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Q3 2023

HR TECH FEST CONNECT 2023: SHAPING THE CONNECTED WORKFORCE OF TOMORROW

Crafting Narratives of Change

Dr Tanvi Gautam on why transforming the enterprise demands a human-centric approach

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Dear *HRM Magazine Asia* readers,

When Greek philosopher Heraclitus coined the phrase "change is the only constant in life", he might have struggled to imagine how, hundreds of years on, this observation continues to be applied to multiple facets of life, including work.

For organisations trying to gain success in culture transformation, constant change, driven partly by the advent of technology, is inevitable. Yet, many change management efforts are doomed to fail because organisations fail to recognise a critical success factor.

Dr Tanvi Gautam, a Transformational Leadership Expert, told *HRM Magazine Asia,* "If AI is becoming more human, we need to make sure that organisations don't become more machine like and instead focus on creating a human-centric workplace that priorities human-centric skills such as creativity, strategic thinking, empathy, and other deeply human skill sets."

In this issue, we spoke with Dr Tanvi on the challenges organisations continue to face in their cultural transformation efforts and why changing the mindsets and attitudes of employees will go a long way in setting the narratives of change.

For these efforts to bear fruit, leaders will have a key role to play. To provide a timely platform for HR and business leaders in Asia to come together to identify growth opportunities and drive organisational transformation, HRM Asia is organising the all-virtual HR Tech Fest Connect 2023 on Wednesday, September 27.

With the theme of **The Connected Workplace: Empowering HR Leaders to Build an Engaged and Resilient Workforce**, HR Tech Fest Connect 2023 will take a deep dive into topics such as how AI and the metaverse is shaping people development in the workplace; how organisations are deploying HR technologies to create a connected workforce; what leaders can do to organise and engage a resilient workforce; and developing successful employee engagement strategies in a hybrid world from renowned speakers such as Arthur Carmazzi, Stacey Harris, Go Ashokh Menon, and Kris Wadia.

Also, hear from international brands such as Bloomberg and Marriott, who will share their best practices in integrating employee wellbeing for a diverse and inclusive workplace, and why employee engagement is all about people when it comes to building a thriving and resilient work culture.

While change may be inevitable, organisations can thrive by embracing and learning off the changes that is taking place around them. And what better place to start then by joining us at HR Tech Fest Connect 2023 and be part of the discussion on how organisations in Asia can achieve sustainable growth in 2023 and beyond!

Shawn Liew

SHAWN LIEW,
Head of Content Development, HRM Asia

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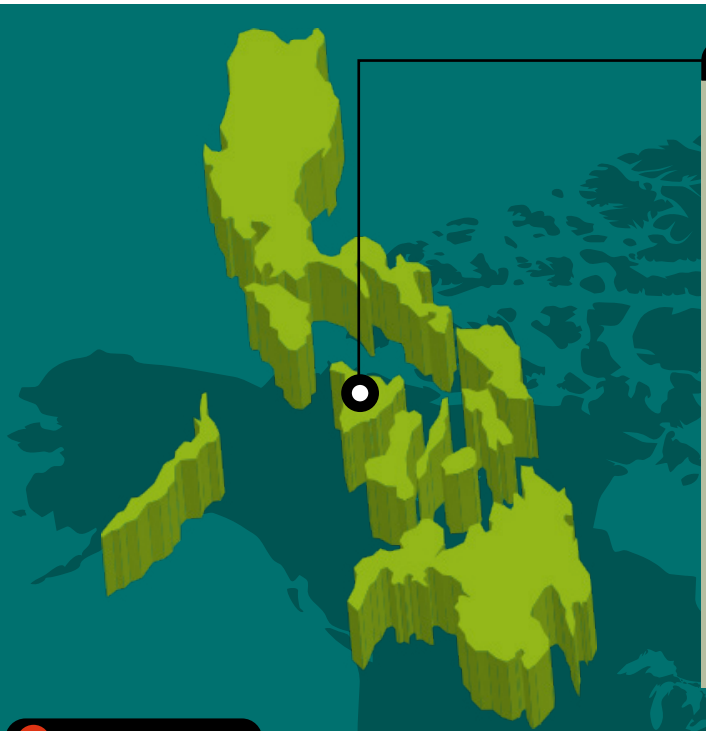


PHILIPPINES

WAGE HIKE IN THE PHILIPPINES REMAINS ON TRACK

FOLLOWING THE P40 (US$0.73) minimum wage increase in Metro Manila, the Senate of the Philippines is committed to legislating a wage hike for employees nationwide.

Juan Miguel Zubiri, President of the Senate of the Philippines, expressed confidence in responding to public demand, as indicated by a Pulse Asia survey, where 44% of respondents prioritised raising employees' pay, second only to controlling inflation at 63%. However, organisations oppose a Congress-mandated increase, advocating for tripartite regional boards to determine wages to avoid potential job losses and business closures.

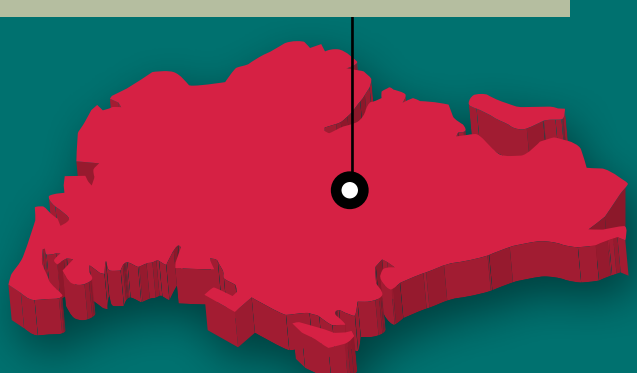
The Federation of Free Workers urged employers in Metro Manila to grant across-the-board wage adjustments to prevent disputes and maintain workplace productivity. They believe this approach will address wage distortion issues and promote fairness among employees.

SINGAPORE

SINGAPORE TO LAUNCH SUSTAINABLE PHILANTHROPY FRAMEWORK FOR CORPORATE GIVING

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE (NCSS) in Singapore is set to launch a sustainable philanthropy framework in Q1'2024. This framework aims to provide organisations with a guide to measure and monitor the effectiveness of their corporate giving, volunteering, and inclusive hiring efforts. By offering a tangible set of metrics, the NCSS hopes to inspire continued giving and enable organisations to assess their social impact.

Masagos Zulkifli, Singapore's Minister for Social and Family Development, expressed that the framework will encourage corporates to deepen and expand their philanthropic endeavours, incorporating them as part of their overall strategies. This approach is expected to address social issues and turn giving into a competitive advantage for the organisations involved.



MALAYSIA

MALAYSIA PROPOSES PROGRESSIVE WAGE MODEL

IN A BID TO RECTIFY long-standing structural issues in Malaysia's economy, the government has unveiled plans to introduce a progressive wage model that may mandate annual salary increments. Rafizi Ramli, Malaysia's Minister of Economic Affairs, acknowledged the potential unpopularity of this reform, especially among senior lawyers and hesitant employers.

The proposed model, a key election promise of the ruling Pakatan Harapan coalition, aims to address wage suppression by ensuring salary increases commensurate with economic growth. The government will present a policy paper outlining the model in August 2023, seeking to address wealth inequality and the widening wealth gap in the country.

SOUTH KOREA

WOMEN IN SOUTH KOREA EMBRACE EXTENDED CAREERS

AN INCREASING NUMBER OF WOMEN in South Korea are choosing to extend their careers beyond the age of 60. Statistics Korea reported that in June 2023, 1.91 million salaried women were in their 60s, marking an 8.2% surge from 2022. This number surpassed the combined total of women in their 60s engaged in full-time homemaking or childcare.

The social welfare sector has seen a notable rise in employment opportunities for elderly women, with approximately 375,000 women in their 60s currently employed in this field.

JAPAN

EMPLOYEES IN JAPAN HESITANT TO RETURN TO FULL-TIME OFFICE WORK

DESPITE MANY ORGANISATIONS in Japan reverting to pre-pandemic work patterns, a significant number of employees are unwilling to return to the office permanently. An XTalent survey revealed that 48.7% of the 1,085 respondents prefer not to work onsite, surpassing the 1.3% who desire a full-time office return. Instead, 37.9% favour a hybrid work setup, valuing face-to-face collaboration.

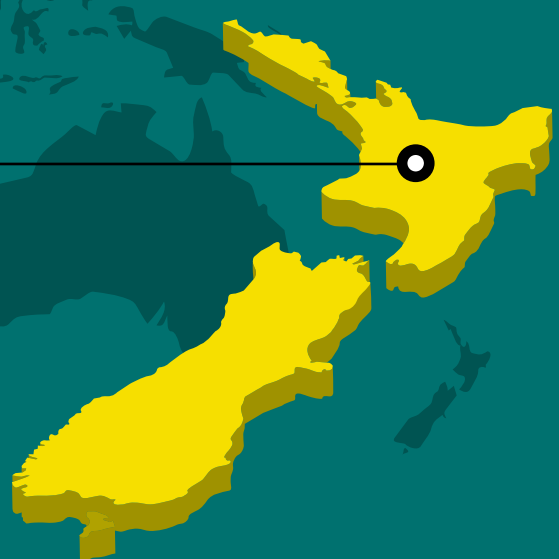
Furthermore, dissatisfaction with inadequate remote work systems prompted 198 of 407 respondents with managerial positions in their 30s and 40s who are raising children, to consider quitting their jobs. 26.4% of employees also favour the option to work once a week in the office, with the option of working in the office three times a month or less as the next popular option at 23.7%.

NEW ZEALAND

NEW ZEALAND ADVANCES IN WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

NEW ZEALAND HAS MADE STRIDES towards enhancing women's outcomes, wellbeing, and equality, with progress in education, labour force participation, and support for women in paid work.

A report presented to the United Nations highlighted the positive impact of the 2022 Women's Employment Action Plan, known as Te Mahere Whai Mahi Wāhine, and other initiatives. The plan targets women from diverse backgrounds, including wāhine Māori, Pacific women, disabled women, former refugees, migrants, and the Rainbow community, providing a roadmap for their employment and educational paths.



EU

EU LAWMAKERS ADVOCATE WFH PROTECTIONS AND RIGHTS

OVER 30 EUROPEAN UNION (EU) lawmakers have endorsed a non-binding document, spearheaded by the Future Workforce Alliance, aimed at safeguarding the rights of remote and hybrid employees. The proposed guidelines seek to grant employees access to co-working spaces, forbid the tracking of employees' computers at home, and protect them from after-hours emails.

The initiative builds on the EU's "right to disconnect" proposal, an earlier call to grant EU employees legal rights to switch off work-related tasks and electronic communication beyond office hours. The policy, supported by majority in the European Parliament and already in place in countries like France, Spain, and Belgium, is likely to become EU lay by the year's end, according to Ben Marks, Co-Founder of the Future Workforce Alliance.

BRAZIL

BRAZIL ENACTS LAW ENSURING EQUAL PAY FOR WOMEN AND MEN

BRAZIL PRESIDENT LUIZ INÁCIO "LULA" DA SILVA has approved Law No. 14,611/2023, aiming to establish equal payment for individuals of all genders performing the same job functions. The new legislation also introduces stricter sanctions for employers.

The law amends Article 461 of the Labour Code, explicitly mandating equal payment and remuneration criteria for men and women carrying out equivalent work. In cases of discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, origin, or age, employers may face fines up to 10 times the new monthly salary owed, doubled for repeated violations, along with potential indemnification for moral damages. This marks an increase from previous penalties, which were limited to 50% of the maximum annual social security pension.

EU

EU COUNTRIES REVISE DRAFT RULES FOR GIG EMPLOYEES' BENEFITS

COUNTRIES IN THE EUROPEAN UNION (EU) have made adjustments to draft rules aimed at providing employee benefits to employees in online platforms like Uber and Deliveroo. The proposed rules, announced by the EU executive in 2021, aim to ensure fair competition between online and traditional businesses and would cover around 4.1 million employees across the EU.

The countries propose that organisations be considered employers if they meet three out of seven criteria. The European Parliament wants additional criteria, such as fixed salaries and defining working hours. Uber criticised the proposals, citing concerns about employee independence and flexibility. Negotiations between EU countries, lawmakers, and the commission will determine the final legislation.

UK

UK EXPANDS EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT PROGRAMME FOR PEOPLE WITH HEALTH CONDITIONS

THE UK GOVERNMENT is expanding a programme that provides employment support to individuals with mild to moderate mental or physical health conditions who are out of work or need support to stay employed. The programme, called Individual Placement and Support in Primary Care (IPSPC), integrates employment support with healthcare treatment and is aimed at helping participants unlock their potential and leading fulfilling careers.

The first phase of IPSPC, launched in April 2023, supported 12,700 people across several regions. Now, an additional £31 million (US$39.9 million) investment will extend the programme to assist up to 12,9000 more people in various areas, with the goal of aiding over 25,000 individuals in securing or retaining employment by March 2025.

PORTUGAL

PORTUGAL TESTS FOUR-DAY WORKWEEK

PORTUGAL IS EMBARKING on a six-month pilot programme, partnering with 39 private-sector organisations and 4 Day Week Global, to experiment with a four-day workweek. Under the "100-80-100" model, employees will work 80% of their usual hours and receive full pay while delivering 100% of their regular output.

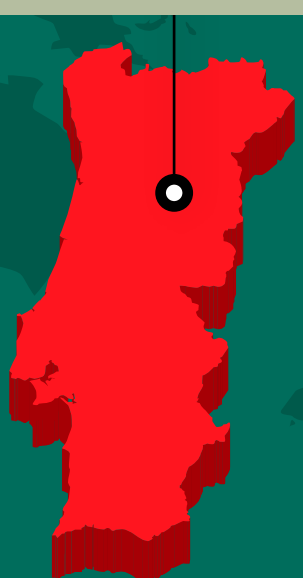
Currently, 72% of the Portuguese workforce works over 40 hours per week, making it the OECD country with the third-longest average workweek. The trial aims to gauge the impact on employee stress, burnout, and retention, as well as the economic, social, and environmental implications.

MEXICO

MEXICO IMPLEMENTS NEW REGULATIONS FOR REMOTE WORK

THE MEXICAN SECRETARIAT of Labour and Social Welfare (STPS) has announced new work-from-home regulations, known as NOM-037, which will take effect in six months. The regulations mandate standards for employees spending over 40% of their workday at home and require IT to carry out their jobs.

Employers will be responsible for providing necessary supplies like Internet service, ergonomic chairs, electricity, and printers. The "right to disconnect" will be established, preventing employers from obligating employees to work beyond standard hours.



CRAFTING NARRATIVES OF CHANGE: A HUMAN-CENTRIC APPROACH

BY **SHAWN LIEW**

While generative AI has continued to permeate into all facets of life, including work, it is perhaps fair to suggest that the technology has raised more questions than answers. Will millions of jobs be replaced at the same time as new roles are being created, and how will it redefine the role of people in the workplace?

