

Unpacking the integrated talent management framework - part 2

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In this second part of our two-part series, we will explore current trends and future considerations in talent management, shedding light on the ever-evolving nature of this essential business function.



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21st Century recently ran a niche TM Survey across the State-Owned enterprise sector. Whilst this represents a very defined market audience, the following trends were evident:

- TM is considered vital for the success of dynamic and forward-looking organisations, but despite this, it appears difficult to implement successfully. Organisational maturity is a key factor in successful implementation. Where an organisation is not ready for such a big change management process and/or poor buy-in and consultation, the likelihood of success is limited. Similarly, if an organisation does not have a well-defined EVP aligned with its values, actions, and policies success, the organisation will experience challenges in implementing talent management.
- The elements that seem to require the most attention are retention strategies, career paths and succession management, since these are the more complex elements to implement. It may be worth following a phased approach and implementing these elements later, once the more accessible elements (low-hanging fruits) are embedded within an organisation.

- At least 50% of the sample did not engage in workforce planning, despite the strategic alignment to future skills requirements and fit necessary for business sustainability.
- Many organisations compete for critical and scarce talent, and trending recruitment mechanisms are essential for timely and cost-effective recruitment. Effective and timely induction programmes are non-negotiable for on-boarding new employees and making them productive and engaged in the shortest time possible.
- Learning and development (L&D) programmes are essential for ensuring that employees bridge skills gaps for current and future organisational roles. Purposefully used assessment tools can significantly aid this process and complement personal development programmes (PDPs), ensuring employee development and growth accountability. Where budgets are constrained, or L&D activities must be focused to ensure success, leadership and pipeline development programmes would probably be the most important considerations.
- Whilst PM is critical to achieve a performance-driven culture, it tends to fail where there is little management buy-in and consistency of implementation. This is often addressed with PM training of both employees and managers. Accurate PM data remains essential for informed and defensible decisions regarding salaries, incentives and bonuses, training, and succession planning.
- Succession committees are key drivers of successful succession management programmes, provided they are held accountable, monitor and follow up on succession plans and receive management support. Succession planning best practice is typically reserved for key and core skills, to avoid becoming diluted when it is applied across the board and is likely to create expectations that are difficult to manage.
- Whilst career pathing is a very useful career management tool, it is challenging to implement in an organisation where other basic HR processes are not in place and is probably best implemented at a later stage of a TM plan once other core processes are working well.
- A total reward approach to retention strategies supports the dual financial and non-financial rewards approach. It is also more likely to succeed in an organisation with a well-defined EVP. In fact, this is probably a precursor to a successful retention strategy.



Unpacking the integrated talent management framework - part 1

Antoinette Crafford and Belinda O'Regan 31 Oct 2023



Future trends

Talent management is an ever-evolving field that needs to adapt to changes in the workforce, technology, and the extremely competitive global business landscape. The Covid pandemic, technological advances, macro-economic factors, and other global issues impact how organisations traditionally manage, engage, and motivate talent. If there was a war on talent before, it will become even more intense in the future.

The Covid pandemic illustrated that remote work is possible and getting up and running was quick and effective in many industries and roles. Now, as memories fade, some organisations once again require a full return to the office.

The issue is that talent has experienced that remote work is possible, and in many cases, they preferred it. It cost talent less as commuting costs were reduced, they could spend more time with family, not wasting time in traffic or commuting, and felt trusted.

Although a fully remote model does not work in all cases, organisations that do not adapt to at least a hybrid way of work for

roles that make sense for, will find themselves on the back foot going forward. Talent management will need to adapt to managing remote and distributed teams. This includes strategies for remote onboarding, performance management, and employee engagement.

Beyond remote work, talent management will need to consider different work models such as compressed workweeks, job sharing, and sabbaticals. This flexibility can attract and retain talent and improve work-life balance.

Larger talent pool

Organisations embracing remote work models also expand the regions where they can source talent. Global talent sourcing is becoming a vital element of some organisation's talent strategies, whereby they increasingly source from around the world.

This is not without its complications, though, as they must also consider international employment laws, cultural differences, tax implications, and so on.

Added to the opportunity of hiring in expanded geographies, the organisation's talent management programmes should consider the use of contingent workers and how they engage and integrate them into the organisation's culture.

Using a contingent workforce allows organisations to scale their human resource capacity quickly in the event of new projects and opportunities without incurring the cost of a heavy payroll.



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More than money

If we look at the talent themselves now, we see a move towards a desire for more fulfilling work, with a definite need to have aligned values. A compelling and ethical employer brand will likely be a key differentiator for talent when deciding which organisations to join.

A key consideration for organisations is diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) when defining their brand and values. Employees are looking for organisations that embrace diversity and are not biased in their employment practices. A robust and well-defined DEI programme and strategies to create diverse and inclusive workplaces will likely be a key factor in talent management.

Talent management must also be agile and focus on the implications of fast-paced technological changes for the currency of their employees' knowledge. With some industries now valuing skills over traditional degrees, keeping up with new advancements would mean a real investment in continuous learning to remain relevant.

Data-informed choices

Finally, as HR, we need to make sure that we truly embrace data-driven decision-making when considering the impact and value of talent management programmes. Data analytics will be one tool to inform decisions, but AI-driven tools need to be considered when predicting trends, identifying high-potential employees, and creating relevant talent programmes.

The use of AI itself, including the ethical use of such tools, will need to be incorporated into organisations' policies and procedures to manage their use and application. Finally, HR departments need to be more agile, and their programmes need to be able to respond quickly to changing business needs and workforce requirements.

Conclusion

Predicting the future of the most effective talent management approaches is getting more difficult. Organisations are advised to constantly review their approaches and update their programmes iteratively. Agility and flexibility will be key in the future; those organisations that do not keep up with the ever-changing landscape will not only be left behind but will most definitely not be even on the battlefield to compete in the war on talent.

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