



# How HR Analytics Translate to Employee Engagement and Competitive Advantage

WHITE PAPER

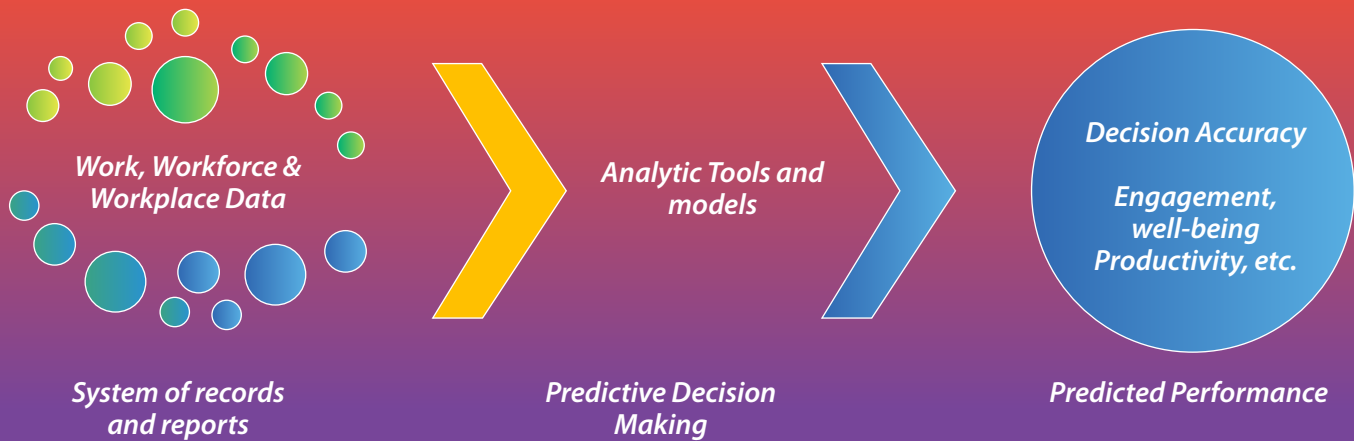
## Abstract



As business leaders begin to look beyond the global health crisis, improving bonds with employees becomes more crucial now than ever before. Emerging successfully on the other side of the crisis as high performing organizations demands the highest levels of engagement across the employee journey. While the move to the distributed work model in the wake of the pandemic was a reactive response, many businesses are now proactively considering leveraging the model for business success. Millennials, for instance, flourish in remote working environment with 54% exhibiting 'thriving' wellbeing, compared with 47% among those who work on-site.<sup>1</sup>

To ensure an optimal person-organization fit (P-O fit) and improve employee retention and commitment in the new world order, HR leaders must reinvent the end-to-end employee experience. This paper provides a blueprint on how human resource analytics can help predict organizational performance and enhance engagement. People-centric data and analytics-driven insights not only helps better understand workforce performance, but also drive intelligent holistic workforce themes and strategy by analyzing persona-centric engagement and development for higher productivity and business outcomes.

[1] Gallup, Will Millennials Finally Get the Workplace They Want?, November 13, 2020, <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/324218/millennials-finally-workplace.aspx>, accessed on February 17, 2021



## Driving success through heightened employee engagement

In today's volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) business environment, organizations are eager to sustain superior performance and retain their high performing workforce – all the while containing costs. To achieve this, they must ensure an enhanced organizational experience that not only meets ever-increasing customer demands but also workforce expectations. Transitioning to remote work environments has reinforced the need to develop high-level talent experiences with a consistent focus on wellness. This is crucial to drive positive employee experience and superior engagement at workplace. This is why a majority of the world's most admired companies such as Hilton and Wegman<sup>2</sup> believe that their efforts to provide best experience to their employees can create a strategic advantage for the organization. In this dynamic environment, exponential HR practices can reinforce importance of job culture-fit hiring practices to meet the quality of staffing, attracting top talent and developing the human economy -- the key factors shaping the future of work.

If nurturing a sense of belonging and building a culture of resilience within the workforce is the way to stay competitive, how can companies realize it? What does providing the best career experience involve? How can businesses alter employee perception by designing positive experiences, providing organizational support, and defining realistic business outcomes? We explore the answers to these questions in the following sections.

[2] Great Places to Work, Fortune 100 Best Companies to Work For® 2019, <https://www.greatplacetowork.com/best-workplaces/100-best/2019>, accessed March 17, 2021

# Amplifying the employee experience with analytics: Three key focus areas

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There are three areas that organizations can target to create superior employee experience and drive sustainable competitive advantage. Positive organizational experiences begin with an empathetic and effective recruitment and onboarding process. Coupled with a supportive and optimistic employee work environment, this results in improved employee performance and reduced turnover, creating a stable and productive workforce.

## 1. Strengthening the relationship between P-O fit, performance and retention

Research shows that when a supervisor perceives an employee's person-organization fit (P-O fit) to be high, there is a demonstrable improvement in job performance along with reduced risk of the employee jumping ship. For organizations looking to build high performance teams, this means hiring employees with similar values as the company to create a positive managerial perception of talent, and in turn, elevate overall performance.

