

# Courageous Human Resources

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Julie Weber

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After nearly 30 years of domestic and international Human Resources experience, **Julie Weber** now serves as an Executive Advisor at Southwest Airlines supporting the Executive Chairman of the Board, CEO and Chief Administration Officer. Areas of focus have been board succession planning, executive compensation, employee relations, employment law, organizational effectiveness, and overall human resource practice transformation. Most recently, Julie served as Vice President and Chief People Officer for Southwest Airlines where she led all aspects of Human Resources. Her broad responsibilities included hiring the right People at the right time with the right attitude, providing Employees with equal opportunity for learning and personal growth, providing competitive and attractive benefits packages, and assuring quality and depth of Leadership throughout the Company.

Julie earned her undergraduate degree in Psychology from the University of Dallas, and a Masters in Counseling Psychology from Our Lady of the Lake University.



**Julie Weber**  
Former Chief People Officer  
Southwest Airlines

# Courageous Human Resources

The work of Human Resources has a profound impact on organizations, communities and the lives of every worker and their families. Courageous HR teams understand this impact and commit to HR strategies that attract diverse top talent, improve the employee experience and create safe environments that unlock potential and drive success for both employees and organizations. This session will dive into attraction, retention and engagement strategies needed today and inspire HR professionals to face today's tough HR challenges with courage.

# Courage *noun*

Mental or moral strength to venture, persevere and withstand danger, fear or difficulty.

Courage implies firmness of mind and will in the face of extreme difficulty.

Derived from cor – Latin for heart.

# Strategic Human Resources

- **Attract, retain and develop** a diverse **talent** base to meet the needs of the organization
- **Enhance the Employee Experience** through improved capabilities and ways of working
- **Create an environment** to unlock potential and drive organizational effectiveness and high-quality results

**ATTRACT**

**ENGAGE**

**RETAIN**

# Strategic Human Resources

**What are the needs of CSU  
and what are the results we  
are seeking?**

- **Attract, retain and develop** a diverse **talent** base to meet the needs of the organization
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# Colorado State University Priorities

Student Success

World-class academic  
and research programs

Institutional  
Competitiveness

Outreach and impact  
around the state and  
world

Strengthening our  
democracy



**“The work you do is fundamental to making CSU a great place for our students, leaders and people. CSU’s mission to be a leading land grant institution of learning, research science and extension can only be accomplished with top talent. Your work is critical to our ability to attract, engage and retain great people. The work we do is vital to our institution’s mission.”**

**- Eric Ray November 17, 2023**



# 2024 for CSU Human Resources



- New capabilities and capacities
- Ability to provide better, more strategic services to our people and campus leaders
- Kicking off a new Human Capital Management Project

**Are you up for the challenge?**



# Headwinds

What will be our challenges?

# Macro US Factor in Labor Force

- With the exception of 2019, **U.S. unemployment** hasn't been this low **since 1969**.
- By 2030, all Baby Boomers will be 65 or older.
- **Colorado unemployment is lower than the national average at 3.5%** in December 2023.
- Average hourly **pay up 4.5% year over year**.
- According to Mercer, U.S. employers plan to **raise 2024 compensation budgets by 3.5% for merit and 3.9% for total salary increases** for non-unionized employees.

## Bureau of Labor Statistics January 2023 Report

Unemployment  
rate:  
**3.7%**

Average hourly  
pay:  
**\$34.55**

Number of jobs  
the U.S.  
economy added:  
**353,000**

# 2024 Workplace Trends\*

- Employers will offer creative benefits to address the costs of work such as housing subsidies, caregiver benefits, financial well-being programs and student loan repayment.
- GenAI will create, not diminish workforce opportunity. HR must evaluate AI's impact on hiring strategies and skill requirements.
- Four-day workweeks will move from radical to routine with employers using them to attract and engage top talent.
- Employee conflict resolution will be a must-have skill for managers
- GenAI experiments will yield hard lessons and painful costs. Good governance, quality control and employee training on judgment is imperative.
- Skill requirements will overtake degree requirements as the “paper ceiling” crumbles. More and more employers are removing degree requirements to increase the talent pool. They are using in-house training and apprentice programs to develop skills needed.
- Climate change protection becomes a new employee benefit such as shelter, compensation and PTO for affected employees and mental health support.
- DEI won't disappear, it will become more embedded in the way we work.
- Traditional stereotypes of career paths will collapse in the face of workforce change making it important to create pathways for leaving and returning to work and looking at talent without respect to tenure.

\*Harvard Business Review, January 23, 2024

# Challenges Facing Higher Education

- Between 2011 and 2022, **enrollment has declined** by 12.3% and, with the decline in birthrates, projected to decline by an additional 15% in 2025.
- Since 1980, **tuition costs have increased** by 180%, outpacing inflation and causing pressure to discount tuition.
- Since 1970, **average student loan debt has grown** by 2,807% (317% adjusting for inflation).
- New **alternatives to college** are emerging such as certificate programs (Google and Microsoft), apprenticeships and trade schools).
- Since March 2020, **35 public or nonprofit colleges, have closed, merged or announced closure.**
- Tenured positions are threatened and faculty are dissatisfied with more than half seriously considering alternatives according to a 2020 Chronicle of Higher Ed Survey.

