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TALENT TECHNOLOGY

A Guide to People Management Software



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PEOPLE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE Introduction

People work with people

Integrated software suites are essential for developing people strategies that create competitive advantage.

BY ROD NEWING

Software started out by calculating payroll, but had most impact when it automated personnel records and gave managers and employees direct access to the systems. Relieved of routine transactional work, Human Resources (HR) professionals were able to take on a much more strategic role in the organisation. Unfortunately this was an area that initially had very little technology support.

"People management software is like customer relationship management was 15 years ago, with too many bits of information in too many places with too few connections," says Phil Brown, managing director at Youmanage, the online HR toolkit for line managers. "This led to duplication of effort and poor customer service. Similarly, most organisations do not have a 360 degree view of their employees, because relevant data is stored in a mish-mash of databases, spreadsheets, paper forms and word processing documents. Implementing separate systems for different areas, such as absence management, appraisals and recruitment, only exacerbated the problem."

This is borne out by the Third Annual Softscape Survey, which found that 94 per cent of respondents do not feel their staff are adequately prepared to meet their companies' future goals. The primary reason HR professionals are increasingly less confident about their workforce readiness lies in their organisations' immediate need to improve a variety of HR processes. 55 per cent were not confident that their organisations can effectively manage their HR processes.

The main thrust of the HR software industry at the moment is to provide

comprehensive suites of software (see box) to support the organisation's people strategies. This helps them to create a competitive advantage through better use of people and brings them success in the global war for talent.

"Effective software should link together all aspects of the employee's lifecycle, from recruitment interview to exit interview, and make consolidated information available to line managers and HR departments," says Mr Brown. "This will support far more sophisticated approaches to critical areas like talent management and

employee development."

Sarah Seabury, project director at TPI, a sourcing advisory firm, says that larger organisations typically use the people management modules of their underlying business systems, usually provided by Oracle or SAP. "I would like to see some more competition in that area to liven it up a bit," she says. "There is nothing like a good bit of competitive pressure to get better products coming out onto the market and I don't see that at the moment."

She is more bullish about the specialist systems that support the cen-

tral HR system, which are more competitive. She cites recruitment systems as a good example, where she says the market offers a wide choice of nice technologies from very able teams that support recruitment processes very well.

As always with technology, success starts with a good strategy and business case and is followed by a well planned and executed implementation. "The organisation must understand at the outset what it wants to get out of the technology," advises Emma Parry, research fellow at Cranfield School of Management. "This starts with a good analysis of the processes that it wants to automate and an understanding of the way technology will improve them."

She advises employing all the normal change management activities of communication, education and training, to get people to engage with the technology and buy into it. They must also evaluate its success afterwards. When people don't do that they get resistance and panic!

Robert Leggett is managing director at Omni Resource Management Solutions, a software vendor and recruitment outsourcer. He points out that however well implemented, success ultimately depends on the way that people use the systems.

"While technology is increasingly important, it has its limitations - even when used effectively," he says. "It is still the case that people buy people and people work with people and managing people is a subjective process. Subjectivity is not one of technology's strong points, so it can never be a substitute for the human element."



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▲ Source: 'HR and Technology: Impact and Advantages,' Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development



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PEOPLE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE Benefits of using technology

How technology supports total resourcing excellence

Jamie Davies, managing director at MrTed Limited, considers how organisations can utilise technology to support and manage talent acquisition effectively on a global scale.

“The ‘War for Talent’ is over – the candidates have won” was an opening remark from a speaker at a recent HR Conference that I attended. This stark comment made people sit up and think about their own talent Acquisition strategy.

The shortage of talent on a national, international and global scale means it is vital for organisations to have a highly effective and efficient resourcing function. Deploying an effective solution goes far beyond simply placing your vacancies on to a job board or website. It is about:

- Ensuring you have visibility and transparency off all vacancies at all levels. This will help promote your brand internally as well as externally
- Maintaining consistency, control and compliance across all departments,

divisions, regions and countries

- Building a collaborative solution where all stakeholders (hiring/line managers, recruiters, HR, contractors, candidates and agencies) are accessing one system.

Technology can support organisations’ resourcing strategy with the aim of creating total resourcing excellence. In other words, it’s the ability to deliver the very best candidates consistently, on-demand and at low cost.

Looking at number of specific areas where technology aids and supports TRE it starts with ensuring the candidate experience is a positive one with your website having clear navigation, be multi-lingual and culturally specific for both the local and international market with comprehensive search capabilities.



▲ Jamie Davies

It needs to be interactive and allow candidates to complete an on-line application, create a personal career page, receive jobs by email, and for candidates to apply speculatively and yet receive a professional and personal response

Technology will streamline the recruitment process by having structured job specific application process with scoring, weighting and matching functions make pre-screening easier,

faster and accurate. This ensures greater consistency and compliance. Clearly technology will cut the administration workload by having standardised processes, workflows and group actions to allow resourcing managers to spend less time on administration and more time with hiring managers and candidates. This in turn will reduce error and improve quality within HR. Technology does allow organisations to build a collaborative environment with real time access to all stakeholders (managers, suppliers and candidates) from one flexible system. This gives transparency, control and consistency across every step of the process. The objective is to reduce the time to hire, reduce the cost to hire and most importantly in these days of talent shortages increase the quality of hires.

In this war for talent, technology will enable organisations to leverage web-based sourcing and talent relationship management programs to attract the best people in a cost effective and proactive manner. This can be

achieved by ensuring all resumes [paper, email, agencies, online] are consolidated in one single system for easier tracking and response management, and for these systems to have smart auto-match capabilities as well as the ability to have smart sourcing options such referral programs, temp-to-perm programs, intern-to-perm programs, and hire back. Equally it is also about building relationships with the market and being proactive. Technology allows organisations to maintain and nurture close relationships not just with people on the market but also those who in the market.