By adopting intelligent digital technology, organizations can demonstrate resilience in recruitment and talent management functions during such unprecedented events such as the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, organizations can use artificial intelligence for job posting phase of recruiting for enabling meaningful language that does not speak directly to one gender over another. The algorithms programmed into AI can scan external and internal databases, various social profiles and websites and to offer best candidate options. AI also enables companies to seek passive candidates who might be appropriate for an open position.

The benefits of AI do not end here. Natural language processing in AI can provide faster parsing of profiles and draw measurable fit candidates for a job. The systems within AI, chatbots or virtual assistants can be established to remove bias by blocking out content of potential distraction in resume or using decision sciences to check best potential fitment to the job. Thus, influence positively the end-to-end employee experience and journey.

AI can build on the organizational structure by learning the candidate preference and company culture. If the system becomes cognizant of individual preferences inside any organization then it can provide the candidates with a better choice of working experiences adjusting to each individual's personal nuances.

Increasing recruitment effectiveness through AI-enabled applicant self-selection process followed by insight-based talent management accentuates transparency and objectivity in the recruitment process, strengthening psychological contracts between organizations and its employees. In the post-pandemic world, robust HR insights lay the foundation for formulating strategies that nurture talent towards a synchronistic, hyper-personalized remote work environment, and improve collaboration and productivity.

## 2. Nurture Supportive Environment to Improve Employee Engagement

According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), pandemic mitigation measures such as lockdowns and stay-at-home orders have impacted four out of five workers in the global workforce<sup>3</sup>. In a remote work environment, the first priority of organizations should be to restructure traditional way of working to better accommodate the demands of the new model, including making more room for families and examining the typical lengths of workdays.

Workforce analytics, AI-enabled services and action platforms can help build a more employee-friendly workplace. For instance, executives and managers can leverage analytics to assess the quality rather than quantity of work, choosing to reward better responses over faster responses or more productive workdays over longer workdays. Similarly, deploying persona-centric, data-driven employee engagement initiatives can help create camaraderie and strengthen bonds of employees and their families to their new workplace. In essence, by creating a system that efficiently caters to the needs of different types of employees, organizations can ensure greater employee engagement and become a high performer.

Employee perceptions around organizational support for self-development also matters a great deal when it comes to achieving workforce outcomes in the emerging world order. Empathetic, hyper-personalized and easily accessible employee development and well-being programs, developed using analytical insights, reinforce positive perception of the company and employee growth opportunities, reducing risk of disengagement and attrition.

## 3. Prioritize work-life balance

Millennials quickly bail on companies that do not offer flexibility and work-life balance<sup>4</sup>. The pandemic presents an opportunity for companies to inculcate diversity, inclusivity and adherence to work-life synergy by empathetically incorporating family dwelling units into the employee's workspace. A case in point: organizations can support a remote working dual-earner couple responsible for dependent care through income benefits and workplace flexibility. At the same time, they can explore questions concerning health and relationships.

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[3] International Labor Organization, April 7, 2020, [https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS\\_740893/lang-en/index.html](https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_740893/lang-en/index.html), accessed on February 17, 2020

[4] Gallup, Will Millennials Finally Get the Workplace They Want?, November 13, 2020, <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/324218/millennials-finally-workplace.aspx>, February 17, 2020

Analytics and insights can help understand synergistic interplay of work and life in a physically dispersed but interdependent team environment, promoting family-supportive supervisor behaviors (FSSBs) in the quest for superior business outcomes.

It is also necessary to provide emotional support to employees who are prosocially motivated. Assessing baseline prosocial motivation levels and offering periodic interventions can help ensure that they are not exhausting themselves trying to help their co-workers. Evidence-based data insights can recommend persona-based organizational and supervisory support for such employees.

## Taking the lead with workforce analytics and AI-enabled services

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To build a more responsive organization in a distributed work environment, HR leaders must focus on designing roles and structures around outcomes rather than responsibilities. They would also do well to provide employees with adaptive and elastic roles along with necessary cross-functional knowledge and training. By mining the workforce data generated across the enterprise, organizations can examine the rules, knowledge, and attitudes developed in post-pandemic scenario to redefine work as well as engagement programs, eliminating the non-essential and unproductive elements.

For organizations looking to outperform in the new reality, building data-driven culture and harnessing workforce analytics is clearly the answer to not just navigating uncertainties but also future-proofing the workforce.

#### About The Author

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Debashis Kanungo is a consulting partner for TCS Workforce and Analytics and Insights. He brings to the table more than 25 years of diverse experience in multiple HR function across geographies, leading to effective people integration and hiring strategies. He has been instrumental in creating, and implementing talent transformation and management framework, enabling high performance work culture using technology and metrics and delivering robust organizational capabilities and processes. Kanungo is a member of National HRD and an active member of various HR forums. He is a certified HR Analytics professional having Bachelor Degree in Law and Masters in Management Studies specializing in Human resource and Organizational Development.

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