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SEPTEMBER 2022

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**HR LEADERSHIP
SERIES LIVE:
WHAT'S AHEAD
FOR HR LEADERS
IN 2023?**

**HOW
ORGANISATIONS
CAN SUCCEED IN A
MULTI-CHANNEL
ENVIRONMENT**



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Dear *HRM Magazine Asia* readers,

While many HR and business leaders recognise the correlation between organisational success and a strong work culture, it does not make creating the latter any less challenging in today's constantly evolving world of work.

In a multi-channel work environment where some employees have fully returned to the office while others continue to work remotely or on a hybrid arrangement of both, organisations need to have a shared vision across all work environments to create a cohesive culture, says Tim Sackett, President, HRU Technical Resources.

In this issue, we speak with Sackett about the importance of buy-in from employees when it comes to building a successful digital culture, and the challenges leaders are facing in delivering work flexibility.

He highlights, "For so long, HR has tended to want policies that treat everyone the same. That's a major hurdle in giving employees flexibility."

It is perhaps a flexibility to embrace change themselves, that will stand HR leaders in good stead as they begin to define their priorities in anticipating what will fundamentally shape work in 2023.

With the discussion on flexible work framing the larger issue of attracting and retaining the best talent, what are the next steps for HR leaders to take?

To provide HR leaders with key insights into how they can build critical strategies that prioritise hybrid leadership and

change management skills, HRM Asia is proud to organise the inaugural HR Leadership Series: Live, which will be held at the Marina Bay Sands Singapore on Thursday, September 8.

The not-too-be-missed in-person event will feature speakers such as Gaston Carrion, Strategy & Consulting, Managing Director, T&O/Human Potential APAC Lead & Global Employee Experience Lead, Accenture; Low Peck Kem, CHRO & Advisor (Workforce Development), Public Service Division, Prime Minister's Office, Singapore; David Hendrick Jr, Director, People Development, Centre for Healthcare Innovation, Tan Tock Seng Hospital; and Dr Bob Aubrey, Founder & Chair of the Advisory Board, ASEAN Human Development Organisation (AHDO), who will discuss the key shifts and priorities that will shape the workplace in 2023, including trends that are driving the best practices in attracting and retaining top talent, hybrid leadership skills, and building agility in the workplace.

HRM Asia invites you to join us in Singapore for HR Leadership Series: Live and be part of the discussion on how Asia's HR community can redefine the HR function and embark on a successful work transformation journey in 2023.

Shawn Liew

SHAWN LIEW,
Senior Journalist, HRM Asia

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MARINA BAY SANDS SINGAPORE

Gaston Carrion
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SINGAPORE

SINGAPORE FIRMS AND WORKERS URGED TO ADOPT GROWTH MINDSET



WITH EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES that are driving the creation and requirement of new jobs, Tan See Leng, Singapore's Manpower Minister, has encouraged both workers and employers to adopt a growth mindset to remain at the top of their fields.

He said, "Emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), blockchain, and big data, are driving the creation of new jobs that require new skills. These technologies also transform existing jobs throughout our entire economy."

JAPAN

EMPLOYEES OF SMES IN JAPAN TO BE PAID MORE

**TO RETAIN AND ATTRACT**

TALENT, 50.9% of SMEs in Japan have either implemented or plan to implement a raise in wages in fiscal year 2022, said the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI).

A JCCI survey revealed that the most common reason (91.4%) to increase wages was "recruitment, retention, and motivation of personnel".

Among companies currently holding back from raising wages, 76.9% gave uncertain business conditions and economic situation as their main reason for their stance and 44.1% said it was due to lack of visible improvement in business performance.

SOUTH KOREA

MAJORITY OF SOUTH KOREANS WANT TO PROLONG WORKING LIFE



AROUND 70% OF SOUTH KOREAN senior citizens said they want to continue working till the age of 73, a survey by Statistics Korea revealed. The figure was up 0.4 percentage points from the survey carried out a year earlier.

Some 57.1% said they wanted to earn enough for living expenses, and 34.7% said that they wanted to work so long as their health allowed, reports *The Korea Times*. Over 54% wanted to have full-time jobs, while 45.8% highlighted that they wanted to work part-time.



PHILIPPINES

MORE JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR DISABLED WORKERS IN THE PHILIPPINES



THE PHILIPPINES' DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (DOLE) plans to increase job opportunities for persons with disabilities (PWDs) across the public and private sector by increasing the quota for hiring under the category.

Currently, at least 1% of all positions in government agencies, offices, or corporations should be reserved for PWDs. Meanwhile, private firms with over 100 workers are encouraged to reserve at least 1% of all positions for PWDs.



INDIA

EMPLOYERS IN INDIA SUPPORT HYBRID WORK ARRANGEMENTS



NEARLY 53% OF EMPLOYERS prefer hybrid work arrangements for their employees, according to a survey by Awfis, which also revealed that close to 74% of employers are looking towards distributed workspaces as a strategy to shift from location-centric to people-centric workplaces.

Most offices in India have opened for employees to report to work on-site, with telecom and consulting sectors seeing 75-100% of their staff returning to offices. However, the IT and new technology sectors account for the lowest rate of employees returning to offices (0-25%).



MALAYSIA

MALAYSIA URGED TO COVER WORKERS' WAGES FOR MATERNITY LEAVE

THE MALAYSIAN EMPLOYERS FEDERATION (MEF) has urged the government to consider funding part of the cost for maternity and paternity leave through the social security system or the Employment Insurance System.

Once amendments to Malaysia's Employment Act take effect on September 1, private sector workers will be able to take maternity leave of 90 days, an increase from the previous 60-day duration.

Employers would have no choice but to implement the changes laid out in the provisions of the act, and that this would incur higher costs on behalf of the employer, said MEF.



GLOBAL

RETURN TO OFFICE COULD BE 'INEVITABLE,' SAYS FORMER LINKEDIN CHRO

EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES

could both benefit from a full-time return to the office, suggested Steve Cadigan, former CHRO of LinkedIn.

In particular, Gen Z employees and those in the lower range of the millennial age bracket will need a return to pre-pandemic norms to advance their careers. "Their sense of commitment to an organisation where they haven't met people in person, they haven't been around, is much less than the people who are spending time together as we were before," Cadigan told CNBC.

A return to the workplace will allow younger workers to nurture all-important relationships with colleagues and managers, he added.



US

JOB LEAVERS IN THE US ARE SWITCHING INDUSTRIES

ALMOST HALF (48%) of American workers who quit their jobs are pursuing new opportunities in different industries, according to a report by McKinsey.

Driving this trend are pandemic-induced burnout and better odds of securing a higher-paid role in a tight labour market. "More employers have opened up their aperture in order to meet the yawning talent gap they are facing," said Bonnie Dowling, one of the authors of the report. "They're prioritising skills over educational background or previous job experience, which is creating more opportunities across sectors for job-seekers."

McKinsey also reported that about 40% of US workers are considering quitting their current jobs in the next three to six months.



US

US WORKERS EXPERIENCING 'THE GREAT REGRET'

MORE THAN ONE-QUARTER of American workers who quit their jobs in the first five months of 2022 are reconsidering whether they made the right decision.

According to a study of more than 15,000 job seekers conducted by Joblist, an artificial intelligence (AI) job-search platform, more Americans now feel more urgency to find work amid signs that job-market conditions are poised for a downturn over the next six months.

42% of those who found a new job after quitting also say that it has not lived up to their expectations.



A stylized map of Europe is shown in a light green color against a dark teal background. Three callout lines originate from the map: one from the UK (top left), one from the Netherlands (middle left), and one from central Europe (bottom right). Each callout line ends in a small circle. The UK callout is connected to a text box with a red location pin icon. The Netherlands callout is connected to a text box with a red location pin icon and a house icon. The Europe callout is connected to a text box with a red location pin icon and a house icon.

UK

INFLATION OUTPACES PAY GROWTH IN THE UK

BETWEEN MARCH AND MAY this year, pay excluding bonuses in the UK was down 2.8% from a year earlier when adjusted for inflation.

This, reported the BBC, represents the fastest rate at which regular pay is falling since 2001.

Pay growth was much higher in the private sector than the public sector. From March to May, average total pay for the private sector was 7.2% higher than the same period last year, before taking inflation into account, according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The figure was 1.5% for the public sector.



NETHERLANDS

THE NETHERLANDS MOVES TO MAKE WORK FROM HOME A LEGAL RIGHT

DUTCH EMPLOYEES COULD

soon be given the option to work remotely on a permanent basis, after the Dutch parliament approved legislation to establish work from home as a legal right.

If given final approval by the Dutch Senate, the new law will mandate that employers consider employee requests to work from home, as long as their professions allow it.

This will make the Netherlands one of the first countries in the world to make work from home a legal right, although in Europe, Ireland has published a draft law that will give employees the legal right to request remote working.



EUROPE

EUROPE OFFERS THE BEST LOCATIONS FOR REMOTE WORK

GERMANY HAS BEEN NAMED by network security company NordLayer as the best place to work remotely from. Germany "successfully balances shortcomings in digital infrastructure with high standards in cybersecurity domains," according to NordLayer.

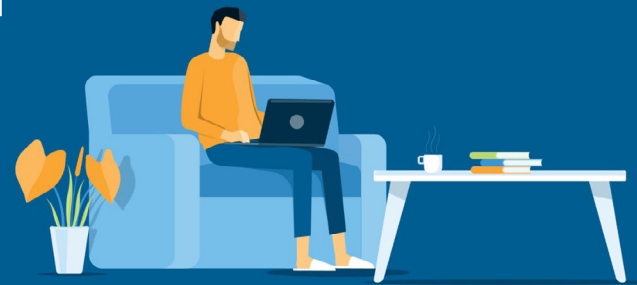
Of the 10 countries named in NordLayer's *Global Remote Work Index* as the best places for remote work, Denmark (2nd), Spain (4th), Lithuania (5th), Netherlands (6th), Sweden (7th), Estonia (8th), and France (10th) joined Germany as the top destinations for remote workers.

Breaking the European hegemony was the US, which was ranked third, and Singapore (9th), the only Asian representative in the Top 10 list.



HOW ORGANISATIONS CAN SUCCEED IN A MULTI-CHANNEL WORK ENVIRONMENT

BY SHAWN LIEW



When the only constant continues to be change, it is perhaps unsurprisingly that HR and business leaders are continuing to face a plethora of challenges in managing their workforce.

For example, some employees have now fully returned to the office, some continue to predominately work remotely, while others work on a hybrid arrangement of both. Within this multi-channel work environment, how can organisations build a cohesive digital culture?

Describing digital culture as the corporate vision and mission that is uniquely designed, delivered, and nurtured for a non-traditional work audience, Tim Sackett, President, HRU Technical Resources, tells HRM Magazine Asia, “Every single corporate culture is a combination of micro-cultures defined by function, location, and position, and so on. Digital culture then becomes three unique micro-cultures organisations must figure out how to support, grow, and combine into one organisational culture.”

“Because most of us have for so long been concentrating on our on-premises culture, we believe this is our real ‘culture’. In today’s work world, that will always fall short.”

To check if a cohesive culture exists, organisations need to ask themselves: Do you have a shared vision across all work environments?

Unfortunately, most employees do not even know what their organisation’s vision is, and this is only going to be exacerbated by the lengthening of digital and physical distances as employees move farther away from the office.

This calls for more reinforcement messages, as Sackett explains, “Leaders tend to get tired of hearing themselves clarify and expand upon their organisation’s vision, but the average employee does not. Contrarily, they want to hear from leaders more.”

“We saw this during COVID shutdowns where we had these great all-hands, weekly calls from leaders. They then became monthly affairs and now, most leaders stop doing them altogether, but employees loved them!”

The next step for leaders to take, he recommends, is take time to genuinely listen to every employee and understand the challenges they face and offer help. Specifically for remote employees, leaders need to help them feel more connected and not be excluded from the team.

