

Chief human resource officers (CHROs) and HR teams have an unprecedented opportunity to help their organizations achieve business objectives through empathetic, transparent, and consistent HR systems, policies, and services. But they need the right technology.

# Ushering in New Human Resource Operations for the Future of Work

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## Introduction

The role of HR is changing, and chief human resource officers (CHROs) are being challenged like never before. No doubt, in 2020, the HR landscape changed in many ways because of the global pandemic, but even pre-pandemic circumstances brought about many changes that HR and HR executives need to address to be successful. The following are examples of particular challenges that many organizations face:

- » **Globalization.** Organizations of all sizes are turning to global expansion to secure new sources of revenue and to tap scarce resources wherever they may reside. Several skill sets are becoming more difficult either to acquire through recruiting or to build through internal staff development. Thus, companies look to secure talent and broaden their global perspectives to achieve their business outcomes. At the same time, the world has truly become flat, fulfilling Thomas Friedman's thesis of 15 years ago. It is much easier to become a multinational company now than it ever was before.
- » **Competition.** Companies across all business sectors are finding it more difficult to achieve a competitive edge. The speed of innovation is driving parity from competitor to competitor across many industries. To become a competitive winner or market leader, a company needs to offer something unique to its customers, which means doing things more quickly, less expensively, or at a higher level of service as well as foraying into new areas and continuously innovating. For this to happen, it's essential to have the right people in the right seats at the right time.
- » **Regulatory compliance.** As companies go multinational, they need to be prepared for all the regulations and local differences from country to country. The HR function, in particular, is pressed with the need to ensure that organizations comply with local regulations.

## AT A GLANCE

### TAKEAWAYS

- » Globalization, stiff competition, regulatory compliance, and technical disruptions are some of the challenges facing CHROs today.
- » HR technologies are changing rapidly with next-generation HR systems and the introduction of artificial intelligence.
- » Savvy HR executives are aligning with HR service partners to navigate challenges, improve overall employee experience, and realize the benefits of well-deployed HR technology.

- » **Internal and external technical disruptions.** Technologies are constantly changing, and it is difficult for employers to keep up. The current emphasis is now on the "experience," which means that systems need to support the workforce in an engaging and straightforward manner. Employees are looking for an experience that is similar to what they encounter in their consumer lives.
- » **The need for anytime, anywhere access.** Going hand in hand with experience, access to HR workflows is assumed to be provided on any device at any time. The watchwords are "mobile first." Not every worker is tied to a work-centric device. Many workers have only mobile access, so systems and services need to be geared to support a broad variety of devices.
- » **Social awareness and diversity and inclusion.** Companies are taking up environmental, social, and governance (ESG) initiatives in large numbers. During the current global pandemic and in its aftermath, organizations are looking to be more responsive to their workforces. Companies are seeking to be good global citizens and are therefore embracing diversity and inclusion initiatives.
- » **Post-pandemic pressures and the new workplace.** Many of the HR practices put in place because of the global pandemic are likely to continue in the aftermath of the pandemic. According to IDC research, over 60% of organizations will consider continuing a work-at-home or hybrid situation in the post-pandemic world.
- » **Employee well-being.** The pandemic has put a spotlight on the employee experience in a positive way. Employers are changing culture to adopt a more empathetic model of leadership and are demonstrating true care and concern for the workforce. As part of the move to empathetic leadership, employee well-being programs are gaining traction; both health and financial wellness are becoming important HR services.
- » **Employee learning.** HR is reinventing learning strategies through microlearning, virtual and interactive modules, and learning on the job that are available anytime, anywhere, on any device. To be successful, HR needs to consider digital learning experience platforms and artificial intelligence (AI) to ensure the right content is delivered to the right employees at the right time.

The challenges are many. But with challenges come opportunities. CHRO and HR teams have an opportunity to help their organizations achieve their business objectives through empathetic, transparent, and consistent HR operations, systems, policies, and services. A key to success is engaging with the right HR business partners.

## ***Defining HR in a Technology-Driven World***

We are living in a technology-driven world, and the HR function is no exception. Technologies now being deployed within the HR function are numerous and are offering up unprecedented ease of use, insight, and utility. While such technologies are highly useful, employing all these newer capabilities can and does put a strain on internal teams, including the business operations and IT teams supporting HR. Once again, having the right HR partnerships, especially with service providers, will help organizations take advantage of technological innovations while easing the burden on internal teams.