Driven partly by the rise of AI and the accompanying shift needed in capabilities, the workplace is transforming in fundamental ways, said Dr Tanvi Gautam, HR Influencer, Keynote Speaker, Transformational Leadership Expert and author of the upcoming book – *"Deep Collaboration: 5 Crucial Conversations To Accelerate Team Performance Across Silos."*

Speaking with *HRM Magazine Asia*, she added, "If AI is becoming more human, we need to make sure that organisations don't become more machine like and instead focus on creating a human-centric workplace that priorities skills such as creativity and strategic thinking, empathy, and we start to pay attention to deeply human attributes of interaction such as relational and somatic intelligence skills as well as storytelling and narrative building capabilities."

Many employees have also emerged from the pandemic re-evaluating the priorities in their lives and pondering why they do what they do. This heightened awareness, said Dr Tanvi, is even more evident in younger employees who demand that employers act on issues such as sustainability, purpose, and inclusivity. She also raised concerns on the approach some companies are taking on these issues. "Organisations who continue to pay lip service and engage in green-washing or pink-washing the agenda will face increasing pressure to declare their activities beyond slogans and campaigns."

Organisations will also need to redefine how they generate value by breaking down silos and leverage a networks-based, eco-systems approach. "The ability to collaborate across sectors and industry lines will become a core competitive advantage," Dr Tanvi explained. "However, organisations that can't even get collaboration going across company lines will find it hard to get it going across industry lines. This has meant that organisations now need to seriously look at bolstering the collaborative capabilities of their people."

Embarking on the culture transformation journey with your people

As collective consciousness evolves and employer-employee relationships are being redefined amidst technological advancements, organisations must continuously re-evaluate how their culture suits an ever-changing context.

Before embarking on their culture transformation journey however, organisations must recognise that culture transformation is an ongoing, adaptive, and collaborative process marked by significant milestones, as opposed to a linear journey with a defined endpoint. Transformation is a journey, not a destination.

Instead of working only on a fixed blueprint or a predefined timeline, Dr Tanvi advised organisations to cultivate an "emergent and evolutionary relationship" alongside their cultural transformation.

Drawing an analogy to gardening, she described, "Just as a garden requires regular care based on seasons, weed control, and soil enrichment, culture change thrives when approached with organic metaphors rooted in nature, rather than rigid industrial-age prescriptions."

The next critical factor for successful culture transformation is an obvious one, she noted. While many organisations have undergone structural changes, desired outcomes continue to elude them because they are failing to change the mindsets and attitudes of people.

"Merely launching campaigns and adopting new ways of working will yield limited results, leading to the all-too-common statistic that 70% of change management efforts fail," Dr Tanvi said. "I often advise my clients to contemplate the impact of an initiative, not just on your organisation, but also on your personal self as a human being and professional skill set. Embrace the collective benefits it will bring to all involved for the initiative to develop deeper roots".

To demonstrate empathy toward employees, organisations must craft a compelling narrative around culture change. Powerful and inspiring storytelling encourages employee buy-in and fosters a sense of connection to the desired change. This prepares employees for what lies ahead, align the individual purpose with the role purpose, and link them to the overarching organisational purpose.

Dr Tanvi elaborated, "By skilfully crafting the narrative of change, we greatly enhance the likelihood of individuals going above and beyond their existing efforts to facilitate the transformation. While many companies focus on presenting charts and graphs to address the issue, we must concurrently address how the human brain processes

"If AI is becoming more human, we need to make sure that organisations don't become more machine like and instead focus on creating a human-centric workplace."
DR TANVI GAUTAM

change as a threat as well as the strain of the change on our nervous systems. Neuroscience and somatic intelligence have a role to play in the success of change processes" she noted.

Breaking down silos to enhance organisational performance

For organisations looking to reinvent their business models in an age of technology transformation, working in silos and collaboration are incongruous and contradictory concepts.

However, are organisations doing enough support collaboration in the workplace? "Today, in many companies, even if there is a desire to collaborate, rewards and appraisals are set up to serve individuals and not collective goals," Dr Tanvi observed. "A jadedness may even hang in the air in such cultures where attempts at collaboration in the past have gone wrong due to the excessive focus on the structure of change and not the humanity and emotion of change."

The conversations that organisations have with employees play a key role in determining the quality of collaboration, as Dr Tanvi explores in her upcoming book, *"Deep Collaboration: 5 Crucial Conversations To Accelerate Team Performance Across Silos."* "Shallow conversations lead to shallow collaborations and create a culture where people are busy protecting their turf and end up playing passive-aggressive games that serve no one," she highlighted.

"I find that once teams engage in the five conversations of deep collaboration, they approach their goals with a renewed sense of purpose and engagement. It is through conversations that people feel that they are seen, heard, understood, accepted and aligned."

To move beyond superficial markers of collaboration to deep collaboration, organisations must learn to create a third identity beyond traditional functional areas or domains. "This in turn requires us to create that connection and commitment to a collective future that both inspires us to do more and be more, as well as cultivate a nuanced understanding of domains of expertise beyond our own" Dr Tanvi said.

"The days of the vertical, deep-diving expert are over, and we need leaders to have the ability to span boundaries," Dr Tanvi suggested. "HR has to learn to speak technology, leaders in marketing have to learn to speak HR, and so on."

Leaders who will create thriving workplaces must begin with self-awareness, self-leadership, and a willingness to be a life-long learner; these, along with boundary spanning skills, will all be key traits for the leaders of the future.

But perhaps most important of all, leaders need to demonstrate the empathy and humility in recognising the work is a means to an end and not an end in itself. The focus on people and a human-centric approach, it would appear, is non-negotiable for long-term success.

"Helping their teams manage and integrate the demands of being human with the demands of the workplace will be a crucial and supportive skill set of leaders of sustainable growth," Dr Tanvi concluded. **hrm**

How HR leaders can cultivate an effective contingent workforce

The rise of the gig economy has brought about a significant shift in the way organisations approach their workforce. Today, contingent workers, including freelancers, contractors, and consultants, make up integral parts of the new boundless workforce.

And yet, according to Ceridian's 2023 Executive Survey, adoption of a contingent workforce in Singapore is lower (66%) than the global average (80%). However, over half of Singaporean respondents anticipate an increase in usage of these workers in the next two years.

This changing dynamic presents both opportunities and challenges for organisations. The Executive Survey, which polled over 2,000 business leaders across seven countries, highlights the many benefits already realised by organisations using contingent workers. In Singapore, these benefits include enhanced agility (52%), increased productivity (46%), and greater workforce flexibility and faster speed to market (44%).

But successfully establishing and managing an effective contingent workforce requires careful planning. Let us explore in more detail.

Strategic deployment

The strategic deployment of contingent workers is a critical factor for the success of any flexible workforce in today's rapidly evolving business climate. Nonetheless, it is a challenging task. Nearly half (46%) of respondents from Singapore said it is challenging to find contingent workers with the right skills.

When leveraged correctly, contingent workers can help fill talent gaps, promote organisational goals, and alleviate labour shortages. More importantly, by tapping into the unique abilities and innovative potential of contingent workers, businesses can gain a competitive advantage. This is particularly noteworthy in a country like Singapore, where 65% of organisations have experienced a labour shortage in the past year.

> **"When leveraged correctly, contingent workers can help fill talent gaps, promote organisational goals, and alleviate labour shortages."**

To achieve success, employers need real-time insights into their workforce, enabling them to proactively identify and respond to potential skill or labour gaps before they negatively impact people, production, or customer satisfaction. This comprehensive, integrated approach not only streamlines processes across the employee lifecycle, boosting engagement and productivity, but also strengthens the relationship between employers and their contingent workforce, making it strategic rather than transactional.

Technology-driven agility

To fully harness the potential of contingent workers, it is crucial for organisations to provide the right tools, resources, and support. This includes offering comprehensive onboarding programmes, providing clear communication channels, and ensuring they have access to the necessary resources.

Technology plays a critical role in seamlessly integrating and growing a thriving contingent workforce. However, it is worth noting that for 61% of Singapore respondents, integrating contingent workers remains a significant challenge. With the right systems, strategies, and mindset, this barrier can be turned into a competitive advantage. Leaders can work to accomplish this by implementing systems that provide visibility and insights into your full-time, part-time, and extended workforce all in one.

An agile infrastructure providing clear expectations, regular feedback, and opportunities for growth and development is crucial for the successful integration of contingent workers. By addressing these

elements, businesses can turn contingent workers into a competitive advantage.

Continuous worker engagement

It is crucial to remember that contingent workers are an integral part of the team, regardless of their contract duration. Inclusion in communications, team meetings, and events fosters a sense of belonging, which in turn boosts engagement and productivity while improving brand perception.

Fostering an environment of inclusivity and treating contingent workers as critical team members can significantly enhance productivity and retention across the workforce. Engagement strategies should encompass clear goal setting, recognition of achievements, and continuous feedback. Engagement surveys are an effective way to gather valuable insights from every part of your workforce.

Top five tips:

Based on these insights, organisations looking to realise the full potential of contingent workers should:

- Assess real-time HR data to glean insights into your workforce trends and identify skill or labour gaps before they negatively impact people, production, or customer satisfaction.
- Leverage human capital management technology to fully integrate contingent workers efficiently and seamlessly.
- Implement systems that provide visibility across their workforce (from full-time, to part-time, and extended) all together.
- Employ employee engagement software to gather insights and data for informed decision-making.
- Ensure contingent workers are part of a holistic workforce talent strategy with clear goals and strategies for greater results.
- Attract and retain better talent by treating contingent workers as the valuable part of the team they are, rather than outsiders.

Final thoughts

These trends underscore the need for organisations to embrace modern HCM technology, such as Dayforce offered by Ceridian, which equip employers with an agile, scalable framework and real-time data for informed decision-making.

As skills gaps and labour shortages continue to pose a challenge to many organisations, the increased use of contingent workers is essential to helping address the complexity crisis prevalent across all industries. Businesses integrating these strategies successfully will lead the workforce transformation, exemplifying adaptability, resilience, and foresight in tackling future challenges. **hrm**

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How performance management can propel organisations forward

Performance management, when conducted with fairness and transparency, offers advantages for organisations. According to research by Deloitte, organisations that prioritise employee satisfaction in performance management are more likely to surpass their financial targets and effectively manage change, enabling them to adapt and excel during periods of turbulence.

In the broader scope of employee experience, performance management plays a vital role. Devshree Bhatt, Senior People Scientist for Culture Amp, described performance management as a "key moment that matters", emphasising how employees' experience during performance discussions can impact their engagement and motivation.

Bhatt told *HRM Magazine Asia*, "Everyone is likely to remember when they've had a great performance discussion where they felt valued and heard from their people leader and were clear on what the outcome was focused towards. On the flip side, performance conversations that were unclear, impersonal or came as an unpleasant surprise can cause frustration and lead to decreased motivation amongst employees."

She further shared that research conducted by Culture Amp identified performance management as a crucial factor for engaging high-performing individuals, provided it focuses on constructive feedback, applies standards consistently, and minimises bias.

Understanding the pitfalls

Understanding the pitfalls of performance management is essential to achieve optimal results. According to Bhatt, placing excessive

emphasis on infrequent performance reviews causes anxiety for employees, pressure for HR teams, and dread for managers.

"Behavioural research has long shown the power of everyday nudges and interactions in driving change," she explained. "At Culture Amp, we sought to validate this impact with our own platform and found employees who were interacting with more continuous performance tools such as 1:1s, goal setting and anytime feedback led to reduced turnover and higher performance ratings."

Another challenge lies in the disproportionate focus on the past instead of the future. While evaluating past performance is necessary for promotions and compensation decisions, a future-focused approach that provides feedback on improvement and skill development is crucial for growth and motivation. Striking a balance between reflecting on past performance and identifying areas for future growth is essential for reaping the full benefits of the process, Bhatt said.

The lack of clarity and perceived fairness in the performance management process can also contribute to its failure. "We often assume that people's perceptions of a performance system are primarily based on the outcomes, so whether or not they got the raise or promotion they were hoping for," she said, adding that having clear rating scales, multiple sources of feedback, and calibration sessions are ways in which organisations can minimise the risk of bias in the process. "It's important to remember that people can be disappointed with the outcome, but still satisfied if the process feels fair and one that takes a human-centric lens to it."

To enhance the employee experience and drive business outcomes, Bhatt suggested embracing a feedback-oriented culture that extends beyond the performance cycle. Building a culture where feedback is encouraged at all levels creates an environment where employees feel comfortable providing recognition and constructive feedback. To this end, Culture Amp developed an anytime feedback tool that facilitates continuous feedback collection, enabling employees to gather insights throughout the year and leading to more accurate reviews and informed decisions.

Consistent and meaningful recognition is another essential element, and Bhatt said that employees should not have to wait for performance reviews to be recognised. Recognition tools that reinforce desired behaviour can keep employees motivated and engaged. One such tool, Shoutouts, developed by Culture Amp, fosters a culture of appreciation and amplifies the impact of employees' work on individuals and teams.

Finally, regular one-to-one conversations play a crucial role in creating a no-surprises approach to performance. Managers and employees can alleviate anxiety by prioritising performance, goal setting, and ongoing feedback in these conversations.

"Our research shows that setting goals is associated strongly with lower turnover and increased performance ratings. However, just setting and forgetting is not beneficial; rather, discussing and adjusting goals, based on the unique context of your team, is essential to set employees up for success," Bhatt concluded. hrm

"It's important to remember that people can be disappointed with the outcome, but still satisfied if the process feels fair and one that takes a human-centric lens to it."

DEVSHREE BHATT, SENIOR PEOPLE SCIENTIST, CULTURE AMP

Driving impact and equity through performance management

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See the research

From gap to growth: Key strategies for deskless workforce

The modern work landscape heavily relies on the deskless workforce, which plays a critical role across various industries, from retail and hospitality to healthcare and construction.

To gain insights into the challenges faced by deskless employees and uncover solutions for optimising their productivity and engagement, Axonify conducted a study called Deskless Report 2023, which delves into the frontline environment, gaining a deeper understanding of what employees, managers, and leaders need to succeed.

The report revealed the tasks that frontline managers encounter and their ongoing challenge of balancing staff management and employee satisfaction. Despite their crucial role in frontline enablement, managers face the challenge of being overburdened and having to rely on insufficient tools or their own personal resources.

Another significant finding is the existing gap in information dissemination between managers and deskless employees. While organisations might focus on community and cultural initiatives, the study revealed that the more fundamental needs of deskless employees, such as livelihoods and stability, often go unaddressed. This disparity creates challenges for deskless employees in fully participating, accepting, or recognising the value of peripheral initiatives.