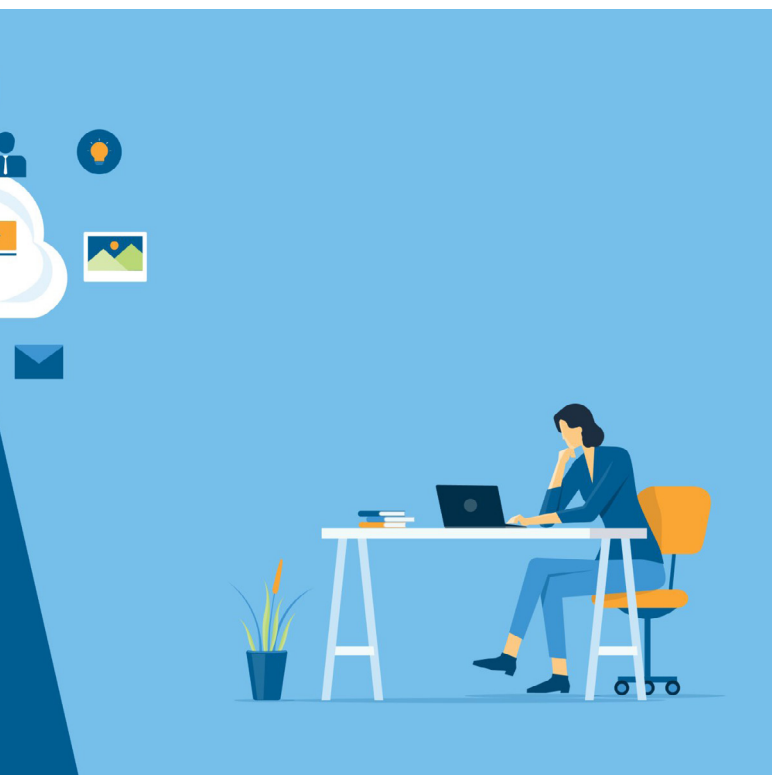
Lastly, a common and transparent measurement of high performance must be introduced to drive a cohesive culture, Sackett emphasises. “We love to say location doesn’t matter if we are performing. If that’s the case, let’s make that happen! We tend to have a much tighter culture when we know who’s performing well and who’s not, and when there is much less second guessing.”

Flexible work does not subscribe to a one-size-fits-all approach

While different organisations will have differing interpretations of hybrid work, high-performing organisations are those who see beyond hybrid work design to provide employees with the flexibility to effectively manage both their work and life requirements.

As employees seek more flexibility to decide when work or life takes priority on certain days, HR leaders can provide support by embracing change.

Sackett explains, “For so long, HR has tended to want policies that treat everyone the same. That’s a major hurdle in giving employees flexibility. Some employees might need flexibility to raise their children, some might need flexibility to manage their mental health, and others may need some flexibility to take classes to increase their skills. All of these will help them become more productive employees, but HR might see only one or two of these



“FOR SO LONG, HR HAS TENDED TO WANT POLICIES THAT TREAT EVERYONE THE SAME. THAT’S A MAJOR HURDLE IN GIVING EMPLOYEES FLEXIBILITY.”



examples as legitimate flexibility.”

HR also has an important role in helping managers understand that ‘flexibility’ is not a synonym for being unproductive and not meeting performance goals. Instead, it is about allowing each employee to produce great results with a little more freedom in how they do their best work.

While different organisations will meet with varying degrees of success, Sackett says, “The job of managers is to reward and praise those who thrive, and quickly help those who are failing to find a way they can have their flexibility but still be productive and valuable.”

For organisations that are making it mandatory for employees to return to the office, he suggests a rethink of how more effective ways can be found to lead people to better outcomes, including transparency in leadership.

“Most employees want to see their organisation succeed because they want to be part of a success story. So, yes, you might have to ask your employees to return to the office, but you should be stating the ‘why.’”

If the reason stems from a distrust that work is being done at home, organisations will lose their best employees. Conversely,

if the organisation is struggling financially and need employees to come into the office to collaborate more quickly and be more effective in the speed of execution, employees are likely to respond favourably if their importance to the organisation’s long-term success is explained to them.

Sackett continues, “They will also want to know, once we get past the storm, will we be allowed to continue the flexibility we enjoyed prior, and that answer should be ‘yes!’”

How data is driving change management and leadership

For leaders to fully embrace workplace flexibility, a contributing factor is likely to be increased productivity across various work environments.

Measuring productivity, however, requires the narrative around performance management to be changed, says Sackett. “Measuring productivity isn’t about micromanaging. It’s about driving outstanding performance on both an organisational and individual capacity. If you ask employees if they would like to be the highest, best performer at their company, they will say yes 100% of the time. Therefore, our performance management process and systems should be designed around helping each employee to be their best self and not about getting someone in trouble for failing at something.”

With the right performance management systems, hard measures of performance, as opposed to subjective measures, can be derived to determine if employees are thriving or failing. Leaders can then use the data generated to help employees thrive in the areas where they need help.

However, while HR is arguably more data-driven than ever before, Sackett is quick to point out that technology is merely the driver to affect change management and leadership. “The ease of exploring data through technology helps leaders manage change more effectively and efficiently. The key to all of this, is your employees must trust that leaders want to see them thrive and the job of the leader is to make that happen.”

Organisations face potential talent crunch in 2023

As a leading HR influencer, analyst, and commentator, it is perhaps not surprising that Sackett is already looking ahead to 2023 and how the landscape will look like for HR.

One key HR trend in 2023, he predicts, is how organisations can get or leverage talent when there is a scarcity of talent, especially in industrialised countries.

“Most industrialised countries are facing a crisis when it comes to not having enough humans to work in their organisations. There are many ways to impact this, but most organisations aren’t thinking long term around this issue.”

Sackett, who will also be joining HR Tech Festival Asia 2023 at a keynote speaker, adds, “Smaller picture, our HR technology is getting too complex when it should be getting easier to use for both HR and employees. In large enterprise organisations, internal mobility and the employee journey is taking hold. For the first time in the history, we also have the concept that HR is required to not just develop an employee to be a better worker, but also to consider employees outside of work and help them become better people.”

To hear more insights from Tim Sackett on key HR trends and workforce developments in 2023, join him at HR Tech Festival Asia 2023, which is taking place live in Singapore from May 10-11. **hrm**

Succession planning: The secret ingredient to retain top talent

There is not a business function that hit the spotlight more than the human resources department to help companies maintain operations since the start of the pandemic. With the third summer of COVID-19 upon us, new challenges continue to fall on their desks. In today's competitive market, HR leaders need to prioritise talent management efforts to attract, retain, and grow engaged high-performing teams. One key piece of this puzzle is succession planning. Although companies are doing a great job of putting policies into practice, their plans are not always translating into success.

In Ceridian's [2022 Executive Survey](#) of 2,000 leaders around the globe, 91% of Singapore-based respondents say their company uses succession planning, yet 2-in-3 (66%) suggest they often or always hire external candidates for leadership roles as opposed to promoting from within. Plus, many also indicate these succession plans are incomplete.

In Singapore, 87% of respondents use succession planning for senior leadership roles. This drops to 73% for critical technical experts, 61% for subject matter experts (SMEs), and 66% for people leaders.

Succession planning is more than ensuring adequate bench strength for an organisation's critical roles. In this climate, employers need to be prudent with how they are managing their own talent. Without an ongoing discussion around proper succession planning, business leaders can be left scrambling to fill the void when key team members depart. And when done correctly, it can lead to improved employee engagement, retention, and clarity of mission across the entire workforce.

In fact, Ceridian's 2022 Executive Survey found that 94% of Singapore-based leaders said their organisations are seeking boomerang talent – former employees – to fill job vacancies. With such disruptive and heightened pressure around talent acquisition, succession planning provides a clear opportunity for employers to fulfil

“Providing career paths and talent development for employees at all levels can help reduce turnover among your highest performers.”

these needs for their workers and boost employee retention while also bringing broader benefits to the business.

Let's explore what employers should avoid when building out an effective strategy.

Succession planning is not just an HR initiative

To much of our surprise, while companies have succession plans in place to protect their futures, these plans have not been impactful. As a result, some businesses experience lengthy vacancies for key leadership roles: half (51%) of Singapore-based respondents stated that these roles go unfilled for four months or longer.

While HR will play a central role in succession-planning strategies and initiatives, they cannot be solely responsible for its success. To be effective, it must be a company-wide initiative that is seen as an evolving process rather than words on a page.

Failing to prioritise roles across the organisation

In our Executive Survey findings, we witnessed a heavy focus on succession planning for senior leaders versus other types of roles. Succession plans should be broad and consider the entire organisation holistically. Providing career paths and talent development for employees at all levels can help reduce turnover among your highest performers, as well as in key subject matter expert and technical roles.

Not using succession-planning tools

Our Executive Survey revealed only half (52%) of respondents currently use technology to map talent or identify leaders. But succession planning should not be a subjective process. It should lead with a data-driven approach over intuition.

Companies should leverage technology to help with succession planning. The right tools can help leaders create coverage plans for key roles to reduce risk and help reduce regrettable turnover. It can help track readiness for promotions and support employees' ongoing development.

Succession-planning software, such as [Dayforce](#) offered by Ceridian, allows organisations to make more informed decisions about employee career paths based on performance, flight risk, compensation, and other essential data. It also helps keep succession planning top of mind, rather than only when a successor is needed.

Ultimately, to create effective succession plans with substance, business leaders need to follow three key rules: Invest in technology to proactively identify and develop employees to fill key roles before there is turnover; broaden the scope of succession planning beyond senior leadership to keep your business running smoothly; and track employee potential and readiness for promotion to help identify where employees are in their career paths.

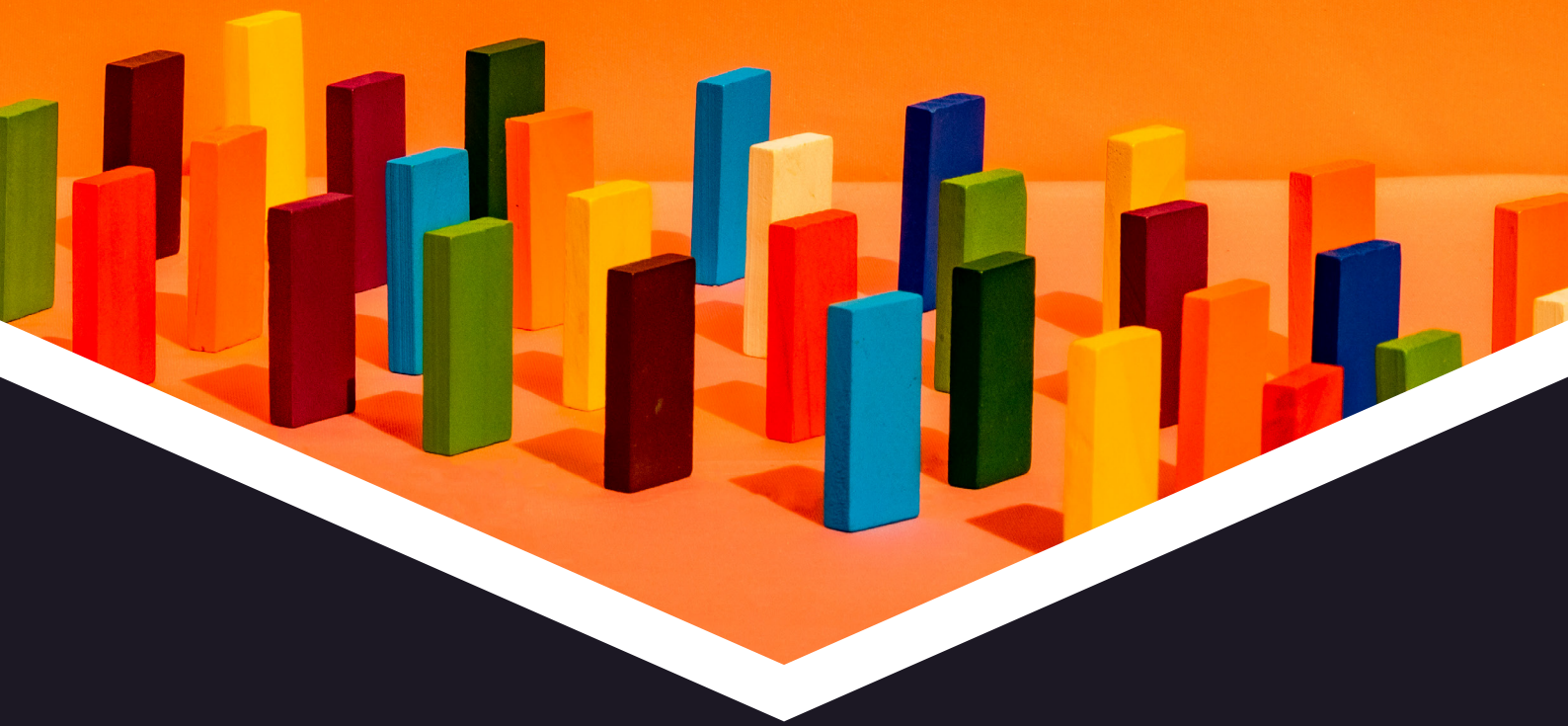
If the data from this year's Executive Survey tells us one thing, it is that leaders cannot know what tomorrow will bring, but they can be ready for it by preparing their people, leaders, and systems today. **hrm**



About the Author

Rob Squires is Vice President and Head of Sales for Asia and Japan, Ceridian

I need to manage a busy team,
juggle payroll, HR, and benefits -
and hire and retain the best
talent. Can a single system help
me get this chaos in order?



