

# A New Era of HR

Business

HUNTERSVILLE, N.C.

*Three ways to drive lasting change in the ever-changing business climate.*

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From the COVID-19 pandemic to social unrest and the presidential election, the workforce has experienced more disruption and distraction in the last six months than ever before. 2020 has ushered in a new era for human resources with much of the workforce now remote and businesses seeking new ways to boost productivity and maintain company culture.

The tried and true, traditional HR practices and technologies are transforming. The element of daily engagement has been dismantled and businesses are forced to rethink processes and policies to fit today's remote environment. Companies with core values serving as the foundation of their business are primed to realize effective change that drives engagement and builds resilience. A successful HR transformation begins with hard-wiring agility into the business and should focus on culture, next-generation leaders, engaged talent, a digital ecosystem, and omnichannel communications.

**Building a Culture of Knowledge**

The key to effecting organizational agility requires investment in a business' most important asset: its people. It is vital that the workforce is equipped with the proper tools, resources, and training so that overall productivity is bolstered. A culture that encourages and provides ongoing education and professional development opportunities allows associates to grow within the company. In turn, this will positively impact overall business growth and organizational change.

Learning and development initiatives provide associates with new ways of thinking, new challenges, and new skills that propel the company toward natural transformation. By fueling constant curiosity and fostering continuous learning, businesses become more resilient and agile. This is vital as many roles continue to shift in a digital-first world and skills gaps across industries widen. Filling these gaps through tailored workforce education not only reskills associates for shifts in roles, but also drives top performers into leadership positions that are pivotal to a company's future.

### **Reimagining Communications**

The COVID-19 pandemic has made omnichannel communications critical. An integrated HR and corporate communications team is important in creating a connected culture that brings teams and leaders together. By doing this, communication begins with the associate even as it reaches external channels..

In the new era of HR, it's important to diversify communications in order to reach each associate through their preferred channels. Whether it's through a company's intranet, executive memos, or leadership videos, the ability to communicate through different channels guarantees all associates are retaining the same information in their own way.

External communications allow associates to remain aware of the company's message, giving them a sense of pride and connection to the brand. Communication becomes the consistent thread to maintaining a connected culture - and it's important to think of it in a duality. It is useful for not only maintaining associate engagement, but also to ensure that associates are connected to the brand, building morale and boosting internal engagement while keeping them informed - no matter where they are located.

This engagement ultimately shows up in how customers are experiencing the brand and engaging with the workforce.

### **Leveraging a Digital Ecosystem**

Global complexity is real. Things change rapidly and the world is getting smaller. Staying ahead of the changes requires a fluid mindset. Through powerful, best-in-class tools that are grounded in artificial intelligence, machine learning, and analytics, HR can re-engineer the power of culture and performance to drive business outcomes. This allows businesses to show a return on investment in terms of productivity and revenue generation to continue driving the strategy and engagement of the company.

It's no secret that investment in technology is vital to today's business, but the key is having an HR digital ecosystem with the right portfolio that engages and evolves people in a rapid and sustainable way to drive business performance. With tools that serve in areas like learning and development, talent management and leadership development, social engagement, and communications and connectivity, business leaders can scale and sustain transformation through knowledge.

Each of these tools delivers real-time data that can inform where the business needs to pivot and adjust. These analytics - both predictive and prescriptive - can provide a

safety net for businesses as they continue to cope with uncertainty, allowing businesses to quickly tailor and adjust strategies to meet the evolving needs of the workforce.

A strong digital ecosystem creates an agile way to not only understand the performance of an individual, but to ensure the development and readiness of an associate for future roles they can continue to play in the organization. In today's remote climate, this becomes important to accelerate the morale and agility of the organization.

HR teams will need to excel in their digital dexterity to not only evolve HR but lead their organizations into a more connected future with an engaged culture. This needs to be foundational to any HR strategy in order to build associate capabilities that drive outside business performance in what will likely continue to be a virtual world.

The pandemic has emphasized HR's role in business continuity and maintaining connectivity through crisis. With the data and insights to back up and inform effective change, HR's modernization has been a long time coming. The traditional strategies and principles are evolving and it's crucial for HR executives and companies to keep up. In turn, the businesses that ultimately look to HR to drive strategic, internal transformation will become the differentiators.

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