

Five Ways to Improve the Employee Experience

Innovative Technologies Encourage Engagement and Productivity

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PAPER



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Focusing on the Employee Experience

The employee experience is comprised of the interactions that employees have with their organization over the duration of their employment. Innovative organizations are focusing on employee experience management to help all employees excel at their jobs while feeling good about both their experiences at work and their contributions to the organization.



Employee engagement matters. In our research on human capital management (HCM) and social collaboration, more than two-thirds (69%) of organizations said employee engagement is a critical metric.

New technologies that many employees use in their personal lives can also help them feel engaged and be more productive at work. By effectively using these mobile devices, collaboration tools and social media as well as advances in

cloud computing, big data and analytics, companies can increase the efficiency, effectiveness and engagement of employees in new ways such as increasing the speed at which they can share information through collaboration or improving process efficiency through mobile access to information.

Analytics is a key technology for managers and executives in all phases of human capital management. Two-thirds of organizations in our research on this topic said it is important or very important to make human capital analytics and supporting metrics and information accessible to all who need them.

Analytics enables people to understand and act on the state of key metrics of employee experience. In-line analytics within HCM applications help them uncover and react to current problems, while predictive capabilities of big data enable them to see issues likely to arise in the future and take appropriate action to head them off before they impact employee performance and satisfaction.

The use of new devices and means of communication also provides companies with new ways to capture and use knowledge of how and how well employees work. These sources provide additional input for both big data and analytics.



Through our benchmark research we have identified five major trends that can improve the employee experience and through it a business's success.

Five Key Trends

Managing Employee Productivity

Improving employee productivity is an ongoing concern. Effectively retaining talent can help in that effort. Organizations are turning to innovative technology that helps increase the engagement of and connection between employees. Our human capital analytics benchmark research finds that three in five (63%) organizations are investing in technology to spur growth in productivity.

Increasing numbers of workers, particularly younger ones, can be engaged by the opportunity to execute common business and human resources tasks using a smartphone or tablet. Our human capital analytics research finds that organizations increasingly are adding mobile capabilities to their HR processes – to their core human resources management systems (47%) and their workforce management capabilities (41%), analytics (39%) and talent management (34%).

Optimizing Employee Recognition

Employee recognition programs help retention. But they need not consist only of periodically offering employees rewards; they can recognize contributions and achievements on an ongoing basis. Retention, according to our research, is the second-most important workforce metric and one that is tracked by more than three in five organizations (62%).



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Effective employee recognition starts with creating programs that business managers can use – for example, making it possible to issue rewards on the spot (gift cards perhaps) for successfully completing projects. We note that if they include rewards, these programs must have budget allotments that make the rewards tangible and meaningful.

Social collaboration tools can spread recognition in the organization and enable peers to recognize one and other with badges or comments that can be convertible to rewards. Our research shows that currently more than one-third (36%) of organizations use business or social collaboration technology, and collaboration is organizations' number-one technology choice to improve the use of human capital analytics.



Impacting Employee Quality of Life

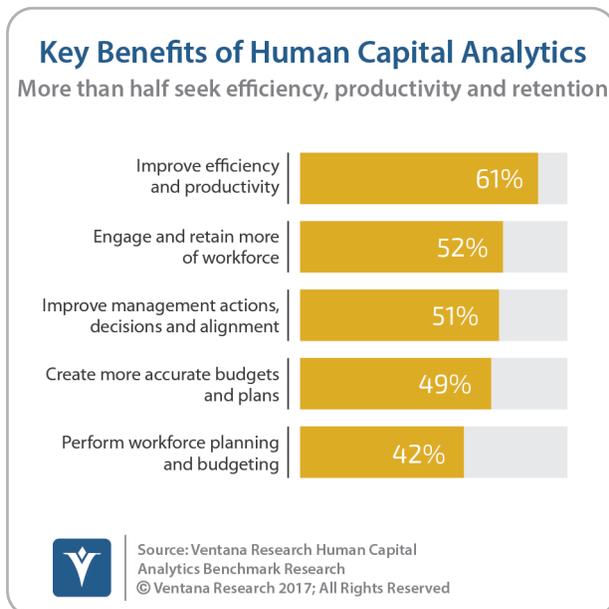
As noted, employee engagement is the most closely watched workforce metric. Quality of life is increasingly related to employee engagement, while achieving a work/life balance appears to be growing more difficult.