Done.

CERIDIAN

Adopting a people-centric approach to performance management

While many employees seek flexibility in when and where they work, should they worry that being away from the office will have an adverse impact on their performance evaluation?

An increased potential for bias in the performance management process is one of the challenges presented by flexible and hybrid work, acknowledges Dr Joel Davies, Senior People Scientist at Culture Amp.

For instance, recency bias can set in when managers base their evaluations of an employee on the most recent example of that employee's work that they can recall.

"Proximity bias can also come into play, whereby people place higher value on work they see or are directly aware of, and discount work they don't see for themselves," Dr Davies tells HRM Magazine Asia. "When we decrease the visibility of people's work by having them work from home more frequently, it can exacerbate the impact of many cognitive biases and reduce the perceived fairness of the performance management system."

The other challenge for effective performance management, is increased friction that can reduce the likelihood of important activities happening.

Dr Davies explains, "Regular development-focused manager 1:1s are a key component of any good performance management system and these tend to happen organically in an environment where managers and direct reports are co-located throughout the week and have visibility into each other's work."

When teams work remotely, these may not be as regularly scheduled and can be overly narrow in scope if clear agendas are not established, while many managers find it challenging to provide constructive feedback virtually.

"The increased discomfort and reduced rapport that comes with communicating virtually may lead to people not having these important discussions at all," Dr Davies cautions.

Organisations can overcome these challenges and more by having more rigorous and comprehensive performance

systems that mitigate against the impact of bias and reduce the amount of friction in performance processes.

People-focused approach to people management

Traditionally, performance management has focused heavily on employee evaluation, without enough attention being paid to the impact of the process on employees themselves.

Organisations need to adopt an approach that meets employees' most fundamental psychological needs, such as fairness, growth, certainty, and meaning. Dr Davies explains, "When these needs are met, people tend to be highly engaged and when they are unmet, engagement almost always suffers."

"Organisations should design performance management processes that have a positive impact on the employee experience, and not just be a tick-a-box exercise that most employees tolerate at best and loathe at worst."

Dedicated employee experience platforms, he adds, are designed with the end user in mind and remove as much bias as possible, giving employees more confidence in the fairness of evaluations.

"They are also designed to help employees identify development opportunities, meet their fundamental needs for growth and progress, and provide certainty around what is important in an employee's role and where they currently stand relative to where they want to be," Dr Davies adds.

Effective performance management can help retain talent

Over the next 12 months and beyond, employees will continue to expect more from their employers and organisations need to do whatever they can to hang to their best talent.

This will increase the need for a comprehensive and well-designed performance management system, Dr Davies predicts. "Good performance management can help address two of the main reasons that good people leave organisations: lack of growth and

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- ☐ Comprehensive analytics that provide actionable insights into the nature of

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development, and lack of fairness."

He also expects analytics engines to become more powerful and better at weeding out bias, which is essential to improving DEI in any organisation.

"Tools like Culture Amp are already going a long way to address this. However, new techniques are being developed that will identify systemic bias across an organisation, as well as identifying bias in individual evaluations to prompt corrective action," Dr Davies concludes. **hrm**



About the Author

Dr Joel Davies is an Organisational Psychologist and Senior People Scientist at Culture Amp.

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Redefining employee engagement with BI Worldwide

Employee engagement has traditionally been a priority for HR leaders. However, that model no longer applies in the workforce today. With a myriad of facets impacting the employee experience, everyone across the organisation has a part to play.

Additionally, while the pandemic may have transformed the way we work, the importance of employee engagement has only increased as organisations look to create a better work culture that reduces attrition and increases performance.

Successful employee engagement strategies recognise what is important to each individual employee and deliver a personalised experience, suggests Omar Hadoui, Managing Director, APAC, BI WORLDWIDE.

Speaking with HRM Magazine Asia, Omar says, “For example, blue-collar workers in the logistics industry are impacted by the pandemic differently than employees who sit in front of a desktop in the office. How do you successfully engage with both groups?”

Firstly, organisations must understand how employee loyalty has changed because of the pandemic.

“Before the pandemic, engagement was amplified by the fact that it was easier to encourage bonding through direct interaction,” says Omar.

“We then moved to a completely digital world with limited physical interaction. Engagement initiatives had to be developed or adjusted to fit communication platforms such as Zooms and Teams.”

Today, many organisations operate in a hybrid arrangement, including BI WORLDWIDE Singapore, where employees return to the office thrice a week on days of their own choosing.

Recognising that employees are fundamental to success, Omar devotes time outside of client engagement to look after his people and strategising a holistic employee value proposition (EVP) that can help nurture the right work environment.

“Nurturing and maintaining a strong company culture requires effort. Creating a company culture means spending time with your team and engaging in activities that stimulate a sense of belonging, eventually benefiting business results,” says Omar.

Touching on diversity and inclusion, he

laments how many organisations make the mistake of fulfilling diversity hires before trying to foster inclusivity.

Instead, he advocates hiring the right people for the job and prioritising inclusion from the get-go. “We build an environment where people feel safe and that they belong. This then attracts deep diversity.”

Within this inclusive work culture, the challenge is finding the best ways to motivate and communicate with employees.

Modern rules of employee engagement

As a 72-year-old global engagement agency, BI WORLDWIDE has helped companies in over 140 countries develop their EVP strategies and build thriving cultures. As employees redefine their priorities in life, it is more critical than ever to motivate employees and make them feel invested in the organisation’s mission and vision.

For instance, organisations should take a personal approach when engaging with employees. Omar explains, “You need to understand what is happening in employees’ lives and adopt different ways of talking to different employees, because everyone receives and reacts to information differently.”

“Managers can do more to bring teams together and celebrate employees’ achievements by magnifying their success. Every time someone in your team achieves something, how do you make them feel like they have achieved even more?”

The concepts of *Make It Personal*, *Unite Them*, and *Magnify Their Success* mentioned by Omar form part of BI WORLDWIDE’s 12 New Rules of Engagement, which identifies the engagement points that resonate best with employees.

Also including *Make Money a Non-Issue*, *Help Them Thrive*, *Realise Their Potential*, *Foster Belonging*, *Be Boldly Transparent*, *Give It Meaning*, *See Their Future*, *Let Them Lead*, and *Challenge Them*, these 12 factors allow

organisations to identify which are more important to their employees and provide a foundation to develop their EVP.

Leveraging the abilities and differing levels of involvement of each stakeholder, these new rules of engagement provide a foundation upon which managers, organisations as a whole, and employees alike can shape a positive experience.

BI WORLDWIDE’s solution, which blends technology, behavioural economics, as well as rewards and recognition, can then be deployed to help organisations build up their EVPs.

This solution, which BI WORLDWIDE calls corporate social media, hosts all the campaigns that are designed around the company’s values, mission, and business strategy.

“We design campaigns using more than 30 behavioural economics principles that produce the level of employee engagement required,” says Omar. “This could be around onboarding new employees, health and wellness, sustainability, or empowering women, for instance.”

Engaged employees are more likely to stay

Employee retention goes beyond remuneration and benefits — employees need to feel engaged and recognised too.

“We found that many organisations with over 10,000 employees still lack recognition programmes,” Omar notes. “These programmes are essential for creating meaningful points of engagement, thus fostering a safe and inclusive environment where employees can focus on their development and contributions.”

Nonetheless, he is encouraged by how more organisations recognise that remuneration, while important, is no longer sufficient to retain employees.

“More organisations are rethinking their recognition programmes and starting to understand what elements are essential. **hrm**

“Managers can do more to bring teams together and celebrate employees’ achievements by magnifying their success.”

OMAR HADOUI, MANAGING DIRECTOR, APAC, BI WORLDWIDE





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CLOUD-BASED HCMS: WHAT MAKES FOR SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATIONS?



Cloud-based human capital management (HCM) systems are a fundamental part of the HR technology market. Today, this market is worth more than US\$25 billion and is estimated to grow to almost \$46 billion by 2029.

HCMs were originally designed to manage payroll, employee record-keeping, time and attendance, and other transactional and compliance needs. They initially ran on mainframes or dedicated servers and required significant support teams to operate them. Therefore, the cost of ownership was quite high.

With the advent of cloud technology, solution providers made

long lists of promises, including faster implementations, reduced costs, less maintenance, and smaller support staffs. But HCM implementations and transformations are complicated; many yield disappointing results. Consider this: One in two projects miss implementation deadlines; one in three come in significantly over budget; and two in five are considered failures two years after they go live.

That is because there are massive gaps between expectations and reality in many areas such as making HR more strategic and innovative, improving the employee experience, lowering total ownership costs, or reducing training.

We recently completed approximately 18 months of research on HCMs; our work included the study of 35 HCM implementations to find out what practices correlate to greatest success. I will summarise these practices later in this article.

But first, I will highlight some key observations:

- A point-in-time focus on HCM implementation will fall short. Instead, organisations must embark on a continuous transformational journey to optimise their investments in HCM systems. Project teams must embrace a process of continual design, prototyping, and testing throughout the system's lifecycle.
- Rather than technology projects, companies should view HCM implementations as an important opportunity to improve and even transform employee experiences. For instance, as part of its HCM implementation, JP Morgan Chase mapped out hundreds of employee journeys and then incorporated the associated workflows into the new system.
- HCM solutions generate volumes of employee-related data. Turning data into actionable insights is critical to success. However, too many companies are not equipped with the resources and skills required for the analysis and meaningful reporting of this data. Using HCM-generated information to provide insights and ultimately make decisions will dramatically help in meeting expectations and deliver actual business outcomes.

A framework for implementation success

Our research led us to the development of an HCM implementation framework with three key components. The work described below is not trivial and requires detailed consideration, documentation, and potentially outside support to ensure nothing is missed. Revisiting this work throughout the HCM lifecycle and updating it as needed will help keep the implementation work on track and help ensure that the results meet expectations.

