

## C A S E

**HR, Culture, and Business Results Success at Google, Scripps, and UPS**

Firms in a variety of industries have been recognized as being among the Most Admired Companies by *Fortune* magazine. Others have been highlighted as being the Best Companies to Work For by *Fortune* or as Optimas Award winners by *Workforce Management*. These recognitions contain some common elements because of how HR management has contributed to organizational success and is being positively viewed by employees. Three examples are highlighted here.

One recognized firm is Google, which is well known by many individuals because of its Internet components. Google has an HR image as a creative contributor to business objectives through its work environment guided by HR. According to the head of HR at Google, Lazio Bock, the overriding key of HR at Google is its emphasis on organizational culture and business objectives. The focus of Google HR is on giving its employees flexibility to produce results, not just following core job requirements. Consequently, HR at Google has established innovative efforts for its people and has made the administrative part of HR efficient. Minimizing numerous HR administrative forms, data, and reports by using technology has occurred, which would be expected in a prominent technology firm.

At Google, HR communicates to its employees extensively about business objectives, organizational results, and relevant current information. Because many of the Google employees are stock shareholders also, they have a personal interest in Google being a successful business. Thus they continuously want to know the operational results by seeing current reports, data, and information. Overall, Google's HR approach is unique in comparison to the approaches at other companies recognized by *Fortune*, but its success illustrates that how HR is established and operates can be a key to organizational success.

A different firm with a variety of organizations and a strong HR culture is Scripps Network, a prominent television and communications corporation. At Scripps, HR plays a core role in establishing strategic goals and efforts. Even when Scripps has merged separate media firms, HR has focused on getting the cultures of the two entities to integrate effectively.

Several HR functions are used to support the culture and core values at Scripps. One is

an active pay-for-performance system to reward employees at higher job levels with base pay increases, annual incentives, and long-term incentives. Another key part of HR efforts at Scripps is that HR emphasizes leadership development throughout the firm. Additionally, the firm has widely used work variability efforts such as work-life balance, telecommuting, and worker flexible schedules. These are done as part of a core value at Scripps of "compassion/support."

A different firm with an extended history of effectively integrating corporate culture and HR is UPS, the transportation and logistics delivery firm that operates worldwide. Its culture is different from the cultures of Google and Scripps; however, for more than a decade, UPS has been recognized for its corporate integrity, culture, and HR inclusion with employees.

UPS has emphasized linking HR with business objectives and uses communication and intranet programs to ensure that employees are kept constantly informed on business objectives and workforce challenges. One well-recognized component at UPS is the established codes of conduct that are consistently reviewed with all employees. These reviews include specific examples of ethical situations that employees may face and how to respond to them. Annually, managers complete a "conduct code" report that asks specific questions about ethical problems that have arisen during the year.

These three firms are in different industries, have different cultures, and use a variety of HR efforts. However, each of them has been recognized for implementing HR as core to their organizational cultures and successful business results.<sup>51</sup>

**QUESTIONS**

1. How does the integration of HR with the organizational culture contribute to the success of Google, Scripps, and UPS? To find ideas, go to the corporate website for each of these companies and search for additional insights.
2. Discuss how some of the cultural facets mentioned compare to those among employers you have worked for, and explain the difference in the views of these various employers.