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#Technology

Role of technology in various facets of HR

Technology has changed the way HR functions and making most of the tasks more convenient and efficient

Sumeet Arora

Technology has permeated every sphere of an organisation be it finance, operations, marketing or the HR function. However, the role of technology in the HR domain is of particular importance, as with the changing business dynamics and diverse workforce, the challenge for HR to align and engage the workforce to the organisations' business objectives is of paramount importance.

The role of technology in HR spans the hire to retire life cycle of an employee in an organization. Technology can aid the staffing, recruitment and hiring procedures of an organisation. Secondly, it can be used as a powerful tool for fostering employee engagement within the organisation. Technology also plays a vital role in the career development of an employee, be it measuring performance management and driving employee productivity or tracking and enabling the training and development needs of an employee.

Role in Recruiting and Staffing

Organisations need the right technology to identify, develop and retain the right talent; the technology being proactive and such that it can translate data to wisdom and help formulate an effective business strategy.

One way in which human resources has been significantly impacted by technology is in the area of recruitment. Prior to the era before the arrival of internet, recruiters needed to rely heavily on print media such as newspapers to post jobs and get prospects for open positions. Technology has made recruiting more efficient and seamless. Thanks to technology, today recruiting agencies can access and understand an organization's manpower requirements on a real-time basis. New generation tools also enable one-to-one connectivity between the organization and the candidates.

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generation tools also enable one to one connectivity between the organization and the candidates.

The benefits of technology in recruitment can be measured on the basis of certain parameters such as cost of hire, time to hire a resource, speed and ease of hiring and global reach. In a company with a diverse workforce spread across different geographies, it's important to acknowledge the fact that talent knows no geographic borders and hence by using technology one can effectively help in recruiting the vast talent available.

Newer communication channels like social media help in fulfilling specific recruitment drives (for example lateral hiring) through dynamic career pages, targeted advertisements and targeted status updates which are fed regularly into the system.

It also acts as a strong communication medium where the marketing and talent acquisition team work in partnership bringing in cross-functional capabilities to target the external and internal audience of the company in a strategic and powerful way.

With social media platforms like LinkedIn and Facebook, which provide for customised campaigns and dynamic pages, organizations like ours have benefitted significantly by helping us to reach out to the right audience in specific geographies and specific professional groups with customised content. Few of the social media platforms like LinkedIn help in reaching out to a large cross-section of resource base who are actively networking and engaging on these forums. Hence, these platforms are utilized to showcase the professional facet of the company and are aggressively used as a potential tool for driving recruitment, specifically for leadership roles and promoting people as brand ambassadors of the company.

HR Management solutions enabling business

Companies in the service industry are heavily dependent on their employees or the 'human capital' as its vital assets and people management is one of the key functions of HR. In order to optimize the use of employee assets, such companies use highly advanced and specialised HRM software tools that provide a 360 degree perspective of all aspects of the HR process. The HR management software allows HR to adopt structured approaches to attract, retain, develop and use critical skills and knowledge needed to improve the capability of the business and meet new challenges. The HRMS tool is an integrated set of applications that are engineered to seamlessly work together and deliver across key areas. Some of the key areas where the management software helps, are; **Aligning your workforce** to Corporate Objectives via collaborative, internet-enabled capabilities; **Streamlining your business processes** with self-service, workflow and policy automation, **Speeding up transactions** and reducing overheads and error; **Use Total Compensation** to Attract and Retain People; **Manage Globally, Apply Locally** to Meet Corporate Compliance Guidelines and regional regulations; Improve Workforce Capability and Develop Leadership Through **Structured Talent Management** and finally **Control Workforce Costs** and Overheads .

Managing and coordinating these different kinds of duties can be time and resource-consuming, hence companies take advantage of these integrated HR technology solutions that combine different databases and streamline work processes. Moreover, such HRM solutions capture employee data from hire to retire, past history and future details as well, and in tandem with effective analytic tools, can help in quick resource allocation or rotation to suit business needs

Communication Tool for employee engagement and marketing

The most important asset of any organisation is its people and it's important that the channel of communication is open and engaging. Hence, companies rely heavily on technology to create employee engagement, whether it's through an **intranet** site that helps to bring employees on a common platform within the organisation or through newer enterprise social media platforms such as Yammer etc.

Using social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter, which are more informal in nature, companies can focus more on employee engagement activities (awards, office parties, employee gatherings, etc.). It can also be leveraged from an employer branding standpoint. Lot of internal employee events and contests get posted on these platforms and campaigns are run for bringing internal employees together. New age tools like Twitter, Facebook, Glassdoor and Pinterest are actively being used to promote employee recognition and engagement.

Most of the social platforms have enriched analytics and this helps in taking calculated decisions. It can be used to measure brand index on platforms and further compare it with competitors.

Role in Performance Management and Career Development

Today technology enables a continuous real-time assessment of performance and developmental needs, which was something that couldn't be achieved earlier. This helps in ensuring that

employees are aware of their shortcomings and get to work on improving them in real time.

Several HR metrics tools ensure that appropriate measures are tracked and prescriptive measures are taken to make talent management more accountable. Effectiveness of HR function can be measured by looking at the employee retention strategy/rate, attrition levels and initiatives to enhance employee productivity. Another important parameter is the learning and development strategy for effective succession planning.

Technology has made it possible for HR professionals to train new recruits in a more efficient manner as well. The ability to access company training programs from remote locations eliminates the need for trainers to work directly with new hires on all training.

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With a global organization such as ours, there is a huge leverage on e-learning. Thousands of e-learning modules ensure employees working out of remote locations don't lose out on training opportunities. Video conferences and webinars help as well in keeping up to date on organization initiatives. Advanced cyber security and IT security measures and trainings ensure that all knowledge acquisition and sharing happens in a secured manner, with absolutely no compromise on customer's intellectual property what-so-ever.

With the world economy going through a seismic shift from capital investment to intellectual capital, the importance of valuing and retaining workforce will act as a major competitive differentiator for organisations. As the workforce gets younger and the businesses increasingly become global and virtual, the challenge that HR faces will only increase manifold and this is where technology, people and processes need to collaboratively come together to deliver results.

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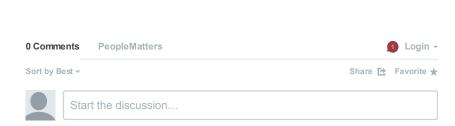|	
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