- **Strategy and governance:** The first priority in any implementation project is to define the strategic vision. What is the business case for this massive investment? Is it a replacement with the intent to create a more integrated data solution, or is this implementation part of a bigger business transformation? Is it meant to improve particular processes such as recruiting or learning or yield better data analytics? Business outcomes and metrics, technology components, governance, and cultural alignment are all factors for careful consideration.
- **Operations and implementation:** This component is all about focusing on what is needed for project execution and post-implementation success. The work encompasses the activities necessary to implement the technology in the company ecosystem, manage the change journey, optimise the processes involved, and support change management. New roles and responsibilities may need to be created and assigned to manage the HCM solution going forward.
- **Transformation and change:** Before any work starts, the project team and stakeholders should consider how the implementation with change the company. Are there processes or workflows that will need to change to best leverage the benefits of the new system? Will self-service transform the role of HR business partners or other HR staff? Will recruiters have vastly different roles? How can you capitalise on the data and analytics generated?

Lessons from our research

Obviously, no two implementations are alike. The variations are practically endless. Different solutions have different strengths and features. Some businesses are highly complex, spanning multiple

industry segments and geographic regions. Others are more focused. Those in highly regulated industries have compliance issues to consider.

Organisations are also at different points in maturity. Some companies may be looking at consolidating multiple HCMs across the enterprise as part of a major business transformation. Others may be looking for an upgrade in features or an improvement in a particular HR process. Certainly, the implementation of a system ultimately serving thousands of employees across the globe will be different than the system needed for a company in its early growth stages.

However, we found some important commonalities when studying successful implementations and meeting expectations. Here are a few:

1. Use your HCM as a foundation for creating radically simplified employee experiences. While core HCM systems are necessary to run a company, they are no longer the center of gravity. Even more important are the employee experience systems, talent intelligence applications, and work productivity tools that sit on top and integrate with it. Use the implementation as the opportunity to analyse the experiences of each workforce segment and geographical region to ensure you are building in the best integrated workflows.
2. Leverage the new HCM to improve your talent intelligence. What skills are my competitors hiring for? What capabilities are emerging in the market, and which ones are declining? What roles do we need for future success? Knowing the answers to these and similar questions and using system data analytics to assess where your workforce stands is hugely important. You'll have a leg up when it comes to talent mobility and future proofing your workforce.
3. In addition to automating HR transactions, use the time freed to build and expand HR capabilities and transform the HR operating model. Making HR more strategic is one of the important goals for most companies when leveraging an HCM platform—and an area where many fall short. Freeing up HR time from transaction-processing and providing data for consulting and strategic engagements does not automatically make HR more

“Remember that HCM systems are living, breathing things – you have to constantly take care of them since they are helping you with your single largest investment – your people.”

strategic. In tandem, you will need to consider what capabilities are needed and the training required. You will also want to examine current HR operating models and roles to take best advantage of the new system and move the HR organisation forward.

4. Engage experienced project teams and partners. The best project leaders work in collaborative, cross-functional teams and agile pods to get the work done together and engage people along the way. Companies should view solution provider staff as partners, not vendors, to augment internal capabilities, leverage consultative expertise, and enable seamless collaboration. In some cases, you will want to enlist other outside help, such as a system integrator or consultant with experience in working with companies similar to yours. Much time and money can be saved by tapping into expertise at the beginning of an implementation, rather than waiting until things go awry.
5. Reduce risk and gain early success with a scaled implementation. We noted that many companies achieve success by scaling implementations and staggered rollouts. For instance, some start by focusing the implementation on a specific capability such as payroll or a core HR service across the enterprise. Others scale by focusing on specific employee populations – specific workforce segments or geographic regions. Whatever approach is taken, project teams take the time to learn from the initial implementations and make whatever adjustments are necessary before moving on to the next phase.
6. Leverage your HCM system to simplify the technology when possible. Simplification is a big deal. Not only does it help lower total cost of ownership (TCO) and facilitate updates, but it also eliminates integration requirements and reduces errors. GE, for example, sunsetted 156 different systems built

or acquired over 20-plus years for HR, payroll, time and attendance, performance, and talent when it transitioned to Workday.

HCM success is about design

This leaves me to my final point. You are in the driver's seat here. Do not let a vendor force you to use all of its tools. Some of them are mature and some are likely not. You have to determine through a series of business decisions what parts of the system will be implemented. I wish it was possible to have one end-to-end HCM platform that does everything needed by a modern company. This will never happen.

Your job is to think like an architect and consider your business needs and employee experiences first.

And the key selection criteria should be around ease of use and productivity – not which system has more features. If your HCM system does not make people more productive and provides the data to grow the business, then you may just want to keep what you have today. Remember that HCM systems are living, breathing things – you have to constantly take care of them since they are helping you with your single largest investment – your people. **hrm**



About the Author

Josh Bersin is a Global Industry Analyst and CEO of the Josh Bersin Company. He will be speaking at HR Tech Festival Asia 2023, which is taking place live in Singapore from May 10-11.

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Empowering employees with an engaging workplace culture

With businesses spanning across a variety of verticals, including telecommunications, enterprise ICT services, cloud, cybersecurity, smart city solution, pay-TV and over-the-top (OTT) video, Singtel employs more than 24,000 people worldwide, including some 12,000 employees in Singapore alone.

The challenge of creating a workplace culture based on shared values can be a real challenge, although it is one that Singtel has embraced and succeeded in doing.

Aileen Tan, Group Chief People and Sustainability Officer, shares with HRM Magazine Asia, “Instilling a strong sense of purpose in a business employing 24,000 people worldwide can only be achieved through adopting a whole-of-organisation, culture-building approach. This involves incorporating and leveraging structures, processes, and leadership to create a sense of belonging for our amazing people to be part of and to do great work.”

And it is this people-centric approach to *Empower Every Generation* that has allowed Singtel to scoop the award for Best Workplace Culture and Engagement at HR Fest Awards 2022, organised by HRM Asia as part of HR Tech Festival Asia 2022.

Tan also attributes the win to Singtel’s refreshed COMMIT values – *Cultivate a Growth Mindset, Operate with Integrity, Make Customers First, Maximise Teamwork, Innovate with a Challenger Spirit, Take Ownership*, which she says has resonated with Singtel employees, as engagement continues to be a priority in Singtel’s people efforts.

She explains, “Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, we were determined to strengthen connection with our people, complemented by the creative use of technologies, and ensure we actively listen to their concerns and suggestions. Based on their feedback, we developed and rolled out initiatives such as the iCARE and Blended Ways of Working.”



The Singtel team receiving the award for Best Workplace Culture and Engagement at HR Fest Awards 2022.

iCARE is both a movement and an overarching programme that empowers Singtel employees to prioritise and take charge of their health and mental wellbeing, as well as promote work-life balance through various initiatives.

These include introducing a digital self-care, well-being app as a virtual buddy for Singtel employees, where they can access personalised support from a behavioural life coach to build self-awareness, learn how to manage daily stress, and work on personal goals.

As for the *Blended Ways of Working* initiative, it was launched to support

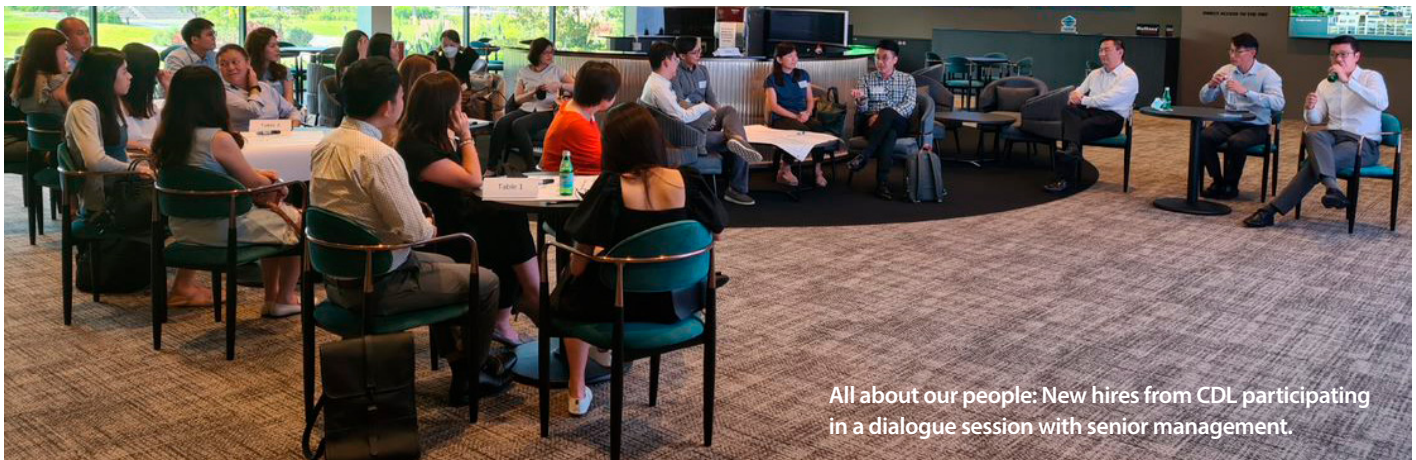
Singtel employees in coping with prolonged COVID-19 measures. Employees were allowed to flex between working from home and reporting onsite three times a week, enriching the wide repertoire of family-friendly work practices.

Additionally, weekly “no-meeting” half-days were also implemented to provide employees with me-time to learn and rejuvenate.

“These initiatives support our people to not only look after their own holistic wellbeing, but also take care of one another as we move into a hybrid and collaborative way of working,” Tan concludes. **hrm**

“Instilling a strong sense of purpose in a business employing 24,000 people worldwide can only be achieved through adopting a whole-of-organisation, culture-building approach.”

AILEEN TAN, GROUP CHIEF PEOPLE AND SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER



All about our people: New hires from CDL participating in a dialogue session with senior management.

Creating a great workplace with a people-first approach

In today's candidate-driven market, talents are seeking a holistic employee experience that goes beyond remuneration when choosing to join an organisation.

Specifically, talents are looking for an organisation that values, cares, and provides flexibility and opportunities for growth, says Steven Tan, CHRO, City Developments Limited (CDL). "Both tangible and intangible benefits are equally significant in influencing their decision," he adds.

At CDL, a priority to create progressive people practices for the past five decades has enabled the company to build a team-centric culture that emphasises collaboration, inclusivity, and innovation.

Appreciated by employees, these efforts also saw CDL named as the Employer of Choice at HR Fest Awards 2022, organised by HRM Asia as part of HR Tech Festival Asia 2022.

Expressing his delight at winning the prestigious award, Tan says, "We are incredibly grateful to our senior leadership team for their unwavering support in fostering a culture of success. People with passion and purpose, combined with our unique 'family-style' environment, makes CDL a great workplace."

"We will continue to inspire creativity and excitement by implementing Human Capital initiatives to support talent management and drive business success."

Tan also emphasises how a people-first culture has allowed CDL to attract and retain the best talent through initiatives such as

regular engagement, which is key to gaining deeper insights into the needs, wants, and perceptions of employees.

This is achieved through various platforms, including informal get-togethers, EXCO interaction sessions with new hires, townhalls, and employee engagement surveys. To create an open and transparent environment, feedback received is analysed, prioritised, and met with actioned and tangible changes.

With the intensifying competition for talent, CDL also invite employees to be part of the recruitment process that identifies the best skillsets needed for specific roles.

Tan explained, "Our employees network frequently with professional peers and former colleagues, who may not be active job seekers but would not mind exploring new opportunities. This referral scheme, where our employees help select co-workers who will fit into our culture, brings benefits like lowering overall recruitment costs, a better cultural/job fit, and improved employee morale."

With more employees looking beyond just compensation and benefits, CDL is also adopting a total rewards and recognition package that is customised, transparent, and equitable. "Features such as Workday's Reward and Recognition allow our employees to show instant appreciation to their colleagues anytime, providing an all-encompassing view of an individual's performance during appraisal," Tan adds.

Learning and development opportunities also abound for CDL employees, who are

empowered to actively search and enroll for programmes to gain new skills and grow professionally. Employees across all levels are encouraged to participate in programmes and workshops that provide training in technical skills, soft skills, personal management, and professional skills.