Finally, technology is there to support your business decision making. Technology will provide you with information – quality information – across every facet of your resourcing strategy. For example how effective is your sourcing? who are your best suppliers?, are your internal mobility strategies working and helping to reduce turnover and external recruitment by making internal deployment more effective?

In today’s highly competitive and global marketplace, organisations need to ensure they have the best resources strategy in place to ensure they stay ahead of their rivals. This resourcing strategy needs must be underpinned by robust and flexible technology that operates globally to ensure companies attract and acquire the most valuable and highly prized resource – namely talent.

HR system helps keep Britain safe

An integrated performance and learning management system is driving performance management at Airwave.



“Managing performance is absolutely key to the success of our relatively young stand-alone business,” says Emily Wylie, head of learning and development at Airwave. “Our system makes it possible by helping to build or skills base and our business.”

Airwave Solutions helps keep Britain safe, by providing the dedicated mobile telecommunications network that keeps emergency and

public safety teams in touch with each other. It is the largest such network in the world. Originally owned by BT, it became part of the mobile telephone operator O2 before being bought out by infrastructure investment funds managed by Macquarie Group, the Australian bank. It has 850 employees and is growing very fast.

Under O2, the HR function had been outsourced, but after it was

bought out Airwave decided to bring the function back in house. The company had to build an HR infrastructure that would allow the function to become a business partner and to measure the results of its human capital management strategies.

The core information system is Microsoft Dynamics, to which managers have access, for recording transactions and making daily tactical decisions. Softscape Apex is used to drive an integrated performance management process and supports associated learning and development. The software is installed on Airwave’s own servers and is available to all staff over the internet, including the company’s many homeworkers.

Every employee must complete a clear twelve step automated self-assessment process, after which the system may identify a skills gap and advise them what learning they may need to undertake. Managers then access the results to evaluate them and people can then see their manager’s comments. Personal development activities, such as training and reflective learning are logged in the system.

The system also manages a recommended monthly one-to-one review with their manager, as preparation for the later formal review. Because it is fully automated, the system alleviates the need for HR staff to take manage through the process, constantly re-

“Ease-of-use is fundamental, otherwise people will get turned off by it”

mind them when they should be doing their reviews.

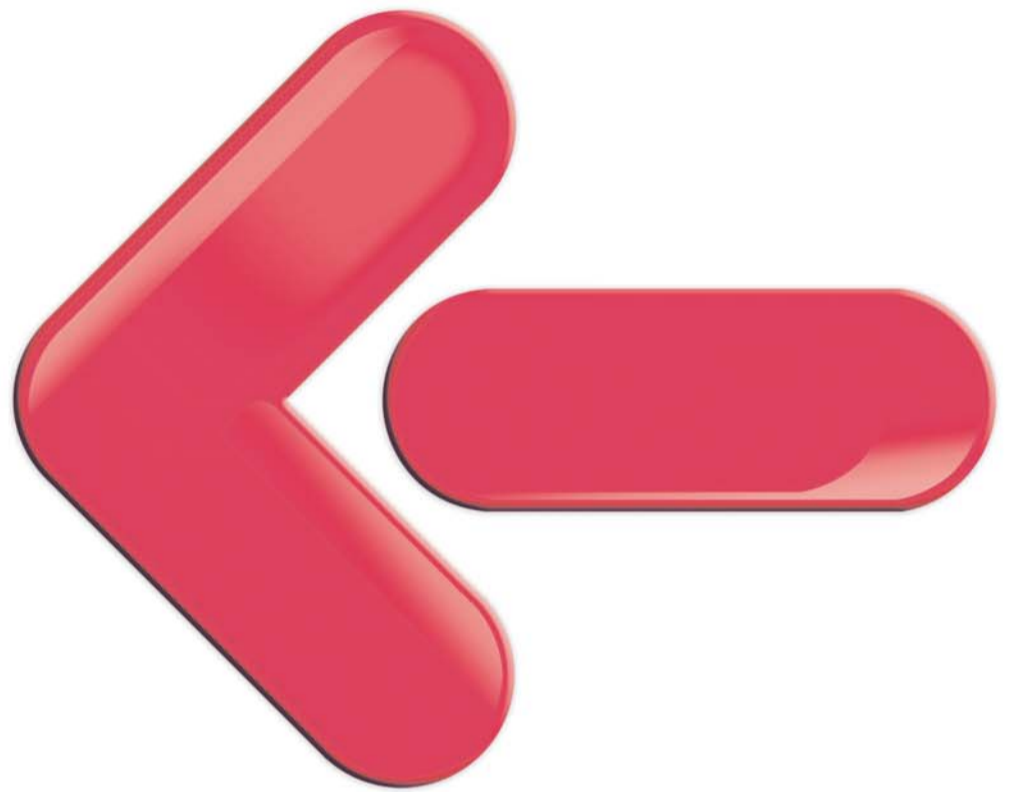
“Feedback has been excellent,” says Ms Wylie. “It is very easy for people to access it and then it is intuitive, clear and easy to use. Employees like the fact that everything is in one place, like a ‘one stop shop.’ Ease-of-use is fundamental, otherwise people will get turned off by it.”

The system makes it easy to access competencies and identify talents; the top five per cent high potential employees who will be the company’s future leaders, and who Airwave’s programmes for talent management, secondment, mentoring and retention need to be aimed at. As a growing business, Airwave needs to move its talent around the business and the system measures and tracks people’s skills so that they can be best fitted into different areas of the organisation when required.

The system will be evaluated mid-year to assess usage times, how objective the data is and whether it has the right balance of quantitative and qualitative information. It will also reveal whether the right goals have been set and if managers are conducting reviews in a professional manner.

