

14–15 May 2018 / Hilton Sydney, Australia / gartner.com/ap/hr

Q&A with Aaron McEwan Advisory Leader



Q How critical is it for HR to approach employees as consumers with the empowerment of digitalization (i.e., changing how HR diagnoses workforce needs, designs solutions, and delivers them to ensure a high quality experience with HR)?

A All employees are also consumers and companies like Uber, Netflix and Amazon have made incredibly successful businesses from focusing almost obsessively on removing the most frustrating parts of the customer experience. Whether it's exchanging cash when you get out of a taxi, being limited by when and where you watch your favourite TV shows or needing to travel to different physical stores to buy products. They are also focused on delivering a heavily personalized service, one that understands them as unique individuals rather than customer segments and tries to learn more and more about them in order to predict what they want before they even know they want it. As consumers, employees are being conditioned to expect this from any organization that they interact with, including their employer. So, it's absolutely critical for HR to approach employees as consumers and to obsessively focus on removing the most frustrating aspects of coming to work whilst increasingly treating them as individuals with unique preferences and needs.

Q How can adopting HR technology assist with automating the transactional work that HR staff currently do?

A One of the things we know from our extensive research into HRBP performance is that when HR teams are able to focus on delivering strategic impact, they can influence revenue and profit outcomes by 7% and 9% respectively. Unfortunately they are often prevented from delivering this impact because they are dragged into operational issues and routine administrative tasks that add little value. Adopting technology that empowers managers and employees to self-serve their day to day HR needs frees up HR teams to focus on driving strategic talent outcomes like sourcing and attracting critical talent, improving employee performance and building future leadership capabilities. Of course, if the technology is also able to intelligently analyze big data sets and predict things like attrition risks and productivity bottlenecks, this empowers HR teams to deliver business intelligence to the organization and ultimately improve decision making.

Q How can the adoption of HR technology enable our function to deliver a better HR experience?

A The most powerful way that HR technology can deliver a better HR experience is to make interacting with HR as effortless as possible and enable employees to engage with HR processes when and how they wish. This means removing obvious frustrations and unnecessary processes that get in the way of employees doing their jobs. The most obvious candidate here is multiple sign ons. When an employee has to remember multiple passwords for different HR systems (one for submitting leave, another for completing self-reviews, etc.), not only is it frustrating, it's inefficient and takes them away from doing meaningful work. So too when we ask them to complete lengthy questionnaires to collect engagement data, or force them to sit through hours of compliance training at their desks that could have been completed on a mobile device between other tasks. The more that HR technology resembles consumer grade tablets, mobiles, apps and the type of effortless experience they get from services like Netflix, the more likely they will see HR as an enabler of their success, rather than a compliance function that takes them away from their work.

3 ways
to register

Web: gartner.com/ap/hr **Email:** apac.registration@gartner.com **Phone:** +61 2 8569 7622

ReimagineHR 2018

14–15 May 2018 / Hilton Sydney, Australia / gartner.com/ap/hr

 **CEB**
is now **Gartner**.



Q What steps can be taken to overcome the notion that there are HR initiatives that cannot be pursued without a major technology investment first?

A This is a common fallacy and one that comes up again and again when I speak with HR teams about improving their talent analytics capability. “We can’t xxx until we get our new HRIS system.” Or, “We just don’t have the data quality to make informed decisions about xxx.” One of the stories that I’ll often share is about a very large retail organization – typical bricks and mortar retailer – that was experiencing significant staff turnover during their busiest and what should have been their most profitable sales periods. An examination of historical engagement data didn’t turn up anything helpful. Then one of their HRBPs suggested that each store place a box

beside the punch out clock so that each staff member could write down whether they were “engaged”, “not engaged” or “disengaged” and anonymously drop it in to the box when they clocked out at the end of their shift. This is by no means a sophisticated technology solution, but within two weeks the HR team was able to identify not only the stores that were having a problem but the shifts and managers that were causing the turnover. As it turns out, some managers prevented staff from swapping shifts with each other and required written approval by management. When your busiest sales periods coincide with national holidays that are about family, this type of inflexibility just wasn’t working. HR was able to intervene and the problem was alleviated in a matter of days.

Hear more critical HR insights for your key initiatives at ReimagineHR, 14–15 May 2018, in Sydney

Strategically timed to help with the annual planning season, ReimagineHR will **address your mission-critical priorities with insights to save time and make better decisions**. The conference will help you to improve the effectiveness of your Human Resources function, create a high-performing culture, lead through volatility, build your leadership bench, and more. The opportunity to learn directly from CEB, now Gartner advisors and to hear their research come to life is unlike any other.

“For me the value of being members was reaffirmed by the conference. There was a great feeling of community and being part of a strong, supportive and interested network. The advantages of having access to great quality information and the absolute up to the moment thinking are immense”

Julia Smith, Chief Human Resources Officer, TAFE Queensland
2017 ReimagineHR attendee

“73% of CEOs expect HR to implement change faster than they did three years ago”

Web: gartner.com/ap/hr **Email:** apac.registration@gartner.com **Phone:** +61 2 8569 7622

 **#GartnerHR**