Sudan Jeganathan, Regional Manager Sales and Product, Capability Group – an organisational development consultancy and Axonify authorised partner in Asia-Pacific, told *HRM Magazine Asia*, "More regular and bite-sized communications top down and across frontline teams is critical to driving engagement and productivity. So is providing the ability for your deskless employees to communicate with each other via two-way communication mechanism. When surveyed, frontline respondents said messaging coming from direct managers and short, easy-to-read copy were the main contributors to making communications more helpful."

Enhancing communications in Asia-Pacific's workplaces

In the context of the Asia-Pacific region, Jeganathan highlighted that employees are more likely to use mobile devices for communication and prefer informal communication styles. To align with these preferences, he suggested that organisations leverage mobile-friendly communication channels, such as messaging services, using easily understandable language and personalising messages. This approach enhances engagement, he added, and builds stronger connections between managers and their deskless workforce.

Cultural sensitivity is also a crucial consideration in communication strategies for organisations in this region, Jeganathan highlighted. "Be aware of the cultural differences in communication styles between different countries in Asia-Pacific. Depending on the countries, there will be a set of culturally accepted norms to adhere to."

To improve communication and foster a sense of community, he encouraged organisations to provide employees with access to relevant information and resources at the point in time that employees need it. Gathering feedback through surveys and feedback forms is another move to identify areas for improvement and demonstrate that employee voices are valued.

Looking to the future, Jeganathan shared several emerging trends specific to the region that will impact the management and support of employees. For instance, the rise of the gig economy necessitates new strategies to attract, retain, and effectively manage gig employees within the deskless workforce. Additionally, the increasing use of AI can automate tasks, deliver customised communications, provide real-time insights, and enhance decision-making, offering opportunities for improved workforce management.

He continued, "Data has always been powerful. But this will increasingly become even more important in the future. Those organisations that can interpret this data to identify trends, improve performance, and make better decisions will hold a huge advantage when it comes to increasing the efficiencies of their people and businesses."

He also expressed enthusiasm about the mass adoption of extended reality (XR) technologies in the workplace, and explained, "XR is a rapidly growing technology that has the potential to revolutionise the workplace. XR includes augmented reality, virtual reality, and mixed reality. These technologies can be used to improve training, collaboration, wellbeing, and customer service."

Embracing technology in frontline training is crucial, according to the Axonify study, where 47% of frontline respondents expressed a desire to leverage technology to address the lack of employee training, considering it the highest priority.

Finally, prioritising employee wellbeing is essential for organisations to improve productivity among employees, as Jeganathan concluded, "The importance of employee wellbeing is a widely discussed topic as of late and will be even more relevant with the pace of change and digital disruption in years to come. Organisations need to find technology-enabled ways to support the wellbeing of their deskless workforce to build both engagement and improve productivity." hrm

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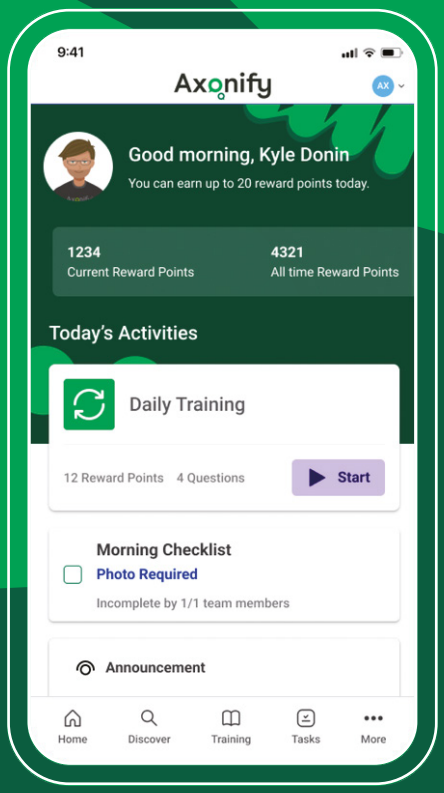

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Axonify is brought to the Asia market by **Capability Group**. See how we have successfully implemented Axonify to global companies across the APAC region.

HR TECH FEST CONNECT 2023: EMPOWERING HR LEADERS TO SHAPE THE CONNECTED WORKFORCE OF TOMORROW

In today's dynamic and uncertain global economy, organisations are confronted with unprecedented challenges. In response, many of these organisations may feel compelled to adopt a short-term, risk-averse approach primarily motivated by cost concerns. However, it is the forward-looking organisations that truly understand the secret to success—cultivating an engaged, motivated, and growth-oriented workforce.

HR Tech Fest Connect 2023

www.hrtechfestconnect.com | 27 September 2023

In the face of adversity, these visionary organisations recognise the importance of empowering their employees to not only weather the storm but to thrive amidst uncertainty. They understand that a workforce that is deeply connected to the organisation's mission and values will be better equipped to overcome challenges and seize opportunities.

To address these crucial HR challenges and identify growth opportunities, HRM Asia is presenting HR Tech Fest Connect 2023. Taking place on September 27, the one-day virtual conference, supported by premium sponsor **Ceridian**, serves as a timely platform for Asia's HR community to come together and drive organisational transformation. With the theme *The Connected Workplace: Empowering HR Leaders to Build an Engaged and Resilient Workforce*, the event offers valuable insights into workplace trends that can help HR leaders steer their organisations towards growth and stability.

Arthur Carmazzi

The virtual conference will feature a lineup of inspirational HR visionaries and thought leaders who will share their expertise on how to shape the future of HR practices and organisational development. One such influential speaker is **Arthur Carmazzi**, Founder of the **Directive Communication Psychology**. Ranked as the world's #1 thought leader in organisational culture by Global Gurus, Carmazzi's keynote address, titled *AIs and the Metaverse at Work: Navigating the Future of Speaking, Coaching, and Training*, will shed light on how AI and the metaverse will reshape coaching and training in the workplace, opening up new possibilities for employee development and growth.

Rob Squires, VP and Regional Head for Asia and Japan, **Ceridian**, will present *The Power of Mobilising the Boundless Workforce*, where he will share insights from Ceridian's 2023 Executive Survey, shedding light on the strategies and technologies that successful organisations are utilising to optimise their boundless workforce.

Stacey Harris, Chief Research Officer and Managing Partner of **Sapient Insights Group**, will present research findings on how organisations in Asia-Pacific are successfully leveraging HR technologies to create a highly connected and collaborative workforce in her session, *How to Build a Technology Stack for a Connected Workplace: Insights from the Annual HR Systems Survey*. By understanding and

Rob Squires

Joshua Ooi

Stacey Harris

Alisha Fernando

Robert Gee

Go Ashokh Menon

Employee wellbeing has emerged as a top priority on the corporate agenda, with leaders recognising its role in driving stronger engagement, retention, and productivity among their teams.

embracing practical applications of HR tech, HR leaders can lead their teams more effectively and drive greater productivity.

Employee wellbeing has emerged as a top priority on the corporate agenda, with leaders recognising its role in driving stronger engagement, retention, and productivity among their teams. To uncover the factors that truly motivate and empower employees, **Alisha Fernando**, Head of Diversity and Inclusion Asia-Pacific, **Bloomberg**; and **Robert Gee**, Asia-Pacific Head of Sell-Side Trading Solutions Sales, **Bloomberg**, will present *Integrated Employee Wellbeing for a Diverse and Inclusive Workplace*, where they will share the initiatives Bloomberg has spearheaded to ensure employee wellbeing is a consideration that is integrated into all facets of the employee lifecycle.

Attendees to HR Tech Fest Connect 2023 will also have the opportunity to gain insights from **Go Ashokh Menon**, an Agile Coach and Facilitator from **One Synergy Global**. During his session, titled *Driving Future Growth: How Organisations Can Identify Trends and Opportunities*, he will delve into critical topics that can help organisations in selecting growth opportunities. One of the key focuses will be on understanding and analysing shifting trends that will shape the near future, as well as strategies for organising and engaging a resilient workforce to achieve high-impact performance.

In an era of transformative change, both people and work have evolved, necessitating a shift in human capital management (HCM). The modern workforce demands flexibility, personalisation, and purpose, and it is crucial for HCM systems to adapt and deliver accordingly. In the next session titled *Three Ways Dayforce Transforms the Way You Work*, **Joshua Ooi**, Senior Manager, Solutions Advisory, **Ceridian**, will demonstrate the power of Dayforce, the global people platform by Ceridian. From unlocking workforce intelligence to empowering individuals and ensuring compliance management, Dayforce is designed to meet the diverse needs of today's dynamic workforce.

In another session titled *Employee Burnout Is Real: Building Resilience for a Healthier Workforce*, **Manish Arneja**, Managing Partner of **Resilience Institute SEA**, will provide insights into how organisations' leaders can support employees in beating burnout and cultivating essential practices to enhance performance. During this session, attendees will gain a deeper understanding of burnout and its multifaceted impact on employees' mental and emotional wellbeing as Arneja will share strategies that have proven effective in building resilience and fostering a healthier and more productive workforce.

To allow organisations to better understand Gen Z in the workplace, a panel discussion moderated by **Dr Sandhya Karpe**, Human Capital Center Leader, Asia and Programme Director of Asia Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Council, **The Conference Board**, will take a deep dive into what organisations can do to attract and retain a new generation of employees, while managing a multi-ge-

Manish Arneja

Andrew Newmark

CERIDIAN
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Dr Sandhya Karpe

Ruth Gellert-Neale

Wong Yang Sheng

David Lim

nerational workforce and creating an inclusive workplace that provides fair opportunities for all employees.

Dr Sandhya will be joined in this engaging panel discussion titled, *Gen Z Rising in Asia: A Dynamic Force for Organisational Change,* by **Ruth Gellert-Neale**, Global HR Executive Director, **JLL**; **David Lim**, SVP Human Resources, **PVH Corp**; and **Wong Yang Sheng**, Head of HR for Singapore, **Standard Chartered Bank**.

Marriott International will present a session specially designed for HR leaders who are passionate about cultivating a vibrant and engaged workforce. Titled *Building a Thriving Culture: Why Employee Engagement is All About People*, this session by **Andrew Newmark**, CHRO of **Marriott International**, offers attendees insights into Marriott International's successful approach to overcoming challenges posed by the pandemic and fostering a thriving culture within the organisation.

Also joining HR Tech Connect is **Nathalie Huynh**, Country HR Director, Singapore, Malaysia and Brunei, **Schneider Electric**, who will be discussing why greenskilling can help create jobs of the future and how organisations can make sustainability a part of their corporate DNA.

In his closing keynote address, **Kris Wadia**, CEO of **Humanized Leadership**, will present a session on *Employee Engagement in a Hybrid World – Strategies for Success*, where he will present a comprehensive checklist designed to help organisations avoid common operational mistakes made in employee engagement programmes. The session will then delve into embedding successful employee engagement strategies throughout the entire employee lifecycle, from recruitment to retirement, and attendees will learn how to foster a culture of engagement that permeates every aspect of an employee's journey within the organisation.

HR Tech Fest Connect 2023 promises to be a transformative event that empowers HR leaders with the tools they need to build an engaged, resilient, and future-ready workforce. By harnessing the knowledge and expertise of esteemed speakers and thought leaders, attendees will be well-prepared to navigate the complexities of the modern business landscape and drive growth and stability through their people.

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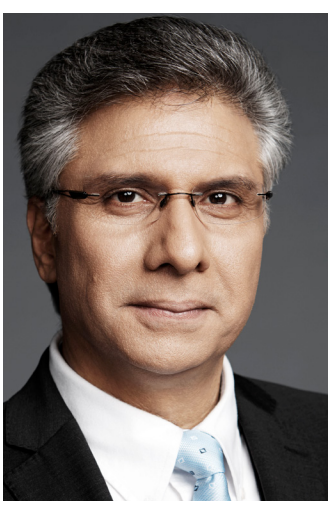
Register here to secure your place at this inspiring conference and be part of shaping the connected workforce of tomorrow. hrm

Nathalie Huynh



Kris Wadia

AIs and the metaverse at work: Navigating the future of speaking, coaching, and training

As workplace learning continues to evolve, live training, coaching or online learning are all effective employee development platforms in their own right. However, AI-generated training in the metaverse has the potential and ability to accelerate implementable leadership and soft skills faster than any of those platforms, said Arthur Carmazzi, Founder of the Directive Communication Psychology.

Speaking with *HRM Magazine Asia,* he explained, "Because we learn more effectively from a trial-and-error process, AI technology can now be used to find the root cause of people-related issues. Avatars can then be generated to act out the root cause in an interactive metaverse scenario that stimulates the real-world human resource problem."

"The users can interact with these avatars and make decisions and fail over and over again while the AI provides suggestions and solutions-based decisions made by learners until they succeed in their own way."

Carmazzi, who is ranked as the world's #1 most influential thought leader in organisational culture for 2022-23 by Global Gurus, also highlighted how mentors, coaches and trainers can create a personal AI that applies their unique methodologies and prevents any potential infringement of intellectual property.

"As learners and HR are dealing with real world AI generated simulations, there are no consequences for failure and once they complete their journey, they have the ingrained understanding and confidence to apply their 'experience' to the real world," he added.

This can also be applied to onboarding of new employees, where AI can personalise onboarding experiences by adjusting scenarios based on organisational values and objectives, as well as the user's performance, background, and experiences. This adaptability, said Carmazzi, ensures that new employees receive tailored guidance and support throughout their onboarding journey.

Pre-hire, AI can also help to vet prospective candidates for the right attitudes and cultural fit by generating quests connected to attitudes on topics such as diversity and inclusion, values, inherent leadership ability, mental health, and succession.

Reshaping leadership and human development in the workplace

Before organisations can explore how AI can help to reshape leadership, they must understand the two key factors that impact good leadership.

Firstly, what is the organisational culture that a leader is leading in?

Carmazzi illustrated, "If you were to swap the CEO of Google with the CEO of Citibank, the leadership competencies that would apply to the to one environment may be completely wrong for the other. No matter how competent a leader is in one environment, asking them to lead in a very different culture would not produce the same results. To start, a leader needs to know and understand the culture or the desired culture of the organisation they must lead in."

Secondly, what it the leadership identity of the potential leader? According to Carmazzi, HR tends to choose leadership training programmes that train specific leadership skills, only to discover that very little of the 'learning' is implemented.

"This is because we are unique, and we may have some amazing strengths that could support great leadership, but they may never be discovered because we are trying to follow a 'leadership model'," he said.

Instead, organisations should encourage leaders to look at the culture that they must lead, look at the different facets of their lives and how some of these can support their leadership success.

"It may be how you lead your kids, or how you support your friends, or how you deal with your accountant," Carmazzi identified. "These are who you are, and you will be able to define them and apply them to build your personalised leadership power. Add this to the AI support and metaverse discovery processes where you can discover and succeed in advance, and you have a fast and powerful leadership and culture solution."

