

Navigating the shift

Redefining HR roles, structures & processes to combat burnout

Amidst the ever-changing landscape of work, HR professionals are facing a mass of new challenges. Over the past four years, the HR realm has weathered significant storms, from the disruptive effects of the COVID-19 pandemic to the seismic shifts toward remote work and the constant pressure to secure top talent. These challenges have led to potential understaffing, increased responsibilities, and, most worryingly, burnout.

Mitigating HR burnout, rethinking roles & structures

As organisations strive to adapt to these shifting work environments, HR professionals find themselves at the forefront of managing change, the relentless pursuit of talent acquisition and safeguarding employee well-being.

Research from Mental Health UK found that 20% of workers needed to take time off work due to stress in the past year as long-term sickness absence reaches a record high. The research found significant factors contributing to burnout include a high or increased workload or volume of tasks and working beyond contracted hours.

Brian Dow, chief executive of Mental Health UK, said: “Simply put, the UK is rapidly becoming a burnt-out nation, and a worrying number of people are taking time off work due to poor mental health caused by stress.”

This surge in demands has resulted in a concerning rise in burnout among HR teams. To address this issue and ensure the sustainability of HR functions, organisations must prioritise the overhaul of roles and structures within the HR department.

Redefining responsibilities

HR professionals often juggle a myriad of responsibilities, from recruitment and onboarding to employee relations and performance management. Given the mounting workloads and burnout risks, organisations must reassess and reallocate these responsibilities strategically.

This may involve streamlining processes, automating routine tasks, and reallocating resources to focus on high-impact initiatives like employee development and enhancing EX.

Crafting roles aligned with organisational strategy

Effective HR functions play a pivotal role in driving organisational success by aligning talent management practices with broader strategic objectives. However, traditional HR roles may not always align seamlessly with evolving organisational needs. To tackle this challenge, organisations should consider redesigning HR roles to better support strategic priorities such as diversity and inclusion, remote workforce management, and digital transformation.

By aligning HR roles with organisational strategy, HR professionals can contribute more effectively to business outcomes while finding greater fulfilment in their work.

Shifting away from traditional structures

Traditional hierarchical structures within HR departments can stifle agility and innovation, impeding the department's ability to respond effectively to changing needs. To foster greater flexibility and collaboration, organisations should explore alternative structures such as matrix or agile frameworks. These structures promote cross-functional collaboration, empower employees to take ownership of projects, and facilitate faster decision-making.

By breaking down silos and fostering a culture of continuous improvement, organisations can create an environment where HR professionals feel empowered to innovate and thrive.

What's now for recruitment?

As organisations grapple with the need to revamp processes, recruitment strategies must adapt to ensure HR can operate more efficiently and effectively. The crux of this evolution lies in embracing emerging trends and leveraging HR technology as a facilitator rather than an obstacle.

Prioritise employer branding – it's no longer optional; it's essential for attracting top talent. Crafting a compelling Employer Value Proposition (EVP) showcases what the organisation offers employees, fostering transparency and attracting candidates aligned with the company's values.

Invest in recruitment marketing - to amplify employer branding efforts, reaching potential candidates through targeted campaigns across various platforms. From engaging job ads to compelling content marketing and social media campaigns, recruitment marketing enhances brand visibility and attracts quality candidates.

Enhance Candidate Experience - every interaction with a candidate influences their perception of the organisation. Streamlining the application process, maintaining clear communication, and providing timely feedback contribute to a positive candidate experience, regardless of the outcome.

Leverage hiring managers and teams - harness the influence of hiring managers and their teams as advocates for the recruitment process. Encouraging them to share job postings, participate in recruitment marketing efforts, and provide insights into roles can expand the talent pool and enhance candidate engagement.

Nurture talent communities - cultivate relationships with potential candidates through talent communities, facilitating ongoing communication and engagement. By providing valuable information and maintaining consistent communication, talent communities strengthen the candidate pipeline and improve retention.

Embrace automation - HR technology, including candidate relationship management systems (CRM), streamlines recruitment processes, from identifying potential candidates to scheduling interviews. Automation enhances efficiency and effectiveness while reducing administrative burdens.

Maintain the human touch - while automation is valuable, it's essential to balance technology with human interaction. Personalised communication, courteous feedback, and acknowledging every candidate's effort humanise the recruitment process, fostering positive candidate experiences and maintaining brand reputation.

By implementing these strategies, HR can navigate today's dynamic recruitment landscape, attracting and retaining top talent amidst evolving challenges and opportunities within the organisation.

Building a resilient HR framework

It's imperative to take decisive action to combat HR burnout. This necessitates a comprehensive strategy that encompasses a range of measures aimed at restructuring roles and frameworks within the HR domain.

By redistributing tasks, ensuring alignment with organisational objectives, and exploring innovative structural models, organisations can cultivate a resilient HR function that not only safeguards employee well-being but also propels organisational achievement.

This proactive approach not only addresses immediate concerns but also establishes a foundation for long-term sustainability and success.

Partner with us

Redefining HR strategies is not just a necessity; it's an opportunity for organisations to prioritise their people alongside their stakeholders and customers. How each company embraces this moment can profoundly influence its reputation as an employer, both within and outside its walls, for years to come.

Partner with us to shift perspectives and unlock the advantages of fostering organisational culture change through strategic alignment. Let's create a brighter future together.