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***FlexBulletin* #124 – A Trio of Challenges to a Triple Threat**

By Paul Rupert

October 17, 2017

For nearly two decades Rupert & Company has been a pioneer in workplace flexibility and publisher of the *FlexBulletin*. Our team has focused on new ways of working and introducing positive change into traditional workplaces, overcoming numerous barriers and challenges. Many of you have been with us on all or part of this journey.

And while we all know things change, 2017 has been a time of tremendous disruption – of tradition, norms and public and private behavior. As a nation, as employers and employees we are experiencing significant and troubling divisions and facing major social challenges. As designers of and advocates for change initiatives, we have taken a long and serious look at our focus, priorities and expectations.

The result: a decision to transform ourselves into a broader and deeper firm. Today we are announcing our intentions in the press release below. I trust it is self-explanatory and would welcome feedback, conversation and your own thoughts about where all of us should be headed in the challenging period ahead.



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rupert Organizational Design Launched to Counter “Triple Threat”

Now is the time to build respectful workplaces

WASHINGTON, DC (Oct. 17, 2017) – 2017 is proving to be a year of great social stresses:

- Post-recession demand intensifies for true flexibility fueled by family-forming millennials, long-suffering commuters and those managing disruptive periods of eldercare, illness, volunteerism and education; employers respond slowly if at all.
- The massive tsunami of boomer retirees takes talent and critical knowledge with it and older workers faces premature retirement and minimal savings; employers continue the outdated practice of 60/65-and-out.
- Social divisions and disrespect deepen and prove toxic in the workplace, while the widely heralded, go-to strategy of bias awareness seems to fall short of addressing this breach; employers and D&I leaders have begun to ask “what’s next?”

Clearly we have passed the time for business as usual.

The principals of leading flexibility consultancy Rupert & Company are responding to these challenges. As founder Paul Rupert says, “Our pioneering flexibility work was challenging but positive in nature. It facilitated the entry of diverse people and ways of working into rigid environments. Today’s demands are far tougher. They require deep organizational change, not just proclamations.”

Contributing to new solutions requires of change-driven consultancies a rethinking of mission, services and scale. To mark this change, the firm has renamed itself Rupert Organizational Design, driven by the commitment to dive deeper into the broad change process required to inspire diverse and lasting change that can offset the trends above. Employers across the board need to rethink and redesign their approaches to flexibility, older workers and constructive standards and habits that re-knit the fraying social fabric. To partner with them in this challenging journey, Rupert has built out its service areas and strengthened its key staff.

The purpose of this reinvention is to assist inventive employers in developing creative ways to overcome the challenges described above while increasing engagement and productivity. Potential outcomes of such initiatives can be:

- **Lifecycle Flexibility** Limited flexible offerings can be replaced by far more inclusive and robust approaches. A menu of a modest set of formal and informal telework and flextime can be expanded to serious strengthening of job sharing, compressed schedules and equitable part-time, along with team self-scheduling and other options for hourly workers. Comprehensive automation and monitoring systems can promote and measure who is actually doing what. And more fluid and integrated systems of flexible management can support employees through serious and disruptive life events.
- **Flexible and Phased Retirement** Our clients have achieved superior programs to reduce retiree schedules in lieu of abrupt termination. They build mutually beneficial approaches by combining phasing with output-driven work redesign and measurable knowledge transfer plans. This can be done in the face of benefits hurdles and fears of age
- **Mutual Respect Initiatives** Bias, division and destructive conflict can be addressed with broad and systematic workplace-wide campaigns for mutual respect. By creating and implementing standards-based accountability systems driven by habit-changing training, shared behaviors can be developed to build inclusive cultures. Complex institutions have experienced dramatic change in collaborative behaviors through this approach.

For further information on the firm’s ongoing transformation, visit www.RupertOrgDesign.com

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