

How to Best Utilize Technology in Human Resources

Technology has transformed the human resource function. No longer is the human resources department siloed with an office, and records stored in a filing cabinet. Technology lets people apply for a position; see personnel records and check payroll stubs. The change makes human resources a larger and more public function within an organization.

The technology has also democratized human resource data. Previously, only employees in the human resource department had access to employee data. Now, senior executives, health insurers, workers compensation carriers and even regulatory agencies can have access to employee information.

Technology can improve human resources in the following ways:

- Streamline and reduce administrative burdens.
- Reduce human resource administration and compliance costs.
- Allow companies to compete for top talent.
- Provide better services and access to data for employees and managers.
- Provide performance metrics that let executives spot trends.
- Makes human resources a more strategic part of an organization.

To better manage technology, human resource departments must learn to integrate hardware, software and business processes. While it may be tempting to choose the highest-rated or least-expensive solution, it's important for a company to research and find the right tools.

Here are some ways that technology can be utilized in human resource:

Collect and analyze data

One of the most important aspects of using technology to improve the human resource function is having a tool to manage the data. A human resources management system, sometimes called a human resources information system, combines a number of systems and processes, making it easier to perform the management of human resources, business processes and data. The challenge, however, is that many of the human resources management system on the market are designed for larger organizations and not intended for SMEs.

Recruiting software

Recruiting software streamlines the hiring process. With a human resource recruiting software program, a company can post job ads, sort and accept applications, manage candidates while saving the hassle of manually tracking everything. The human resources department can easily identify the top candidates for a position based on key parameters. That allows more time to actually talk to the candidates and find the person who best meets the organization's needs.

Training and Development

Web access completely transforms a company's ability to provide training and development. Gone are the days of a dozen people sitting in a room during important business hours. Companies like Lynda offer huge online training libraries, and web-based conference software gives a company access to training professionals all across the country. Employees do not have to leave their desks.

Online training can drastically reduce costs and make the process more efficient. People are no longer tied to in-person training. In fact, some organizations implementing online training have realized spectacular savings, ranging from 40 to 50 percent. For example, IBM reported that it was able to save more than \$400 million annually through online training, according to the *Transforming HR through Technology* report.

Onboarding new employees

Once the proper candidate has been selected, technology plays a key role in integrating the employee into the company. New hires can be given access to training manuals, sign up for benefits and input demographic information into a database. They can also be provided with relevant tax and immigration documents through an online system. Companies have even set up onboarding videos online for new employees to watch, making the onboarding process more efficient and exposing the employee to the company's culture.

Benefits management platform

Often times, payroll and employee benefits are on different platform with a company. Some platforms allow for the administration of benefits, time off, payroll and retirement plans. A platform like Paylocity integrates the two and can make tasks like complying with employment law easier. That reduces liability costs and reduces the chances that a company will get sued.

Employee engagement tools

Happy employees are better employees, and technology allows for better employee engagement and recognition. That can lead to more productive employees and ones who want to perform at the optimal level. Communication is the key, and technology provides numerous ways to better communicate with employees. Tools like Slack provide an easy way to seek feedback from employees about important issues. A company can also announce an all-hands meeting with a Slack channel. A company-wide wiki can be a great place for employees to better understand the company's culture, and Survey Monkey can help a company understand feelings and attitudes within the company.

Performance Management

Human resource technology can collect a lot of data, and that data can be used to better monitor an employee's performance. For many company's, employee-related data can be just as important as customer data, because a company is only as good as its people. A recent report by Deloitte found that two-thirds of companies are now using an analytics platform, and organizations are investing in this data in a major way. The data collected from employees can be used to reduce

employee turnover and allow managers to make better decision