## Current Headlines

UNC Greensboro cuts 17 undergraduate and graduate programs.

Penn State cuts over \$100M from budget to address financial challenges.

Dartmouth basketball players are employees, NLRB rules

**“The level of collective courage in an organization is the absolute best predictor of that organization’s ability to be successful.”**

Dr. Brene Brown, *Dare to Lead*



# ATTRACT

What are the key strategies for attracting talent?

# ATTRACT

## Talent Acquisition

- Employer branding and advertising
- Building and expanding talent pipelines
- Candidate sourcing and selection
- Candidate Experience

## Talent Development

- Onboarding
- Career development and growth

## Compensation and Benefits

- Compensation philosophy
- Job leveling and pricing
- Flexible job descriptions
- Market competitive benefits

## General HR, HRIS, Employee Relations

- Applicant tracking and CRM systems
- Interviewing skills and inclusive practices

“People are not your most important asset. The right people are.” - Jim Collins



# ATTRACT: DISCUSSION

Will the same strategies, methods and processes we used in the past, generate the results we need now?

# ENGAGE

What are the key strategies for employee engagement?

# ENGAGE

## Talent Acquisition Functions

- Internal Employer branding
- Building and expanding internal talent pipelines
- Career mobility

## Talent Development

- Onboarding into new roles
- Leadership development
- Career development and growth

## Compensation and Benefits

- Rewards and recognition
- Job leveling and pricing
- Flexible job descriptions
- Employee Well-Being
- Benefit access and communication

## General HR, HRIS and Employee Relations

- Get the basics right (payroll, administration)
- Provide a stable work environment
- Create physical and psychological safety

“Employee engagement is an investment we make for the privilege of staying in business.” - Ian Hutchinson

# ENGAGE: DISCUSSION

Are we effectively addressing the needs of employees today for them to be fully engaged (mental health, career growth, financial stability)?

# RETAIN

What are the key strategies for employee retention?

# RETAIN

## Talent Acquisition Functions

- Internal Employer branding
- Building and expanding internal talent pipelines
- Career mobility

## Talent Development

- Manage performance and productivity
- Leadership development
- Career development and growth

## Compensation and Benefits

- Rewards and recognition
- Maintain market competitive pay
- Flexible job descriptions
- Employee Well-Being
- Benefit access and communication

## General HR, HRIS and Employee Relations

- Get the basics right (payroll, administration)
- Maintain records
- Provide a stable work environment
- Create physical and psychological safety

“Performance management when handled skillfully in an organization today, can increase job satisfaction, employee retention, loyalty, and overall performance of the organization.” - Soumyasanto Sen

# RETAIN: DISCUSSION

Do we have the right strategies in place to retain top talent? Who is focused on it?



This is HARD!







# Tailwinds

What will push us forward?

# What's Our WHY?

- Johnny Taylor, Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM) CEO upon taking on that role shared his thoughts on the power of Human Resources to impact the world. “Our profession matters to the U.S. and global economies, to the future of business and to every worker and family.”
- The Lumina Foundation - Gallup report assessed the relationship of postsecondary education to 52 different economic and non-economic outcomes and found that education is positively related to higher income, better health status, better well-being, increased likelihood to do work that fits with their natural talents and interests, voting participation, volunteerism and charitable giving.
- According to a 2022 McKinsey and Company report, human resources can play a pivotal role in maintaining a robust higher education talent pipeline, supporting faculty and staff and building new skills across the institution if the function has evolved beyond compliance and administration and is focused on talent attraction, development and retention.

**“The work you do is fundamental to making CSU a great place for our students, leaders and people. CSU’s mission to be a leading land grant institution of learning, research science and extension can only be accomplished with top talent. Your work is critical to our ability to attract, engage and retain great people. The work we do is vital to our institution’s mission.”**

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“Choose courage over comfort.”

Dr. Brene Brown, *Dare to Lead*



# Courageous Human Resource Leadership

- **Choosing the harder right over the easier wrong.**
- **Knowing that not everyone will agree with you.**
- **Challenge the status quo.**
- **Challenge performance.**
- **Challenge old processes.**
- **Admit that you don't have all the answers.**
- **Ask for feedback.**
- **Take time for self-care.**



Are you up for the challenge?



