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You are listening to Tell Me Your Story where we connect to HLS staff on a personal level.

Welcome back to the second half of our conversation with Trina.

So, how much you see change in terms of what you learn in HR? Since we started working for the company where we spent 12 years, in terms of recruiting, in terms of in of investing in different areas, from that time to the medical or HLS. Do you see a big curve in terms of learning in terms of development?

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I feel like I've learned so much over the course of my career. Starting from not really knowing what human resources was and being exposed to so much. I think in an environment like Harvard, that's really where it all opened up because it's so decentralized too, so there are so many different people doing the same work or this work. You get to really learn how other schools are doing things, and learn from other people's expertise, like, a community of practice. Here, it's been so interesting, I think, at Harvard because Harvard is a federal contract. There's a lot of compliance that goes along with recruitment that I think a lot of people don't understand, and it's not really exciting to hear about either. But there's a lot of intricacies on the back end of things that we need to do to meet our obligations as a federal contractor that other companies, other organizations don't have to deal with. I think in some ways it actually has shaped the practitioner that I am in terms of making sure everything has to be fair and equitable. These are the drivers of our process.

[00:02:38]

Is that what makes it take long for not a response directly, but for example, for a background check, for documentation, for everything to be in line for someone. I assume that internally is faster because people are already here and we have been through the process before, we still have to renew, but for someone coming from outside, it would take a little bit longer. Would that one of the reasons or not?

[00:03:05]

It's not really to be honest. I think to our horns in talent acquisition here at the law school, we really try to move searches along really quickly, and In the past few years, we've actually changed our practices to help expedite time to start. I think sometimes what takes the longest is people who need to give a longer notice. We might close the search and say, we found our person, but they're not starting for two months.

[00:03:43]

Because where they are living.

[00:03:45]

Yeah, they're leaving, they want to give a month notice. Maybe they have to relocate because we have a fair number of people who relocate to work here at the law school or just the timing of the academic year. They need to finish out an academic year where they are, things like that. Our average time to fill a job last year, and the metrics this year may look different, but last year it was 59 days.

[00:04:11]

Fifty-nine days.

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That's really good. Certainly some searches take longer. But if we have a department who is highly engaged and is focused on hiring someone, we can get through a process in six weeks.

[00:04:32]

It depends also on the department and how department specks certain candidates for their roles and everything.

[00:04:40]

It's how many people are involved in the interview process.

[00:04:45]

Their availability as well.

[00:04:46]

Availability. When we add more people into an interview process on our side, that takes longer to get through. It takes longer to schedule. It takes longer to gather the feedback. It takes longer to make the decisions. It can vary depending on the role itself. Some of our most senior positions, those candidates can be meeting up to 25 people in an interview process. It's a lot of time.

[00:05:20]

Depends on the department. It's a lot of the scheduling to put this and to match and stuff might change. Depends on the emergencies that happen and you have to start over again.

[00:05:31]

If people are traveling in those opportunities, if people are traveling from other states, but we want to have them on campus for final round interview. You have to give people notice to travel and do those things and align all the schedules, so it's very complex.

[00:05:51]

Trina, when the process is internal, Harvard internal. I'm not saying from before it's open to the external public. Because it is decentralized, but at the same time, there is some a connection. The HRs from each school connect with other when there is internal candidate that they want to refer or are looking for, you have a sense of what the department as you reach out to a school to say, hey, you have this candidate, would like to, Is it something that people are okay with or you have that connection?

[00:06:28]

I think it depends on the role, depends on the candidate. But we always for internal candidates, I guess I'd say we ask. Does your manager know you're looking? If they do, and sometimes they do, then it's really not even a question, but if they don't, I always say, we'll just know that your application is confidential, always.

[00:06:58]

If we get to the point of, a finalist stage, that's probably a good time to notify your manager, and not that we can make somebody notify their manager, but I always say, you'd probably rather have your manager hear it from you than through the grape vine.

[00:07:18]

Exactly. For the trust part.

[00:07:21]

Exactly. But unfortunately, not everybody has a strong relationship with their manager. It can be understandable if people don't. But on the human resources side, we, as a best practice, always check in with human resources. That's called our confidential check. It's a HR to HR, is this person in good standing? Are they eligible for a transfer? That's usually all I ask. Some other schools ask more questions, but really, I just want to know, we're going to go through a reference process. Not every HR person knows the story of how somebody's performing.

[00:08:12]

Exactly.

[00:08:16]

I think it's more from my perspective, just to check in to make sure that there are no flags.

[00:08:24]

Yes.