HR service providers offer a variety of capabilities to ensure that HR effectively takes full advantage of new and emerging technology, including:

- » Up-front services to advise the HR team in the selection of the right solutions from the "best fit" technology options
- » Consulting to help HR organizations reimagine and improve upon HR processes and procedures
- » Services to help client companies digitally transform their processes and implement new capabilities once technologies have been selected
- » Ongoing management of the technologies associated with HR
- » Augmented capabilities that help HR fully embrace and integrate the range of technologies to be used
- » AI-driven human-machine collaboration to enable HR to access, engage, and harness organizational talent

Among the myriad technical trends emerging, the following are most significant:

- » Next-generation HR systems that put skills and talent at the center and offer alternative ways of looking at the workforce, including embracing the reality of gig work and unconventional work models
- » Cognitive automation that examines data and not only provides a readout of results but also offers predictive measures and prescriptive advice for overcoming problems
- » Cloud-based systems that are becoming de facto application platforms, meaning that organizations are weeding out and migrating from older on-premises models
- » Robotic process automation that helps minimize manual interventions and augments human staff with digital assistants to fulfill inquiries such as those handled by the HR call center
- » Shared service models that serve to help organizations minimize duplication of efforts and proliferation of disconnected technologies
- » Focus on employee wellness as organizations make the mental and physical well-being of their workers a top priority, including listening to the voice of the worker and responding with programs designed to improve the worker experience
- » Focus on employee experience with human-centric design at the core, with responsibilities shared across IT and HR
- » Integration of HR operations across business processes, IT infrastructure, and applications (This aids in providing a seamless, consumerlike experience.)

## Benefits

It is critical that HR take advantage of the opportunity presented to step up and be a force for change during these difficult times. By becoming leaders and taking advantage of newly emerging trends, technologies, and services, HR will be making a major contribution toward the achievement of overall corporate goals. Organizations across the globe are looking at how they might put employees first. Rather than continue to just pay lip service to this idea by including it in mission statements, organizations have made it an essential component of their overall success.

An important step in putting employees first is ensuring that the best technologies, systems, and services are in place to support employee well-being and heighten employee satisfaction and engagement. The benefits include:

- » **Visibility.** Consistent and well-integrated systems and services offer up global visibility across the workforce, which in turn enables better and quicker executive decision making.
- » **Insight.** Decision making can be improved dramatically through proper data management and the availability of analytical tools that both analyze the past and predict future outcomes.
- » **Employee experience.** IDC research has determined that a strong employee experience has a direct impact on organizational resilience, which in turn has a positive effect on HR strategies. IDC found that organizations that deliver a mature and comprehensive employee experience have employees who are 35 times more likely to feel like part of one team driving business results.
- » **Cost optimization.** Deploying state-of-the-art systems and services homogeneously across the enterprise leads to cost savings.
- » **Productivity.** A key goal is to help employees get their work done wherever they are and whenever they need to.
- » **Performance.** Well-managed HR operations serve to improve overall performance to achieve strategic objectives.

Organizations are in a place where they've never been before, and no one is quite sure what the "next normal" will entail. Putting in place an ecosystem that supports HR effectively with visibility and insight will help organizations adapt quickly to whatever the future holds.

## Considering TCS

TCS has a comprehensive portfolio of HR services spanning the hire-to-retire life cycle across consulting, technology, and services. With a balanced client portfolio covering various industries and buyer sizes, more than 14,000 HR subject matter experts and consultants (TCS HR team included), and a global delivery footprint, TCS has been focusing on the HR transformational objectives of leading organizations for more than 15 years, helping more than 150 enterprises reimagine their HR operations.

TCS leverages digital technologies such as cognitive/AI, analytics, intelligent automation, and cloud to drive digital transformation, delivering on key business outcomes for its clients. Its key digital solutions include advanced analytics solutions, AI-powered cognitive automation engine ignio, and HR BPaaS solutions backed by partnerships with leading HCM platform providers such as SAP, Oracle, and ServiceNow. Digital tools also include proprietary chatbots and virtual agent solutions as well as mobility-based workplace solutions.

TCS CogniX for Human Resources is designed to bring a paradigm shift in the way enterprises access, engage, and harness organizational talent with next-generation technologies. TCS CogniX is an AI-driven human-machine collaboration suite, powered by Machine First Delivery Model (MFDM). It helps enterprises gain a competitive edge through cognitive operations. It also helps enterprises ensure resiliency, adopt new business models with agility, and embrace a culture of continuous innovation.

