage Curriculum. Most notably, the entrepreneurs of the Village Capital 2015 U.S. Health Cohort provided a great deal of assistance by participating in early iterations of the curriculum and offering useful and relevant feedback on content and delivery. We also appreciate Village Capital’s Ross Baird, Allyson Plosko, Alex Fife, Ben Younman, Bidisha Bhattacharyya, Joseph Steig, Brittney Riley, Rachel Crawford, and Ulili Onovakpuri (now with Kapor Capital) for their support and suggestions. Kevin Davis of Rebound Technologies gave very helpful feedback in the initial stages of development on ways the curriculum could meet the needs of early stage entrepreneurs. On the investor side, Bonny Moellenbrock and Alexandra LaForge of Investors’ Circle provided thoughtful input midway through the process. Finally, we appreciate Drew Greenblatt of Marlin Steel for taking the time to share his company’s human capital best practices with the U.S. Health Cohort.
Human Capital Advantage Curriculum Modules

MODULE 1

Human Capital as a Key Competitive Advantage

MODULE 2

Recruiting, Onboarding, Culture Building

MODULE 3

Compensation, Benefits, Sharing Equity Broadly

MODULE 4

Learning and Development

MODULE 5

Reenvisioning Leadership