[00:08:26]

One other question because I have had people asking me questions that I have to end up trying to figure out with our HR folks as well. The biggest mistake may be that someone makes when they are trying to find another job or if they see in the Harvard Portal, that there are opportunities out there, would be applying to too many different jobs, different positions. That's why I ask the communication among HR, though confidential, it's going to sign in a different way. For example, if I'm working in finance, and I'm applying for DOS for career services for alumini or whatever it is, HR, whatever it is, how does that show for the research.

[00:09:17]

Interestingly, as HR access in that system, we can see all of the applications. We don't even have to call another school to know that somebody's applied.

[00:09:28]

That's a centralizing right?

[00:09:30]

Yeah. The system is completely centralized. Every school recruits out of the same system. We can see if people have applied to however many jobs, and sometimes we get little notes that say, information won't load because it's over 100 records. Meaning people have applied to over 100 things. That's internal and external. Like any candidates. In town acquisition, we always recommend or suggest that you really try to be pretty focused in your job, in your search. When exploring other opportunities. The system, I think will allow you to do up to 20 applications at a time.

[00:10:19]

But even that even 20 applications?

[00:10:23]

I've had people message and be like, I won't accept my applications. I'll be like, yes, because you applied to too many roles. It's on a rolling basic. It's like 20 in a 30 day period or something. I was like, I think you'll have to wait another 30 days before you can apply to anything else. But I think It depends on the role. There might be somebody who's in a pretty general coordinator role where their experience and skills are very transferable to many other coordinator type roles or, whatever that may be. I never want to discourage somebody from finding a lot of opportunities that they might be interested in. But I think I would probably say, prioritize the roles that you're most interested in and do a few at a time. That you really can keep track. I mean, I've also had people say to me, which job is this? I've applied to so many.

[00:11:26]

Oh, my God.

[00:11:28]

I'll be like, I think in my e-mail that I sent to you to invite you to this conversation, I referenced the job title.

[00:11:35]

You still get that question.

[00:11:37]

Yeah.

[00:11:38]

It's reprising.

[00:11:38]

It's interesting.

[00:11:39]

On your experience as a talent acquisition, What are the characteristics that you look for in a candidate that you would say could be the same across the board in terms of whether someone working as if you talk about grades. 53 as a front desk person to a director of a department that could be fit for all of them regardless of the position.

[00:12:11]

I think a common skill, especially in this environment is adaptability and flexibility. It's hard to see on paper. You have to conversations and ask questions pointed questions about that. But that's huge just because there are so many changes.

[00:12:33]

Yes.

[00:12:36]

If people are uncomfortable with that, it's really hard to bring them along in the team. That's a big one. But I also see, the communication, interpersonal skills, to be able to either one on one or in groups, really express yourself to be able to articulate the work that you do and the work that you're interested in doing. Those are the candidates that usually stand out to not only in a first round interview, but also in, future rounds. Communication skills are really important. I think in our environment, customer service. We can call that customer service. We can call it, in my line of work, candidate experience or hiring manager experience or client experience. But just, whether you're working with students or whether you're working with faculty or whether you're working with other parts of the administration, really that sense of being helpful. Just wanting to in and be available, teamwork. Those things.

[00:13:59]

One other thing that I was going to also ask you, it's going to come back to me, but you we mentioned a few things, and I haven't noticed here that sometimes nothing against the person who wants to do go for the job description, and once you work 9-5, that's it. I don't want to do with anything else outside of this job that I wanted. This job description that I was offered. I respect that. I just feel like when time comes for you to look for that promotion, I believe that you have to follow the rules in terms of how long you need to be in a position until you can talk about a promotion or until you can talk about something else. I assume because in my experience, coming from where I come and I have changed four times here from landscape to facilities to DOS and to the position that I have right now, I always had a sense of curiosity outside of my role. Not with the intention really, anticipated intention that I'm going to do this because it's going to give me that. But I always felt like if I know more, if I spend a little bit time outside of my role to help someone who needs in a project that doesn't belong to me, but I'm going to learn from that and it's going to apply to my resume in the future, that's going to give me some experience that's going somewhere else, my boss or in another department, even, is going to say, this person, have this motivation, has this flexibility, and adaptability that could be good for us as well.

[00:15:51]

Exactly.

[00:15:52]

I know that people gave the opportunity to work with them, and I'm very grateful for every step of everything that I did. But I also put myself there with that intention to learn more because you are going to be learning for free from people who knows about that.

[00:16:13]

Experts.

