Get a 3D view of your workforce

You see your employees every day; you’ve never seen them like this before.
More than **60%** of companies are now investing in BigData and analytics tools to help make their HR departments more data-driven, but **only 14%** have done any significant “statistical analysis” of employee data at all.

– Bersin, 2013
HR has been in the trenches in the past 5 years. Helping the board restructure the business, being the advisor, counsel, and enabler to navigate the economic turbulence and see the business through to now. Keeping the workforce informed, motivated and in the fight.

**HR is visible....but what next?**

In more UK businesses than ever, HR is on the radar, adding value and alongside the board. Much of this work has been driven by reactive measures, cutting back, responding to economic influences, but industry is starting to look to the future. That means investment, growth and for HR, managing talent and creating the platform for the business to outmanoeuvre the competition, and outperform the market.

**HR duties first, then talent management?**

We know that great businesses bring the right people in, nurture and retain them better than others. But sustainable talent management is often elusive. The HR department isn’t fee-earning so it has to work harder with leaner resources, budget, and staff. And that can mean day to day duties take priority over strategic talent management. And even if the HR team could employ extra resource, gain more hours in the day, do they always have the information required to manage talent effectively and measure the effectiveness of their efforts?

**James can speak German and wants to live in Europe**

Nice to know but useful? What if the Operations Director has just announced plans to move operations to Europe? And they are calling on you to pull a team together with the right skills and commitments to execute the plan by the end of 2014. If you haven’t captured this insight, can you assemble the best team and stop James from fulfilling his aspirations down the road at your nearest competitor because he didn’t get the call? Use another example on engagement. The initiative you ran on the factory floor last month; did you have access to the output figures for the following month? Was there any improvement in motivation and productivity you can measure? The sales training your team organised in Q1; has the new learning been put into practice increasing revenue in Q2? The recruitment drive you’ve just started; do you know the characteristics of your best performers, their education, employment history, out of work interests, so you can focus and attract more people like them?

**From 2D to 3D..... Evolution not revolution!**

A well-used phrase. But for most HR teams it represents the best chance of introducing successful talent management. There is no getting away from the day to day tasks for a busy HR professional. But if you can make small incremental changes to your systems and processes people are the most important and most expensive investment in most organisations and HR holds the key to their recruitment, development and retention.
to capture more data and intel on your employees and then analyse with data from other sources (CRM, operations), you can shift your view of the workforce from 2D to 3D; and make more informed decisions about your workforce and measure the impact of HR initiatives. This means going beyond collecting basic employee data in the HR system. You don’t need extra resource, you can start today....

**Recruitment**

There is mostly likely room to improve the recruitment and onboarding process. Think about the interview process; what kind of information is offered up between the four walls of the meeting room which never gets logged or referred back to?

Interests, ambitions, aspirations, skills outside of work, and competencies? This information is no less valuable than qualifications and employment history but rarely gets recorded past the initial point of contact between company and candidate.

**Onboarding**

The onboarding period; the perfect opportunity to show a new candidate the mission statement, company values, and fire drill. But what about the new recruit’s first impressions about the company and industry knowledge that could be captured and used across the business?

As the employee enters the probation period, does the business understand how long it takes for an employee to get up to speed and profitable? Are competencies, impact on customer service, improvement in team performance measured and recorded?

**Performance Management**

This is one area of people management which has received much attention over the past few years. No longer are appraisals a ‘behind closed doors’ once a year opportunity for employees to complain about their workload. The introduction of 360 degree feedback and journal based appraisals has brought the concept up to date, but this is another juncture where so much more could be utilised.

Strengths and weaknesses are identified and objectives are set, but what about behaviours, confidence, or even styles of execution? To truly know your employees you need to be plugged into what drives them to perform the way they do (or should do).

By understanding the characteristics of high performers, their schooling, career history, after work interests, you can start to refine the recruitment process to attract candidates with similar characteristics.

**Learning and development**

Development is intrinsically linked to organisational success, and is an increasingly popular incentive for the knowledge hungry Generation-Y crowd. However, once training is complete how often is the positive impact on the business measured?

Does the spend on training have any impact on performance, competence, and engagement? Gaining access to company systems (CRM), sales pipeline, and working with the sales director to understand and record the output/ROI of training is essential.

**Engagement**

With many jobs now seen as a stepping stone rather than a rung on the one-company career ladder, keeping employees loyal and productive is an increasing challenge. If you have successfully employed the best people in the talent pool, retention is a key priority. But as we know, factors for retention differ from person to person.

Are you capturing what each employee values in their career? Work/life balance, salary and development potential are just some of the areas which employers should be collecting. If HR understands what engages individuals and uses this insight to motivate them, the business can move quicker, respond to emerging markets, bring new products to market quicker and so on.

**Exiting**

Capturing leaver intel yields information that can be used to improve all aspects of the employee lifecycle. Did the business understand the leaver’s aspirations and skills? Were they given the opportunity to perform and reach their professional and personal goals? If the employee had the attributes you require and you can capture them in the HR system, then when it comes to recruiting, developing and engaging the next generation, you can make sure your processes bring the right people into the business.

**Turning information into insight**

Hopefully you can the value in capturing more information about your workforce, the insights, motivations, and ambitions that lie beneath the surface, that

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captured, understood and acted on, can enable you to replicate high performers, deliver engagement initiatives that increase revenue, bring new products to market quicker, enter new markets, and ultimately deliver the competitive advantage the business strives for.

HR has to do the ‘day job’ but it has the enviable opportunity to provide the organisation with invaluable information about the people who choose to work there. By reaching further and capturing ‘data’ outside of what is necessary, HR can reform the recruitment, development and retention process, build strategic, advisory relationships with the Board, and align the objectives of the workforce with the objectives of the organisation. People information is at the very heart of the HR function, and it’s only a matter of time before it becomes imperative to have a 3D view of your entire organisation.

What can you do now?

Look at your daily HR duties; the meetings, conversations and interactions you have with the workforce and the extra data and insight you can capture in your HR system.

It may require adding additional fields in the system that you can report on. Streamline processes with self-service technology to take away the administration burden and put more control in the hands of line managers and employees.

Get access to company systems that yield sales and productivity data. Allow a period of time to gather meaningful data, and then use simple analytical tools to interpret it so you can start to build a 3D view of your workforce.

See your people in 3D

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