

# MARK R. GASTA

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## S U M M A R Y

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A purpose-driven **PROFESSOR** and a transformational **BUSINESS EXECUTIVE/PUBLIC COMPANY OFFICER** with extensive experience in aligning people solutions with business strategy. A strategist who acts as an internal advisor to the CEO and board of directors. A systemic, integral leader who lays the foundation for the long-term prosperity organizations.

- STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT
- CHANGE MANAGEMENT
- PROGRAM DESIGN AND EXECUTION
- HUMAN RESOURCES
- CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
- SUSTAINABILITY
- ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
- ORGANIZATIONAL ETHICS AND COMPLIANCE
- EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING
- EXECUTIVE/LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
- SUCCESSION PLANNING
- EXECUTIVE COACHING
- PUBLIC SPEAKING
- OUTDOOR INDUSTRY
- ORGANIZATIONAL PURPOSE

## E D U C A T I O N

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PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY, Malibu, California  
**Ed.D., Organizational Change, 2016**

UNIVERSITY OF DENVER, Denver, Colorado  
**Executive M.B.A., 2000**

California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, California  
**B.S., Environmental and Systematic Biology, 1988**

## A C A D E M I C T E A C H I N G E X P E R I E N C E

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UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO

**Instructor and Director – Business Leadership Certificate**, Boulder, Colorado.....2019-Present

Leeds School of Business, Division of Social Responsibility and Sustainability instructor teaching future values-driven leaders to conduct business with ethical, environmental, social and economic initiatives.

- Director of the Leeds Business Leadership Certificate. The Business Leadership Certificate provides students with the foundations of theory and research on leadership, but emphasizes professional experiences such as mentoring, internships, and engaging in leadership roles to prepare students to embrace leadership challenges as they unfold, make sense of leadership experiences, thrive in a dynamic business culture, and lead with an ethical compass.
- Redesigned and teach Organization Management, a course to help students consciously and purposely design their life and leadership by focusing on self-awareness and desired impact. This sense of purpose results in students that ultimately build and lead sustainable organizations that create profit for shareholders while protecting the environment and improving the lives of those with whom they interact.
- Designed the Sustainable Outdoor Recreation and Tourism MBA course which will be taught in the Spring of 2021. The course includes an international trip to experience the emerging Chilean outdoor and tourism industry. The outdoor recreation industry represents a new economy in Chile and emerging markets have one chance to get it right. When done right, sustainable outdoor recreation and tourism is a powerful economic development tool and an avenue to help alleviate poverty and protect and preserve wild places and threatened cultures.
- Teach the "BCOR Applied Semester Experience" course designed to apply foundational business technical material (finance, marketing, information management, operations, business law, accounting, statistics) in a way that requires the integration of knowledge from multiple disciplines. Provide students with "real-world" projects demonstrating the interconnectivity and interdependence of business operations and decision-making.
- Developed an Executive Education course to help leaders lead in an uncertain environment. When leaders and organizations are clear on who they are and what they believe, this results in sound decision making based on pre-determined criteria such as values, ethics, and established priorities. In this program, we explore how to create this clarity of purpose and alignment to assist both individuals and organizations in reaching their fullest potential.
- Served as the leadership, ethics, social responsibility, and sustainability subject matter expert on the Executive MBA Faculty Committee working to design and deliver a new Executive MBA program to be offered at the University of Colorado Boulder in Fall 2021.
- Partnering with the Colorado Tourism Office and the Adventure Tourism Trade Association to develop the Business of Sustainable Tourism program. This program will be administered by Leeds staff and led by Leeds faculty in partnership

with industry practitioners. This program is designed to train the tourism workforce on business, leadership, environmental, and sustainable tourism practices.

- Received excellent student reviews in all courses taught with an average of 5.15 on the question "rate your instructor overall" (1-6 scale).

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

**Associate Professor and Director – Adventure Tourism Graduate Certificate**, Fort Collins, Colorado .....2017-2019

Warner College of Natural Resources master of tourism management associate professor and program director of the adventure tourism graduate certificate.