[00:16:13]

Exactly. When I you have to pay for a course to learn, you're going to pay the good money for a course, then when you are doing your job, someone is teaching you for free because you're doing them a favor. There is an exchange. Everything that I did in my career here was always thinking about that. DOS was a tremendous opportunity for me to learn from every aspect of that department. In everybody who asked whether was commencement or orientation or any event, I would be there. I can help you out. I we spend more time here. I'm going late home because of this, but paid off so well for me. I learned so much. By the time when I left, I don't know if that was help for the department or not, but I knew so much there that I think that I was doing, that it was easy for someone to see that I had the experience that in everything. One thing that was interesting when I took this position, and you were the one who helped me the entire process. I'm really grateful to you for the way that you handled everything and how kind you were explaining to me things. One thing that I cannot forget is when you went to talk about salary, you gave information and said that guy, this is what disposition allows. This is what they are offering, how you feel about this. They say, okay.

[00:17:47]

Yeah.

[00:17:49]

I felt like weaning.

[00:17:53]

Should I have said, is there room to negotiate?

[00:17:57]

But the also interesting part of that thing is that, when you have a vision of what's coming and what the opportunity is, and you are happy with the entire process, what this much more is going to do? I go back to your experience, the dark days, one year, you were making more money.

[00:18:22]

Yes.

[00:18:22]

But feeling miserable.

[00:18:24]

Unhappy.

[00:18:24]

Until you decide that's it. That's enough. Not that I was feeling miserable at the US, but there was a chance for a career move there. That's it. The rest will come in terms of how I am going to be working and who I am going to work with. I was just happy. I think that's why everything was so smooth. Decided there. Do you think that also people should consider in terms of and you went through the whole side? If you want your nine to five job description, fine. But then, remember, the rules of policies and everything that's applied to this, when you talk about promotion or, be flexible and do something else. I think it could be more or less.

[00:19:13]

I think Edgar, what you're describing of your experience is like you've always had the growth mindset and curiosity.

[00:19:25]

Curiosity.

[00:19:26]

That's a perfect word because, I feel like that's how I've learned so much here. My role is talent acquisition, but I know so much more about human resources because of the people that I get to work with every day in the office, and the types of things that they encounter that also impact tangentially TA, talent acquisition. It intersects a little bit, but it's not my responsibility. But I have to understand how it all plays out in order to make my decisions or my next steps or whatever it may be. That's how I've learned so much too. I think it also comes from that, in your DNA to be helpful. To be, sure, I can take that on. I would like to learn a little bit more about that and seeing it as an opportunity versus, just doing a task. I guess I do agree with you in terms of the folks that I see who have had progressive experience, moving through, are generally not the folks who are very strict in looking at, what they will do or what they won't do based on a job description.

[00:21:01]

Because that was really my experience. Sometimes I see people that want to talk about salary first, before accepting contribution and participating in other curiosity opportunity that the department can offer there, instead of going for that and negotiating later, I'm doing this for a while, I learned that well, what can we change here? Can we change my job description and can we look for something, where is a pay grade, whatever is? Sometimes I feel like you were talking about money first before. It will come. That has been my experience here. That, time for you to talk about your pay grade and your development. If you do your part, you come. I have never had a different experience in that way. I don't know if people can feel different about that.

[00:21:57]

I don't know. There's a difference between, I think taking on some new responsibility than having your entire job change.

[00:22:06]

Exactly.

[00:22:09]

Taking on some new responsibility is a growth opportunity and a development opportunity, if your entire job changes?

[00:22:18]

That's a different story.

[00:22:19]

That's a different story, and I think it needs to be re-evaluated.

[00:22:26]

Also, the way that you select candidates, goes along with what the department is asking from you. This is what you are looking for in a candidate as well. Then you try to make that match.

[00:22:44]

It's like matchmaking. We at the beginning of a search, we always have a kickoff meeting with the hiring manager, and so based on the job description, we can get a sense of, what skills they're looking for. But then, we just dive in a little bit deeper into that and it's like, what does an ideal profile look like for you? Are there certain organizations that people with these skills would work at? Where would we find these people? It's not only about, looking at the applications that come in, because a lot of people will apply, in most cases. But also looking and doing outreach and trying to identify people who are exactly what they're looking for. Then we will prioritize the candidates that most closely match, the experience that they're looking for. But ultimately, the manager will review and decide, who moves forward. It's not an HR decision in that respect. It's definitely a hiring manager decision.

[00:24:02]

Do you have on top of your mind, the number of people that you have helped hire, or why you were working here?

[00:24:10]

That's so funny that you asked. Because, I actually ran these numbers.