For high-performing employees who have been identified as having the potential to grow beyond their current role, job rotations provide opportunities to assess how these employees perform when faced with varied challenges in situations they are unaccustomed to.

This approach, says Tan, is also effective in identifying successors for critical leadership positions. "Job rotation provides these employees with a holistic view of our business, making them better prepared for impending leadership roles. It also provides job variation, increases job satisfaction, and are aligned to the high expectations of employees in terms of career growth and personal development."

A holistic approach to employee wellbeing also sees CDL focusing on the physical, mental, financial, and social wellbeing of employees, including introducing a monthly programme that allows employees to connect with colleagues, invest in self-care, and improve their quality of life beyond the workplace.

Tan elaborates, "We have been engaging stakeholders through active employee volunteerism to complement our community investments and deliver a more meaningful impact in the public sphere. Our dedicated employee-led volunteering body, City Sunshine Club (CSC), has been actively reaching out to the less fortunate and underprivileged, providing an avenue for CDL employees to serve the community." **hrm**

Building a high-performing HR team begins by focusing on your people

Over the last three years, the role of HR has evolved to become more strategic and aligned with business objectives and directions in a digital world shaped by technological shifts and a younger and remote workforce.

At a macro level, HR must ensure that their organisation has the right talent and competencies that are relevant to their go-to-market strategies, and can help achieve strategic goals, says Serine Loh, Head of HR, APAC.

Speaking to HRM Magazine Asia, she adds, “HR must also ensure that talent development is continuous and prioritise employees’ wellbeing and engagement. Specifically, HR is required to play a vital role in ensuring that employees’ feelings of purpose, fulfilment, and wellbeing are met. Through continuous engagement and data feeds, HR can bridge the disconnect between policies or leadership strategies, and actual employee sentiment.”

At Blue Prism, a technology-led transformation of HR systems through bots and automation has moved the organisation away from traditional administration and transactional roles, to performing value-added tasks and ensuring that various employee programmes are recommended and implemented to positively impact business in measurable ways.

Loh explains, “As we continue to evolve, we are using technology, analytics, and data to transition towards thought-leadership. Our shifted focus on real-time performance reviews and our efforts in creating a more diverse workforce and culture have helped us shape best practices at Blue Prism.”

She also shares how HR functions in Blue Prism shifted gear during the pandemic to play a central role in balancing wellbeing and workplace practices. For instance, managers were trained to manage virtual teams and ensure all employees were connected and supported, including in the area of



Meet Blue Prism’s award-winning team (from left to right): Penny Tan, People Partner, APAC; Priyanka Krishan, Senior People Partner (L&D), APAC; Serine Loh, Head of HR, APAC; and Amita Bhatt, Senior People Partner, APAC.

learning and development (L&D), which was enhanced and delivered through the implementation of new learning management software (LMS) systems.

And it is this insistence on having their people at the front and centre of the company’s focus areas that saw Blue Prism take home the prestigious Best HR Team of the Year award at HR Fest Awards 2022, organised by HRM Asia as part of HR Tech Festival Asia 2022.

Describing the win as “humbling and motivating” for Blue Prism, Loh says, “We believe in doing our best, while enjoying what we do and delivering meaningful work for our people that are aligned with our values. This award has reaffirmed our belief that great and meaningful work done with commitment, passion, and professionalism will always be valued. The award has also new benchmarks for us and will inspire us to move upwards and onwards!”

As for Blue Prism’s secret to building a high-performance HR team, Loh replies

proudly, “Our HR team comprises of a group of highly talented, collaborative, passionate and motivated individuals with complimenting skillsets, who work together within a safe, open, and high-trust environment.”

“The willingness to go beyond the call of duty, the willingness to push boundaries, and having the fearlessness of failures and the desire to learn from them, make ours a high-performing, high-trust, and effective team.”

For this award-winning HR team, the rest of 2022 will be spent focusing on increasing engagement, promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), and investing in the development of their people and their careers.

“We will also employ our own technology to further automate and streamline processes, empower our human workforce to work on meaningful tasks, while supporting the growth of our business and achieving strategic goals,” Loh concludes. **hrm**

Enabling workplace transformation with the right technology

As organisations look to build a future-ready workforce in a continuously evolving world of work, many challenges need to be successfully navigated.

Identifying talent retention as one of those challenges, Chong Yee Lin, Head, HR Digital Solutions CoE, APAC Hub, Air Liquide, says, “Multi-talented employees are more willing than ever to change jobs and people can now easily look for new employment opportunities beyond country borders.”

Speaking with HRM Magazine Asia, Chong also highlights that in a hybrid world characterised by talent shortage and rapid global mobility, organisations need to develop work models that allow critical skills and competencies to be built, while offering employees greater flexibility to maximise productivity and efficiency.

The key to achieving these goals, Chong says, is having the digital dexterity to use skills, processes, and technology to not only spur innovative digitisation, but also to attract and retain the best talent.

Citing the example of how hiring during the pandemic involved hiring and onboarding people without meeting them in person, she adds, “Creating a positive onboarding experience remains a challenge and this has become a priority for many HR departments.”

“With IT transformation projects being carried out remotely, creating a positive team spirit, encouraging team collaboration, and promoting engagement becomes a challenge with the limitations of virtual workspaces.”

For Air Liquide APAC, identifying efficient employee feedback models and putting action programmes and tools to work on the feedback became a priority, leading to a digital transformation drive to reinvent and streamline HR operations.

Powered by a new human resources information system (HRIS), a new automated and centralised HR operating model now unifies Air Liquide’s Business Shared Services Centre, six HR Centres of Excellence and HR Business Partners as



Air Liquide’s APAC digital transformation project was managed and implemented remotely from Air Liquide’s Singapore Office, in collaboration with Paris HQ, with members dispersed geographically. With COVID workplace restrictions having been gradually lifted, Air Liquide is now better-placed to meet the workforce challenges of the future.

foundational pillars.

Chong reveals, “With one common platform, we can provide consistent processes, convenience, and functionality to support line managers with decision-making on people matters. At the same time, the platform can provide enhanced HR services to employees and ensure better outreach to not only managers and executives, but also frontline and remote blue-collar workers across diverse businesses, geographies, languages, and cultures in APAC.”

Air Liquide APAC is also now better placed to add new automation capabilities for recruitment, talent management, onboarding, performance management, as well as learning and development.

“With a central HRIS platform, we can leverage on real-time data and analytics to help businesses determine future workforce plans, predict turnover in critical roles, make hiring decisions, and connect metrics to goals,” she adds.

Recognising how this HR transformation initiative has enabled Air Liquide APAC to successfully navigate the disruptive challenges of hybrid work and a rapidly evolving business environment, the company was awarded with the Best Use of Technology accolade at HR Fest Awards 2022, organised by HRM Asia as part of HR

Tech Festival Asia 2022.

Expressing her pride in winning the award, Chong says, “It was a highly complex and ambitious automation project. Multiple tracks ran in parallel, there were high quality benchmark expectations, and collaboration with multiple stakeholders was required to deliver the project on schedule.”

With team members dispersed geographically and the APAC project was managed and implemented remotely from Air Liquide’s Singapore Office, in collaboration with Paris HQ, the project not only showcases team spirit and the ability to execute in challenging circumstances, but also demonstrated a scalable pilot technology platform that can be successfully implemented across Air Liquide offices globally, according to Chong.

She also pays tribute to Air Liquide’s leadership team for providing the compassion and flexibility needed to create a more empathetic, humane, and inclusive work environment during the pandemic, which was critical to the project’s success.

“The investment in cutting-edge technology innovations in a difficult business climate, and the decision not to scale down on initiatives that ultimately benefit the employee, has been exemplary,” Chong concludes. **hrm**

Why HR leadership embodies workplace culture and organisational success

In a constantly changing world of work, being future-focused and having the courage to challenge, test, learn, and scale is a key quality for HR leaders.

Describing this as the ability to *strategise*, Tanie Eio, Vice-President of Human Resources Business Partner, UPS Asia Pacific, tells HRM Magazine Asia, “Understanding the key leverage to pull to thrive in a disruptive world, while creating forward-thinking strategies to overcome challenges, is a key requirement for a true HR leader.”

HR leaders should also strive to *inspire* by creating an environment that encourages employees to engage and express their points of view, so they feel empowered and motivated to contribute. “This also means being authentic—to guide others in your own unique way of showing concern and empathy. Employees want to know that you’re sincere about putting their and the team’s success ahead of self-interest,” Eio adds.

Lastly, HR leaders need to be able to *deliver* by taking ownership for setting and achieving goals, and display agility in adapting to new, changing, or uncertain business environments, says Eio, proud winner of the Best HR Leader award at HR Fest Awards 2022, organised by HRM Asia as part of HR Tech Festival Asia 2022.

She declares, “This is an achievement that I proudly share with my amazing team at UPS, who have worked tirelessly to bring our HR function to where it is today, as well as the incredible support from our business leaders across various functions.”

In her role, Eio has also acted as a catalyst for cultural change in UPS, which she started by creating a strong foundation for workplace culture excellence.

This involved defining five key aspirations that UPS believes are essential to creating a best-in-class workforce: Developing future leaders, elevating employee engagement, enhancing compensation competitiveness, strengthening safety culture, and building a high-performance environment.

An employee communication and



Tanie Eio, Vice-President of Human Resources Business Partner, UPS Asia Pacific (third from left) and her team continue to drive UPS Asia’s HR function to greater heights.

engagement programme was then launched to allow employees to understand and experience the kind of workplace UPS was building, and the instrumental role they play.

Believing that leaders are the embodiment of workplace culture, a crucial part of UPS’s strategy involves engaging leaders and making them accountable for creating a healthy and enjoyable working environment.

Eio explains, “Setting expectations of our leaders in terms of measurable KPIs such as the ‘likelihood to recommend’ metric helped keep everyone focused on a common goal. This metric indicates how likely employees are to recommend UPS as an employer to friends and family.”

With ownership and partnership playing critical roles in UPS’s human capital strategy, she devotes time to ensure all business leaders understand UPS’s workplace culture aspirations and how they can be incorporated into business strategies.

When buy-in from top leaders becomes challenging because they need to shift focus from their more immediate day-to-day objectives to prioritise culture change, Eio seeks to alleviate any concerns by helping to frame people strategies and maximisation agendas as a necessary element to drive business growth.

Highlighting the increasingly important

role leaders play, she says, “How well we perform as a business ultimately boils down to our people, and people look to leaders for inspiration and guidance. Leaders need to walk-the-talk and be the role model who displays the behaviours we want to see in our people.”

“In that vein, my own credibility as a HR leader is also important. It is on me to demonstrate that I can deliver results and add value, meet the needs of the business and the employees, and am role modeling what a good leader should be.”

A good leader is also not afraid to make tough decisions, particularly those that may bring about unfamiliar change and anxiety for people.

Eio, who is also committed to building HR capacity for external organisations and Singapore’s community in her role as an active board member and chairperson of the Samaritans of Singapore’s HR Committee, urges her fellow HR professionals to persevere and believe in what they are working for when meeting resistance.

She concludes, “Setting the direction is the easy part. Getting buy-in requires heavy lifting, building trust, and gaining support. It’s important to lead by example, gather a committed team, believe in your vision and don’t be distracted by challenges and disbelief. The end result will be rewarding!” **hrm**



As VP of HR at Oracle JAPAC, Rachna Sampayo (seated, second from left) is always focusing on how ensuring that employees have the best possible work experience to succeed.

HR leadership key to managing change in changing world of work

With the role of the HR function evolving to be multi-dimensional, CHROs are now expected to elevate brand building through talent management, champion organisational transformation by leveraging digital tools, and work with CEOs and CFOs to drive revenue, margin, brand recognition, and market share.

To also lead their organisation successfully through change in a volatile and unpredictable world, CHROs will be defined by four key characteristics, suggests Rachna Sampayo, Vice-President, Human Resources, Oracle JAPAC.