“The system is very transparent, fair and consistent and provides clarity from an HR perspective,” says Ms Wylie. “Our people have clear objectives, clear expectations and are measured against our values and capabilities. It drives and supports our strategies for retention, rewards and recognition, plus learning and development.”

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PEOPLE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE Software for managing talent

Building relationships

Talent management software gives organisations visibility of their most promising employees and helps build relationships with them.

Managing talent is the most critical challenge facing Human Resources (HR), according to 'The Future of HR: Key Challenges Through 2015' by Boston Consulting Group and the European Association for Personnel Management. Similarly, Convergys recently reported that two-thirds of senior executives around the world cite a significant weakness in their leadership pipeline as one of their main concerns.

Talent management is the process of identifying, attracting and developing individuals who have a high potential to change the performance of the organisation. 'Talent: Strategy, Management, Measurement,' is a report from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) and Nottingham Business School. It recommends that 'processes must be developed to track the performance and progress of those identified in the talent pool, as well as systems for reviewing, refining and making changes to talent management initiatives to reflect changing organisational priorities.

However, 70 per cent of organisations still depend on manual paper-based processes or word-processing/spreadsheet systems without a central database, according to 'Hi-tech HR - A contradiction in terms?' independent research commissioned by Qikker

Solutions, an internet-based HR systems provider.

"If you have 50 key positions, with incumbents, that you want to track and five possible candidates for each position, you have 300 people to track," points out Sue Lingard, European marketing director at Cezanne

"Technology is vital for talent management, as it enables organisations to create a central source of data"

Software, an HR systems provider. "If you are looking at a talent pool of several thousand, it is impossible to manage without a system."

Technology is vital for talent management, as it enables organisations to create a central source of data, including performance, skills and aspirations. This provides a single view and supports strategic decision making.

"It will enable you to identify talent

and assess individuals within a pre-agreed talent pool across a range of core variables," says Diana Hogbin-Mills, managing director at TalentMax, a talent management consultancy. "These include potential, core competencies, retention, vacancy risk, position criticality and alignment. A set of consolidated reports then provides information that identifies your organisational depth across these variables, along with individuals listed by aptitude rating and by potential."

According to Lars Dalgaard, chief executive officer at SuccessFactors, a provider of on-demand talent management solutions, a strong process also helps organisations more closely align individuals' goals with those of the organisation to create a more engaged workforce. This leads to greater productivity and, ultimately, improves the bottom line.

As well as providing sophisticated planning, talent management tools also create greater transparency and fairness. Under paper-based systems talent can languish in appraisal forms in filing cabinets because weak managers are not offering up their best people. Likewise, strong managers were able to keep back their best people to prevent losing them.

"Talent management software provides a comprehensive view of



talent across the company, helping HR to create one-on-one relationships with talented employees," sums up Patrice Barbedette, founder of Jobpartners, an HR software ven-

dor. "To attract and retain the best talent, organisations need to treat their employees and prospective employees in the same way as they treat their customers."



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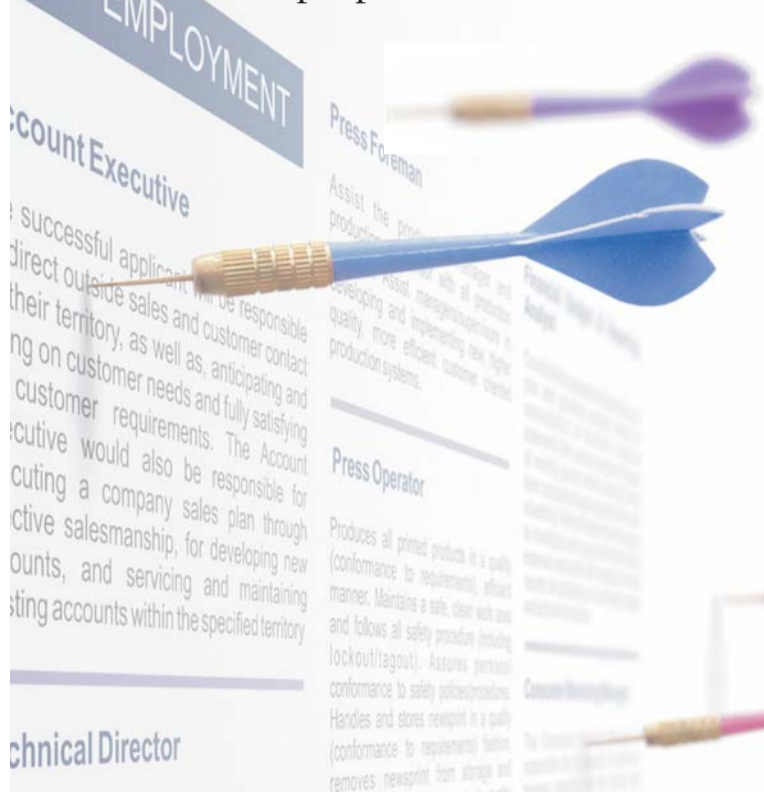
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People recruit people

Recruitment is moving to the web, but people must still be involved.



Online recruitment offers more efficient processes that lower cost and fill vacancies faster. Organisations have a choice of using internal software, usually linked to their own website, or utilising a third party website.

According to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) 2007 Recruitment, Retention and Turnover survey, websites have broken even with local newspaper advertisements as the most common method for attracting candidates. These websites range from being an electronic 'jobs board' that advertises vacancies to offering a fully featured recruitment and selection process.

Emma Parry, a research fellow at Cranfield School of Management, advises organisations to take a holistic approach to the whole process of attracting job applicants, managing the process and responding to candidates, sifting and selection technologies, and even induction and creating personnel files. "If people just advertise on a jobs board they get flooded with

applications that they cannot manage or sift," she warns.