[00:24:16]

You did.

[00:24:16]

Yeah, even before we decided to make this date today.

[00:24:22]

Because I know that you are here because the TAs are having a meeting and talking with our new director.

[00:24:31]

That's actually how I ran the numbers. I was pulling numbers to say, how many people did we hire last year or the year before? Looking year-over-year, and then I was thinking about it, and when I first got here, I was by myself, and there was one year that on my own, I hired, 120 people, and I was like, how did I even do that by myself? I don't know.

[00:24:54]

To go through all the profile and everything.

[00:24:56]

I don't even know how I did that. Then I was like, that's so interesting. I'm like, I wonder how many people I've hired since I've been at Harvard. We have such a really great analytics tool, that it's not hard to get that data. I just clicked on every year, and my name and there it came, and, over the course of my career at Harvard, I've hired over 1,300 people.

[00:25:17]

Thirteen hundred.

[00:25:18]

Isn't that a lot?

[00:25:19]

It is huge.

[00:25:21]

A lot of people.

[00:25:22]

How many people need to be grateful to you for giving the opportunity to them?

[00:25:26]

Well, I don't know about that. I feel like from every hire that I also learn something.

[00:25:32]

Yes.

[00:25:33]

When I'm working on positions, especially here, and I think that was also the draw of coming here. The candidates that come through our process are so fascinating, and talking to people who are doing all lawyering in different areas of law and helping the clinics hire their clinical instructors, just people who are doing such amazing work for their own communities. It's just really great.

[00:26:09]

Trina, you hire from, which level to which level, from 53 to?

[00:26:15]

Forty nine is the lowest I've ever hired.

[00:26:18]

Also research assistants faculty?

[00:26:22]

We don't hire faculty.

[00:26:27]

Human resources managers hiring for staff. Talent acquisition, in particular, so our team handles benefits eligible staff. That's anybody. Those are the jobs that have to be posted in Harvard careers and that's what we work on. Faculty runs out of academic and faculty affairs.

[00:26:51]

All that would be with [inaudible 00:26:52]?

[00:26:53]

Yes. Exactly.

[00:26:54]

That's what our difference is there. But 1,300 is a huge. But when you say hire 1,300, can you multiply that in terms of a candidate related?

[00:27:05]

I know how many people I've spoken with outside of that, because for every job that I've hired for, I've talked to way more than one person.

[00:27:14]

I would say at least five more.

[00:27:16]

At least.

[00:27:17]

Because you have a poll that you have to think about. Then slowly is going to funnel down.

[00:27:23]

Funnel down.

[00:27:24]

All the way to the one, two or three finalist. If you consider my Lord it's a lot of people.

[00:27:31]

I know but it's also been a lot of years.

[00:27:33]

Is too. But if you consider, like I said, one year over 140. In one year, you have a 360, and you consider all the paperwork that you have to read through. Did the interviews[OVERLAPPING].

[00:27:47]

All the interviews.

[00:27:48]

Exactly. That's Amazing. You are happy with the work that you do? I love the work that I do every day. There can be days.

[00:27:57]

The dark days are over?

[00:27:58]

The dark days are over. Sometimes there's a few clouds that come through and challenges and things like that. But it's part of the journey and I have great teammates.

[00:28:15]

You have a great group of talent acquisition.

[00:28:17]

I know.

[00:28:18]

People are fantastic. I didn't have much of a connection with HR my entire time that it was I'm having more because I am inside of the space now and connect with the folks. But it's a beautiful group of people work together[OVERLAPPING] and how much do they care. I need to have more conversation also with the business partners because I learned so much about them and how important they are. I have been telling people that I know here and work with please go talk to them, regardless of whatever it is, get to know them. They have a sense of who you are and what you are doing and have a different side of the story.

[00:29:04]

There's a period of when somebody's new, we try to get them to meet with the HR business partners, and sometimes they do, and sometimes they don't, depending on schedule and if it works out. But it's more of, it's just like a brief introduction. There's so many people that get hired. But I do think that if you build that relationship. I don't know, it's one of those things like people from other schools, for example, have called to say, so and so has applied for a job at our organization, and they're a finalist. This is another Harvard school. Can you share anything about them and we'll be like, no news is good news? Because it's like, well, we don't know anything bad.

[00:29:57]

Yes. Because [inaudible 00:29:58]

[00:29:59]

It must be good, or hopefully. But I know, I think part of what our office wants to do is to be more visible and to really know people at a deeper level. To know more about them. How can we help you? Talent acquisition, so I'll put a plug in. We have our new talent acquisition Tuesdays that we're trying to just bring more visibility to the work that we're doing. We did a presentation on some of the numbers that we were talking about. Last year, we reviewed 5,000 applications, and we phone screened, X number. I think the number of people who were interviewed was like 495 or something.

