Technology and **HR Functions**

▪ Manoj Pandey

There is no denying the fact that today's environment, be it business or home, is technology driven. All Traditional businesses are adding 'E-commerce' and/or 'Digital Marketing' as another means of growing their business by attracting the e-Generation (the Millennials & Centennials). In this process of digitization, the HR function has also adopted various 'technologies'. These technologies range from standalone systems to an integrated HCM, engaging Social Media. At the same time, HR as a function has also evolved from a mere 'Support Function' to being a 'Strategic Business Partner'; where the 'Technologies' have played a significant role in enabling this transition. Also to attract the best-in-class talent, every single organisation needs to adopt the best practices and implementation of the same can't remain unaffected by contemporary technologies. In a nutshell, since HR is dealing with people who are getting hugely affected by Technology trend, the effective management of those resources puts HR under stress to adopt new ways.

New technologies

Now one might wonder as to why the recent attention to new technologies and how the future of HR can be related so much to them, especially since various ERP based HCM have been in existence for quite some time. The answer is the growing awareness among all levels of employees, reduced cost of the technology and ease of implementation which has enabled mid-size, small size and growing businesses also to invest more on technology.

In recent years, cloud based systems and the related 'Software as a Service' (SaaS) products have witnessed phenomenal growth. In the field of Human Resources, although Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems still have a dominant market position, revenue growth of SaaS solutions demonstrates that this trend is reversing. HR SaaS solutions have become an integral part of the HR applications landscape; they cover almost all HR processes such as recruitment, talent management, Performance Management, Learning Management, Employee Self Services, and

Surveys & Analytics. The emergence of many new players and recent takeovers as well as investments of PE confirms that SaaS is here to stay. ERP based HRM are robust but affordability of the same for mid and small size organisations is a question mark. Low entry cost of cloud based systems, followed by low operational cost with ease of implementation, is making cloud based systems popular day by day.

Many mid-size companies like ours had faced issues with the workforce who are still not tech savvy or are not required to use computers for their day-to-day work. Training these employees to use such technologies and providing them access at least to a common computer is essential for the success of HRM. Availability of Mobile App for key HR processes is also helpful. The awareness of technology is increasing among the employees, thanks to the Digital India Initiative and the presence of tech savvy kids in their homes. Another challenge which HR people may face while implementing HRMS is the redundancy of certain jobs and people. This needs to be handled cautiously.

Judicious usage

The contribution of cloud-based systems in the field of Human Resources has significantly changed the way HCM is perceived. This represents an opportunity in terms of quality of service, process streamlining and cost reduction. Businesses, if they have not already done so, must examine the maturity of their organization and assess whether it would be beneficial to migrate all or part of their HCM to the cloud. Given the impact for the HR business, CIOs and CHROs need to assess the influence in terms of organisation and consider the other related implications of the same. Also an integrated approach to cover HR and related processes will ensure success of the overall initiative.

One of the most important contributions of Technology to the HR function is its capability to put predictive analytics. This enables Businesses to make right and quick decisions. A user of such HR solution with the appropriate security rights is able to produce reports without anybody else's input, with the advantage that information is available immediately. The business partner dimension of the HR function can be enhanced many times through the ability to configure the tool to provide the right information for business decisions involving human factor. The other future aspects of HR technology can be derived by having employee at the heart of HCM and it is also vital for talent management. HR must have a clear picture of the employees' development potential and aspirations to better identify sources of recruitment, development policies and HR-related services.

Begin with the end in mind; do not digitize all the HR processes for the sake of doing it. We are all human; in the race for technological superiority, we should not forget the core human factor. Technology is supposed to make things easy for humans and not for replacing them everywhere. Certain Key processes like Entry/Exit Interviews, Reward & Recognition, and Greeting Employees on their Birthdays/Anniversaries and such occasions, Grievance handling, etc. cannot be done effectively without personal interactions. We may use Technology for such processes, limiting ourselves to using tools for recording data and analytics.

[The author Manoj Pandey is Head-HR at Ador Welding Limited.]