The choice of own or third party websites often depends on availability of internal resources. Vanessa Robinson, an advisor at the CIPD, says it could be attractive for organisations that do not have a strong brand to attract unsolicited applicants. She warns that the downside is that on a busy day an advert may not get enough visibility on a big site.

Recruitment and selection also lends itself to outsourcing. Ms Robinson says that it can be particularly useful for organisations that have a lot of fluctuation in demand, with seasonal workers and other peaks and troughs.

'Web 2.0' social networking sites are becoming more prominent in recruitment, with younger applicants putting their career histories in their profiles. "A simple internet search can provide many more potential candidates than job boards or agencies," says Tim Richards, managing director

at Bond International Software, a provider of recruitment applications. "They hope that anybody performing an internet search for specific skills will come across their CV and hey presto - they get offered a job for very little effort on their part!"

Diana Hogbin-Mills, managing director, TalentMax, an engagement and retention consultancy, says that Generation Ys, born between 1979 and 1999, are technologically 'savvy.' "They are heavy users of Web 2.0, expect technology to be a major part of their recruitment process and will look for companies that harness technology to make their working lives easier," she says. "Organisations must communicate with them in an increasingly virtual world."

Lesley Nash, one of the directors of Changework, a web recruitment systems consultancy, argues that although online recruitment has become the norm, it should not replace the human element. It is best used alongside other selection processes, such as face-to-face interviews and psychometric testing.

However, the traditional agencies are not surrendering in the new electronic world. Steve Carter, managing director at recruiter Nigel Lynn, warns that over-reliance on automated checking procedures risks losing out on attracting the best in the middle of war for talent. An organisation may attract the ideal candidate, but if there is no human being involved in the first CV filter it may be rejected if it doesn't include the right keywords.

"Very often, the best candidates are not actively looking," he says. "They are not going to spend time optimising their CVs with keywords in order to try and beat an online system, when they know they can go to a recruitment consultancy and get four interviews. People recruit people, not computers. You can't e-mail a handshake."

Structure, not luck

Career planning systems provide a structured approach to managing careers and eliminate the element of chance.

We all like to think that we have been promoted because of our outstanding talent. However, even the most confident high fliers may admit that there is an element of luck in being in the right place at the right time.

"Career planning has often just been opportunistic and not viewed very strategically," says Alex Barfield, European director at Softscape, an HR software vendor. "In most large organisations, the best way to get ahead was to 'blow your own trumpet' and ride the coat-tails of a senior manager. Similarly, most organisations needing specific skills at the start of a new project will not have information on the skills available internally and will hire somebody externally. These are not a good way to manage your workforce."

Judith Germain, director of leadership consultancy Dynamic Transitions, warns against the traditional approach to look for the next crop of senior managers from a small subset of individuals, rather than assessing the entire workforce for the best talents that it can offer. "This approach can ignore the true potential of a diverse workforce," she warns.

Richard Doherty, vice president for operations, at Jobpartners, an HR software vendor, explains that career planning software can establish individual development plans between each employee and their manager. The system makes the process transparent, allows managers to monitor progress and ensures the plan is regularly updated. It also ensures that each employee knows that his or her aspirations are acknowledged and, as a result, fosters loyalty. This helps to create profitable one-to-one relationships with every employee and increases retention rates.

"Career planning systems allow organisations to make efficient and effective use of their people," says Mr Barfield. "They add a good level of

structure to the process, so people know what they are supposed to be working on and that they will be rewarded for their efforts. To maximise the effectiveness of your people, you need to know that you are getting the right people, with the right skills, paid the right amount in the right jobs - and the only way to do that is to have information."

Ms Germain says that the very nature of these systems is to provide detailed knowledge of an entire organisation from the most junior employee to the chief executive. This allows a two-pronged approach of looking for the top talent in the organisation, as well as nurturing talent in the rest of the workforce, which ensures that it maintains competitive advantage.

These systems benefit the employee, by ensuring that there is clarity in work expectations to support

“Employers are often unaware of the hidden skills of their employees”

detailed discussion on job competences. Employers are often unaware of the hidden skills of their employees and risk losing them and decreasing overall employee morale and motivation. Formal feedback from managers is also a benefit, as the conversation can lead to additional training and improved performance.

"Our clients are currently putting a lot of control into the hands of the employees themselves, by going into the systems themselves and highlighting their aspirations and finding out what skills are needed to achieve them," says Mr Barfield.

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From blackboard to virtual world to wearable computer

eLearning is most effective when combined with other learning methods, but technology has an increasing role to play.



Training and development of staff have never been so important. In a fast changing world, it is vital for organisations to keep their staff up-to-date with the skills and knowledge

they need. In the global war for talent, many organisations have to rely on recruiting people with potential who can be taught the skills they cannot find in the marketplace. An in-

creasingly regulated business environment is also increasing the need for compliance training.

Unfortunately, 'Realising Value from Online Learning,' a recent report from

the Chartered Management Institute and the Centre for Applied Human Resource Research, found that senior managers across the United Kingdom are missing easy opportunities to hone their skills, as they fail to make use of the online resources available to them. Only 54 per cent have made use of online management resources in the past year and just 20 per cent have participated in a structured e-learning programme.

Barriers include loss of the human touch (47%), too many distractions (46%), lack of motivation (28%), the content fails to engage them (20%) and lack of appropriate support (17%). 37 per cent suggest that 'tutor-led' development is most effective.

"Buying available material and chucking it at the user simply will not work," says Martyn Sloman, an advisor at the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. "Those organisations that are successful have prepared very customised material for their own particular organisational requirements. They have also tied it in with their wider organisational objectives."

Fabrizio Cardinali, co-chair of the European Learning Industry Group, says that personalisation and contextualisation are key factors in enabling Europe's businesses to compete effectively in world markets. This means understanding learners' likes and dislikes, their learning styles and preferences, their habits, and their language and culture.