[00:30:57]

Wow. In one year?

[00:30:57]

That's interviewed. Like candidates interviewed were, almost 500 candidates last year. But that's not just one interview per candidate. That's multiple interview for all of them.

[00:31:11]

I think for a full year of 365. It's much more than.

[00:31:16]

We were busy. It's our departments are busy, too. They're the ones interviewing.

[00:31:21]

Are this information available in the HR web paid for talent acquisitions? Some of them, at least. Anyone who wants to see numbers that you can provide that's available?

[00:31:32]

There's a little button. I think it says, learn more about the TA team. Then there's a little like a PDF, which was basically our slides for that presentation that has, like the funnel on it, of how many? Coming down from all the applications that come in and how it all moves through. We're doing one on one sessions. People can sign up for one on one session.

[00:31:58]

That was going to be my next question.

[00:31:59]

Talk with us. We're really trying to support, internal development and internal mobility and people wanting to move around, and get more experience in other areas, and hopefully.

[00:32:16]

That's one part of the importance of the development aspect of this, because I think every department want to retain the employees that they have. But I think the main goal would be once you can help folks to develop and go better, we always have room for talent to come to our hands. Of course, if you are offering the right environment for them to chances are they're going to stay for a good number of years there. Until time comes for renew and, more options as well. I think I was going to ask that was the question. If someone is interesting to chat with you or asking your opinion, or should I try this or not? Because it's always good to have in a confidential way, someone that they can ask a question.

[00:33:15]

It's like the inside track.

[00:33:18]

Exactly.

[00:33:19]

We're on this side of it, and people should feel free to ask us questions. I think we're hopefully getting to a place where more managers are comfortable. I think there will always be managers of don't take my person. I want to keep them. I want to retain them. I can understand that because they don't want to have to find somebody else. Train train somebody get somebody up to speed, and that person is probably amazing, and they don't want to lose them. It's more often than not the manager is supportive of it and wants that person to grow and be able to develop. There's a lot of roles here that we don't expect people to come into a first job out of college and stay in that one position for 20 years. There are certain positions like faculty assistants or staff assistants, and even coordinators that it's a few years runway, and then you're off. I would expect people to move on to another opportunity.

[00:34:32]

Another thing, Trina, that I think people should manage in general, should pay more attention as well. We are always looking for the best candidates that coming out of college with all the qualifications that you know of and they are very available there. But if you have the time to provide development, you can also look into people in your own department that could be reaching and deserving. I always tell everyone. I was in landscape. It took someone to take a look in my resume, and say, you have experience in this area from when you lived in Brazil, maybe you can work here. That's how I got into facilities. I took someone's eye to not look at me just as landscaper guy, but you see that I had quality, other potentials as well. The same happened when I left facilities to go to the DOS. I had never been directly in a position working with students. But because of my customer service at front desk at Facilities, they thought that my customer service at the front desk of DOS would be a good opportunity. There must be plenty of Edgars around there in herds, in custodial, in landscaping, whatever it is, just waiting for an opportunity. These folks in my view, my own experience, are going to stay longer in a position, then I'm not going to make less of the folks coming from the college that would be one year to go for another position, which is perfect fair. But I am 100% sure that folks in terms of work environment and want to develop, they are going to spend a little longer because they want to learn more, get used to the environment where they are just getting hired for. That would be a good way to have someone retain someone for a longer period as well. They can balance, have the ones that are going to for certain jobs in doing this and hire someone with expertise in college or already outside work for other functions that they need to. They can do both. Have that balance.

[00:36:50]

Absolutely. I love that.

[00:36:53]

I think we touched a lot of ground here for someone who was going to do it just 45. Trina, I have to thank you so much for having the opportunity. It's really always a pleasure being with you. You are wonderful person. I admire for everything that you have done. Myself, personally, you helped me so much while you are working here. I am one of the 1,300.

[00:37:20]

You are. Yes. You're a statistic.[LAUGHTER]

[00:37:24]

I am a number. Thank you very much for taking the time to stop by and talk to me about your career. Beautiful story.

[00:37:33]

Thank you for having me. Thank you so much. I had a great time.

[00:37:37]

[MUSIC]Thank you. That's what I want to hear. Sometime comfort to come here and talk, but this is we can ease it up and have a conversation. Thank you again. For everybody listening out there until our next time, bye, bye.