First, they need to be results-oriented, as she explains to HRM Magazine Asia, “HR leaders must become proactive trouble-finders, rather than reactive trouble-shooters. To do that, we must understand the business and not be bystanders anymore.”

Next, they need to be influencers to manage shifting workforce dimensions and employee demands. With a younger generation of employees entering the workforce and more experienced employees expecting more customisation of their working experience, HR leaders must manage a new blended workforce where there is no one-size-fits-all approach.

Sampayo highlights, “HR leaders need to develop strategies tailored to all employees, deliver a positive employee experience, both virtually and in-person, and enable employee productivity for a very diverse workforce in every aspect.”

HR leaders also need to be digitally-savvy and data-driven to drive the business beyond lag indicators like attrition and employee opinion surveys, and to better gauge productivity and engagement. Specifically, HR leaders with the capability to pivot business intelligence through the data mine can help to drive and measure meaningful outcomes.

Last but certainly not least in importance, a caring leader is paramount for empathy to be at the heart of an organisation. “Our world of work has taken a hybrid avatar, merging work from home with work in office, on-premises, or on cloud. The future of work is now centered on how you work, not just where you work. This new hybrid workplace needs an innovative strategy that is intentional and purpose-driven while factoring diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) initiatives.”

At HR Fest Awards 2022, which was organised by HRM Asia as part of HR Tech Festival Asia 2022, Sampayo was nominated for the award of Best HR Leader and in recognition of the line-up of outstanding

candidates for the award, she was presented with the specially created Best HR Leader (Highly Commended) accolade.

“It means a lot to receive this award personally and on behalf of my team, we are very proud of the things that we are doing to make an impact at Oracle, and this award reinforces our belief that our efforts are in the right direction.”

Sampayo goes on to highlight how Oracle is ensuring that employees have the best possible work experience to succeed, an imperative to Oracle’s success as an organisation.

She continues, “I believe we have evolved with innovations powered by technology and are really driving key HR strategies around employee experience, wellbeing, and our DE&I efforts.”

Such an approach has also served Oracle well during the pandemic, when established routines were disrupted and compelled businesses to rethink the way they work and operate.

Today, employees are placing a higher premium on flexibility, creativity, and purpose at work, which means that managers are under more pressure to build the right environment while the business focuses more heavily on customers.

To manage a more dynamic talent retention landscape, Oracle provides career development opportunities with continuous cycles of progression in the form of job rotations and stretch assignments that empowers employees to take greater control of their careers.

“The new hybrid work model is a big paradigm shift that requires a high degree of both high-tech and high-touch to drive better employee engagement,” Sampayo says, while highlighting the important role HR leaders will continue to play.

She elaborates, “Being able to pivot in the right direction during difficult times, redefining engagement strategies by sensing the internal/external environment changes and adopting a minimal impact strategy during challenging moments are just a few ways in which leaders can manage change in the most effective way.”

“Every leader is faced with what I call the ‘first move’ dilemma, which is very similar to making ‘make or break’ decisions when faced with oncoming challenges. Decision-making capability becomes one of the key differentiators between a good HR leader and a great HR leader.” **hrm**



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Now that the pandemic is almost over, the world is in the grips of a new phenomenon: *The Great Resignation*. As once loyal employees leave their jobs, companies are being starved of talent. Organisations are having to restructure to keep up with the churn. That is good for people who still love their jobs. They have an unprecedented opportunity to move up faster than they thought possible.

But there is a risk for companies. Those people chosen to transition to a more senior role will be faced with two intimidating factors. First, the enormity of the new role may be challenging for the newbie. And second, the new environment may be ridden with bear traps (real or imagined).

Take Amit's story. After a 15-year stint at a bank, he joined an insurance mammoth as head of strategy, leading a small, tight knit team (similar to the size he led in his previous job.) But within a year, his new company went through a major restructure and Amit found himself thrust into an operations role where he was responsible for more than 2,000 people.

Naturally, he was intimidated by the size and spread of the team he would soon be managing. Worse still, some of Amit's peers, instead of being equals, would now have to report directly to him. Amit was anxious about the team dynamics.

The new role would start in sixty days. He used the time to read available reports and materials, as well as thinking through a transition plan. When he started his new assignment, he had a fair understanding of what the new role would entail. Or so he thought.

Nine months later, the results of the annual engagement survey revealed that Amit had a disengaged team. Amit's direct reports had given him poor feedback. A conversation with HR left him at a loss. He learned that his next promotion could be in jeopardy. The company needed him to come up with an action plan to salvage the situation.

It's tough but you can do it

Stepping into a new role, whether it is a promotion, a sideways move or, indeed, a new job, can be daunting for even the most accomplished leaders. Twenty to forty percent of professionals fail to make the transition.

What was the key factor between success and failure?

Time! The longer it took for a leader to get to grips with their new position, the higher the risk of failure.

DDI, a global leadership consulting firm, conducted a survey in 2021, which showed that leaders who transitioned successfully in the first three months had better engagement scores. 66% felt accountable for being an effective leader, 55% were engaged and 51% found purpose.

On the flip side, those who took longer than three months to transition (and more than a year in many instances) had much lower scores. Only 42% felt engaged and only 37% found purpose.

The critical quarter.

It's called that for a reason

In the first quarter, a 'new' leader is constantly watched. Every decision they make is scrutinised. They must establish credibility with their team and supervisors. While mistakes may be forgiven, there is pressure on them to perform. And if they do not, their career will falter.

The six key pillars of success

Over the years, I have conducted thousands of interviews with leaders. I have identified Six Pillars of Success that every leader in transition must be mindful of in the 'critical quarter'.



1. Self-Awareness: You need to develop a high sense of self-awareness and, work on and remap skills required for the new role.



2. Build Your Team: Spend time understanding the dynamics within your new team(s) and ensure everyone is aligned to the same goals.



3. Set Expectations: Agree on focus areas and define clear markers of success with all key stakeholders.



4. Building Allies: Build and nurture relationships with key people within the organisation.



5. Shifting Mindset: Develop a strategic approach to leadership and elevate your executive presence.



6. Seeking Early Wins: Create credibility with high impact projects. They give you immediate visibility.

The change

Coming back to Amit. A conversation with a mentor gave him the clarity to realise where he had faltered. He was using old skill sets. What worked for him as strategy leader did not work for him as an operations leader. Moreover, he had not taken time to understand his direct reports more personally or professionally. He quickly fixed this. Amit changed his operating style, engaged better with his team, and became a more inclusive leader. **hrm**



About the Author

Ritu G. Mehrish is an executive coach, a global speaker with 20 years of global corporate experience at P&G and GE, and is author of the book, *Leader's Block*. To find out more, you can reach Ritu Mehrish at ritu@ritumehrish.com or visit her website www.ritumehrish.com

WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS EMPLOYERS CAN IMPLEMENT?



If you are an employer who seeks to implement Flexible Work Arrangements (FWAs) for business sustainability, you have to consider the types of FWAs that best meet your business and employees' needs. Though there are many FWAs available, you may begin by considering these few:

Telecommuting



What is it?

- A flexi-place arrangement where employees can perform their jobs at a location other than the workplace
- Uses information and communication technologies to enable employees to connect with clients remotely

Benefits

- Reduces commute time which can be spent more effectively at work
- Helps business reduce operating costs

Part-Time Work



What is it?

- An arrangement that allows employees to work reduced hours on a regular basis
- Employees work less than 35 hours in a week, including those who work less than a full day all week or only some days per week

Benefits

- Allows employers to provide coverage of duties during peak periods or when work needs to be done only at particular times
- Access to wider talent pool such as: back-to-work individuals

Job-Sharing



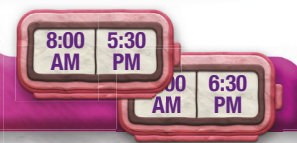
What is it?

- An arrangement that allows two or more part-time employees to share the responsibilities of a single workload
- Employees usually work at different times during the day or week, or on alternate weeks

Benefits

- Helps companies attract and retain employees who need reduced work hours
- Enables exchange of skills and knowledge between job sharers

Staggered Time



What is it?

- An arrangement that allows employees to vary their daily start and end times to suit their personal commitments
- Flexible time bands are created to let employees choose their preferred start and end times

Benefits

- Helps employees avoid peak-hour travelling
- Helps the business extend operating hours at no extra labour costs

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PRIORITISING HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA'S WORKPLACE



Organisations that promote human development (HD) in the workplace are characterised by a sense of purpose in not only considering that people need to contribute to the goals of the business, but also understanding that the business must contribute to the development of people.

Speaking exclusively to HRM Magazine Asia, Dr Bob Aubrey, Founder and Chair of the Advisory Board, ASEAN Human Development Organisation (AHDO), explains, “HD organisations don’t limit responsibility to employees only but extend responsibility to the human ecosystem of suppliers, partners, and the society where they operate. This is the ‘S’ of ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) and HD organisations measure their contribution and impact.”

Unfortunately, not all organisations are equipped to deliver social responsibility, productivity, and profit simultaneously, as he points out, “Professionals in HR may assume that using HR tools and processes as an employee in an organisation is equivalent to a career. HD professionals, on the other hand, have careers that cross boundaries, enabling them to work with the education system, governments, and the non-profits that make up the HD ecosystem.”

Human development continues to gain momentum in South-East Asia

Having founded AHDO in 2018 with the aim of developing ASEAN’s management identity and culture with a core purpose

of improving HD at work, Dr Aubrey is in a better position than most to analyse the state of HD in South-East Asia.

Encouraged that the region is “breaking new ground” in adopting a stakeholder approach to developing people, he highlights, “Business leaders agree that getting HD right in the next 10 years is a top priority and many want to contribute to make that happen. Studies have shown that they generally don’t believe that traditional HR professionals are equipped to meet the challenge.”

Calling for the awareness of HD to be treated as an “urgent priority” alongside issues such as sustainability and biodiversity, Dr Aubrey adds, “There is also an immediate need for people professionals in the region. Few professionals have an understanding and experience of other countries beyond their own. One of the reasons I decided to create AHDO with our founding members is that there was no regional association or organisation for professionals.”

Moving forward, one of AHDO’s priorities is to continue building institutions to serve more than 650 million people in South-East Asia. Having established presence in Indonesia, Vietnam and Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines are up next for Dr Aubrey and the AHDO

team.

Also high on the priority list is continued education, with certification programmes organised regularly for HD professionals. In collaboration with the University of Malaya and the ASEAN University Network, AHDO is also developing South-East Asia’s first master’s degree programme in HD.

A focus is also being placed on thought leadership and ESG at a level where business leaders can define goals for their organisations and measure the impact of their HD initiatives, Dr Aubrey reveals.

