

Pennlope Davis, MBA

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Results-oriented leader with extensive experience in building high-performance, inclusive workplace cultures, driving organizational change, and aligning strategic initiatives with mission-driven goals. Proven ability to develop and execute strategic plans, manage fiscal responsibility, and lead teams toward the successful delivery of client services. Expertise in creating and sustaining partnerships with stakeholders, overseeing programmatic and financial operations, and ensuring compliance with federal and state mandates. Passionate about fostering economic development and business growth through innovative consulting, training, and resource delivery.

KEY STRENGTHS

- ▶ Strategic Planning & Execution
- ▶ Fiscal Solvency & Budget Management
- ▶ Team Leadership & Development
- ▶ Stakeholder Relationship Management
- ▶ Regulatory & Policy Compliance
- ▶ Business Development & Consulting Services
- ▶ Client Engagement & Satisfaction
- ▶ Program Design & Evaluation
- ▶ Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DE&I) Initiatives
- ▶ Training & Professional Development

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT, Hartford, CT

Adjunct Professor, School of Business, 2025-present

- ▶ **Managing a Diverse Workforce: Introduce and explore emerging issues in diversity, equity, and inclusion**, sharing insights—through real-world experiences—into opportunities for improved culture shaping, employee relations, and management communication.

Adjunct Professor, Master of Public Policy Program, 2018-present

2019 Distinguished Professor of the Year

- ▶ **Human Resources Management: Engage graduate students in the study of HR functions** with a focus on understanding how to influence employee learning, growth, and performance through communication, constructive feedback, and professional development.
- ▶ **Artificial Intelligence integration** cover key skills relating to generative AI tools designed to significantly optimize HR processes, improve decision-making, and create an improved workplace experience.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

THE AURORA GROUP, Windsor, CT

CEO & Principal Consultant (2021–Present)

- ▶ Founded and lead a women-owned consultancy focused on human capital strategies, utilizing DE&I frameworks to drive organizational transformation for businesses and government agencies.
- ▶ Developed and executed strategic business plans, aligning resources with clients' objectives to foster sustainable growth and operational excellence.
- ▶ Cultivated strong relationships with key stakeholders, including business leaders, legislators, and industry professionals, enhancing service delivery and expanding business opportunities.
- ▶ Provided comprehensive consulting, training, and policy development, artificial intelligence integration helping clients improve organizational efficiency, employee engagement, and overall client satisfaction.
- ▶ Led teams in securing funding opportunities, including public and private financing, to ensure financial sustainability for clients and projects.

MOUNT HOLYOKE COLLEGE, South Hadley, CT

Associate Vice President for Human Resources, 2021-2023

Provided leadership to a team of 10+; managed a \$2M operating budget; and steered all functional areas, including talent and performance management, training, benefits, compliance, employee and labor relations, HRIS administration, and more. Built partnerships across the institution to position HR as a 'go-to' resource, elevating visibility and communication; enhancing relationships; and championing an unprecedented level of continuous process, policy, and system improvements.

- ➡ **CHALLENGES:** Stepped into a position that had been vacant for 2 years, working diligently to ‘stand up’ a sound and scalable human resources infrastructure with formalized processes and policies.
- ➡ **ACTIONS:** Developed the first strategic plan and ensured alignment with institutional priorities, led migration of HRIS to Workday, instituted formal job descriptions, and initiated the college’s inaugural compensation study.
- ➡ **RESULTS:** Enabled the creation of insightful performance measures and dashboards, fostering an environment where data plays a key role in decision-making, strategic planning, HR operations, talent leadership, and program delivery.

ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS —

- ▶ **Built a flexible and adaptive work program with remote options in 19 states** and secured investments in staffing to fuel employee relations and engagement; ADA and 504 accommodations; and Title IV, Title VI, Title VII, and Title IX compliance.
- ▶ **Mitigated risks and institutional exposure by thoughtfully addressing concerns and complaints**, partnering with department leaders to address issues, conducting misconduct investigations, and identifying opportunities for change.
- ▶ **Negotiated collective bargaining agreements for 3 critical units** and guided the institution through the unionization of student workers, working diligently to improve communication, transparency, and performance management structure.
- ▶ **Played a key role in talent acquisition initiatives**, filling several open requisitions, participating on search committees for high-profile positions, engaging in job fairs, and positioning the college as an employer of choice in a competitive landscape.
- ▶ **Supported RFP processes to procure new HR programs and services**, playing a key role throughout the discovery, evaluation, and solution acceptance phases to engage with new providers and implement best-in-class HR programs.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT, Hartford, CT

Chief Human Resources Officer, *Department of Social Services*, 2018-2021

Promoted to an executive-level leadership role within an 1,800-employee agency. Tasked with ensuring the consistent administration and execution of HR policies, programs, and practices within a customer-centric service delivery model. Directed a team of 12 HR professionals in ‘standing up’ the programs and systems to reduce employee grievances, increase engagement, drive retention, and support a strong culture following significant leadership turnover. Oversaw 3 payroll and operations staff.

- ➡ **CHALLENGES:** Address systemic workplace issues and cultivate positive relationships with union and nonunion team members, providing strategic guidance on collective bargaining issues, grievances, and administrative hearings.
- ➡ **ACTIONS:** Defined root causes of workplace issues and employee grievances, negotiated mutually beneficial collective bargaining agreements, and collaborated with the Office of Labor Relations as the second chair for arbitration hearings, maintaining a finger on the pulse of the organization, its cultural dynamics, and its opportunities for improvement.
- ➡ **RESULTS:** Reduced labor grievances by 90%—from 20 to 2 per month—through implementation of mediation programs, establishing positive relationships with union leaders, and ensuring consistent and fair policy administration.

ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS —

- ▶ **Developed a background check and fingerprint program for all team members in compliance with federal regulations**, creating HR practices and policies—from the ground up—to drive transparency and quality across the agency.
- ▶ **Partnered with leaders to drive strategic initiatives**; collaborated with the CFO to develop and administer the multibillion-dollar budget, and with the Division of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DE&I) to support equity and inclusion initiatives.

Human Resources Manager, *Department of Public Health*, 2008-2018

Managerial Award

- ▶ **Led broad-based HR functions for an agency with 700+ FTEs and a \$250M+ annual budget**, providing strategic leadership in talent acquisition, onboarding, benefits and compensation, WC, policy development, compliance, and DE&I.
- ▶ **Directed the acquisition and integration of an independent state agency**, coordinating the merging of administrative operations, facilitating staff orientation and onboarding, and working to consolidate and shape a high-performance culture.
- ▶ **Championed strategic initiatives to fuel organizational development and advancement**, resulting in the achievement of Public Health Accreditation and the deployment of a Customer Service Committee to ensure a customer-centric approach.

Human Resources Generalist, *Department of Administrative Services*, 2007-2008

- **Provided generalist leadership to two agencies concurrently**—Department of Consumer Protection and Office of the Child Advocate—each with 100 team members, steering day-to-day HR responses, strategies, and employee engagement.

Recruiter, *Department of Developmental Disabilities*, 2004-2007

- **Shaped a high-performance culture for the department** through strategic actions in talent acquisition—reduced overtime expenses by \$1M—new-hire onboarding, career development coaching, succession planning, and retention.

EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD, West Hartford, CT

Master of Business Administration (MBA), Human Resources

UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT, Storrs, CT

Bachelor of Science (BS), Management

CERTIFICATIONS & DEVELOPMENT

Title IV Investigator, 2022

Project Management Professional (PMP), 2016

State of Connecticut Workplace Discrimination Investigations Foundation Training, 2013

FEMA Essential Records Protection for Disaster & COOP Planning Certification, 2010

State of Connecticut Human Resources Certification, 2007

Certified Professional in Managing Workplace Conflict, 2006

Certified Diversity Trainer, 2004

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR)

International Public Management Association for Human Resources (PSHRA)

Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)

Association of Title IX Administrators (ATIXA)

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Central CT Chambers of Commerce, Member, 2025-present

The West Indian Foundation, Inc, Board Member, 2023-present

University of Hartford Alumni, Volunteer, 2013-present

Rotary Club Holyoke Chapter, Member, 2023-2024

Greater Hartford Arts Council, Associate Board Member, 2009 – 2011

Circle of Hands Foundation, Secretary, 2003-2009