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# Foreword

*Simon Collinson*

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Many of our best organizations have always treated employees as talented people, rather than costs or assets on a balance sheet. Moreover, they recognize that to keep talented people they must invest time, effort and resources to develop, nurture, apply, deploy and refresh their talent. Not only because this underpins the quality of the organization, its products and services, its role and its reputation, but also because this creates a different relationship between the organization and its employees. There is mutual benefit in valuing talent that adds value. But this is easier said than done.

This edited collection, assembled by Yipeng Liu, fills an important gap in the literature by providing a new and much-needed perspective on talent management, well beyond the usual HR approach. It takes an international and interdisciplinary perspective on talent management across a wide range of empirical contexts. Different kinds of talent and talent management systems are explored across different national cultures, industry sectors and organizational functions. The contributors also look at different kinds of organizations, from entrepreneurial start-ups and creative design firms to expatriate-staffed subsidiaries and public sector organizations. Comparisons within and across these organizational types then reveal a wide variety of approaches to a common goal: to attract, keep and deploy talent for the good of the organization.

This approach is made possible by the multicultural diversity of the contributors. There is a particularly strong focus on talent management in transitional economies, with European and Asian attitudes and approaches explicitly or implicitly compared through the book. This brings to life a range of alternative meanings and different ways of valuing and managing talent in very different private and public sector settings. The core lesson throughout is the overriding importance of managing talent well, in the face of a growing global competition for talented people.

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