HR Tech Trend
People-Focused Time and Attendance

Summary

HR technology is increasingly people-focused rather than process-focused, as tech vendors realize employees' opinions matter. Two trends in HR technology—transparency and engagement—can be key to shifting tech's focus from people to processes, and a time and attendance system is uniquely positioned to promote both in an organization. System features such as confidential communication, automatic benefit accrual, labor law compliance, mobile access, leave facilitation and personal information management help establish a culture of open communication and active engagement that employees value and appreciate.

The New Frontier of HR Technology

As HR-focused technology—apps, software-as-a-service (SaaS), and data analytics—proliferate, many HR professionals are left wondering which tools are a fleeting fad and which have the power to transform the profession?

One of last year's notable HR tech trends was the shift to supporting people, not just processes, according to Steve Parker, head of business transformation at Achievers:

> This meant moving away from outdated…offerings that employees, managers and executives used only when they had to…to providing tools that people used because they wanted to—technology designed to engage and help people be more productive.[1]

Technology Shift—From Processes to People

Parker identified two major upcoming trends in HR tech that demonstrate the important shift from processes to people:

- *Technology will increase transparency.* Parker sees this tech trend as "foster[ing] an open culture" where employees are free to communicate their feedback (negative and positive), and organizations are open to receiving it.

- *Technology will increase employee engagement.* "We spend more…on measuring engagement than we do doing something about it," said Parker. With this tech trend, Parker believes organizations invested in increasing employee engagement will "focus more on taking action…by providing people with tools to connect across functions…and stay aligned to what's most important."

What both of these trends have in common is the idea that *employees' opinions matter*. So much so that the technology that allows employees to express those opinions is a growing priority for HR departments.

Time and Attendance: A Powerful Tool

Time and attendance holds a unique place in an organization. Unlike other systems that focus on a particular user group (such as customer relationship databases for sales people), nearly every person in an organization uses a time and attendance system. This positions it to be a particularly powerful tool in shifting the focus from processes to people because:

- A time and attendance system *naturally focuses on people*: the hours they work, the schedules they keep, the departments they function within, and the personal information they make available to their employer.

- Time and attendance *captures and relays people-focused information*, providing important context to managers and executives in workforce decision-making.

- Most of all, a time and attendance system *stands in for an organization* in the minds of employees. A straightforward, user-friendly time and attendance system bestows similar characteristics to the organization that employs it. This shapes employees' opinions of their workplace, and—as we already know—employees' opinions matter.

People-Focused Time and Attendance

While a time and attendance system sits at the heart of an organization, not all time and attendance systems promote the transparency and engagement Parker mentions.

A people-focused time and attendance system goes above and beyond basic time-keeping to encourage open communication and active engagement. These features can include:

Open Communication

- *Confidential communication*
  Time and attendance issues (such as medical leave, sick time and vacation) can be sensitive topics. A time and attendance system with messaging allows an employee and manager to confidentially discuss and resolve personal time and attendance issues through a protected and relevant platform.

- *Automatic benefit accrual*
  A time and attendance system with configurable benefit rules makes benefit accrual automatic, transparent and free of bias. This demonstrates to employees that they are being treated fairly with clearly defined rules around benefit accrual, calculations and eligibility.

- *Labor law/ACA compliance*
  Federal provisions such as the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and the Affordable Care Act (ACA) offer employee-focused benefits and demand compliance from employers. Questions about overtime, medical leave eligibility and ACA coverage can pit employees and employers against each other. A time and attendance system with labor law compliance features fosters transparency and goodwill between both parties.

Active Engagement

- *Mobile access*
  More and more employees value mobility and flexibility, whether they're sitting at their desk, in the field, or traveling on business. A time and attendance system with mobile access (such as a mobile app that's user-friendly, maintenance-free and tied directly to the parent system) shows the organization also values this level of engagement by employees.

- *Facilitated leave requests*
  Leave requests have many moving parts: making the request, evaluating eligibility, granting approvals, adjusting schedules, and reporting compensation. A time and attendance system that facilitates leave requests encourages engagement by eliminating roadblocks in the process, making it easier on employees and managers alike.

- *Personal information management*
  From a change in address to a change in marital status, a time and attendance system that offers employees a way to manage their personal information confidentially gives employees a sense of privacy—and the feeling that their employer values this privacy.

Conclusion

As HR technology shifts from processes to people, the right time and attendance system can promote open communication and active engagement across the organization. With features like confidential communication, automatic benefit accrual, labor law compliance, mobile access, leave facilitation and personal information management, employees experience how much the organization values their time, engagement and satisfaction.

About Attendance on Demand, Inc.

Attendance on Demand supports the labor management needs of thousands of companies and more than a half million employees across North America. Launched in 2006, Attendance on Demand is a rapidly deployed, cloud-based solution that minimizes a company's risk and technology investment while providing advanced features for securely managing labor data—calculating pay rules, scheduling employees, budgeting labor, and automating recordkeeping for labor law compliance. With standard uptime over the industry average of 99.995% and above average customer retention rates, Attendance on Demand removes the worry of maintaining expensive infrastructure. An extensive North American distribution network helps organizations use Attendance on Demand to reduce labor expenses and improve decision making.

References

1   Higginbottom, Karen. "HR Technology Trends In the Workplace in 2015." Forbes.com. 6 Jan 2015. Web. Accessed 25 Mar 2015. http://www.forbes.com/sites/karenhigginbottom/2015/01/06/hr-technology-trends-in-the-workplace-in-2015/

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