**Julie Weber**

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Thank you

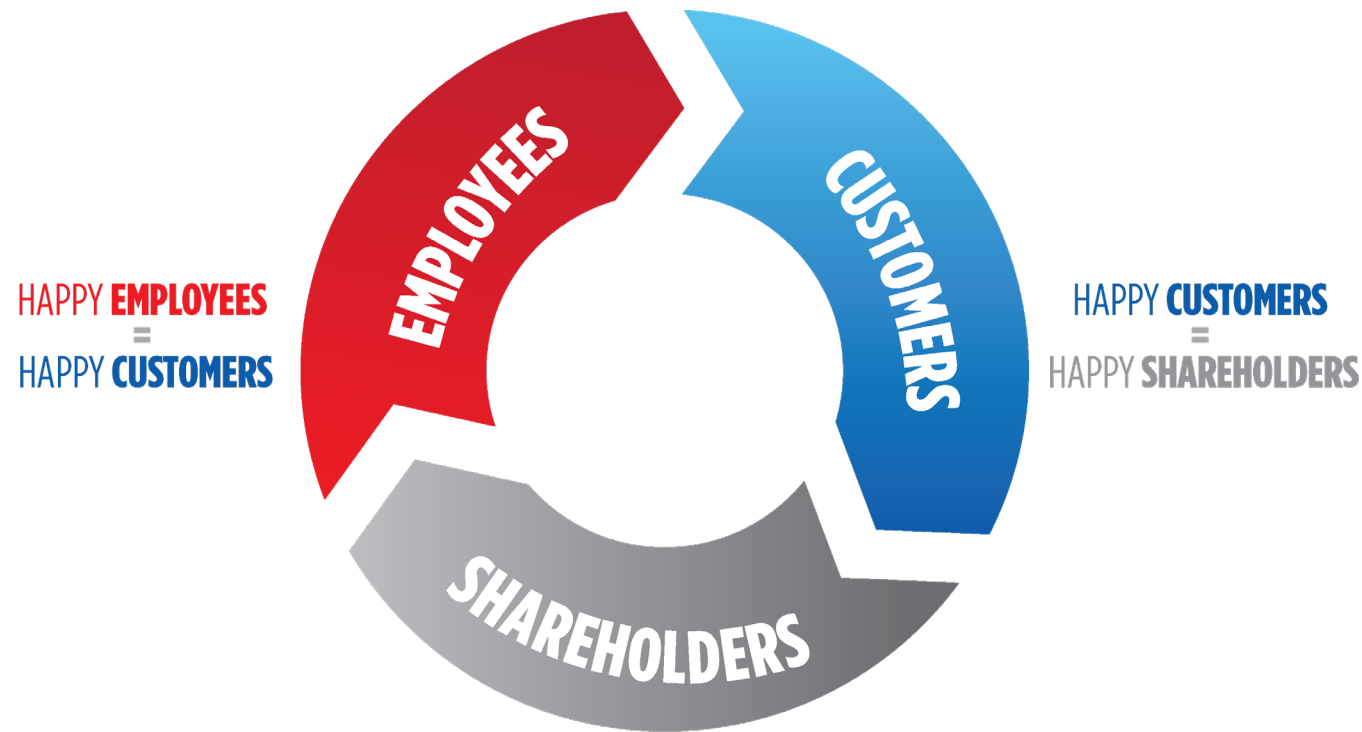


Colorado State University

# Appendix



# Foundation for HR Strategy at SWA



## The Southwest<sup>®</sup> Way

### Values

Me	We	Southwest
Pride	Teamwork	Efficiency
Integrity	Honesty	Discipline
Humility	Service with LUV	Excellence

### Company Promise

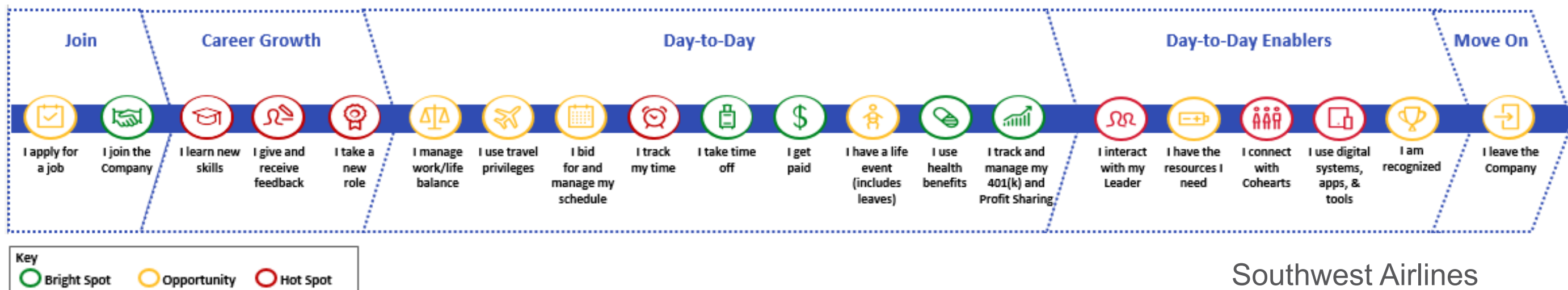
Southwest will provide a stable work environment with equal opportunity for learning and personal growth. Employees will be provided the same concern, respect, and caring attitude within the organization that they are expected to share externally with every Southwest Customer.

### Employee Promise

I will demonstrate my Warrior Spirit by striving to be my best and never giving up. I will show my Servant's Heart by delivering Legendary Customer Service and treating others with respect. I will express my Fun-LUVing Attitude by not taking myself too seriously and embracing my Southwest Family.

# Employee Experience

Measuring Satisfaction: What are the **moments that matter** to employees and how are we doing?



Southwest Airlines