TCS CogniX for HR integrates and orchestrates multiple digital technologies, such as artificial intelligence/machine learning, advanced analytics, intelligent automation, and platform solutions, to shape the future of HR, offering a simplified, intuitive, and personalized experience to users at all levels with organizations. It leverages the rich HR domain capability of TCS and is integrated with cognitive and digital levers to address the modern-day challenges in human resource management. It contextualizes solutions to industries and know-how from a vast expanse of HR operations to realize a "configurable enterprise." CogniX for HR leverages a library of digital solutions and assets such as predictive demand forecasting, an AI-based payroll command center, mobility-based HR-On-The-Go solutions, cognitive assistants, and HR analytics solutions. Orchestration of all these technologies help deliver hyper-personalized and future-ready HR services.

TCS' sustained investments in research and innovation have helped CHROs reimagine their HR operations, delivering superior business outcomes such as consumer-grade employee experiences, improved employee productivity, optimized cost/hire processes, increased learning effectiveness, and enhanced payroll accuracy/timeliness.

TCS' HR services are well positioned to cater to the evolving CHRO needs across the HR value chain. The company's portfolio of offerings includes:

- » HR strategy services supporting policies, procedures, employee relations, and regulatory compliance
- » Payroll services such as reconciliation, preparation, distribution, reporting, and filing
- » Compensation services such as salary administration, reviews, commissions, and bonuses/incentives/awards
- » Recruitment services including sourcing, screening, background check, candidate assessment, and onboarding
- » Learning services such as curriculum development, content design, development, and registration management
- » Rewards and recognition strategy and management, catalog design, and rewards fulfillment
- » Employee data management such as employee data changes, status changes, travel and expense management, and new hire processing
- » Benefits administration including defined benefit plans, wellness plans, health and safety, and ancillary benefits

TCS' HR consulting services are well positioned to help reinvent HR in the next normal. These services include HR strategy and assessment, digital solutions implementation strategy, and HR process (re) design, from talent attraction to retirement. These services are synchronized with core business processes and the future of work, employer branding, and consumer-grade employee experience.

TCS' HR capabilities are underpinned by the deep domain expertise and best practices of TCS. TCS is one of the largest global organizations with a diverse talent base of over 469,000 associates representing 147 nationalities across 46 countries. TCS has been recognized with multiple global HR awards. In 2020, it was named one of the *Fortune Best Big Companies to Work For* and recognized as a *Global Top Employer* by the Top Employers Institute. In addition, TCS was ranked number 1 in Europe for customer satisfaction for a seventh consecutive year.

### Challenges

The market for HR systems and services has withstood the challenges presented by the current pandemic and resulting economic fallout with lowered but relatively steady investments. However, should economic conditions worsen and the employment outlook become bleaker, TCS will face a lower demand for HR systems and services until an economic recovery takes place.

### Conclusion

HR leaders are challenged in today's global, mobile, fast-paced environment — especially with a global pandemic affecting the who, where, and how of achieving work goals. At the same time, savvy HR leaders recognize the opportunity at this fragile moment to push forward and improve HR processes and delivery.

Employees and managers alike are looking for a user experience that mirrors what they enjoy as consumers. More attention is being paid to improving workforce skills, which is paving the way to greater investments in training than ever before. HR leaders can also encourage and help clear the path to a more empathetic leadership style, which serves to improve employee engagement, leading to better business outcomes. HR organizations do not need to undertake these endeavors alone. Rather, IDC advises HR organizations to seek out HR business partners that can help them get there. The destination will be worth it.

## About the Analyst



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Lisa Rowan is Research Vice President for IDC responsible for global research on human capital and talent management software and services. Ms. Rowan provides expert analysis focused on both the business services and software used to address HR and talent-related dimensions.



## MESSAGE FROM THE SPONSOR

**About Tata Consultancy Services Ltd. (TCS)**

Tata Consultancy Services is an IT services, consulting and business solutions organization that has been partnering with many of the world's largest businesses in their transformation journeys for over 50 years. TCS offers a consulting-led, cognitive powered, integrated portfolio of business, technology and engineering services and solutions. This is delivered through its unique Location Independent Agile™ delivery model, recognized as a benchmark of excellence in software development.

A part of the Tata group, India's largest multinational business group, TCS has over 469,000 of the world's best-trained consultants in 46 countries. The company generated consolidated revenues of US \$22 billion in the fiscal year ended March 31, 2020 and is listed on the BSE (formerly Bombay Stock Exchange) and the NSE (National Stock Exchange) in India. TCS' proactive stance on climate change and award-winning work with communities across the world have earned it a place in leading sustainability indices such as the Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI), MSCI Global Sustainability Index and the FTSE4Good Emerging Index. For more information, visit us at [www.tcs.com](http://www.tcs.com).

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