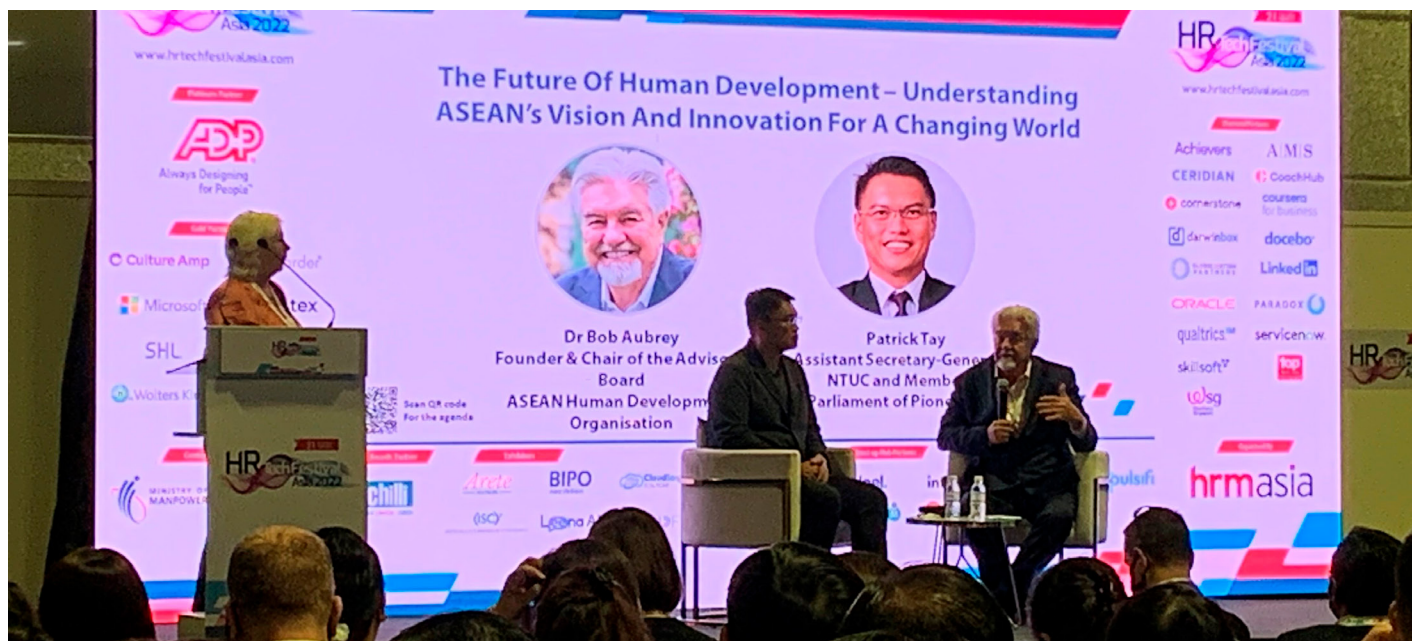
“We have published books, we speak at business conferences, and we are founding members of the Ethics Committee and Advisory for the ASEAN Region,” he highlights.

Building and managing a sustainable workforce

One of the conferences Dr Aubrey recently spoke at was HR Tech Festival Asia 2022, which was successfully held from May 10-13.

Besides serving as moderator for the virtual AHDO Summit on May 11, Dr Aubrey also participated in an engaging conversation with Patrick Tay, Assistant Secretary-General of Singapore’s National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) and

“Business leaders agree that getting human development right in the next 10 years is a top priority and many want to contribute to make that happen.”



At HR Tech Festival Live, Dr Bob Aubrey, Founder and Chair of the Advisory Board, ASEAN Human Development Organisation (AHDO), discussed the future of human development in the ASEAN region with Patrick Tay, Assistant Secretary-General of Singapore's National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) and Member of Parliament, Singapore.

Member of Parliament, Singapore, at the in-person HR Tech Festival Live event on May 10, where they discussed issues such as workforce sustainability.

Dr Aubrey describes, "When you hear sustainability, you usually think of the environment and global warming. However, the pandemic taught us that a sustainable workforce is necessary for a healthy society and economy. Businesses and governments need to work together to maintain employability, as well as mental and physical health, for a population that will be living and working longer."

"You can measure workforce sustainability with economic and human development indicators, which would obviously include employment but also things like inequality, inclusion, and wellbeing. People will need to learn new jobs and work in different organisations, so development during different career stages is a key capability."

What anaging a sustainable workforce is not, however, is keeping employees on the payroll until retirement. Throughout an employee's tenure at the organisation, they should have developed themselves in some measurable way, which is essentially the definition of HD when it comes to work, according to Dr Aubrey.

Lamenting how some companies are giving short shrift to managing a

sustainable workforce, as they do to the sustainability of the environment, he cautions that the dated economic model where profit is the only social responsibility of a business is no longer viable.

"You can't defend a formula like that in today's world and expect humanity to be around for long. The pandemic showed us that when governments and the private sector work together, we can deal with even the most unexpected crisis."

Dr Aubrey is also seeing the rise of a movement driven by the three Ps of: *Purpose, People, and Profit*; a boardroom approach to ESG; the emergence of human rights responsibility for a company's supply chain and its employees; as well as a refusal of employees to work for companies that do not support and develop them.

To successfully manage a sustainable workforce, he recommends companies to set strategic key development indicators (KDIs), as well as key performance indicators (KPIs), while recognising their differences. "Development indicators are not the same as performance indicators and, as the saying goes, what doesn't get measured doesn't get done."

Companies also need to realise that what works in building a sustainable workforce in one country may not necessarily work in another. Dr Aubrey

cited the example of how Singapore has successfully managed youth unemployment through education and a policy of upskilling and reskilling workers.

Malaysia, in contrast, continues to experience high youth unemployment for university graduates, as well as unskilled workers. "Across ASEAN, companies are experiencing a talent shortage, but what they can do to build sustainable talent for themselves and for their industry is different from one country to the next," Dr Aubrey concludes. **hrm**

About the Company

Established in 2018, AHDO is the first organisation created to serve the community of human development professionals in the world of work. AHDO is also for organisations where human development is a purpose in alignment with United Nations principles and development goals, as well as the International Labour Organisation's decent work mission.

AHDO supports members through activities, conferences, professional certifications, and accreditation of organisations. AHDO publishes books, white papers, and research on human development and as an ASEAN entity, promotes commitment to improving human development, build networks and support thought leadership from the region.

What's ahead for HR leaders in 2023 and beyond?

As 2023 begins to appear on the horizon, HR leaders are beginning to define their priorities as they predict what will fundamentally shape work in the new year.

With a people-centric approach likely to be favoured by many organisations as they look to attract and retain the best talent in an increasingly defined hybrid world of work that calls for more flexibility than ever before, what are the next steps for HR leaders to take?

To accelerate business transformation and elevate HR functions' ability to enable talent outcomes, today's CHROs need to embrace the modern HR mindset to move beyond efficiency to resiliency and create a culture of innovation that enables their organisation to see the future differently, said **Gaston Carrion**, Strategy & Consulting, T&O/Human Potential APAC Lead & Global Employee Experience Lead, **Accenture**.

He explained, "Modern HR is an ethos, not a function, that focuses on designing and shaping work and experiences that unleash the full potential of individuals, teams,

organisations, and communities. The future of HR depends on how we seize this moment and our future."

To find out how the modern HR mindset can help unleash human ingenuity in your organisation, join Carrion at the on-day, in-person **HR Leadership Series: Live**, which will be held at the Marina Bay Sands Singapore on Thursday, September 8.

Organised by HRM Asia, HR Leadership Series: Live will provide HR leaders with key insights into how they can build critical strategies that prioritise hybrid leadership and change management skills.

Other distinguished speakers joining Carrion to discuss their key shifts and priorities that will shape the workplace in 2023 include, **Low Peck Kem**, CHRO & Advisor (Workforce Development), Public Service Division, **Prime Minister's Office, Singapore**; **David Hendrick Jr**, Director, People Development, Centre for Healthcare Innovation, **Tan Tock Seng Hospital**; and **Dr Bob Aubrey**, Founder & Chair of the Advisory Board, **ASEAN Human Development Organisation (AHDO)**.

HR Leadership Series: Live will also

take a deep dive into the latest digital technologies that are impacting the way we work and share key data and trends in industry sector updates and will be supported by leading HR tech companies such as ADP and Ceridian.

Stephanie Silvester, Senior Marketing Director, Asia-Pacific, **ADP**, will share key emerging and escalating workforce trends organisations need to take note of to manage their workforce; and **Rob Squires**, Vice President and Head of Sales for Asia and Japan, **Ceridian**, will explain why organisations need to make agility more than a mindset as they look to build organisational resilience and manage future disruptions.

With HR leaders beginning to plan strategies that will ensure business continuity and success into 2023, HR Leadership Series: Live, a complimentary and invitation only event, is not to be missed.

Seats are limited to ensure executive peer-to-peer networking and collaboration, so click [here](#) to reserve your slot now and join Asia's HR industry in redefining the HR function! **hrm**

HR
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LIVE

8 SEPTEMBER 2022
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Gaston Carrion
Strategy & Consulting,
Managing Director,
T&O/ Human Potential
APAC Lead & Global
Employee Experience
Lead, **Accenture**



David Hendrick Jr
Director, People
Development,
Centre for Healthcare
Innovation, **Tan Tock
Seng Hospital**



Low Peck Kem
CHRO & Advisor
(Workforce
Development)
**Public Service Division,
Prime Minister's Office,
Singapore**



Dr Bob Aubrey
Founder & Chair of the
Advisory Board,
**ASEAN Human
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Why a modern HR mindset is key to future-proofing businesses

Long-standing trends affecting businesses and employees all over the world have accelerated across the human, digital, and physical layers. We have seen major evolutions on both customer and employee expectations. People today expect more from their companies, particularly in the diversity and inclusion space, and those who do not rise to the challenge face a potential talent drain.

Vaccine mandates, the great resignation, and the pivot to a hybrid work model have contributed to the list of challenges for business leaders. This is compounded by external factors such as supply chain disruptions, and the growing emphasis on sustainability.

These trends mean that today's CHROs need to accelerate business transformation and elevate HR functions' ability to enable talent outcomes. The good news is that Accenture's research has demonstrated that it makes good business sense to do so, with organisations that successfully unlock their people's full potential standing to gain upwards of 5 percent revenue growth.

The case for the modern HR mindset

Talent management approaches have typically been built around the needs of the organisation, rather than the people joining it, making it time for leaders to rewrite a script that builds trust based on the fundamentals of what matters most to their people.

To do this, leaders must embrace a modern HR mindset. And we are already seeing this; 50 percent of CXOs today have fully embraced the responsibility to support people's holistic needs, compared to just 35 percent prior to the pandemic. But what does a modern HR mindset entail?

It means moving beyond efficiency and process execution to see the future differently. Embedding sustainability into the company DNA and involving employees every step of the way. Creating experiences grounded in care for people and concern for communities while accelerating the performance of the business.

Embracing this mindset can help

organisations achieve several goals simultaneously: Enhance relationships with workers based on trust and accountability, accelerate business performance, and create positive societal change.

The five pillars of modern HR

So, how can companies embed the modern HR mindset into their team? Accenture has identified five pillars that set companies apart from their peers, and position them to succeed:

Focus on Net Better Off

Change starts from the top. This means that in addition to looking at financial performance, leaders must consider social and environmental factors. In other words, they need to focus on the triple bottom line and evaluate their performance in a broader perspective.

This will entail ensuring that employees are Net Better Off, a framework which Accenture has identified to help companies unlock their people's full potential. Through meeting the needs of employees across six key dimensions: emotional and mental, relational, physical, financial, purposeful, and employable, leaders can not only unlock their people's potential, but also business potential.

People strategy and transformation

Ensuring that the company has enough talent with the right skills will also be a priority in modern HR. In addition to identifying the next generation of skills, leaders will have to approach talent acquisition with a strong focus on these skills, and curate experiences for existing employees that further develop their potential for sustained competitiveness.

They also must improve enterprise scale while delivering localised focus, and make sure that teams are fully optimised, using capability+ as a transformation catalyst.

Organisation development for an agile organisation

The HR structure will also have to be augmented to pivot to an operating model that works for their people. Agility and collaboration will be at the heart of

strategising for organisation development, and leaders will have to develop dynamic cross functional connections to enable network development for talent, expertise, and information flows. They will also have to place an emphasis on organisational effectiveness to ensure accountability between teams.

Build digital fluency

To build an intelligent organisation, digital fluency will emerge as a core capability. Leaders need to optimise digital technologies for frictionless work, using data and intelligent guidance for better decision-making, and improve human and technology work and interactions.

Develop an experience-driven employee value proposition (EVP)

Finally, leaders must create the conditions for successful and meaningful work. This means prioritising an end-to-end EVP-driven experience, allowing for flexibility and personalisation, and adopting a customer centric (CX) / product management (PX) approach to HR service development.