- Developed and taught courses (online and face-to-face) on the business of nature-based tourism. Courses included Sustainability, Leadership, Entrepreneurship, Organizational Development, Operational Management, among other topics.
- Led the start-up of a first of its kind online graduate certificate. Obtained all necessary program approvals, developed operating budget, was instrumental in the design and execution of marketing strategy, and lead all curriculum development efforts. The program successfully launched in Fall 2017 and continues with strong enrollment and excellent student reviews.
- Developed and led department strategic planning process in pursuit of faculty/staff alignment and an actionable roadmap leading to the desired future state.
- Lead the efforts to create and successfully execute a university wide diversity and inclusion event that featured four nationally renowned experts. The panel focused on diversity and inclusion in conservation and the outdoor recreation industry.
- Received excellent student reviews in all courses taught with an average of 4.81 on the question "how do you rate this instructor" (1-5 scale).
- Received a score of "Exceeds Expectations – Superior" on annual performance review for 2017 performance.

UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

**Adjunct Professor**, Denver, Colorado .....2000-2001

Daniels College of Business master of business administration professor for high-performance management course.

- Developed curriculum focused on concepts including leadership, organizational behavior, communication, organizational culture, human resources management, and employee engagement.
- Earned Diamond Award for excellent student evaluation ratings (top 1%) within the business school.

**C O R P O R A T E   T E A C H I N G   E X P E R I E N C E**

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A few highlights from twenty years of direct responsibility for all aspects of talent management in corporate organizations. Responsibilities include curriculum design, learning and development, high potential identification and development, executive development, succession management, executive coaching, and organizational development.

- Created enterprise-wide "Higher Ground" leadership development series comprised of fully integrated curriculum leveraging multiple learning modalities. The series was designed proactively to ensure the organization's talent and leadership pipelines remain full to support the strategic direction of the organization.
- Designed, led, and facilitated multi-year development program for the Executive Committee, resulting in significant growth and performance improvement as individuals, as a team, and as a company.
- Envisioned, designed and led Vail Resorts Leadership Summit, which includes top 600 leaders annually to recognize, develop, and align leaders strategically and culturally.
- Developed and implemented innovative business solutions, including "bullseye", a self-paced new hire training program that resulted in decreased dependency on platform training, reduced overall program time, increased productivity, reduced turnover, greater employee engagement and higher customer satisfaction.
- Created "Peak Leadership", a high-potential leadership development program designed to balance way of doing, way of being, and business results. Measured return-on-investment of program with reoccurring 360-degree reviews, trending business unit results, employee satisfaction surveys, talent management reviews, and subsequent promotional rates.
- Selected to serve as leadership academy advisor, logistics college instructor, and one of 11 master trainers.
- Certified 360 Degree Feedback Coach.

**R E S E A R C H I N T E R E S T S**

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Focused on developing purpose-driven leaders with the capacity to build sustainable organizations that create profit for shareholders while protecting the environment and improving the lives of those with whom they interact (employees, customers, communities).

**A C A D E M I C A D V I S O R Y B O A R D S**

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**Colorado State University Master of Tourism Management Advisory Board**, 2013 – Present  
**University of Colorado, Denver Business School, Managing for Sustainability Advisory Council**, 2012 – 2014  
**University of Colorado Leeds School of Business Executive Education Advisory Board**, 2011 – 2013

**B U S I N E S S E X P E R I E N C E**

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ADVENTURES IN LEADING, LLC

**Founder, Leadership Guide**, Boulder, Colorado.....2017-Present

Founder of executive development firm focused on personal and group development experiences. Design and deliver strategy development sessions, executive coaching, leadership retreats, team development activities, leadership summits, keynote presentations, and bespoke experiential activities.

