

Canadian HR Reporter (Toronto, ON)			Order/Commande
			118934
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Ontario shifts attention to 2020

What will the world of work look like in 2020? It's a question the Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA) first broached last year and one the organization plans to fully explore in 2011.

"There's so much change happening right now and it's having a major impact on how people work," says president **Bill Greenhalgh**.

"We want to look at what kind of skill sets will be needed in the future and how that will affect the organizational structure."

HRPA has narrowed down a list of key trends that could have a significant influence on the future workplace: technology, demographics, globalization, sustainability and social attitude. Over the next year, researchers will take an intimate look at each trend and report back with their predictions. Those predictions will then be analyzed by a consortium of academics, upper-level executives and senior HR professionals.

"We want to look at what's going to happen within the next 10 years," he says. "How will things like computerization, greater bandwidth and intelligent communication between computers affect the workplace? Will people retire or not retire? If they don't re-



**CEO
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tire, will they work part time and, if so, what will that mean? Will young people be less concerned or more concerned about the environment? How will the transfer of wealth to China and India affect how people work?"

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Based on the research, the group will create a description of the implications for each trend in the workplace, something Greenhalgh says he hopes will guide organizational leaders.

"We don't want to one day say, 'Look how things have changed,'" he says. "We want to be proactive now."

As **HRPA** looks forward, it hopes to do so with an enhanced status and image as a profession. Until now, the organization has been covered by a private legislative act that "effectively gave us a degree of credibility as an organization," says Greenhalgh.

Under Bill 138, which has passed first reading in Ontario's provincial legislature, the association would be governed by a public act similar to the act governing accountants. The legislative change moves the HR profession in Ontario from a Tier 2 profession to Tier 1, says Greenhalgh.

"In practice, it converts us from being an occupation to a profession," he says. "That makes our members that much more credible."

HRPA has also relaunched the Human Resources Research Institute, a separate research foundation focused on information for practical applications.

Finally, HRPA is continuing to build on its Career Ladder professional development program by offering an increased variety of certificate programs.