Shaping the future of HR

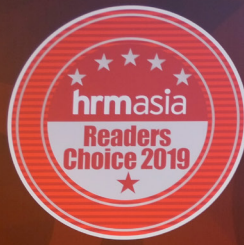
At the end of the day, modern HR is no longer a function, but an ethos that focuses on designing and shaping work and work experiences that unleash the full potential of individuals, teams, organisations, and communities. Our workforce and communities are counting on CHROs — in collaboration with the rest of the C-suite — to support them and emerge stronger from this crisis. The future of HR depends on how we seize this moment. **hrm**



About the Author

Gaston Carrion is Managing Director – Talent & Organisation / Human Potential, Asia Pacific, Africa, and Middle East Lead, Accenture. Join him at HR Leadership Series: Live, which is taking place at Marina Bay Sands Singapore on Thursday, September 8.

The HRM Asia Readers' Choice Awards, which celebrates Asia's best and brightest HR and technology solutions providers, is returning for the first in-person edition held since 2019.



Readers Choice Awards 2019

RECOGNISING EXCELLENCE



HRM Asia Readers' Choice Awards makes in-person return



The HRM Asia Readers' Choice Awards is back and will celebrate Asia's best and brightest HR and technology solutions providers in the first in-person edition held since 2019.

This year's awards presentation, which will take place on **Thursday, November 3** in a live Gala Awards Ceremony in Sheraton Towers Singapore, will recognise the vital partners for Asia's HR industry

and provide an in-person platform for Asia's HR community to interact and exchange ideas.

The winners of each category will be chosen by HRM Magazine Asia readers (70%) weighting) and a panel of independent expert judges (30%). Click [here](#) for the full list of award categories for HRM Asia Readers' Choice Awards 2022.

All organisations and businesses are welcome to nominate themselves,

partners, and anyone else worthy of being recognised as an esteemed HR service provider in Asia. Nominations close on 31 August 2022, so submit your nominations now!

Voting will take place from September 1-16, before the winners are announced live in Singapore on November 3. Watch this space! **hrm**



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HRM Asia Readers' Choice Awards returns in-person on 3 November for the first time since 2019! Happening at Sheraton Towers Singapore, and featuring over 30 award categories across the entire HR spectrum this year, the awards are presented to recognise and celebrate the best and brightest HR industry partners and solution providers.



The winner for each category will be chosen by HRM Magazine Asia readers and a panel of independent expert judges.

Nomination closes on 31 August. Submit your nominations [here](#).

Online voting will commence on 1 September and end on 16 September. Vote for your HR partners that are worthy of the coveted awards!

VOTE NOW





The ASEAN Future of Work conference 2022 examined the major shifts affecting the future of work in South-East Asia, including flexible work.

Future of work in ASEAN to be shaped by flexible work

With organisations looking to build a more engaged and productive workforce, the momentum for flexible work is continuing to grow globally.

In Singapore for instance, the tripartite partners of the Ministry of Manpower (MOM), National Trade Union Congress (NTUC), and the Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF) continue to encourage employers in Singapore to offer flexible work arrangements (FWAs) to employees, and to promote FWAs as a permanent feature of the workplace.

By 2024, the tripartite partners also expect to develop a set of Tripartite Guidelines that will set out practices that employers should adopt to assess and communicate decisions on FWA requests.

While all employees in Singapore have been allowed to return to the workplace since April 26 this year, the nation's public sector has taken the lead to promote flexible work. Public employees whose work can be done remotely are allowed to

do so two out of five days per week, while also being offered staggered working hours.

Flexible workplaces are here to stay, and more employers are introducing flexible work arrangements to improve employee engagement and productivity, as well as boost talent retention and attraction, said Heng Swee Keat, Singapore's Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) and Coordinating Minister for Economic Policies.

Speaking at the ASEAN Future of Work conference held in conjunction with HR Tech Festival Asia 2022 this May, DPM Heng, highlighted, "Different workers have differing expectations for flexible work arrangements. Workplace settings and business needs also differ across companies – a one-size-fits-all approach will not work."

"The shift towards greater flexible work arrangements will take time and some iteration. Many countries and companies are also feeling their way forward, and we can learn from one another."

Calling for greater collaboration between countries and all stakeholders within each economy, DPM added that ASEAN is in a "good position" to contribute to, as well as benefit from, major shifts affecting the future of work.

Organised by HRM Asia, in an exclusive collaboration with Singapore's Ministry of Manpower and the Regional Centre for the Future of Work, the ASEAN Future of Work (FOW) conference brought together speakers from regional governments, unions, and the private sector to discuss how to work together to balance stakeholders' needs and interests in adapting to new business models and ways of working.

For flexible work to be successful, standards and best practices need to be developed to improve employee engagement and retention, and organisations need to create a culture that ensures all employees are treated fairly, said Yeo Wan Ling, Director, NTUC U Women and Family/USME.

Yeo joined Jason Seng, Partner, People Advisory Services, Ernst & Young Advisory; Samantha Gleeson, Group People Director, SafetyCulture; and Deanna Ong, Chief People Officer, GIC in a panel discussion that discussed the challenges and best practices to balance the needs of businesses and their workers under flexible work models.

The panel also highlighted the importance of putting digital enablers in place, and how flexibility is about creating autonomy for employees to decide how work gets done.

Away from the lively discussion around flexible work, the ASEAN Future of Work conference also discussed how artificial intelligence (AI) is being adopted in ASEAN to support workforce management and key HR functions, what can be done to strengthen labour protections for platform workers, and the challenges youths in the region are facing when balancing education and training opportunities.

To celebrate the resounding success of this year's event, the ASEAN Future of Work conference will return as part of HR Tech Festival Asia 2023, which is taking place from May 11-12, at the Suntec Singapore Convention & Exhibition Centre.

Be sure to be part of Asia's largest HR tech event and find out what is shaping the future of work in ASEAN! **hrm**

Navigating the new paradigms of people and work

2023 is shaping up to be a pivotal year for many organisations as employees continue to demand more flexibility in the way they work. To attract and retain the best talent, HR and business leaders need to rethink their employee engagement strategies to offer an employee value proposition (EVP) that addresses the myriad needs of employees..

With employees who are more engaged and productive, leaders will also be in a better position to drive sustainability in the workplace, supported by increasingly critical environmental, social, and governance (ESG) strategies that attract investment and talent into the organisation.

To ensure that their organisation can thrive in a post-pandemic world that is still fraught with multiple challenges, HR and business leaders are also looking to introduce workplace strategies that promotes an agile mindset and creates a company culture that employees buy into and feel valued for their contributions.

With change likely to remain a determining factor in the way we work in 2023, how can organisations, particularly those operating in a region as diverse as Asia, overcome the challenges that a new

paradigm of people and work is likely to bring?

To answer this question and more, HR Tech Festival Asia, the region's largest HR technology and workforce management event, returns in-person on 10-11 May 2023 for its 23rd edition, bringing together Asia's biggest HR community, global influencers, and industry experts to learn, collaborate, and inspire.

With the theme of *Engage. Sustain. Thrive. Navigating the new paradigm of people and work*, HR Tech Festival Asia 2023, which is taking place at the Suntec Singapore Convention and Exhibition Centre, will bring together some 5,000 C-suite HR professionals, business leaders, government officials, HR tech analysts and influencers, to discuss the most pertinent workplace issues faced by organisations in Asia.

For visitors looking for the best technology solutions to support their HR transformation, HR Tech Festival Asia 2023 will also feature the region's biggest HR-focused exhibition, featuring products, services, and technology demonstrations from some of the leading HR tech solutions providers in the world.

Away from the exhibition floor, a series of carefully curated conference sessions

will cover both the entire spectrum of HR practices and how HR technology supports in navigating the new paradigms of people and work.

Taking centre stage at the Suntec Singapore Convention and Exhibition Centre, will be a brand new, state-of-the-art conference area that will play host to several key plenary sessions.

Join global and regional thought leaders and HR luminaries such as **Josh Bersin**, Global Industry Analyst and CEO of the **Josh Bersin Company**, **Ray Wang**, Principal Analyst and Founder of **Constellation Research**, and **Tim Sackett**, President, **HRU Technical Resources**, as they provide key insights into what is shaping the way we work.

Other not-to-be-missed highlights include the return of the popular ASEAN Future of Work conference, which brings together representatives from regional governments, unions, and the private sector to discuss best work practices as organisations in South-East Asia adjust to a post-COVID world of work.

Click [here](#) to register for HR Tech Festival Asia 2023 and be part of the discussion on how Asia's HR community can successfully navigate the new paradigm of people and work in 2023! **hrm**



After the success of HR Tech Festival Live, an in-person event held as part of HR Tech Festival Asia 2022, the 2023 edition of Asia's largest HR technology and workforce management event will return as a two-day, in-person event in Singapore from May 10-11.

Restructuring of work calls for a personalised approach

BY
SHAWN
LIEW

Henry Ford's decision to introduce the five-day workweek in 1926 was largely met with ridicule, as employees of Ford Motor Company became among the first in the US to deviate from the then entrenched six-day workweek.

The rest, as they say, is history and almost a century on from Ford's groundbreaking move, another potential restructuring of work has already begun in earnest.

More than 3,300 employees at 70 UK companies are currently undergoing a trial to test the feasibility of a four-day workweek. Running for six months, the pilot project is based on the 100:80:100 model, where employees retain 100% of their pay working 80% of the time, in exchange for a commitment to maintain 100% productivity.

In Asia, the debate around the four-day workweek has, perhaps predictably, drawn mixed responses. Following the example of Panasonic to offer employees a four-day workweek, the [Japan](#) government has thrown its support behind a proposal to let employees choose a four-day workweek, citing the need to improve employees' work-life balance.

In the [Philippines](#), the Department of Labour and Employment (DOLE) has said that the decision to introduce a four-day workweek or not is entirely up to the discretion of organisations. "We can only encourage, not obligate the private sector to adopt four-day workweeks," said DOLE.

On the other end of the spectrum, the [SME Association of Malaysia](#) has opposed the four-day workweek, citing low productivity and labour problems. Fewer work hours, the business lobby group argues, will result in less output and higher cost for businesses.

Is a four-day workweek then, a distinct possibility or merely a pipe dream? Before this question can be definitively answered, organisations should have a clear understanding of the reasons why they should be even considering implementing a four-day workweek.

Is it to allow employees to have more time to spend with their loved ones and to pursue personal interests and engage in activities that will improve their wellbeing and mental health?

In return, are organisations getting more engaged, committed, and productive employees in the long run?

Much will also depend on how organisations interpret a four-

day workweek. Does it equate to employees working the same hours for a reduced salary? Will employees be expected to work longer hours to compensate for the extra off-day and should they be expected to be in 'always-on' mode, particularly those who continue to work remotely?

In an ideal world, the 100:80:100 model is an attractive proposition that meets the needs of the organisation and their employees. After all, employees are paid the same salary to spend less time working, while employers continue to see favourable business results because of a more productive workforce.

The reality, however, is not so straightforward. While it may seem implausible to find many employees who are resistant to

a four-day workweek if it means having to work less for the same salary, employees who are already overburdened with work may not be receptive to the idea of having to catch up on work on what will be newly designated as a non-working day.

For organisations looking to introduce a four-day workweek that mandates a salary reduction, the resistance or pushback from employees can be expected to be more significant.

With the introduction of a four-day workweek likely to be a generational transition that will have

far-reaching implications, the importance of operational planning cannot be understated.

Organisations need to speak with employees to understand their concerns and how they feel about a restructured workweek. Careful thought and scrutiny need to be put in place to study the sustainability of a four-day workweek for the organisation, and whether a more measured approach is required to create a more bespoke working model for each individual employee.

As Tim Sackett highlights in this issue when referring to flexible work, there has been a regrettable longevity of HR policies that have sought to treat all employees as the same. In the continuously evolving world of work today, a one-size-fits-all approach no longer works, and this is inclusive of any discussion around the concept of a four-day workweek.

Instead of making any decision a hasty or arbitrary one, business and HR leaders will be well-served to spend more time deliberating on what will work best for not only their organisation, but their employees as well. **hrm**



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