- Particular expertise in assisting organizations in the achievement of executive team and organizational alignment resulting in strategic clarity, prioritization, focus, expectations, and significant acceleration.
- Tremendous success helping organizations refine/define their Mission, Vision, and Values resulting in organizational cultures where employees believe in the organization, understand how they fit into it, and show up each and every day providing their discretionary performance.
- Serve as an Executive Coach to senior executives including CEOs, Presidents, and Chief Human Resource Officers.
- Facilitate experiential activities designed to expose leaders to something bigger than oneself and connect them with their unique purpose.

VAIL RESORTS

**Executive Vice President, Chief People Officer and Chief Sustainability Officer**, Broomfield, Colorado..... 2010-2016

Served as leader for human resources (HR), corporate communication (PR), as well as public affairs and sustainability (PAS) for 26,000 employees located in multiple states and countries around the world. Manage HR, PR, and PAS team of 250 employees and \$20,000,000 budget.

- Led the highly successful strategic planning process for organization. Designed and facilitated Executive Committee process that resulted in the development and communication of organizational mission, values, vision, core, competitive differentiation, enterprise-wide goals, integrated/multi-year strategic plan, and metrics to measure progress.
- Identified need and led initiative, resulting in highly successful cultural transformation. Developed programs that enabled organization to maintain local ownership and entrepreneurial spirit while simultaneously capitalizing upon synergies by sharing best practices and helping each employee understand how they fit into the success of larger organization.
- Led HR team to have highest overall employee engagement scores in company 4 years in a row.
- Played key leadership role in over 20 projects from mergers and acquisitions to new properties to additional growth and development. Built repeatable processes from due diligence to post-closing integration. Directed organization through integration and change management to ensure quick realization of synergies. Coordinated all internal/external communication strategies for multiple acquisitions.
- Implemented consumer-driven health plan, resulting in \$2,600,000 positive variance to budget in year one and a \$5,000,000 positive variance in year two. Led design, rollout, and management of new plan, enabling company to achieve Most Innovative Health and Benefits Plan Design Award from Institute for HealthCare Consumerism.
- Led the "Sustainability Vision Team" to create an integrated company sustainability strategy designed to enhance brand loyalty, increase employee engagement, gain greater support from our local communities, preserve the natural environment, and produce a projected \$40,000,000 of value over 5 years.
- Led the strategy that ultimately resulted in Vail Resorts committing to zero net emissions, zero waste to landfill, and zero net operating impact to forest and habitat – all by 2030.
- Partnered with communities, local non-profits, federal and state agencies to create integrated, sustainable, positive change within the communities that we operated.

**Senior Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer**, Broomfield, Colorado.....2008-2010

Responsible for all aspects of HR, including employee relations, compensation and benefits, organizational development, culture, learning and development, talent acquisition, employee housing, safety, and office services.

- Implemented sophisticated HR tools and processes where none previously existed, including performance management, goal setting, pay-for-performance, 360 reviews, and succession management. Enabled company to achieve consistent goals and performance reviews to ensure people worked in lockstep with company goals and were being evaluated regularly and fairly. Enabled company to identify top performers across company and determine how to differentiate pay based on employee performance. The introduction of these sophisticated tools and processes resulted in a scalable platform enabling the organization to drive and grow business.
- Evolved talent acquisition function to maximize synergies of larger organization, enhance candidate experience, reduce effort of hiring manager, and attract best possible talent. Changed process for staffing seasonal needs of over 20,000 annual hires by rethinking technology, compliance, process, structure, tools, and people.
- Redesigned learning and development function to align better with needs of business without duplicating initiatives across various locations/lines of business. Introduced the "LIFT" (Learning Management System) to create learning culture, coupled with restructuring of team, to better serve needs of partners, achieving impressive enhancements/results.
- Directed implementation of state-of-the-art talent management tools such as Success Factors and Taleo.
- Created and launched employment brand that resonated so extensively with employee population that it was ultimately selected to serve as company's mission.
- Designed and implemented annual employee engagement survey for organization, with company exceeding Towers Watson Global High Performing Norm on nine out of 10 categories. Exceeded Leisure Norm in every category. Realized year-over-year statistical improvement from six to 11 percentage points as direct result of action planning, execution and communication. Made significant progress in all categories 4 years in a row.
- Envisioned and implemented employee "Street Teams" at all locations designed to ensure employees' voices were heard. Utilized teams to design and communicate new programs, plan and run employee events, and own the success of culture.
- Created and implemented VR Connections Program, which required all corporate employees to spend at least 1 day per season in operation fulfilling a frontline role to facilitate greater operational awareness, better understanding of how to best serve operation, and deeper professional relationships.
- Envisioned and launched first all employee meetings called "Inside Edge:" live meetings conducted semi-annually where CEO and other key leaders provided insights into strategy and current priorities and provided direct, candid responses to employees' questions.