To find out more about technology can shape higher standards of people development in the workplace, join Carmazzi at the all-virtual HR Tech Fest Connect 2023 on September 27. In his keynote address titled, *AIs and the Metaverse at Work: Navigating the Future of Speaking, Coaching, and Training,* Carmazzi will describe a future where workplace leaders can use their knowledge and wisdom through AI avatars of themselves to support employees to fail with no consequences and develop the skills and mindset to interact with real-world problems. **hrm**

"Because we learn more effectively from a trial-and-error process, AI technology can now be used to find the root cause of people-related issues."

No Normal: How the business of HR shifted from tactical to strategic

There is no "normal" to return to, but that has not stopped our minds and hearts from hoping to return to something close to "normal" after the significant business upheavals we've encountered in the last three years. The impact of monumental change is no longer imminent; it is here to stay. And, for those of us in Human Resources, the business of HR has forever changed.

We all felt the shift as it was happening; overnight, we faced talent scarcity, unreliable supply chains, changing workforce demographics, and new AI technology requiring us to reimagine future skill sets. These challenges impact organisations globally, but those headquartered in the Asia-Pacific region are facing the most significant gaps in the availability of skilled labor and critical talent due in part to the region's economic successes. Over a three-year period, Sapient Insight Groups Annual HR Systems research found that Asia-Pacific organisations saw markedly reduced annual outcomes in their ability to retain and attract top talent, while 42% still have plans for increasing their hiring over pre-pandemic numbers.

> **"Creating an HR technology environment that achieves actual outcomes requires careful planning, constant evaluation, and regular updating to ensure the organisation has the information it needs for informed decision-making."**

Even when skilled workforces can be found at high enough levels to meet the growing demand, organisations need help to keep top talent engaged enough to stay with the company long term. With remote work opportunities and increased access to higher education, our world is markedly smaller in hiring quality talent. Still, our global workforce feels more disengaged than ever, with two-thirds of employees feeling disconnected from their current colleagues.

Many Asia-Pacific organisations are looking to HR Technology as a valuable tool to help acquire and retain a growing number of employees, allowing them to both increase HR efficiencies and colleague collaboration.

WHY APAC ORGANISATIONS ARE INCREASING HR TECHNOLOGY SPENDING

- 88% Improve HR Efficiency
- 56% Improve HR Data Quality
- 52% Manage an Increasing Workforce

2022-2023 Sapient Insights Group HR Systems Survey Research, 25th Edition

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Over the last three years, we have seen the average Asia-Pacific organisation's per-employee spending on HR technology increase threefold, and the percentage of organisations with at least one HR application in use jump from 50% to 75% in our last annual survey. Payroll solutions are the most frequently adopted application, but APAC organisations are also heavily investing in solutions critical to managing the employee experience, such as platform tools like Human Resource Management Systems (HRMS), along with employee and manager self-service tools, and HR portal technologies.

Keeping talent is as critical as finding new talent – driving organisations'

APAC COMPANIES CONTINUE TO FACE TALENT CHALLENGES

ASIA PACIFIC ORGANISATIONS CONTINUE TO FACE TALENT CHALLENGES

Ability to achieve these outcomes declined, stayed the same, or improved?	2020 Average Outcome	2021 Average Outcome	2022 Average Outcome	
Retain Top Talent	2.9	2.7	2.5	↓ 14%
Attract Top Talent	3.1	2.9	2.8	↓ 10%
Availability of Workforce Data	3.0	3.2	3.2	↑ 7%

42% Increase in hiring over pre-pandemic numbers

53% have fully remote or hybrid workforces

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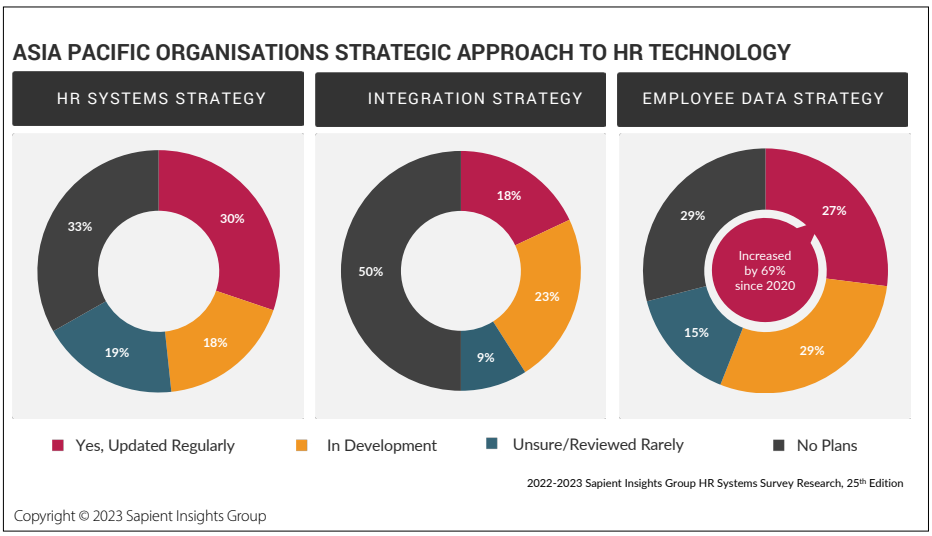
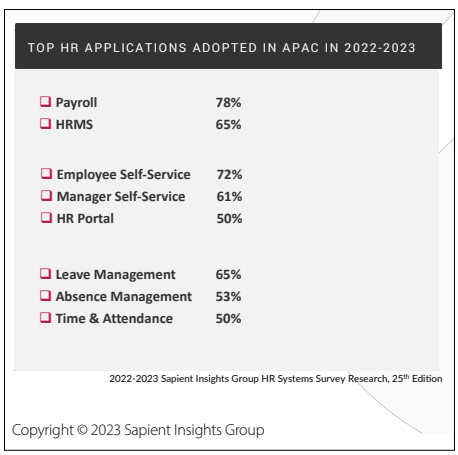


desire to continue improving the employee experience. Before 2020, just 6% of organisations had a substantial number of their workforce working fully remotely or in hybrid environments. The APAC region continues to have some of the highest percentages of remote workers, with 53% of organisations stating they have some level of hybrid work offering today and another 21% claiming they also offer some level of fully remote positions.

With the shift to work-from-home and hybrid working environments, technology has become more critical than ever to employee experience outcomes. Organisations are rushing to see what their current solutions can do and what complementary or new solutions they may need to add to meet changing employee expectations. Beyond existing application investments, the APAC region's top plans for increased HR technology spending in 2023 included:

- Recruiting and onboarding
- HR Analytics and planning
- Learning and training
- Wellness and benefits
- Skills management

Although we are seeing increased spending and adoption of HR technology across the Asia-Pacific market, we still need more strategic planning when architecting an effective HR technology stack that creates employee connections and value for our organisations. Only 30% of Asia-Pacific organisations have an updated HR Systems strategy that helps them clearly articulate a current and future state HR technology environment and how that aligns with business goals. Even fewer organisations have a process for ethically managing the increased amounts of employee data they gather daily or how they will integrate that data into a helpful business environment.



An HR technology environment is a complex set of applications, platforms, data sets, and intelligent workflows utilised by an organisation and its workforce to support the business. An HR systems strategy underpins and supports the organisation's overarching business strategy, and part of that business strategy is how innovative and competitive a company is, what it wants its market share and profitability to be, and how it treats its customers – including what its customers say about them. Over the last five years, Sapient Insights Group has found that organisations that invest in strategic planning of their HR systems, data integration, and an adaptive approach to change management regularly see double-digit increases in these business outcomes. An HR systems strategy alone was aligned with a 12% increase in these outcomes in 2023 versus organisations with no HR systems strategy.

Creating an HR technology environment that achieves actual outcomes requires careful planning, constant evaluation, and regular updating to ensure the organisation has the information it needs for informed decision-making. Part of your HR systems strategy needs to show how your solutions will drive significant business outcomes and improve the value of the investment. This data can be part of your business case for acquiring new, more effective solutions. Every HR technology investment should be focused on outcomes.

The HR systems strategy builds on the organisation and HR strategies to provide tools, technologies, and data to create a more connected work environment and allow the organisation to understand its needs as it relates to its workforce. If you are a small organisation just starting the journey into HR technology, begin now, as the baseline solutions you put in place will build the foundation for your organisational culture and the data and information you will need to grow your business faster. If you are a larger organisation, it is never too late to get started – and you will be amazed by how a little planning can begin to reduce the number of shadow systems, and fire drills your HR function faces regularly.

If you would like to see the most recent updates from Sapient Insights Annual HR Systems Survey, now in its 26th edition, join us at HRM Asia's HR Tech Fest Connect 2023, which is a one-day, all-virtual event taking place on September 27.

I will reveal how global organisations are using technology to create and enhance connected workplaces and share preliminary Asia-Pacific data from this year's annual survey in our session on How to *Build a Technology Stack for a Connected Workplace: Insights from the Annual HR Systems Survey*. **hrm**

About the Author

Stacey Harris is Chief Research Officer and Managing Partner of Sapient Insights Group.

Embrace resilience: Build a future fit organisation

The COVID-19 pandemic has reshaped the business landscape and presented leaders with unprecedented challenges. As organisations navigate through the economic aftermath of the crisis, it has become clear that the approach to finding growth opportunities and leading teams must evolve. The disruptive nature of the pandemic has highlighted the need for leaders to adopt a different mindset—one that embraces change, innovation, and resilience.

Challenge the past: Leaders do not have an empirical playbook to guide them through this crisis. The pandemic unleashed unique challenges, disrupting traditional norms. From supply chain disruptions to remote work arrangements, organisations face a multitude of challenges. Organisations are also grappling with economic issues such as recession, a decrease in consumer spending, employment issues and an increase in future uncertainty. Against this backdrop, leaders cannot totally rely on past pre-COVID practices to guide and navigate their teams. What worked in the past may not be relevant for the future.

People Powered Future: Amidst the uncertainty, a glimmer of insight emerges from McKinsey's Global Institute's Performance Through People report, which reveals that organisations which prioritise people development and organisational performance soar above the rest. These "people + performance" companies not only weathered the storm but thrived during the pandemic, maintaining profitability and growth when others faltered. This emphasises the importance of a people-centric approach to foster innovation, collaboration, and sustainable implementation.

How can leaders create their own high impact teams that experience high quality motivation and deliver business results? By deliberately designing interactions and support systems that focuses on:

1. Identifying future strategic opportunities
2. Organising collaborative high-impact teams
3. Developing self-aware leaders

Future opportunities

Leaders need to develop a clear vision of their organisation's intended future and anticipated opportunities for growth. They should review the current trends and shifts shaping the world and their industry, including technology changes, regulatory requirements, demographic needs and values, to name but a few. They should identify the trends that will likely impact their businesses and prioritise the actions that need to be taken immediately and in the near future. Matching customers' unmet future needs with these trends will provide clarity of the direction to take.

High-impact teams

The future vision should be clearly communicated to teams, especially focusing on how team contributions will make a positive impact for customers and the organisation. In this current uncertain era, leaders should lean on adopting the agile methodology to track and implement the chosen strategies. An agile framework allows for continuous iterations where teams can continuously reflect, adjust and improve their actions. This removes their fear of failure as every action is deemed as a learning moment. A well-organised agile meeting provides the frameworks to make decisions, track progress and provide valuable feedback for improvements. Leaders can tap into their team's intrinsic drivers as long as they respect the first value of the agile manifesto –*"individuals and interactions over processes and tools".*

Self-aware leaders

Leaders who are prepared to embark on this journey would be required to learn or understand different skills, including strategic thinking, decision making, facilitating, listening, asking questions, and managing change.

But the key competency they need is to reframe their beliefs about their role and identity as a leader. To navigate and thrive in this new disruptive world, leaders need to undertake inner work to shift their mindsets. This will allow them to rethink the way they interact, the way they support their teams and the way they lead their organisations into the future. As leaders become more self-aware, they will be more enabling and work collectively to drive a thriving organisation that delivers impactful value.

In a world of continuous disruptions, leaders must embrace a new mindset to navigate challenges and build resilient organisations. Challenge past assumptions, prioritise people and performance, and focus on actionable areas such as identifying future opportunities, organising high-impact teams, and developing self-aware leaders. By doing so, organisations can adapt, thrive, and shape a resilient future. **hrm**

About the Author

Go Ashokh Menon is an Agile Coach and Change Agent, One Synergy Global. Join at HR Tech Fest Connect 2023, where his session titled, *Driving Future Growth: How Organisations Can Identify Trends and Opportunities*, will explore how to organise and engage a resilient workforce to deliver high-impact performance, and what leaders need to do differently to engage and support their teams as they navigate the future.

Advancing the D&I agenda from diversity to true inclusion

The past few years have witnessed companies stepping up on D&I initiatives. This positive shift has resulted in a plethora of new programmes in recognition that the D&I landscape is always evolving and there is always more that can be done.

At Bloomberg, D&I is top of mind for us every day, because we are at our best as a company when our employees bring their best selves to work. Our approach has been to focus on a few things and do them well, in lieu of spreading ourselves too thin and potentially compromising on impact. The encouraging thing about D&I is that while firms may compete with one another for business, when it comes to diversity and inclusion, we are all in it together because progress is charted for the collective.

Our journey has been one of collaboration. There have been instances where we have led the market and others where we have learned from our peers, both humbling in our commitment to advancing the D&I agenda for the industry and talent by and large.

One of the first-to-market initiatives we led in APAC was the This is Me Asia (TiMA) campaign. Originally created in the UK, TiMA focuses on sharing personal stories from persons with disability or mental health conditions to help normalise conversations about these topics in the workplace. We proactively approached Community Business, a leading non-profit committed to promoting DE&I across APAC, and volunteered to be their strategic partner in bringing the campaign to the region. We invested dollars to expand the programme and in partnership with Community Business, convened a steering group, which produced an Employer Guide made available at no cost to any firm interested in getting on board. Now in its second year, we have seen a 50% uptick in participation, totaling around 60 organisations across all industries. Through storytelling, TiMA has moved the dial in destigmatizing mental health. It has empowered employees to

be comfortable in being their true selves at work, and fostered a more supportive culture.

At Bloomberg, we know that equity looks different for everyone, so we created a Wellness Plan to ensure we were best supporting the personal needs of new joiners. The Wellness Plan gives employees the opportunity to disclose any accessibility related needs to perform their roles effectively. With the support of the D&I team, our leaders sit down with employees to map out how Bloomberg's workspace, tools and teams can support them to thrive. Its impact has been felt on both sides, providing our talent an avenue to openly seek support and our leaders an opportunity to have proactive and supportive conversations with their direct reports. As one of the first firms to pioneer this approach, we have received inquiries from other firms about our process, and have openly shared our learnings, best practices and experience with them.

