

7 Digital Trends to Watch in The HR Field

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Digital trends in HR are the integrations of digital technologies into all areas of HR services and processes through the use of social, mobile, analytics and cloud technologies. These are all about the people in an effective, efficient and future-friendly way, changing how the people operate and delivering value to the clients (Jehna, 2019). The digital transformation is imperative for all businesses such that every business needs to take it seriously if they want to survive [the future of work](#). John Marcante, CIO of Vanguard, points this out, as well: “Just look at the S&P 500. In 1958, U.S. corporations remained on that index for an average of 61 years, according to the American Enterprise Foundation. By 2011, it was 18 years. Today, companies are being replaced on the S&P approximately every two weeks. Technology has driven this shift, and companies that want to succeed must understand how to merge technology with strategy.” (Enterprisersproject.com, 2020).

Today, with the experts consistently warning us about the opportunities and consequences that artificial intelligence, robotics, and other technologies bring in the industries, it is crucial to embrace the digital transformations and watch out for all digital trends in the HR field. It is clear that times have changed when we look at our current workplaces and everything going on it is evident that now there is a relentless acceleration of technology impacting our work, the employers and the employees. To set yourself up for success you have to watch out for the following seven digital trends in the HR field:

1. Artificial Intelligence



Artificial intelligence is the intelligence demonstrated by machines which can meaningfully improve people's lives and everyone who has access to it. Technological developments in artificial intelligence, machine learning and analytics are going so fast and there are now a lot of AI applications in various HR functions. Some of the HR functions where AI has transformed an HR service is in recruitment. The talent acquisition experience is widely automated and this has made the process more efficient, however, it does not address everything. As recruiters and HR professionals there need to really embrace the change AI brings to the HR field, despite how many times we fail, try to figure out things and eventually get comfortable with it.

2. People Analytics



People analytics, also known as HR analytics, is a method of analytics that helps managers and executives make decisions about their employees or workforce. It applies technology, statistics and expertise to large sets of people data which results in better management and business decisions for an organisation. People analytics is a new domain for most HR departments that organisations are using to better drive the return on their investments in people. It is now a must-have which is done using smart analyst software such as R, Power BI to generate Business Intelligence reports etc.

3. IoT



The internet of things is a system of interrelated computing devices, mechanical and digital machines, objects, animals or people that are provided with unique identifiers and the ability to transfer data over a network without requiring human-to-human or human-to-computer interaction. It is a form of cloud computing that is here to stay which has increased over the past years. The majority of the organisations are now realising the advantages of cloud computing and they have started to make the transition. Cloud computing means staff can access applications anywhere and at any time which often means better data protection as well!

4. Remote workforce



The support of flexible work culture is increasing vastly with HR departments in other organisations offering flexible work policies allowing employees to leverage on compressed workweeks, flexible hours and telecommuting. Others have innovated new ways to cultivate digital collaboration tools at work such as Slack. This is being implemented and will soon be the norm for the majority of the organisations whether remote, distributed or in office. In the US alone, 9 million employees worked from home at least half of the time the past year (AIHR Digital, 2020). This is what the 21st-century employees want – to work remotely at least part of the time which also increases employee satisfaction, which is good for employee morale.

5. Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality



Augmented reality and virtual reality can have various applications in HR. For instance, virtual reality can be used to improve the recruitment process by giving candidates a realistic preview of the organisation and the job. Both augmented reality and virtual reality can be used for training and such applications are actually ground-breaking!

6. Employee experience



The idea of employee engagement is huge with organisations eager to have their employees more involved with their organisation on every level. Employees want more experience therefore organisations should focus on creating a whole new environment or adjusting their current environment on engagement, performance, and culture. Economists estimate that a lack of engagement at work costs the U.S. economy \$550 billion annually. This is a huge challenge in which HR should leverage online

software and tools to continuously track their employees' moods, get feedback and to celebrate their achievements. This is mostly caused by the millennials which are currently two-thirds of the total workforce.

7. Gig Economy



The Gig Economy is a labour market characterised by the prevalence of short-term contracts or freelance work, as opposed to permanent jobs. It is a free market in which temporary jobs are so common and organisations contract with independent workers for short term projects. Research has shown that the volume of employees who have worked by telecommuting has risen to 44%, up from 39% in 2012. Having flexible work provisions will drive a firm's employer value proposition, expand the candidate talent pool and is a great way of retaining highly valued employees.

These seven digital trends show how new technologies are changing our workplaces making us more productive and connecting lots of people on a global level. Despite organisations having challenges in making the transition possible, they are trying to adopt these digital trends that are a must-have to set themselves up for success. It is evident that HR is indeed innovating the way we work for the better!

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