Most organisations have found that eLearning works best when it is combined with other learning methods, including classroom lectures and workshops, called 'blended learning.' "eLearning is not the panacea that many people think it is," says Scott McArthur,

principal consultant at Atos Consulting. "It will never replace old fashioned 'chalk and talk' and should be combined with mentoring and coaching. It should be part of a blended programme, not an excuse for saving money on quality training and learning."

Many people believe that Web 2.0 and social networking will impact learning, as the next generation of employees will be connected through facebook, MySpace and Bebo. They may be expected learn in radically different ways. Mr Cardinali warns that they may increasingly receive learning materials through personal digital assistants, BlackBerry, Nintendo, smartphone, wearable computer, serious games, simulations and virtual worlds.

Mr Sloman says that workplace skills are not just about obtaining knowledge, but learning from each and trying things for themselves. This fits in with the increasing interest in the use of games and simulation techniques to allow people to try things electronically.

Games are already being used as a low-cost way to train emergency services and a simulator has been developed for a major international accounting firm. It allows staff to practice their skills on a range of 'difficult' clients before being put in front of the real thing!

"Games technologies have matured to the point where virtual environments are realistic, usable and convincingly mimic the trials and pressures of work situations," says David Wortley, director of the Serious Games Institute at Coventry University. "Just as with theatre, it is the suspension of disbelief that helps to engage people."



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Alstom powered by people

'You can't value what you can't measure' it's been said, and 'if you can't measure it how can you act on it?' should be the rejoinder. Alstom Power Service is an organisation that has undergone considerable change and growth in recent years and HR technology has provided a valuable tool for measuring people performance and engagement.

Alstom Power Service is an engineering organisation that was defined by a typical heavy manufacturing approach. To become more dynamic and commercial the company's strategy shifted to a service driven organisation focused on Project Management. This combined with major acquisitions meant Alstom Power Service needed to define a consistent set of values and a culture that would work with a disparate, workforce and provide a sound basis for further growth and commercial development.

Julian Webber, Head of Organisational Development at Alstom Power Service North West Europe (PS NWE), says: "We had to start from scratch as nothing coherent had existed before. We initiated the process through focus groups across our many locations. We needed to get buy-in from every aspect of the company at the very start of the process rather than impose a culture and set of values defined by the senior management team."

The top value that emerged was Valuing People and the importance of people development. "We needed to support



this by processes that demonstrated our commitment to people development and performance management. It was also important for us to track the key values and understand the engagement levels of the 20,000 people across our worldwide organisation."

Working with HR technology firm Qikker (<http://www.qikker.com/>), Alstom Power Service designed a global questionnaire 'Our Identity: Your Voice'. Steve Jones, Managing Director, Alstom PS NWE says: "As a business, we will only be successful if everyone shares in our vision and

feels able to contribute towards making that vision a reality. This survey is an important part of that process, because it measures how people Look, Feel and Act towards the business in a quantifiable way. In doing so, it gives us valuable data upon which we can make meaningful decisions about improving the way we do things and investing for the future."

The global survey is conducted annually and results are available immediately with rich 'line of sight' reporting through the business that enables instant management analysis.

"This data is an important base for management decisions," comments Julian. "We have the management information about performance levels and fiscal growth and now we have the people information. Overlaying these opens up discussion and can provide options for us that would previously not have been visible."

Alstom Power Service has also worked with Qikker to implement a complementary online 360 degree appraisal system for its senior-level managers that reinforces the change to a service culture and encourages behaviours commensurate with valuing and developing its people. "We looked at the expectations for each tier of management and built these into a 360 degree appraisal system," says Julian. "We can now assess each manager's learning and development needs against agreed objectives. However, this is not just about training, it's about improving the opportunities for every individual and for their own career. For instance, we might find someone who is a great change manager and who could be more fully stretched in a different role or location. We can match up this talent with a business need."

360 degree appraisals have had a mixed reception due to candidates' own previous experiences. Julian admits that in Alstom Power Service there is still some challenges ahead, "Some of our managers have really taken to 360 degree but we do need

to motivate others. This is part of our culture change programme as gradually our people are seeing the personal benefits of a thorough appraisal system as well as the value measurement provides to the business."

Alstom Power Service's global 360 degree appraisal system is available to all employees. "Without utilising technology this process would not be pos-

"We can now assess each manager's learning and development needs against agreed objectives"

sible. Now, everyone is in control of their own performance and progression, supported by HR. We can meanwhile use this data and that of the survey to inform the strategy of the business and align people to deliver the organisation's growth objectives."

To download your free 'pay-for-performance' white paper - 'THE MISSING LINK', go to www.qikker.com/thetimes.

Develop Motivate Retain



At **Qikker** we work closely with some of Europe's leading companies. We help support their transition from paper based to technology based people management. We provide world class solutions that give them instant visibility of people performance throughout their entire organisations.

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Real-time information at the clients' fingertips

Talent management solutions; acquiring and deploying talent on a global scale.

Mr Ted is helping to change the nature of Capita's resourcing business. A big advocate of the use of technology in resourcing is Nicola Jellyman, service delivery director at Capita Managed Services. "Technology is fundamental to our business," she says. "It has made a huge difference to our industry and the way we operate. New clients expect automated systems to be part of an end-to-end resourcing process."

Each year Capita Resourcing, a division of The Capita Group Plc, manages over 2,000 campaigns, 500,000 candidate enquiries and 30,000 interim, contract and permanent placements on behalf of its clients. Its managed services organisation primarily takes on responsibility for managing the whole process of resourcing temporary staff for its clients. This covers the whole spectrum of requirements, from part time administrators to interim directors.

The company uses a number of systems, including MrTedTalentLink. Mr Ted is a leading provider of talent management solutions, designed to help organisations of all sizes to optimise the processes of acquiring and deploying talent on a local and worldwide scale.

