

Debra A Bernardi

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Global People Leader | Culture Conductor | HR Advisor

Strategic problem solver, courageous advisor, and culture conductor—driven to elevate organizations by aligning people, purpose, and results. My leadership leverages creativity and big-picture vision to turn business challenges into transformational growth. With empathy and integrity, I mentor teams, foster inclusivity, and deliver on both strategy and execution. I thrive on building trust, inspiring autonomy, and scaling organizations with a commitment to doing what's right.

Executive Strengths & Leadership Traits

- **Strategic problem solver** with an enterprise mindset, consistently envisioning and executing transformative solutions that align HR strategy with global business objectives and drive measurable impact.
- **Courageous advisor**, adept at navigating sensitive, high-stakes conversations with candor and emotional intelligence, earning trust from C-suite partners while advancing critical initiatives.
- **Dynamic culture conductor** who orchestrates high-performing, cross-functional teams, integrates resources seamlessly, and accelerates scalable organizational growth across diverse environments.
- **Innovative, adaptable, and action-oriented leader** acclaimed for pioneering creative solutions that resolve complex business challenges and enhance operational excellence.
- **Empathetic mentor and coach**, known for elevating talent, inspiring autonomy, and cultivating a peak-performance culture marked by trust and organizational resilience.
- **Values-driven executive**, grounded in ethics and humility, consistently delivers difficult messages with transparency and compassion while championing stakeholder advocacy.
- **Committed to inclusive**, agile, and purpose-driven cultures; recognized for embedding inclusive strategies and fostering environments where people and businesses thrive.

Work Experience

IDC RESEARCH, INC., Needham, MA Premier Global Market Intelligence Leader

IDC is the leading provider of market intelligence, data, and events in IT, telecommunication industry, and consumer technology. As a senior HR leader, I developed and executed people management strategies with 45+ globally dispersed HR professionals across five regions, supporting 2,400 employees worldwide.

Global Human Resources Leader/Chief HR Officer (12/2015 – 09/2024)

Oversaw global HR and Talent operations, including HR business partnership team, talent acquisition, total rewards, employee engagement, and workforce development across research, consulting, data & analytics, sales, finance, marketing, and corporate functions. Led enterprise-wide DEI initiatives and HR technology implementations to optimize efficiency and drive business impact.

Key Executive Achievements:

- **Global HR Leadership & Expansion:** Selected by the CEO in 2021 to lead global HR operations, integrating dispersed HR professionals under a centralized structure across Europe, Asia, Japan, Latin America, and Canada, strengthening HR alignment and strategic impact. Managed global budgets, compensation planning, incentive plan design, business acumen, negotiation strategies and financial planning.
- **Talent Strategy & Workforce Optimization:** Built three dedicated Talent Teams across the U.S., Asia Pacific, and Europe, reducing time-to-fill for 590 positions. Enhanced talent acquisition through targeted social media strategies and an IDC-branded LinkedIn career page, attracting top-tier candidates. Developed a global job architecture framework in partnership with corporate compensation to foster career planning. Worked on organizational review and succession planning for leadership team.
- **HR Technology & Process Innovation:** Led the global rollout of **Kronos UKG**, modernizing HRIS for 2,400+ employees and improving self-service functionality. Implemented **WorkTango** an employee engagement platform for performance

management and recognition, **ICIMS** for applicant tracking, and **PurelyHR** to ensure global compliance with labor laws. Created data driven analysis of all open requisitions as well as performance data for workforce planning.

- **Inclusion & Culture:** Founded and sponsored IDC's 150-member **Diversity & Inclusion Council**, designing and implementing a four-module respectful workplace training. Created IDCares, an employee-led social responsibility initiative fostering community engagement. Consulted with L&D on management development and training programs.
- **M&A & Corporate Strategy Leadership:** Served as the HR on IDC's M&A team, managing due diligence and integration efforts always maintaining confidentiality. Led HR strategy presentations to potential buyers during IDC's sales in **2015 and 2021**, ensuring seamless workforce transitions. Ensured legal compliance to all employment laws. Led corporate communication strategy for the CEO, enhancing transparency and organizational alignment.

Vice President of Human Resources & Education (10/2002 – 11/2015)

Oversaw HR strategy, talent management, employee relations, coaching, performance management, and organizational developed and implemented talent management strategies, scaling IDC's professional workforce to **1,700+ employees worldwide** while maintaining a strong leadership pipeline and cultural consistency. Led global talent review cycle and tools

Key Executive Achievements:

- **HR Technology & Process Innovation:** Founding member of the migration team that transitioned employee data from **PeopleSoft HRIS to Kronos UKG** in 2015, enhancing system efficiency and workforce analytics capabilities.
- **Compensation, Benefits & Employee Experience:** Expanded IDC's **global benefits portfolio** and introduced innovative programs such as the **Global Fellowship Program, Mentoring Program, and Perks@Work**, driving engagement and retention. Co-developed and managed **35+ incentive plans** to optimize performance across research, sales, and corporate services. Ran division benefit enrollment and communication.
- **Organizational Transformation & Change Management:** Led multiple company-wide **reorganizations and reductions in force** during market downturns, ensuring business continuity while mitigating risk and maintaining employee morale. Managed confidential investigations.
- **Learning & Development Leadership:** Built IDC's corporate training function, hiring and managing **five trainers** and launching technical and soft skill programs, including **new and advanced analyst training**. Spearheaded corporate-wide learning initiatives to accelerate onboarding and leadership development.

Vice President of Human Resources & Operations (03/2000 – 10/2002)

Built IDC's first formal HR department designing and implementing foundational HR strategies, policies, and employee relations frameworks to support a rapidly scaling organization. while also overseeing administrative functions, including telecom, library services, copy center, and general services. Led workforce strategy, all employee relations, onboarding, talent development and operational efficiency, ensuring seamless HR integration during rapid company expansion.

Education

Lesley University, Cambridge, MA Master of Science (MS), Management

University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH Bachelor of Science (BS), Health Management & Policy

Boards & Certifications

- **HR Hive Collective, Board of Directors/ Membership Services, January 2025 to present**
- **Certified Executive Coach, Center for Executive Coaching 2024**
- Certified in Emotional Intelligence, Emotional Intelligence Solutions Group
- Myers Briggs Type Indicator Certified, MBTI Business Training Institute
- Certified Coach, Motivation Factor and PaperRoom , Results System