We are committed to making strides in D&I but we are also cognisant we do not always have all the answers. Learning from our peers has enabled us to build on our knowledge, such as that around disability hiring. We were inspired by Credit Suisse's robust programme around accessibility and disability hiring and employee support. We adopted and tailored a few of their project frameworks when we looked at our own approach to accessibility and disability employment this year. There is so much to be gained from firms putting their heads together and we are grateful to be partnering with others to improve our initiatives.

The running thread in all these programmes is our intentional move towards true inclusion and equity. We are proud of moving our D&I conversation from one focused on "diversity" towards one centered on "inclusion". Although the difference may seem subtle, the impact is compelling. Reframing away from "diversity" reduces emphasis on our "differences," which for a region as vast and culturally diverse as APAC, is sometimes a sensitive nuance. Moving towards "inclusion" allows us to look less at what makes us different and instead invest energy in creating an environment where everyone feels included.

The industry and workplace are currently going through a significant shift, particularly how firms define D&I and engage with talent. And while no one has answers to all that we are solving for, as long as we are adamant with the why and flexible with the how, together we can continue to build inclusive work cultures that ensure employees feel seen, heard, supported and valued. **hrm**

About the Author

Alisha Fernando is Head of Diversity and Inclusion APAC, Bloomberg. Join her at HR Tech Fest Connect 2023, where she and Robert Gee, Asia-Pacific Head of Sell-Side Trading Solutions Sales, will share more on how Bloomberg is ensuring employee wellbeing is integrated into all facets of the employee lifecycle.

Employee engagement in a hybrid world: Strategies for success

The benefits of engaged employees are well documented. Increased productivity, greater profitability, reduced attrition and more.

Opinions differ as to how this is to be achieved, especially as the variables include, but are not limited to, the demographic composition of the workforce; nature of the activities being undertaken; degree of hybrid working; cross-cultural constraints; and the profitability of the business.

This article proposes a 'back to basics' approach – both Tactical and Strategic – to improve the chances of success of an employee engagement programme.

Let's begin with the Tactical.

When rolling out such a programme, the focus is typically on the creativity of the solution and seeking the necessary internal approvals to get it launched. Unfortunately, only limited time, attention and budget is allocated to the mechanics of how the programme will operate in the field. As a result, multiple failures occur, followed by waves of unproductive finger-pointing and expensive fixes.

All of these could have been avoided by asking execution-related questions at the design stage.

To improve your results, try these top five questions that always keep the needs of participants in mind:

- How will they know the programme exists? How will it be communicated? How often? Are the benefits crystal clear?
- Which representative sample of employees should we engage to identify and meet the 'real' needs of potential participants?
- Have we ensured that everyone has the tools and WiFi needed to access the programme, regardless of whether they work from the office, home, or hybrid?
- Will participants be afraid to engage because they fear repercussions for not providing the 'right' answers?
- How will the programme publicly celebrate both individual and team success to increase motivation and excitement?

Having minimised the avoidable errors at an operational level, it is time to consider the Strategic perspective.

This requires a significant mind-set shift.

All too often, employee engagement is assumed to be:

- The exclusive responsibility of the HR department
- A stand-alone initiative
- Something to be deployed only when people-related targets are not being met

For measurable and durable success, re-frame employee engagement as:

- The responsibility of every individual in the company in a supervisory capacity
- Willingly owned from the C-suite to the junior-most team leader
- Having touch points during every phase of the employee life cycle
- Supported by efficient processes accessible from home, office or hybrid
- Using technology to inspire and drive progress

Consequently, programme creators will need to embed employee engagement across:

- Recruitment
- Onboarding
- Learning and Development
- Performance Management
- Workforce Optimisation
- Employee Wellbeing
- Communication Strategies
- Corporate Culture Development

Specialist consultancies can assist with implementing the recommended solutions, supported by a Programme Management Office that guides the employee engagement programme to a successful outcome.

Take recruitment, for example.

It stands to reason that better inputs during talent identification will result in better outputs from an employee engagement programme, particularly if the individuals being sourced have a track record of consultative behaviour and energising leadership of teams.

According to Prems Srampical, Founder of White Crow, a global research-led sourcing provider, "a Talent Reputation Study could separate the individuals who are highly rated by their peers, managers and clients from those that are best avoided."

Technology, too, has a role to play that goes far beyond mechanistically recording participants' activities.

As Prithvi Singh Shergill, Group CEO of Entomo explained, "continuous real-time feedback, personalised insights that guide participants to the right decisions and automated pulse surveys are proven devices for improving employee engagement within a people experience platform."

So, what is the first step?

Consider running a design workshop, integrating the Tactical and Strategic recommendations, preferably moderated by an experienced practitioner. The resulting fit-for-purpose employee engagement programme, when executed correctly, would deliver a significant return on both human and financial capital in today's hybrid world. **hrm**

About the Author

Kris Wadia is the CEO of Humanized Leadership, a human capital consultancy. He focuses on putting human beings, not processes or technology, at the core of any business that wishes to be successful. Join Wadia at HR Tech Fest Connect 2023, where his session, titled *Employee Engagement in a Hybrid World,* will provide more insights into proven tactics and strategies for improving an organisation's bottom line by motivating employees and making them more productive.

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Kat Ledesma, HR and Iloilo Site Lead at REPH, accepts the Employer of Choice awards at HR Fest Awards 2023, celebrating the organisation's dedication to fostering an inclusive and empowering work environment.

All about people: How Reed Elsevier Philippines remains an employer of choice

In recognition of its commitment to employees and a relentless pursuit of fostering an inclusive, supportive, and inspiring work environment, Reed Elsevier Philippines (REPH) picked up the Employer of Choice award, sponsored by CIPD, at HR Fest Awards 2023.

One of the key reasons for REPH's success as an employer of choice can be attributed to its comprehensive approach to talent management. The global provider of information and analytics solutions believes that the success of an organisation is directly linked to the happiness, satisfaction, and growth of its employees.

In an interview with *HRM Magazine Asia*, Kat Ledesma, HR and Iloilo Site Lead at REPH, elaborated, "Receiving the Employer of Choice award is a humbling experience which reaffirms our commitment to valuing what matters—our people. We firmly believe that a successful organisation is built on the foundation of its employees' happiness, growth, and wellbeing. This award serves as a testament to the hard work and dedication we have put into creating an inclusive, supportive, and inspiring work environment."

With the focus on their people, REPH invests in extensive training and development programmes tailored to meet the specific needs and aspirations of its talented workforce. By providing access to continuous learning opportunities, Ledesma is confident that employees are empowered to reach their full potential and contribute meaningfully to the organisation's success. For instance, REPH has consolidated all learning academies into One REPH University, which nurtures talent and equips professionals with future-ready skills across diverse industries.

Fostering a culture of innovation is another key aspect of REPH's approach to becoming an employer of choice. The organisation empowers employee-led initiatives, supports continuous learning, promotes cross-functional collaboration, provides recognition and rewards, organises innovation workshops and events, and collaborates with external partners. This culture of innovation, according to Ledesma, enables the organisation to adapt to evolving technology and enhance the customer experience through more efficient processes.

"Currently, we have more than 800 Certified Lean Six Sigma practitioners, accounting for approximately 17% of our total REPH population. These practitioners have successfully delivered substantial savings from completed projects in 2022 alone," she said.

Employee engagement is a top priority at REPH, and the organisation has implemented various initiatives and strategies to foster a sense of belonging and commitment among its employees. REPH's employee value proposition, *Valuing What Matters*, creates a fun, engaged, and professional culture that attracts, develops, and retains a talented workforce, Ledesma added. Activities such as team-building events, sports festivals, year-end parties, employee appreciation weeks, Halloween celebrations, and family days contribute to employee wellness and interaction.

In addition to these activities, REPH fosters inclusivity, respect, and empowerment, creating an employee-centric environment where diverse perspectives thrive, as she concluded, "Diversity is our strength, not just a buzzword. We celebrate individuality, ensuring every voice is heard and valued. This cultivates a space where diverse perspectives thrive, fostering collaboration and innovation."

"Our commitment to diversity and inclusion is evident through employee resource groups like Pride and Women's Circle. These groups support and empower LGBTQIA++ individuals and women, providing networking, mentorship, and advocacy. We strive to make every employee feel respected and valued. By actively promoting diversity and inclusion, we create an environment where everyone thrives, contributing their unique talents and perspectives." hrm

Transforming career development in Singapore's public service through AI-driven innovation

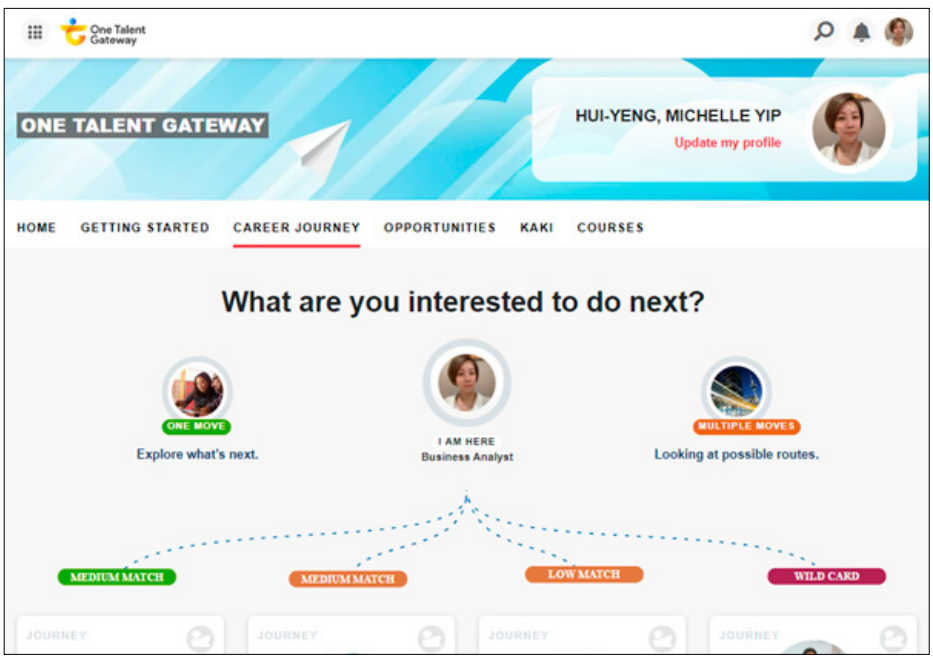
The Public Service Division (PSD) of Singapore has achieved recognition in the field of HR, being honoured with the Best Use of Technology award, sponsored by Androgogic, at HR Fest Awards 2023.

This recognition was a testament to PSD's innovative implementation of One Talent Gateway (OTG), a groundbreaking technology that has revolutionised traditional HR practices and empowered public officers to take control of their career development.

OTG was launched as a pilot in August 2022, with the aim of catalysing the talent marketplace within the Singapore Public Service. The platform harnesses the power of AI to enhance the career experience of public officers by providing personalised recommendations for developmental opportunities and learning interventions. Leveraging individual competencies, career goals, and interests, OTG ensures that public officers have access to tailored growth pathways that align with their aspirations.

To date, OTG has successfully reached approximately 6,000 public officers across 104 government agencies in four job families, namely Public Communications, InfoComm Technology and Smart Systems (ICT&SS), Service Delivery, and Policy and Planning, a spokesperson from PSD shared with *HRM Magazine Asia*. By equipping public officers with the tools and resources needed to drive their own growth, OTG has played a pivotal role in maintaining an agile and skilled workforce within the public sector.

When asked about the transformation brought about by this technology, the spokesperson emphasised the benefits for both HR practitioners and public officers, and explained, "For HR practitioners, OTG helps them to support officers in their growth and development in a more efficient manner. They can tap into OTG's AI to recommend personalised developmental opportunities and learning interventions based on an officer's competency profile, aspirations, and interests, and facilitate the matching of developmental opportunities to our public officers."



The One Talent Gateway (OTG) platform transforms career development with personalised AI-driven recommendations.

From the perspective of public officers, OTG has become a game changer in fuelling their career development, the spokesperson continued. Beyond seeking guidance from supervisors, public officers can now utilise OTG to select their desired career pathways, identify competency gaps between their current and future roles, and receive personalised recommendations for developmental opportunities that can help bridge those gaps.

For instance, public officers may find Short-term Immersion Programmes (STiP) and gig projects that enable experiential learning, relevant training courses from the Civil Service College and The Digital Academy, or self-initiate social learning opportunities by initiating a gig project, all via OTG. "Through OTG, public officers can also expand their networks within the Public Service by connecting with like-minded individuals and participating in cross-agency projects," the spokesperson added.

While implementing technology-driven solutions, PSD remains committed to maintaining a human-centric approach in its HR practices rather than replacing the human touch. OTG thus, plays a key role in empowering public officers to take charge of their own growth and development, with HR practitioners providing support along the way.

"By leveraging AI to recommend real-time, personalised recommendations on developmental opportunities and learning interventions, OTG makes it easier for public officers to drive their own growth," said the spokesperson. "Enabling public officers with OTG to drive their own growth and development is key to helping the Singapore Public Service maintain an agile and skilled workforce." hrm

Newport World Resorts Chief HR Office Ma. Theresa Llamas (front right) and President and CEO Kingson Sian (front centre) join Thrillmakers in showcasing their support for the organisation's integrated sustainability initiative, I LOVE Earth.

Revolutionising HR with a human touch

Newport World Resorts (NWR) has garnered attention in the HR industry as Ma. Theresa Llamas, the organisation's Chief Human Resources Officer, was recently honoured with the Best HR Leader award, sponsored by IBM, at HR Fest Awards 2023.

This recognition not only celebrates Llamas' contributions but also highlights the HR practices and management capabilities of Filipino organisations on a global scale.

"I was truly honoured to receive the award. It means a great deal to me personally and makes me proud as a Thrillmaker and as a Filipino," she shared with *HRM Magazine Asia*. The term "Thrillmaker" is how NWR employees are referred to, emphasising their integral role in the organisation's success. Llamas sees the award as a recognition of the unique culture they have fostered at NWR, while also serving as a motivating force to continue delivering world-class experiences with a distinct Filipino touch.

At the heart of Llamas' HR leadership at NWR lies a passion for driving change and fostering innovation. She understands that NWR is not simply part of the hospitality, tourism, and leisure and entertainment industry, but rather, in the "people business".

"Kingson Sian, our President and CEO, would always remind us that we are in the 'people business'. Because in the industry we're in, the strength behind our success is our employees. With this, our thrust is to make our approach more personal. Human to human and connecting at a level that mattered the most by maintaining honest and open communications, creating actionable outcomes beyond simply listening, and getting the best out of every person in the organisation," she explained. "We have removed the traditional perception of and transformed the employees' view of HR as the 'office police' but instead, their allies to succeed in their respective professions."