Today mobile devices are ubiquitous and electronic communications can reach (and interrupt) people 24 hours a day. To make communication with employees as unobtrusive as possible while supporting the levels of productivity today’s enterprises require, the supporting technology must be simple to use so completing a task requires only a single click or a few swipes of a mobile device. This streamlining can help ensure that any interruption will be as brief as necessary.

Quality of life and technology intersect in the emerging trend of wearable computing. This development offers the employer the ability to impact important areas in workforce effectiveness and safety. However, it also must identify and respect the boundary at which business and personal aspects of life meet. Relevant wearable computing innovations include smartphone applications to track personal wellness, from calories consumed to number of steps walked, that connect to wristbands and other devices. The data they generate can be used in employee wellness programs to promote quality of life through health and fitness programs.

Increasing Engagement through Innovation

Harnessing technological innovation can help improve the quality of work that people do and make the business more competitive. For example, half (51%) of participants in our research on human capital analytics said that analytics enables managers, executives and HR professionals to make decisions that are better informed and aligned. Even more said that human capital analytics can help improve productivity (61%) and engage and retain more of the workforce (52%). These benefits help managers allocate resources more effectively to support employees in their tasks as well as increase satisfaction with their jobs.



As well as the technology innovations discussed above, one other can enhance the employee experience and productivity. Cloud-based deployment can make applications and data more readily available no matter where employees are while limiting the resources needed to support the applications. This is reflected in our research on business technology innovation, in which 46 percent

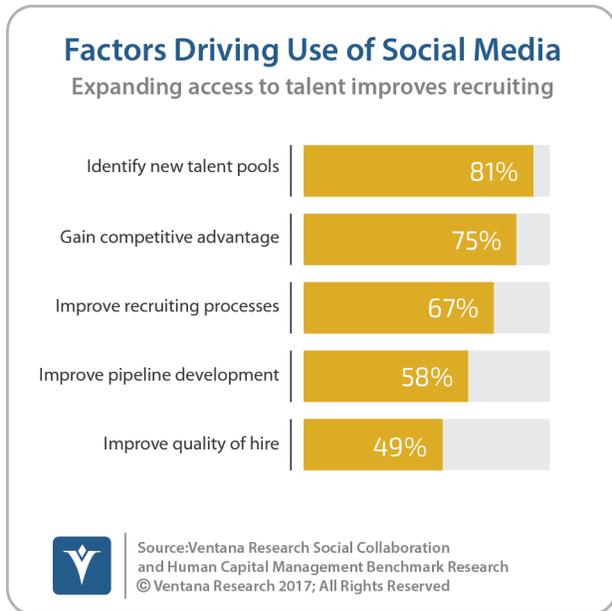


of executives said cloud computing has improved availability of applications and information in their organization. Introducing cloud computing can increase employee engagement by speeding application access.

Mobilizing and Socializing the Workforce

Producing better results and greater productivity can be assisted by enabling the workforce to make use of both mobile and social technologies. Our research finds that nearly three-fourths (70%) of organizations are using mobile technologies

today, and close to two-thirds (64%) said they are confident in their ability to use mobile applications.



The research also shows that using mobile applications benefits business. Those most often cited are better communication and knowledge sharing (by 62%), an ability to respond faster to opportunities and threats (39%) and increased productivity (also 39%).

Social media tools can increase the efficiency and effectiveness of several key HR processes. Extending recruiting to social media gives organizations new ways to reach out to new candidates and to stay in touch with high-quality

candidates. In our research on social media and human capital management four in five (81%) organizations said identifying new talent pools is an important benefit of social media for recruiting.

Moving Forward

Embracing these five trends can help improve the employee experience and transform the HR function into a strategic partner for executives and managers across the organization.

Improving that experience can spur productivity from employees. It also is a key to retaining the best talent. An organization’s human capital is more than ever critical to improving profitability and can offer a competitive advantage over others with less talented or less satisfied employees. No business can afford to ignore efforts to enhance it.



About Ventana Research

Ventana Research is the most authoritative and respected benchmark business technology research and advisory services firm. We provide insight and expert guidance on mainstream and disruptive technologies through a unique set of research-based offerings including benchmark research and technology evaluation assessments, education workshops and our research and advisory services, Ventana On-Demand. Our unparalleled understanding of the role of technology in optimizing business processes and performance and our best practices guidance are rooted in our rigorous research-based benchmarking of people, processes, information and technology across business and IT functions in every industry. This benchmark research plus our market coverage and in-depth knowledge of hundreds of technology providers means we can deliver education and expertise to our clients to increase the value they derive from technology investments while reducing time, cost and risk.

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