COMCAST COMMUNICATIONS

**Corporate Vice President, Organizational Development**, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania .....2007-2008

Served as company's organizational development lead for 90,000 employees. Responsible for planning and executing on organization-wide strategies designed to increase organization effectiveness and enhance organizational performance and health through development and empowerment of teams and individuals.

- Led development of company's enterprise-wide pay-for-performance program.
- Directed "Comcast Talent" initiative, a fully integrated performance management program designed to empower employees at all levels to take charge of their career development in order to share in success of company.
- Provided managers and supervisors with intuitive, easy-to-use tools to support employee development and performance; as well as link compensation directly to performance results.
- Integrated program components, including competency-based career, talent, and learning management; cascading goal-setting process; performance management progress and system; and rewards and recognition directly linked to individual and business success.

**Divisional Vice President, Human Resources**, Denver, Colorado.....2002-2007

Established cutting-edge human resources and learning and development (L&D) team for \$5.6B division employing 15,000 employees. Responsible for all related functional areas and leading staff of 300 HR and L&D professionals located throughout eight western states.

- Designed and led organizational change initiative to define desired future state of organization; developed cross-functional/cross-divisional plans to operationalize vision; positioned organization to meet future competitive challenges of environment.

- Created "EmployeeFirst" program based on value profit chain research, which indicated that employees drive customer satisfaction directly, which in turn fuels value for investors.
- Developed and implemented frontline annual bonus program, "GAIN," designed to create ownership culture where employees understand business goals and their role in achieving those goals, and are rewarded based upon their direct contribution.
- Crafted and implemented organization-wide leadership development strategy, including talent review, high-potential identification/retention planning, individual/organization development strategies, diverse leadership development, critical gap identification, and succession planning.
- Increased overall employee satisfaction by 13% in 2003 as indicated by "CredoSpeak" (Employee Satisfaction Survey), resulting in positive employee culture and in decertification of six bargaining units within division. Achieved 2004 and 2005 ESS scores significantly above corresponding scores for Comcast Cable as a whole in eight of 12 and 12 of 13 categories, respectively.
- Developed and implemented HR measurement system to ensure all HR initiatives had desired impact and to demonstrate direct linkage between human capital and financial performance.
- Led six of seven major regions of responsibility—Bay Area, Colorado, Oregon, Sacramento, Utah, and Washington—to be named as one of the "best places to work" in local markets.
- Directed front-line leadership job design analysis, resulting in redesign of roles and enabling leaders to focus on less administrative tasks and more on coaching and developing employees.
- Led development of division initiatives adopted enterprise-wide, including talent management process, front-line bonus program, self-paced new hire program, employee satisfaction survey, and EmployeeFirst brand.

**Corporate Labor Relations Director**, Denver, Colorado .....2000-2002

Partnered as labor relations consultant responsible for developing strategies, objectives, metrics, and specific action plans associated with organizing campaigns and labor contract negotiations for an organization of 40,000 employees. Responsible for developing and implementing management training programs to promote effective labor relations and application of labor laws.