Capita Resourcing uses whichever system is appropriate to each client's needs. Although MrTedTalentLink has only been in use for twelve months, it is already used on major contracts with British Nuclear Group, which has a high requirement for engineers, and EDF Energy, which is a big user of contract IT staff.

"We primarily use Mr Ted to facilitate all the interactions with our clients throughout the resourcing process," says Ms Jellyman. Clients log onto our website and enter their skills requirements direct into Mr Ted. Experienced consultants then plan and manage an appropriate campaign through the system and record the results into it.

If the company needs to run a campaign for a large number of vacancies, it can set up a separate microsite that is linked to MrTedTalentLink. This has details of job roles and gives

a superior candidate experience. The applicants enter their details directly into the system.

Clients review suitable candidate profiles and career histories on-line. They can enter their comments on the skills or experience into the system and use it to ask Capita to invite candidates for interview. The system handles the interview administration and records feedback from interviewers.

If an offer is required, the client enters the dates and rates and the offer

"We primarily use Mr Ted to facilitate all the interactions with our clients throughout the resourcing process"

is prepared by the system and passed through the client's approval process, including management, budgetary and HR approval. Capita's consultants can track the clients' approval processes through the system, which provides a full audit trail of who approved what. The system understands both the client's hierarchical structure and its cost centre codes.

Once the employee starts working, the system is capable of providing on-line timesheets for each worker and can handle their manager's approval. It also pays the worker and bills the client.

"It is great that the system can scale up to handle varying volumes," says Ms Jellyman. "It also interacts with other suppliers." Capita has agreements with other agencies to access their talent pools and use their electronic job boards. The system's on-line vendor management functionality will communicate requirements to these third parties. "The

system has enabled us to increase the size of our network," she says, "so we can connect with a wider audience more quickly to find quality candidates."

The management information produced by the system is also vital. It builds up an end-to-end picture of what type of candidates work well in which environment. This helps to produce better matches so that Capita is able to offer better quality candidates to its clients. The system shows the best sources of candidates for each type of role, helping consultant's plan to go straight to the most likely source to fill a particular requirement.

The system also enables Capita to build up a candidate talent pool for each client. Ms Jellyman says that it adds huge value when the system automatically matches new requirements with candidates already within the system.

Because Capita is providing a full resourcing service, not just filling vacancies, it uses the system to identify long term temporary posts that could be converted to permanent positions. The system makes the back-office processes far more efficient. The company now has all its billing information in one place, pre-approved by the client.

Ms Jellyman admits that she could probably go on forever about the benefits of the system! "It has genuinely changed the way we operate in the marketplace," she says. "The clients particularly appreciate the visibility it gives them through having meaningful real-time management information at their fingertips, so they can make more valid decisions about hiring or better using their workforce. The powerful combination of experienced consultants using highly functional software makes the resourcing process efficient and effective, so we can achieve 25 per cent to 30 per cent savings for our clients."



MrTed™
Technology for Talent

PEOPLE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE Performance management

Closing the Loop

On-line surveys are quicker, cheaper, more flexible and get more responses, but they must be seen to be acted upon.

In a world where financial performance is everything and customer service is seen as a major driver, it is important to remember that employee satisfaction is a major driver and a leading indicator of both. Retention of employees is also a key weapon in the war for talent.

Organisations have invested millions, or even hundreds of millions, of pounds in using software to help them to understand their customers, but understanding the staff who serve those customers has for too long been restricted to the annual employee survey.

It has been a cumbersome and costly exercise that often involves third parties. Response rates, themselves an indicator of satisfaction, have also been lower than employers would like. "The third party holds the intellectual property and produces data for you," says Scott McArthur, principal consultant at Atos Consulting.

In contrast, on-line surveys are quicker, more flexible, cheaper and encourage higher response rates. Organisations can conduct them as often as

they want and can compose their own questionnaires.

"Products like SurveyMonkey are tremendous and you can brand it with the organisation name," says Mr McArthur. "It is much easier for employees to contribute their views anonymously on-line, rather than on paper, so surveys are more representative and more valuable. It is more flexible and reduces cost."

Ben Smith, a UK head of Vovici, which provides enterprise feedback management software, points out that many companies are over-surveying their constituents. They are irritating respondents, rather than building relationships with them.

Gary Schwartz, vice president for product marketing of Confirmit, another enterprise feedback management software provider, recommends measuring employee attitude at key moments throughout the employee

lifecycle. These include recruitment, induction, three month 'pulse,' training course, new manager, new role and exit interview.

These will help to build a set of key attitudinal indicators, such as whether they feel that they can make a difference, the value they place on training and promotion, their reaction to feedback about performance, their ability

to take on new skills and responsibilities and whether they feel their observations about the company's approach to a particular issue are being heard.

Mr Smith warns that employees rarely see any of the resulting analysis from the process and too infrequently see any evidence that change flows from their participation. He recommends setting up an active 'employee community' with a panel of respondents to close the feedback cycle. "Gathering regular and consistent feedback not only keeps you current with the thoughts and concerns of the employee base," he says, "it provides

the ability to spot trends and evolving employee sentiments over time."

Intelligent use of survey software will help to build a relationship with employees through a two-way dialogue. Results should be reported through of every manager's 'dashboard' that gives a snapshot of the state of their organisation's performance.

"A poor survey or one that is not acted upon can become a major demoralising factor," concludes Clive Longbottom, a director and Quocirca, an analyst. "In contrast, a good survey can be of incredible use and value."


PROMOTIONAL FEATURE

Quality, not just cost

Resourcing software can significantly improve the quality of new hires, says **Charles Hippi**.

Most HR professionals understand that resourcing software can reduce costs by 50% and time to hire by up to 75%, but many are still sceptical when told that it can considerably increase the quality of the people they hire. This improvement in talent arises partly because of the objectivity that software can bring and partly through its ability to measure the effectiveness of the process.