To ensure open lines of communication and genuine employee engagement, Llamas and her HR team have implemented various strategies. One approach is conducting regular engagement surveys to stay attuned to employee concerns and sentiments. Additionally, employees are encouraged to voice their suggestions and issues through platforms like the Employee Events Facebook Page, email, and chat groups. Llamas has also facilitated honest and transparent connections between management and employees through initiatives like the Kamustahan Sessions, where small groups of employees can engage in focused discussions with Sian, and the Sama-Salo, NWR's version of a town hall meeting.

These efforts have resulted in an environment where employees feel comfortable expressing their opinions and ideas, knowing that their voices truly matter. Llamas further highlighted the positive outcomes that have emerged from this approach, saying, "The management does not shy away from answering their questions and sharing the considerations behind some decisions, and they've already seen a number of measures already implemented by the organisation which stemmed from their feedback."

Effective communication lies at the core of Llamas' HR leadership. Recognising the diverse nature of its workforce, Llamas employs a range of communication strategies and channels to reach every employee. She elaborated, "In an ideal HR world, it would be much easier for us to just have a single channel of communication or strategy for everything we communicate with employees. But with our type of organisation with almost 5,000 employees, we recognise that doing that will make us lose our purpose as HR which is to connect with them and the management."

In addition to traditional communication tools such as email, surveys, and HR helpdesks, Llamas and her team have embraced unconventional methods. They created a Public Facebook Page called NWREmployeeEvents, catering to the visual and social media-savvy millennial employees who constitute 65% of the workforce. This platform, she added, delivers information in a fun and easy-to-digest manner, employing engaging elements like live videos, contests, and posts in a combination of Tagalog and English.

Looking ahead, Llamas remains committed to driving the success and growth of NWR by ensuring that HR remains at the forefront of innovation, creating an environment where employees can thrive. "I would love for NWR to further grow through digitalisation with a human touch. This will help a lot not only to streamline processes but also give more time for the team to focus on strategic programmes and initiatives to further elevate employee experience," she concluded. hrm

Redefining HR leadership: Breaking barriers and fostering inclusivity for success

In the ever-evolving world of HR, leaders who drive innovation, foster inclusivity, and empower organisations to thrive are poised to be the true catalysts of success. Rick Hammel, CEO of Atlas, exemplifies such leadership and was recognised with the Best C-Suite Leader award, sponsored by Sanderson-Ikas, at HR Fest Awards 2023. Under Hammel's guidance, Atlas has revolutionised the way organisations connect with talent across borders, breaking down barriers and facilitating growth opportunities.

In an interview with *HRM Magazine Asia*, Hammel shared his thoughts on the recognition and shed light on his leadership philosophy, strategic vision, and commitment to fostering diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

"It's truly humbling to receive this award. It serves as a testament to the impact we've made in our industry, creating opportunities for organisations and talent to connect globally," Hammel said, while expressing his excitement at hearing clients and prospects acknowledge that Atlas' services have enabled their organisations to expand and market globally, regardless of their size or available resources.

Hammel's leadership approach reflects the changing dynamics of the modern workforce. Successful leaders today, he emphasised, are those who actively engage with their teams, work alongside them, and lead by example. "Leaders these days must be able to be seen as part of the team, not separate. Leaders are not meant to dictate and solely benefit themselves. It is crucial for us to roll up our sleeves together, support our teams, lead by example, and never assign tasks to our team members that we wouldn't be willing to undertake ourselves."

This mindset is further reinforced by Hammel's open-door policy, as he participates in calls and supports his team whenever needed. By fostering a collaborative environment, Hammel ensures that individuals have opportunities for growth and can unleash their true potential.

Rick Hammel (right), CEO and Founder, Atlas, clinches the Best C-Suite Leader award, sponsored by Sanderson-Ikas.

As an HR expert himself, Hammel acknowledged the pivotal role HR plays in shaping an organisation's strategy, and said, "HR is fundamentally one of the most important pillars of an organisation." By integrating the voices of both clients and employees, Atlas maintains a "glocal" approach that combines global insights with local expertise. He further revealed that Atlas holds internal conversations with executives and leadership teams, combined with employee feedback, to drive the organisation's strategic direction while aligning with its core values of helping people.

Navigating the delicate balance between leading an organisation and addressing the needs of the HR function and the broader workforce can pose challenges, but Hammel believes in the significance of including HR leaders in decision-making processes and recognising their invaluable role in shaping the organisation's direction. He shared the example of Lulu Rufael, CHRO of Atlas, who reports directly to him and possesses an equal voice in every executive meeting. This, he added, ensures that HR's role in fostering a positive organisational culture and championing the needs of employees remains central to the organisation's overall strategy.

One of the key HR initiatives implemented at Atlas is a focus on diversity and inclusion. Hammel highlighted the importance of broadening the perspective of diversity beyond traditional definitions, and said, "Diversity is defined not just by what you've seen online but by the cultural nuances of where you have people."

To eliminate bias, Atlas actively re-evaluates its approach to diversity and inclusion by striving for a more comprehensive understanding of diversity across its global team. This self-reflection led to the adoption of practices that embrace local cultures and ensure equal opportunities for all.

Acknowledging the historical gender inequalities in the Asia-Pacific region, Hammel shared that Atlas actively promotes gender equality and seeks to hire diverse talent, going beyond gender binaries. He emphasised Atlas' commitment to fostering a diverse and inclusive organisational environment through cultural exchange between Asia-Pacific and other regions, and concluded, "Our goal is to continually break down barriers and foster a culture that embraces diversity and inclusion in every aspect of our organisation." hrm

Marriott International's HR strategies prioritise associate wellbeing and growth while embodying a people-first ethos across global operations.

A people-first workplace culture creates a great place to work at Marriott International

Building a great place to work is always a challenge and especially when you are one of the biggest hospitality brands in the world. Marriott International, with hotel chains under their belt like The Ritz-Carlton, JW Marriott, W Hotels, St. Regis, and Autograph Collection Hotels, boast a staggering number of close to 400,000 associates across the world. How do they cultivate workplace culture and engagement within their organisation?

With such a vast number of properties, associates and brands, Marriott International's feat of winning Best Workplace Culture & Engagement for more than 500 associates at the HR Fest Awards 2023 is significant, especially in the wake of a pandemic that has hit the hospitality industry much harder than most in the last few years.

Speaking with *HRM Magazine Asia*, Andrew Newmark, CHRO, APEC (Asia Pacific excluding Greater China) at Marriott International, said, "Coming out of the pandemic, our hotels experienced challenges such as the surge in travel demand despite a talent shortage in the hospitality industry. However, our associates continued to show resilience and adaptability while taking care of our guests and each other. We are inspired by their commitment and will continue to support them with meaningful opportunities to grow and learn."

Marriott International's work in cultivating a workplace that engages and supports their associates globally across multiple regions starts by taking care of their associates, who will then take care of their customers. Newmark called this people-first approach their guiding principle for more than 95 years in building a strong workplace culture at Marriott International.

This "TakeCare" philosophy, as he coined it, is supported by leaders openly sharing the importance of wellbeing with their teams. As role models of TakeCare, leaders will share with team members how they personally take care of themselves, while other leaders and volunteers, known as Champions, will initiate and advocate well-being programmes in their local region. Marriot also sets aside time to express their appreciation for their associates during Associate Appreciate Week, which serves as an important reminder that organisational success is rooted in the dedication and hard work of their people.

The organisation's culture of social responsibility extends into the local communities where any local Marriott International property operates. Grounded by the organisation's core value 'Serve Our World', Marriott International associates are encouraged to volunteer in their communities. This includes activities such as charitable fundraisers and DEI-focused initiatives like offering job training to people with disabilities. These efforts are all ways that associates in the organisation engage with work that is consistent with the Marriott International brand set nearly a century ago.

Like many hospitality establishments, Marriot International's work is often affected by the scourge of manpower shortage and ability to attract top talent. Newmark acknowledged that fact but explained that the Marriott International team has already introduced new initiatives to deepen their focus in areas of wellbeing and growth opportunities.

"Over the past year, we delivered a series of mental health and wellbeing training to equip leaders with practical knowledge and skills to care for their teams," he explained. For example, leaders are trained to identify signs of mental health struggles in their teams, create a safe working environment for their teams to raise and address concerns, be empowered, and build better relationships with colleagues.

Marriott International has also launched a pilot job enrichment programme, iJobs, for associates in different departments to explore and learn multiple roles, enhance their career skillset, and grow professionally. Associates often share their career journeys through the organisation's social media campaigns, delivering authentic stories and first-hand accounts of their Marriott experiences to a wider audience. The result? A robust growth in applicant numbers between the Marriott properties.

When asked how organisations should develop a great working environment for associates to work in, especially for international brands that span globally across multiple countries with a high headcount, Newmark cited the importance of glocalisation. "Define your purpose and core values on a global level but customise your approach when it comes to local execution. From employer branding to recruitment efforts, trainings, and career mobility opportunities, you need to meet people where they are and with what they need," he concluded. hrm

Building a dream team: How a good HR team can help shape an organisation

The phrase, "teamwork makes the dream work" is one that has resonated through the ages, and still holds true to this day. When it comes to effective communication and change within any organisation, a good team is one that excels in these areas. This is even more imperative when it comes to creating a good HR team, where their whole purpose and job description revolves around recruitment and managing top talent within any organisation.

Orica's HR team sets the bar for collaborative excellence in shaping workplace culture.

One such example happens to be the HR team from Orica, a multinational corporation that is one of the world's largest providers of commercial explosives and blasting systems to the mining, quarrying, as well oil and gas sectors. Their work at Orica is one that exemplifies the meaning of teamwork, which led to the company receiving the HR Team of the Year sponsored by Sanderson-Ikas at the HR Fest Awards 2023.

Calling the award a testament to the team's hard work and dedication and a way of increasing the company's visibility to attract top talent to join the company, Mhar Anthony Villaester, Manager of People Services Global Hub, Orica, told *HRM Magazine Asia*, "Winning this award serves a powerful motivator for each member of the People Services, inspiring each of us to continue striving for excellence and making a positive impact to our employees and stakeholders."

To Villaester, creating a great team boils down to a service excellence framework that boils down to four key words: *Purpose, People, Performance,* and *Process*.

Purpose, for instance, defines what the team is and the group's work to facilitate efficient and cost-effective HR services; while People revolves around the value and respect that the team should have for each other, with open communication based on honesty, integrity, trust, and respect. The team's Performance key phrase is one where any successful work progress is backed up by quantifiable data, such as through ticket resolution rates, and finally Process, which focuses on improving processes and always optimising every aspect of the business to meet the needs and standards of the work ethic.

These four P's shapes the environment that Orica's HR team works in because they have absolute clarity in what to do and how to succeed together. "We remain true to our main purpose of providing high-calibre services to our employees while not losing sight of ensuring we establish a culture based on diversity, equity, and inclusion," said Villaester.

To make sure all four P's are in the forefront of shaping the culture and work processes at Orica, constant communication is always at hand between the HR team and the rest of the employees at Orica. Villaester explained that the company's communication stance to their employees and stakeholders has always been a precise one, with clear explanation of the issue at hand, and how they are trying to solve it, with managed expectations of what they can expect when implementing the changes. This means also providing employees with a safe space to express their opinions through various methods, ensuring that the team members are empowered to share their thoughts in a way that is most comfortable for them, such as monthly business reviews and attending smaller departmental meetings instead of bigger ones where they may feel less comfortable presenting their ideas.

What else can organisations do to cultivate their HR teams? To Villaester, it is a matter of developing a workplace environment that emphasises fostering open communication and dialogue, encouraging team members within the organisation to actively participate and share their views to work through solutions. Organisations, in turn, should give opportunities to employees to challenge themselves in any situation, while still being creative. But this will only work when the organisation takes care to hire prospective talent in the first place. "The organisation should focus on the philosophy of culture-add and mindful hiring," concluded Villaester. "Put simply, prioritise people who have strong value alignment over those who have relevant work experience." hrm

Building community: Workplace culture and how it can be developed

A great place to work is often the dream, but to create that space for employees, one has to take into account all types of factors. For an organisation like Hummingbird Bioscience, which spans three continents, a consistent, great workplace culture is all thanks to heavy communication, understanding, and developing community.

Cultivating workplace culture, with a strong emphasis of engagement from employees is an uphill task because of the ever-changing needs of employees in the workplace, especially with more returning to work onsite in the office. It is then commendable when an organisation like Humming Bioscience, a clinical-stage biotechnology company looking to develop a broad pipeline of novel, precision therapeutics for the treatment of cancer and autoimmune disease, is recognised for their work in providing an engaging workplace environment for their employees. At HR Fest Awards 2023, Humming Bioscience received the Best Workplace Culture & Engagement for any organisation with under 500 employees.

For Hummingbird Bioscience, this new title is a significant one for them. Speaking with *HRM Magazine Asia,* Annie Lim, Vice President of Human Resources at Hummingbird Bioscience, attributed the award to the employees who have worked tirelessly to make sure any initiative regarding engaging and workplace culture is a success. "We drive a positive workplace culture to empower, engage and develop our employees at all levels, with commitment to our core values: Intellectual Integrity, Determination, Excellence, Audacity, and Teamwork," said Lim. These values, she added, are a continuous pursuit of intellectual excellence, and they continuously integrate their company core values into their employee experience to focus on building a high-trust workplace.

Hummingbird Bioscience also looks to reward employees for their contributions via a three-pronged approach: recognition, engagement, and training. Firstly, the organisation recognises the employees with mission patches and accolades through various employee appreciation activities. "We have a robust talent management cycle process to review, listen, provide constructive feedback, and reward performance," explained Lim.

Hummingbird Bioscience embodies a vibrant and collaborative workplace culture across continents.

Hummingbird Bioscience also embraces employee engagement with the use of company-wide meetings and activities that help encourage bonding, such as on-site lunches every day. The organisation also encourages their employees to develop a feeling of charity and social responsibilities via their corporate initiatives that give back to society. They finally look to develop their employees via relevant and essential skills-based training, with opportunities like overseas conferences, and various learning and development initiatives.

With such a strong commitment to ensuring a strong workplace culture, Hummingbird Bioscience takes time and effort to maintain consistency through three different continents through three key components: building community, strong communication, as well as understanding and empathy. Different groups within the company, for example, must know that teamwork is key, and a shared culture is then built through company-wide events, or shared afterwards with the rest of the company via memos or newsletters. Communication is necessary to ensure that employees understand the full extent of the company's mission and then have a shared goal to work towards.

And lastly, due to the challenges of working across time zones, compromise and communication must be emphasised to prevent possible communication issues, especially between different cultures and geographies. This can include sharing information about the different public holidays between different locations so there is a better appreciation and understanding about the lives of employees through all locations.