- Developed and facilitated comprehensive strike planning process to ensure organizational preparedness.
- Served as labor relations consultant for multiple organizing campaigns, resulting in success ratio of 4 to 1.25 while under constraints of neutrality. Exceeded academic research predicted success rate for neutrality-controlled campaigns of 33%.
- Led development of organization's post-neutrality labor strategy, "Employee-Informed Choice." Trained organization's 4,000 leaders on new strategy within three-month period.
- Served as corporate representative during national negotiations with Communications Workers of America.

**A D D I T I O N A L   E X P E R I E N C E**

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LEXIS-NEXIS

**Human Resources Director**, Colorado Springs, Colorado .....1999-2000

- Integrated three newly acquired companies into Lexis-Nexis business portfolio.
- Identified as strongest human resources business partner within Lexis Publishing when quantitatively assessed by executive leadership of the organization, taking into account technical competency, business acumen, and demonstrated leadership ability.

TARGET CORPORATION

**Human Resources and Development Senior Manager**, Pueblo, Colorado .....1997-1999

- Improved employee satisfaction survey results by 18% and 23% in 1997 and 1998 respectively, comprising the largest year over year improvements in the company.
- Implemented several departmental programs to include onsite B.S. and M.B.A. programs and formal executive development program.
- Identified as high-potential leader during semi-annual personnel planning review.

**M I L I T A R Y   E X P E R I E N C E**

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UNITED STATES ARMY

**Commissioned Officer and Aviator**, United States, Germany, Italy .....1988-1997

- Communicated and negotiated with international governments/organizations while living and operating in multiple countries throughout Europe.

- Gulf War veteran.
- Earned six "top block" ratings on officer evaluation reports.
- Honor graduate of executive management course, executive staff leadership course and leadership/management course.
- Earned George C. Marshall Leadership Award, top military cadet, reserve officer training corps.
- Distinguished military graduate, commissioned as number one cadet, reserve officer training corps.

#### H O N O R S   A N D   A W A R D S

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- HRO Today's Chief Human Resource Officer Lifetime Achievement Award (2016) Finalist
- Vail Resorts recognized as one of America's Best Large Employers (2016) by Forbes
- CX Innovation Award Finalist (2016) – Using Neuroscience to Improve Employee Experience
- Vail Resorts named 2016 Fast Company 50 Most Innovative Companies – CEO attributes award to culture and leadership development work accomplished
- Highlighted in Harvard Business Review (Jan 2016) for excellence in designing and operationalizing company values
- Featured in Forbes.com for best in practice in terms of talent management
- Highlighted by Journal of Corporate Recruiting Leadership with article on workforce planning model
- Earned SuccessAdoption Award given to organizations with most creative, effective or original deployment of the talent management technology
- Achieved Most Innovative Health and Benefits Plan Design Award from Institute for HealthCare Consumerism
- Redesigned employment website won award at The Denver 50 Show, advertising award show that recognizes best 50 advertising/marketing ideas of year
- Vail Resorts Named 'World Saver' by Conde Nast Traveler Magazine
- Travel and Leisure Magazine awarded Vail Resorts with the Global Vision Award for social responsibility
- HR Team was awarded both the Vail Resorts Teamwork and the Vail Resorts Innovation enterprise-wide awards (two of nine given each year) for excellence
- Awarded Comcast's Teambuilding Award for leadership excellence

#### P U B L I C A T I O N S

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**Operating from Center:** Adventure Travel News, 2019

**The Opportunity Every CHRO Has to Drive Revenue:** FMG Leading, 2018

**Driving Employee Engagement through Greater Purpose:** Pepperdine University, 2016

**Leading the Sustainable Organization at Vail Resorts:** Journal of Business Strategy, 2014

**Maximizing Your HR Efforts: "Implementing Integrated and Sustainable HR Strategies"** Aspatore Books, 2009

**HR's Role in Contributing to the Green Movement:** Books24x7, 2009

Featured and quoted in numerous business media such as Harvard Business Review, New York Times, Forbes.com, Chief Learning Officer Magazine, among others.