Software can be much more objective than managers during the early stages of screening applications and conducting first interviews with applicants. Some managers are not good at these and can have very personalised interview techniques. In contrast, software can provide online questionnaires and tests, which can provide a totally fair and objective initial screening process. This is counter-intuitive, but results show that automated

screening can result in one third more candidates on the shortlist meeting the required standards for employment.

The software records all details of the selection process, creating a valuable data store that forms the basis of detailed reporting to managers. For instance, all competency rating scores by each manager are recorded, together with the decisions they make on each candidate. This can then be linked with the organisation's performance management system to compare with their subsequent performance. This will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the selection process in spotting talent and improve quality of the workforce.

The software also increases the quality of the workforce by helping to get better access to talented minorities. The on-line screening process is much easier for disabled people than having

to travel to interviews. Screeners can be shown applicant details without name, nationality or religion to eliminate any prejudices.

Some organisations offer a guaranteed interview scheme to disabled people, but one organisation found that an unrealistic 25% of applicants claimed to be disabled. Its software was used to ask a series of supplemental questions about the nature of the disabilities, which reduced the number claiming guaranteed interviews to a more realistic 3%. The stored data can be used to compare decisions made with the organisation's various equal opportunities policies, to ensure that managers are making unbiased decisions.

The flexibility and agility of software is vital for making rapid changes to resourcing processes in response to a fast-moving market. It will also be important now that a new wave of in-house 'sourcers' is emerging. They are starting to build up a talent bank of candidates through direct advertising and networking sites, such as LinkedIn and other similar sites.



Software allows the organisation to build a cradle-to-grave picture of its hiring policies and processes and new hires' subsequent performance within the business. This means that it is not just making resourcing more efficient, it is providing the basis for a much more structured and information-driven approach to talent management.

People focus on cost savings because they have to justify investing in the software, but systems are really

about hiring better quality people. In the middle of a war for talent, HR will finally deliver on its promise to act strategically and deliver value to bottom line business performance.

Charles Hippi is managing director and founder of WCN plc, a talent management and resourcing software provider. He is author of 'E-Recruitment Projects in the Public Sector: A Government Guide to Best Practice' www.careers.civil-service.gov.uk



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PEOPLE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

Top tips

TOP TIPS

BETTINA PICKERING

MANAGING CONSULTANT
FOR PEOPLE AND
ORGANISATIONAL
CHANGE AT
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Do not get seduced by 'best of breed' promises, but consider the end-to-end talent

management process. To ensure managers and HR can focus on better people management, talent management software needs to cover the full talent management lifecycle including performance management, objectives setting and cascade, learning and development, succession planning and reward management.

Best of breed software usually offers more functionality in one specific and contained area, such as objectives setting. However, covering the end-to-end talent management process with a collection of different specialist software increases the administrative burden for HR and employees and increases the cost of maintaining the system.

HR staff and employees would have to constantly switch between, in many cases, very different approaches, terminologies and data structures or go down a very costly route of aligning these often very different applications. Therefore, instead of helping organisations to understand, motivate, develop and retain key talent, using this approach has the opposite effect.

As talent management is a two-way process between line, functional and HR managers and employees, organisations should seek an integrated talent management system that covers the complete end-to-end talent management process. This allows easy access, reporting and information exchange for both employees and managers alike.

DUNCAN MACINTRYE

GTI ONLINE SOLUTIONS

How to go about implementing an on-line job application system and why it is important.

Today any organisation which processes over 250 applications a year ought really to be looking for a system that is based on-line.

That means more than just asking people to send in a cv and application form to a recruitment e-mail address, a comparatively crude option that looks increasingly out-dated.

A proper on-line solution can offer a range of more sophisticated tools to manage the process.

It will give those managing the interview and selection process important information that helps refine the selection. This information includes instant access to key performance indicators, and a range of select, sift and sorting tools.

It ensures the hiring process is both accountable and transparent, key requirements for any modern organisation.

At the same time the process needs to be quick, efficient, cost effective and leave the candidates feeling that they have been treated with respect, whatever the outcome.

So when implementing a system define your processes clearly. Measure and set the work involved in dealing with each candidate, be aware of implementation timescales and crucially make sure you have a senior manager on your side who understands the advantages of the changes you propose.



“A proper on-line solution can offer a range of more sophisticated tools to manage the process.”

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The academic world is awash with varying definitions, so we have tried to simplify some of the most used terms.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The workforce of an organisation, which is considered to contribute to the organisation's effectiveness.

HUMAN CAPITAL

The recognition of people as an intangible asset of the organisation that can be a source of competitive advantage. Value is created by time, experience, knowledge and abilities.

HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

A strategic approach to managing those people issues that are critical to the organisation achieving its strategic objectives. It requires support from systems that can analyse, measure and evaluate how the organisation's people policies and practices are creating value.

HUMAN RESOURCES INFORMATION SYSTEM (HRIS)

A computerised system that enables an organisation to acquire, store, manipulate, analyse, retrieve and distribute information about its employees. It includes a single database or set of linked databases, and is generally associated with the back-end transactional and administrative tasks. It must be able to share data with the more strategic applications.

TALENT

Those individuals who can make a difference to organisational performance, either through their immediate contribution or in the longer term by demonstrating the highest levels of potential. (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development)

TALENT MANAGEMENT

The systems and processes for attracting, identifying, developing, engaging with, retaining and deploying talent. Originally referring the top single digit percentage of performers, talent management is increasingly being used to describe an overall system that encompasses career development for all employees, succession planning for senior staff and performance management for all.

SOFTWARE AS A SERVICE (SAAS)

A business model in which a single set of application software is hosted by a vendor or service provider partner and made available to multiple customers over the internet. Payment is usually through a monthly 'rental' for each user. The objective is to reduce costs and complexity, whilst increasing functionality and reliability.