All in all, the initiatives put in place by companies like Hummingbird Bioscience to create a great and engaging workplace for all involves a tremendous amount of clear communication between HR teams and their employees. By building a sense of belonging and purpose within everyone in the organisation and empowering employees with opportunities to better themselves for their futures, it is clear that Hummingbird Bioscience has found a winning formula to create a workplace culture embraced by all employees. hrm

Driving change through the journey from human resources to human development

Mewah International recognised for empowering workforce growth and skills enhancement across ASEAN.

In the realm of human resources, many would consider human development (HD) as the next step: adopting a people-centric approach to building a sustainable workforce. With a focus on fair and inclusive development of employees and stakeholders, as well as the community around them, HD is often an investment in people to create better opportunities for themselves in the future by reskilling and upskilling them.

This is one of the reasons why the ASEAN Human Development Organisation (AHDO) Summit is continuously looking to create opportunities for employees in South-East Asia, and rewarding organisations that are aligned with this objective. At HR Fest Awards 2023, AHDO, in collaboration with *HRM Asia*, introduced the Best ASEAN Human Development award, which recognises the best organisation that has pushed for fair and inclusive development of employees and stakeholders in at least two ASEAN countries.

Winning the award was Mewah International, a company listed on the mainboard of the Singapore Stock Exchange. It is one of the largest global edible oils and fats companies with distribution offices in countries such as Australia, Africa, Turkey, Malaysia, China, and Singapore. With such a large network, it becomes imperative to develop it becomes imperative to develop and equip their human resources especially those with localised knowledge so as to create the best strategies for the respective regions.

Speaking with *HRM Magazine Asia*, Bianca Cheo, Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer of Mewah International, said, "We are honoured to receive this award as it confirms that Mewah International is heading in the right direction in terms of HD for our workforce. This award belongs to everyone in Mewah International and acknowledges the dedication and effort of our leaders and staff in contributing to their career and skills development. Mewah International will continue to drive positive change and nurture our greatest asset – our people."

The group transformation from a HR administration-centric organisation to a people development-centric organisation is one that took considerable time and many debates on strategy to develop, Cheo disclosed. It started with rebranding Mewah International's HR department to one that focuses on People, Development and Innovation., and with half-yearly leadership meetings to ensure implementation and buy-in.

"In the leadership meetings, we will focus on discussions regarding our common goals, talent management and identify the key competencies of our people. We also discuss opportunities for job rotation & career growth," she shared.

Leaders would communicate the key discussion points to their people managers and team members and work together to upskill and reskill the people under their care. With these discussions, leaders and employees can work together to figure out the opportunities the organisation can provide in their career development plans.

The key to success HD within Mewah International is a lack of gatekeeping when it comes to information sharing, as Cheo explained, "We are grateful that leaders in Mewah International are unselfish in sharing their knowledge and growing their people. With that in mind, we can continuously help our people to progress in their skills and in their careers."

Organisations, she elaborated, should focus on developing a robust talent pool so that they are not solely dependent on any individual leader or people manager. Leaders, as well, need to better understand new HR frameworks or solutions, with an open mind to review new ideas that could help them lead, inspire, and develop their team. Collaboration and knowledge sharing is something that Mewah International deeply values, offering diverse learning opportunities such as providing a range of learning opportunities that cater to different learning needs, styles, and preferences. This can include formal training programmes, online courses, coaching, mentoring and informal learning opportunities through on-the-job training, job rotations, and cross-functional or entities projects.

Lastly, the HD aspects of an organisation should always be in tandem with a safe dynamic working space that empowers employees. Mewah International always tries to encourage knowledge sharing and mentorship, pushing employees to not only upskill and grow, but to use those skills to collectively contribute to the overall success of the organisation. hrm

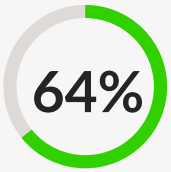
Four-day workweek

Insights from an employee

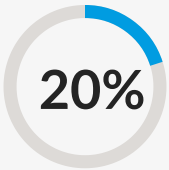
The four-day workweek is an alternative schedule where employees work four days a week, deviating from the traditional five-day norm. To gauge employees' sentiments about this arrangement, HRM Magazine Asia conducted a poll to determine the feasibility of implementing a four-day workweek in their workplaces.

Do you think a four-day workweek could be implemented in your workplace?

- Yes, it is feasible
- No, it is not practical
- Unsure/Need to understand more



A majority of respondents support a four-day workweek in their workplace



A portion of the respondents expressed uncertainty and the need for more information

SOURCE: https://www.linkedin.com/company/hrmasia/

Meet Nur Haryani Kasman, Manager, Customer Service Quality Specialist at Spread Technologies, a fintech headquartered in Singapore. Her team has been implementing a four-day workweek schedule, and she shares her insights and experiences on the concept.

01 Flexibility

With a four-day workweek, we gain freedom for routine tasks and hobbies, saving time and money by avoiding weekend peak prices for activities.

02 Work-life balance

Supporting a four-day workweek, as a 12-hour/day employee, I find more time for social life and recuperation.

03 A schedule challenge

Challenges with four-day workweek scheduling, rest day allocation, and potential misuse of sick leave require clear policies to ensure fairness and accountability.

04 Poor handover

Flexible schedules can lead to work delays. Address issues through assessments and open communication. Manage concerns about additional gigs with clear expectations.

"I consistently work and still manage to find time to go outdoors, socialise, and build connections. Despite the longer hours, this schedule grants me greater control over my life."

- Nur Haryani Kasman, Manager, Customer Service Quality Specialist at Spread Technologies

HR Tech Fest Connect2023

The Connected Workplace : Empowering HR Leaders to Build an Engaged & Resilient Workforce

JOIN ASIA'S LARGEST VIRTUAL HR & WORK TECH CONFERENCE

HR Tech Fest Connect 2023 which takes place virtually on **27 September 2023** aims to empower organIsations to thrive in challenging times by prioritising their most valuable asset: their people.

In the face of an uncertain global economy, some organisations may opt for a short-sighted, risk-averse approach driven by cost concerns. However, forward-thinking companies understand that true growth opportunities lie in nurturing a workforce that is engaged, motivated, and eager to grow alongside the organisation.

That's why HR Tech Fest Connect 2023 provides a timely platform for Asia's HR community to come together, identify growth opportunities, and drive organisational transformation. With the theme of "**The Connected Workplace: Empowering HR Leaders to Build an Engaged & Resilient Workforce,**" this event offers invaluable insights into workplace trends that will enable HR leaders to steer their organisations towards sustainable growth and stability.

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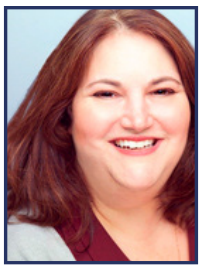
Ranked World's #1 Organisational Culture Thought Leader
Directive Communication Psychology

GO ASHOKH MENON
Agile Coach and Facilitator
One Synergy Global



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hrmasia

Igniting change and success:
The unifying power of purpose across generations

As someone who has spent the last 20 years helping organisations unleash the full power of their multigenerational workforce through appreciation, understanding and collaboration between generations, I was thrilled when I first saw the data from the *XYZ@Work Post-Pandemic Workplace Study* in the Spring of 2022.

The impact of COVID-19 has unequivocally bridged the gap between generations, as technology adoption, transformed leadership, prioritisation of well-being, workplace reimagining, the shift towards a growth mindset, and the profound understanding of our interconnectedness have united generations in unforeseen and remarkable ways.

But what particularly grabbed my attention was a finding linked to a topic that is quickly gaining prominence: Purpose. The study revealed a significant trend following the pandemic, with 45% of employees across generations feeling a strong need to realign their careers to a greater sense of purpose. I was intrigued. After all, purpose (or the perceived lack thereof) has long been a prominent factor contributing to intergenerational conflicts. The youngest generations inherently think of themselves as purpose-driven, while the older generations are seen as reluctant to change and less social minded. But after Covid, something changed. The "Quest for Purpose" was (re)ignited just as strongly in Baby Boomer and Gen X employees, along with a newfound desire to help enable purpose in their younger colleagues.

Purpose emerged as the glue that can unite generations, inspire collaboration, and drive positive change. What was not clear, though, was whether generations were aligned on the definition of purpose in the first place. This is when I decided to launch a new study, the *XYZ@Work 2023 Purpose Study*, to understand how different generations define purpose, what social causes they feel most aligned to, and what organisations can do to enable their sense of purpose and help them find meaning in their work.

As a true testament to the big misunderstanding that unfortunately still exists between generations, 66% of employees believe that their generation defines purpose differently than other generations. Baby Boomers and Gen X feel mutually aligned but disconnected from Gen Z and Millennials, Gen Z feel aligned to Millennials, and Millennials feel misalignment with every generation except their own.

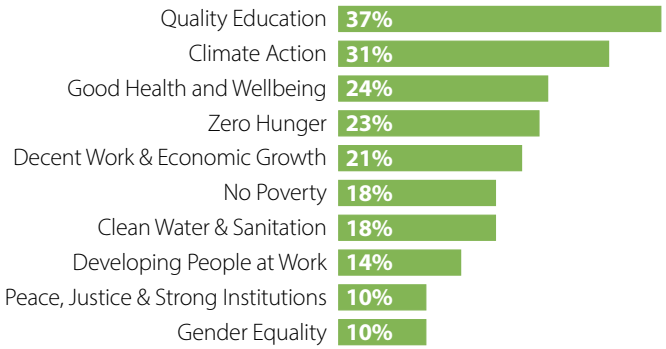
However, this perception that generations have completely different views on purpose is mostly untrue. In reality, they have a lot more in common when it comes to defining Purpose than they realise. And here are eight fresh findings to prove it!

1. In the post-pandemic era, purpose has become a powerful force among different generations. Over half of Baby Boomers (52%), Gen X (57%), Millennials (63%), and Gen Z (59%) are craving a deeper sense of meaning. However, one in five employees – particularly Gen Z and Millennials – face a unique challenge in uncovering and expressing their purpose.
2. 67% of employees (55% of Baby Boomers, 68% of Gen X, 70% of Millennials and 76% of Gen Z) are looking for a career change in the pursuit of flexibility, growth, and meaning. Helping others, making an impact, growth, fulfilment, recognition, and appreciation are what makes work feel meaningful for every generation.
3. For 82% of employees across generations (71% of Baby Boomers, 79% of Gen X, 83% of Millennials, 88% of Gen Z) the opportunity to drive social impact has become a key factor when thinking about their ideal career or employer (particularly in South-East Asia). Climate action and good health and wellbeing are two of the top three causes that every generation feels most passionate about, along with quality education (Baby Boomers and Gen Z), zero hunger (Gen X), and gender equality (Millennials).
4. Ethical consumerism is on the rise among all generations. 41% of

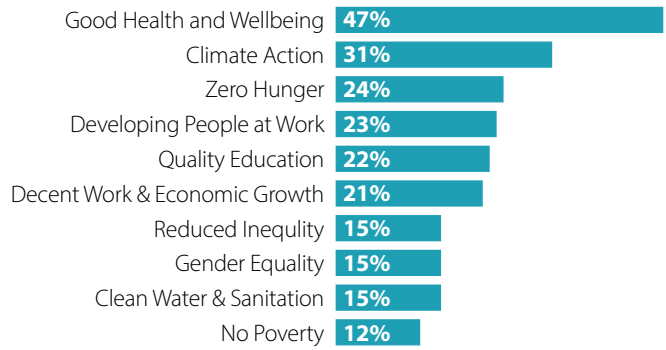
"PURPOSE EMERGED AS THE GLUE THAT CAN UNITE GENERATIONS, INSPIRE COLLABORATION, AND DRIVE POSITIVE CHANGE."

What causes do you feel most passionate about? (select top 3)

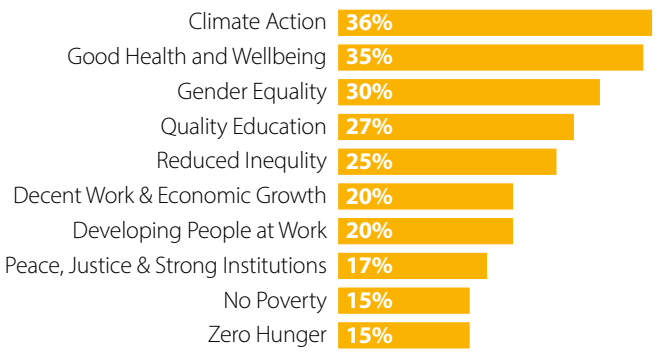
Baby Boomers



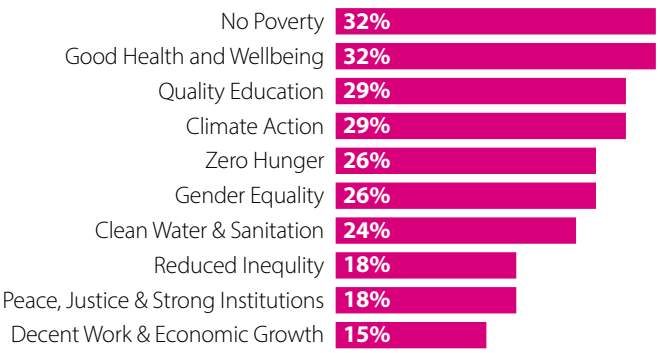
Generation X



Millennials



Generation Z



Baby Boomers, 68% of Gen X, 58% of Millennials and 62% of Gen Z said they only buy products from brands that support issues they are passionate about. Similarly, 70% across generations said they would stop buying products from brands that do not share their same values or have unethical practices.

5 While nine-in-ten employees emphasise the importance of having purpose at work, only a mere 26% feel capable of truly fulfilling their purpose through their current job. This is consistent across all generations.

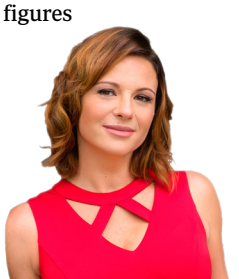
6 One-in-four employees across generations feel that their employer fails to support them in fulfilling their purpose at work due to toxic or money-driven cultures, misalignment in values, and limited opportunities. *"Changing employers"* is widely seen as the best way to be able to express purpose in a job, along with *"reporting to a different boss"* (Baby Boomers), *"more commitment on the part of my organisation"* (Baby Boomers and Millennials), *"redirecting my career path"* (Gen X, Millennials and Gen Z) *"having a clearer idea of what my purpose is"* (Gen X and Millennials), and *"moving to a new role"* (Baby Boomers and Gen Z).

7 Across the board, the inability to choose projects aligned with their passions is a key factor contributing to employee dissatisfaction. Remarkably, four-in-five employees (76% of Baby Boomers, 82% of Gen X, 85% of Millennials, and 78% of Gen Z) are eager to pitch and/or work on meaningful projects that address causes they are passionate about, extending beyond their usual work responsibilities. This trend is particularly evident in South-East Asia.