#### S P E A K I N G   E N G A G E M E N T S

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2018 Colorado Governor's Tourism Conference – *Easing the Tourism Workforce Crunch*

2018 University of Trento, Italy – *Developing a Sustainable Business Model*

2018 Xcel Energy Annual CEO Leadership Meeting Keynote – *Values Driven Leadership*

2018 Wuhan University, China – *Creating Employee Engagement Through Greater Purpose*

2018 Pathways Conference Namibia, Africa – *Leadership in Conservation for High-potential Leaders*

2017 Colorado Outdoor Industry Leadership Summit – *Education and Workforce Training*

2017 National Ski Area Association Annual Convention – *From Frontline to the Bottom line, Every Employee Counts*

2016 HRO Today Annual Forum – *From Professional in Human Resources to Chief Executive Officer*

2015 Heidrick & Struggles Panel – *Working Effectively with Your Compensation Committee*

2015 Colorado State University Masters of Tourism Management – *Building a Career and a Business to Do Well and Do Good*

2014 Colorado State University Executive MBA Leadership Conference – *Strategy Implementation and Execution*

2014 University of Colorado's President's Leadership Program – *Community Issues in Leadership*

2014 National Ski Area Association Winter Show – *Driving Employee Engagement through Greater Purpose*

2013 35th Annual Human Resources People and Strategy Global Conference - *Galvanizing Your Workforce Around a Shared Mission, Vision, Values and Strategy*

2013 Vail Global Energy Forum – *Building a Sustainable Organization*  
2012 Vail Leadership Institute – *Building a Culture of Character*  
2012 Colorado Society for Human Resources Management Conference - *Leading Innovation*  
2012 Sustainable Opportunities Summit – *Culture Shift and Getting Employees On-Board*  
2011 Boulder Human Resources Association Annual Sustainability Conference: *If Not Us Then Who: Creating a Sustainable Workplace*  
2011 University of Colorado Leeds School of Business Career Day – *Aligning Purpose and Passion with Your Career*  
2010 33rd Annual Human Resources People and Strategy Global Conference - *Doing Well and Doing Good: Developing a Sustainable Business Model for All Stakeholders*  
2010 Statewide Sustainability Roundtable - *Moving Ahead: A Roadmap for the Future*  
2010 National HR in Hospitality Conference & Expo - *Using the Employment Experience to Drive Business Performance*  
2009 NSAA National Convention – *Developing a Sustainable Business Model for All Stakeholders*  
2007 Academy of Management Annual Conference - *Alignment of People Systems to Business Strategy*  
2005 HR Metrics Summit – International Quality Productivity Center – *Beyond Measurement – Operationalizing Human Resources Metrics*

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**B O A R D   A P P O I N T M E N T S /   S E L E C T E D   V O L U N T E E R   A C T I V I T I E S**

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**State of Colorado Tourism Leadership Journey**, annual mentor, 2017 - present  
**State of Colorado Tourism Office Leadership Committee**, 2016 - present  
**Colorado Outward Bound School**, 2010 – 2014  
**Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics**, 2012 – 2014  
**Executive Committee for Rocky Mountain Human Resource People and Strategy Board**, 2009 – 2013  
**Urban League of Metropolitan Denver**, 2002 – 2005

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**P R O F E S S I O N A L   D E V E L O P M E N T**

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**Leadership at the Peak**, Center for Creative Leadership, 2005  
**Personnel Decisions International**, Certified 360 Degree Feedback Coach, 2003  
**Labor Relations Professional Certification Program**, Labor Policy Association, 2002  
**FOCUS – Men's National Leadership Program**, 2002  
**Aviator Flight Training**, United States Army, 1989

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**P R O F E S S I O N A L   A F F I L I A T I O N S**

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Academy of Management  
Adventure Travel Trade Association  
Conscious Capitalism  
Human Resource People and Strategy  
National Ski Areas Association  
Organizational Development Network  
Outdoor Industry Association  
Society for Human Resource Management