JENNY BARRETT

CONSULTANT AT MORSE,
A BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY
CONSULTANCY.



Organisations often simply look to train people up to be replacements for a specific job, because that is what they have always done. However software can provide information that can help them to manage succession planning more effectively and improve their employees' readiness for a move up into a range of different roles within your organisation. These may be posts that currently exist within the organisation, or new roles that could be created in the future as the organisation responds to changes in the business environment.

Organisations must not use succession planning software just to identify a few potential replacements for current incumbents of key positions in the organisation. Instead, the full power of succession planning software should be used to identify the skills required to move the business forward, identify those employees who have the potential to meet the future needs of the organisation and help them to realise that potential. In this way, the succession planning system will help to retain talented employees within the organisation and use them to drive your organisation forwards in achieving its strategic objectives in a fast-changing world.

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Keeping the all sorts in line and on target

The world's largest confectionery company employs over 70,000 people, all busy making and selling a kaleidoscope of famous brands from Cadbury's Dairy Milk chocolate to Dr Pepper and Bassett's Liquorice Allsorts. They do it in virtually every country of the globe, giving Cadbury Schweppes a giant-sized administrative headache.

With a product range that is literally as diverse as a packet of allsorts how on earth do you keep everybody in harmony? For the corporation to stay focused on driving growth and improving its efficiency it was vitally important everybody was pulling in the same direction; the need was to find ways of enforcing standards that were internationally consistent without creating a bureaucratic nightmare that reduced senior managers to form-filling automata -more Willy Wonka than key players in a globally competitive 21st Century organisation.

Part of the solution has been found by adopting flexible and very powerful on-line performance management tools.

The aim, in management jargon, was to "promote the alignment and cascade of objectives with clear linkage to business goals."

In other words to make sure everybody was singing from the same song sheet. However, with a deadly serious objective because such a system would prove the only sure way to track and monitor the business efficiently and to ensure that it was complying with all of the management and legislative requirements made on it.

Why SuccessFactors?

Cadbury Schweppes chose SuccessFactors because it could provide a quick, flexible solution in multiple languages. One that had the capability to expand when required.

The system was introduced in 10 languages, covering 96 per cent of the target audiences. The SuccessFactors solution allowed the essential elements of the Cadbury

Schweppes to be maintained and a company "look and feel" to the system while the modular design of the technology allowed further development that would eventually bring all people processes into a single system.

Business Results

Today, 11,000 Cadbury Schweppes managers in Europe, North America, South America,



Asia and the Pacific are using the system, with more languages due to be added soon.

It enables them to ensure that individual objectives are properly aligned to company performance targets and that the cascade of corporate goals is properly adhered to.

And there have been other benefits, including an increased focus on development discussions between colleagues and a building of commitment.

It has also been much easier to apply global performance ratings consistently while the reporting and analysis of data has become easier, leading to better decision making and tighter compliance support.

"We have succeeded in simplifying our performance management process while also reducing administration.

We can now focus on deriving more value from the tools it gives us of feedback, coaching and development without having to worry about the mechanics."

Julia Freeman, People Capability and Process director, Cadbury Schweppes. SuccessFactors: a superior choice SuccessFactors helps organisations achieve their objectives of rapidly aligning, developing, motivating and rewarding their workforces.

This is achieved through the delivery of world-class applications that drive organisational alignment, workforce performance and bottom-line results to the complete satisfaction of all customers.

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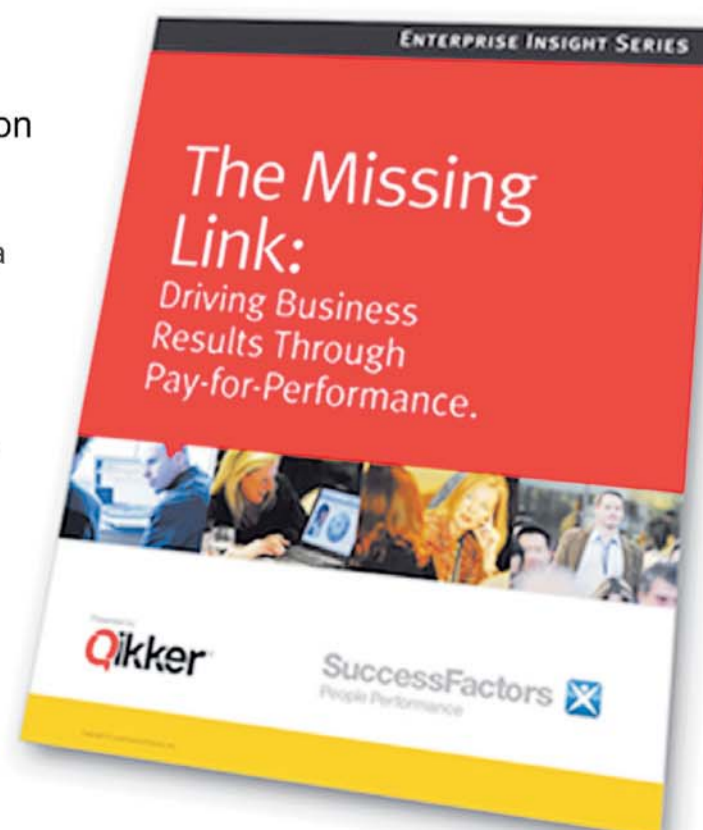
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- How to ensure pay-for-performance will be successful in your business
- 3 key steps to build a pay-for-performance culture in your business

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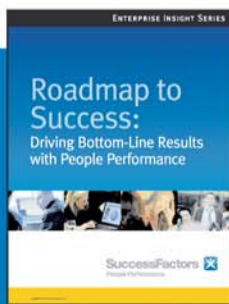
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