8 Employees across all generations unanimously agree that to show genuine commitment to driving impact beyond profitability, an organisation should focus on *Employee Wellbeing, Corporate Citizenship, Ethics & Transparency,* and *Diversity, Equity & Inclusion.*

In summary, the study clearly shows that in today's workforce, purpose has emerged as a powerful driving force across generations. Employees from all age groups unanimously agree on the significance of purpose, seeking meaningful work that offers flexibility and growth. Making a positive impact on society – particularly in areas such as climate action and education – resonates deeply with everyone.

However, many employees feel a disconnect between their purpose and the values upheld by their organisations. To effect real change, companies must prioritise employee well-being, ethics, diversity, and demonstrate an unwavering commitment to social causes. Survey respondents hailed leading organisations like Patagonia, Unilever, Google, Apple, Microsoft, and Tesla as exemplars of purpose-driven success, while inspirational figures such as Barack Obama, Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, Elon Musk, Nelson Mandela, and Jacinda Ardern serve as beacons of Purposeful Leadership. By aligning our values and embracing purpose in both our work and our lives, we can collectively forge a brighter future. And as the workforce continues to evolve, purpose becomes the transformative catalyst for positive change that empowers individuals, propels organisations, and uplifts society. **hrm**



About the Author

RACHELE FOCARDI is Founder of XYZ@Work

HRM Asia Readers' Choice Awards 2023: Nominations Closing Soon!

The eagerly anticipated HRM Asia Readers' Choice Awards is back to celebrate Asia's best and brightest HR and technology solutions providers, with over 30 exciting award categories to be contested.

Taking place in a live Gala Awards Ceremony on 3 November 2023 at Carlton Hotel Singapore, the 2023 awards presentation will be recognising the vital partners for Asia's HR industry and providing an in-person platform for Asia's HR community to interact and exchange ideas.

This year, two new categories have been added to Readers' Choice Awards 2023, further expanding the recognition of HR technological advancements. Both categories were introduced after popular feedback from key leaders in the industry. The new categories are:

- Best HR Tech – Employee Benefits Solution
- Best HR Tech – Employee Productivity Tracking Software

The winners for each category will be chosen by HRM Magazine Asia readers (70% weighting) and a panel of independent expert judges (30%).

The full list of prestigious awards are as follows:

2023 Nominated Award Categories

BEST BUSINESS TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION

- Best Corporate MICE Venue
- Best Serviced Apartment – By property
- Best Business Hotel

BEST EMPLOYER BRANDING SOLUTIONS PROVIDER

- Best Employer Branding Solutions Provider

BEST HR SERVICE PROVIDERS

- Best Employer of Record (EOR) Service Provider
- Best Professional Employer Organisation (PEO) Service Provider
- Best Corporate – Learning & Development Provider
- Best Corporate – Training Provider
- Best Corporate – Leadership Development Provider
- Best Background Screening Provider
- Best Corporate Healthcare Group
- Best Corporate Healthcare/Wellness Solution Provider
- Best Rewards/Compensation & Benefits Solution
- Best Recruitment Firm: Engineering/IT positions
- Best Recruitment Firm: Client Experience
- Best Recruitment Firm: Recruitment Process Outsourcing
- Best Workspace Innovation Solution

BEST HR TECH SOLUTIONS

- Best HR Tech – Payroll Solution
- Best HR Tech – Human Resource Information System
- Best HR Tech – Outsourcing Solution
- Best HR Tech – Time & Attendance Management System
- Best HR Tech – Cloud Solution
- Best HR Tech – Recruitment and Applicant Tracking System
- Best HR Tech – HR Data & Analytics Solutions
- Best HR Tech – Talent Management System
- Best HR Tech – Best Recruitment Platform Solution
- Best HR Tech – Employee Performance Management Solution
- Best HR Tech – Employee Experience & Engagement Solution
- Best HR Tech – Employee Productivity Tracking Software
- Best HR Tech – Learning Management System
- Best HR Tech – AI Recruitment Software Provider
- Best HR Tech – Learning Experience Platform
- Best HR Tech – Employee Benefits Solution

BEST MOBILITY AND RELOCATION SOLUTION

- Best Mobility & Relocation Solutions

HRM Magazine Asia is inviting all organisations and businesses to nominate themselves, as well as other organisations worthy of this ultimate honour as the favourite and dedicated partners of HR. From now till 31 August 2023, get on to our site and name your favourites so that they get the recognition and accolades they deserve before nominations close! hrm

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HRM Asia's Readers' Choice Awards 2023 returns in-person on 3 November 2023 at Carlton Hotel Singapore. Featuring over 30 Award categories, the prestigious Reader Choice Awards are presented to celebrate HR excellence and innovations by the best HR industry partners and solutions providers in the region.

The winner of each category is chosen by HRM Asia readers and a panel of independent expert judges.

Nominations close on 31 August 2023. Submit your nominations by scanning this QR code.

NOMINATE NOW

Online voting will commence on 1 September and end on 16 September 2023.

Nominate and vote for your HR Partners that are deserving of these coveted awards!

Empowering CHROs to drive organisational success

In the dynamic landscape of today's business world, organisations face an array of challenges that require forward-thinking strategies to thrive in 2024 and beyond. As the driving force behind workforce management and development, CHROs play a pivotal role in shaping their organisations for future success.

CHRO Series 2023, organised by HRM Asia, offers an exclusive platform for CHROs and HR leaders across South-East Asia to come together, share experiences, and exchange best practices. This prestigious event focuses on key topics such as fostering a culture of belonging and equity in the workplace and leveraging HR technology to enhance the employee experience.

With the theme ***HR 2024 and Beyond: How CHROs Can Shape Organisational and Workforce Transformation***, the series not only look ahead but also reflects on significant developments in HR and workforce management in 2023. It provides valuable insights into emerging trends and priorities that CHROs need to embrace for future growth and success. Collaboration with CEOs and leadership teams is also highlighted as CHROs increasingly work closely with top executives to strategise for the future.

The CHRO Series 2023 commences with CHRO Indonesia on 18 October 2023, followed by CHRO Malaysia on 22 November 2023, CHRO Singapore on 7 December 2023, CHRO Philippines on 21 February 2024, and concluding with CHRO Vietnam on 6 March 2024.

As part of the CHRO Series 2023, HRM Asia is organising a one-day masterclass on Sustainability in Action for CHROs. This masterclass, led by **Joanne Flinn**, Author of *Greensight: The Sustainability Guide for Company Directors* and Chairwomen of the **ESG Institute**, equips HR leaders with essential knowledge and tools to navigate the growing importance of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) considerations in today's business landscape.

The masterclass is scheduled for 19 October 2023 in Indonesia, 22 November 2023 in Malaysia, and 6 December 2023 in Singapore.

Understanding the significance of ESG standards and pressures is crucial for CHROs to guide their organisations effectively towards achieving their sustainability goals. By integrating sustainable practices, organisations can not only drive environmental stewardship but also enhance employee satisfaction and strengthen their overall reputation.

In conclusion, the CHRO Series 2023 offers CHROs a unique opportunity to gain insights, network, and explore innovative strategies to navigate the evolving business landscape. By focusing on people strategies, fostering inclusion, embracing technology, and understanding ESG considerations, CHROs can lead their organisations towards a prosperous and sustainable future. hrm

Celebrating Singapore's human-centred organisations who are defining the future of work

The 16th SHRI HR Awards, organised by the Singapore Human Resources Institute (SHRI), is set to revolutionise the way HR excellence is acknowledged by introducing cutting-edge non-fungible tokens (NFTs) as a symbol of recognition. Beyond traditional trophies and certificates, winners will receive personalized NFT images, each representing their outstanding accomplishments within the HR community. These tokens signify ownership of a specific digital asset and embody the spirit of innovation that defines HR's future..

The objective of the SHRI HR Awards is to set a regional benchmark for advancing HR practices and to honour organisations that have achieved Gold, Silver, or Bronze standards. By recognising industry best practices and showcasing successful HR initiatives, the awards inspire other organisations to elevate their HR strategies.

This year's theme, *Embrace the Future of HR,* reflects the collective efforts to build human-centred organisations and drive innovation in HR practices. The 16th SHRI HR Awards provide more than just a night of celebration; they serve as a dynamic platform where industry leaders, HR professionals, and organisations come together to exchange insights, network, and forge collaborations that will shape the future of HR.

Alvin Goh, Executive Director of SHRI, commented, "Celebrating the pinnacle of HR excellence, the 16th Singapore HR Awards is a testament to the unwavering dedication and innovative spirit of HR professionals across Singapore."

"This prestigious event showcases the transformative power of human capital strategies and recognises the visionaries who have redefined the future of work. As we honour the outstanding achievements of organisations and individuals, we celebrate the profound impact they've had on their workforce and the broader business landscape."

This year's awards will feature four main award categories that highlight the evolving priorities and challenges faced by HR professionals.

The first category, People-Centred Awards, focuses on initiatives that prioritise the wellbeing, development, and attraction of employees. This category includes awards such as Employee Experience and Wellbeing, Learning and Development with Coaching and Mentoring, Talent Attraction and Acquisition, Talent Management, and Total Rewards (Compensation and Benefits).

Next is the Humanise Awards category, which recognises organisations that excel in promoting diversity, equality, and inclusion (DE&I) within their workforce, fostering a culture of belonging and equal opportunities. Two awards are presented under this category, namely Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; and Workplace Culture and Engagement. The third category is Innovation (Technology), which features the HR Tech and People Analytics award to honour organisations that effectively leverage technology and data analytics to support HR decision-making and drive business outcomes.

The final category is Excellence (Non-Nominated Awards), where judges will select the winners based on the submissions from the People-Centred Awards category. This category includes awards for different segments, such as Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) and Start-up, Not-for-profit and Public Sector, Large Enterprises and Multinational Corporations (MNC), CEO, and HR Leader.

"The Singapore HR Awards embodies our commitment to nurturing talent, fostering growth, and building a future beyond legacies. Together, we shape a world where HR thrives, and organisations flourish," Goh concluded.

As the HR community awaits the awards ceremony on 25 October 2023 at Orchard Hotel Singapore, the stage is set to celebrate the achievements of HR professionals and honour those who are making a difference in the field of HR and people management. hrm

Bridging the generational gap to create an inclusive workplace

BY CHAMPA HA

As two of the biggest age demographics in the emerging workforce, Millennials, and Generation Z (or Gen Z) are playing a large part in shaping how organisations work. Employees from these two generations are looking for a work environment that fuels them and their passions, their ethics, and the future that is developing in front of them, especially if it helps them make an impact in the world.

The current workforce, however, is not consisted of just these employee demographics, with Generation X and Baby Boomers filling leadership and managers positions in most organisations. Often, there is strife between different generations due to a lack of understanding. For instance, there are workplaces filled with lectures and resentment from managers who do not believe in millennial and Gen Z employees, often calling them out for being, 'entitled' 'selfish' and 'not willing to work.'

This is not a new argument: younger employees, rightly or wrongly, have long been perceived as not willing to work hard. The fundamental experiences of Millennials and Gen Zs, however, have been shaped by events like recession, war, and the pandemic. In fact, many Gen Z employees completed their tertiary education and entered the work force during COVID-19, and much of their early career journey has been done remotely.

This has led to a few priorities shaping the Gen Z and millennial mindset, including financial renumeration. Any organisation that these employees choose would have to compensate well. Next, these two generations are more conscious about mental health, especially at work. They are likely to seek employers and workplace environments that support a healthy work-life balance. Lastly, they might have borne witness to family members being unemployed or retrenched. They would thus be more willing to job-hop across different organisations to find the workplace that will not just value their employees, but also invest in them and their skills.

Gen X and Baby Boomers also care about elements of these priorities, but they are also concerned about adapting to new norms due to workplace digitalisation. Boomers, for example, may be slower to embrace social media for work purposes and believe in tried-and-true communication methods to push information. This is a challenge with the rise of communication tools such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams, as well as the increasing shift towards hybrid, if not remote working arrangements. Many boomers are doing their best to cope with these changes and unlearn processes they have been used to for years. They, along with Gen X, are also concerned about job security to support their families and the constant upskilling and reskilling it requires.

The priorities and concerns of employees in a multi-generational workforce can be better addressed when HR leaders create opportunities for employees to address their concerns, as well as provide opportunities for them to work and communicate with one other. Employees should be given more opportunities to collaborate, whether through face-to-face meetings in the office, or projects shared between team members. HR Leaders should also ensure that the opportunities provided to aspiring leaders align with their career journey. Next, employees should be given more control and say over where, when, and how they work. This can be done when HR teams foster a workplace culture that not only compensates employees for the work they do, but also supports their safety, physical and mental wellbeing.

This can be achieved only when organisations truly invest in the time to develop and work on clear, open communication, where the main objective of any new motion is not only distributed across every arm of the organisation, but also clearly explained to make sure employees are collectively aligned. Conversely, if an employee has any constructive feedback, HR teams should be willing to listen, understand, and compromise so that every member of the team is heard.

To learn more about how to develop a talent strategy that works for your organisation, join representatives from The Conference Board, JJL, Standard Chartered Bank, and PVH Corp at HR Tech Fest Connect 2023, as they engage in a thought-provoking discussion that focuses on Gen Z in the workforce and how you can create an inclusive workplace for all employees. hrm

CHRO SERIES 2023/2024

INDONESIA	MALAYSIA	SINGAPORE
18 OCT 2023	22 NOV 2023	7 DEC 2023

ESG MASTERCLASS

INDONESIA	MALAYSIA	SINGAPORE
19 OCT 2023	23 NOV 2023	6 DEC 2023

CHRO SERIES 2023/2024

CHRO Series is the most influential and eagerly anticipated in-person event for CHROs and HR leaders in Southeast Asia. With the theme, 'How CHROs Can Shape Organisational and Workforce Transformation' for the 2023/2024 edition, this one-day event is designed to help forward-thinking leaders explore innovative people strategies to retain top talent, especially as employees prioritise their key goals and plan for their future career advancements in 2024. Critical topics that will be discussed include:

- **The role of CHROs and the evolving labour market dynamics of 2024**
- **Achieving diversity, equity and inclusion in today's context**
- **Advancing your people strategy to become the employer of choice**
- **Building a skill-based talent strategy to fuel your organisation**
- **Leading the transition to an agile workforce**
- **A new work paradigm for a better employee experience**
- **Talent trends & predictions for 2024**

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As part of the CHRO series, HRM Asia is excited to introduce the Masterclass series, designed to equip HR leaders with specialised knowledge from industry experts. Leading the way in this series is the inaugural one-day session titled "Sustainability in Action for CHROs," which will dive deep into the world of ESG. By providing HR leaders with a comprehensive understanding of current ESG standards, pressures, and future directions of Sustainability, this masterclass aims to equip them with the tools to effectively guide their organisations towards achieving their ESG goals.

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