

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

TALENT IN A CHANGING WORLD

“The talent crisis is no longer a problem of the future. It is here and now and is threatening business growth and economic prosperity.”

This is how PwC starts its recent global report on the subject, before going on to explore how CEOs around the world are starting to take a more strategic view of their future workforces.

No longer, it seems, can they assume tomorrow's talent be as freely available to them as today.

“To be successful HR has to be a true partner to the CEO – helping to shape the priorities and plans of the business,” the report authors continue. “How HR leaders take up this challenge may well determine whether their organisation will sink or swim in these turbulent times.” Take a look at our edited reviews on pages 4 and 5.

On page 6 we also touch upon further change within HR itself. Little more than a decade since one of the profession's more senior roles – the Business Partner – surfaced, some of the latest thinking is that this position now needs to be replaced by that of HR Entrepreneur. Whether this is a formal job title or simply a way of being more ‘business savvy’ as the CIPD likes to call it, remains to be seen.

But it does call into question what HR leaders and their teams should prioritise in their Monday morning planning meeting.

A key priority right now for law firm, Eversheds, is its ongoing commitment to diversity in the workplace. See what Margot King, Head of Corporate Responsibility, Diversity and HR Projects has to say on page 7 and how the firm has recently won a National Business Award for its inclusive culture and work ethic.

Elsewhere, take a look at the results of our new Salary Survey over-leaf and catch up on the next round of HR conferences and new publishing on the horizon.

We hope there is plenty to interest you in this issue of insideHR.

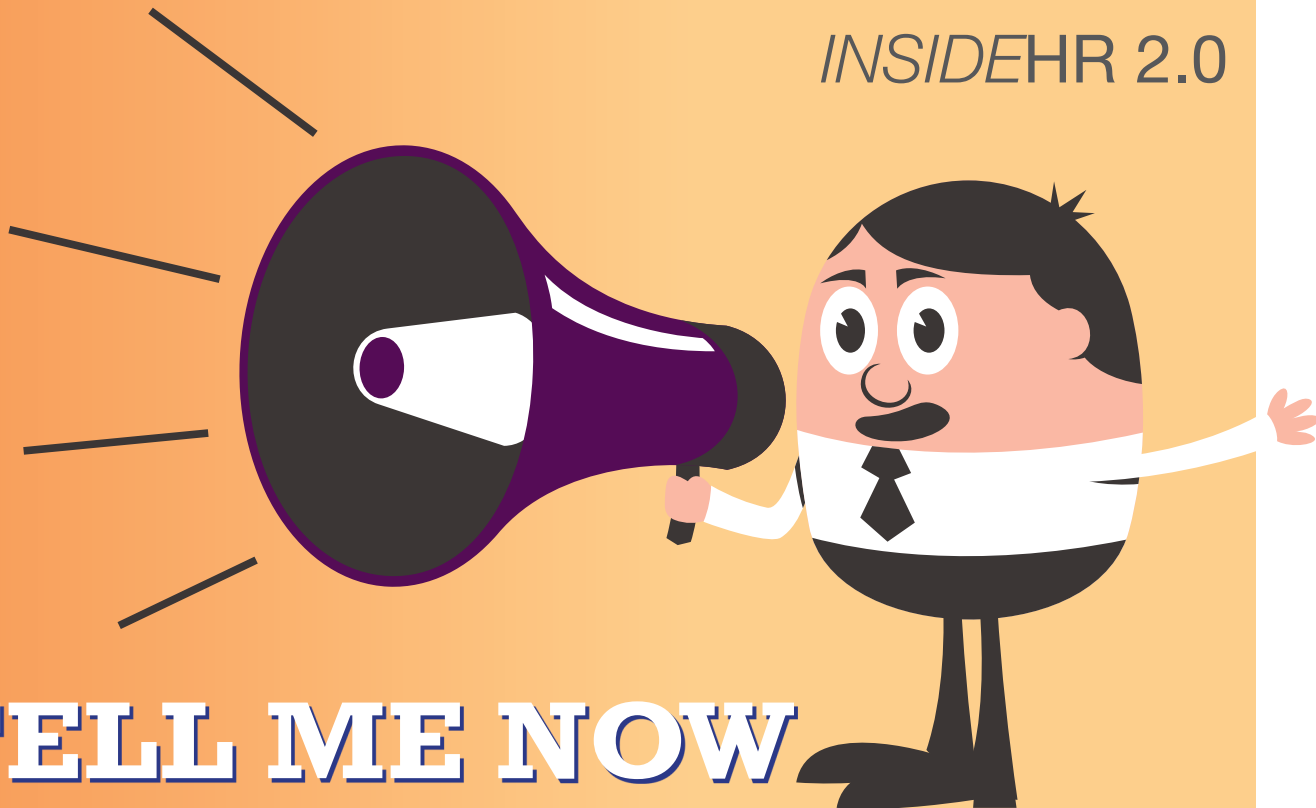
Best wishes



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INSIDEHR 2.0



TELL ME NOW (ALL OF YOU!)



How social media culture promises to put ‘community feedback’ into performance reviews.

Michael Silverman

Do you find existing performance reviews to be a bit generic and sporadic? I know I do.

This is despite the fact that most organisations have taken technological advancements on-board (by moving from the traditional paper-based performance appraisal to online performance reviews).

But the basic premise behind them has remained the same – and there are several issues associated with this.

Despite new technology, one of the big problems is that performance reviews still tend to ask the same questions or assess the same competencies. There is also a lack of regularity because they are typically conducted on an annual or six-monthly basis.

In my view, this is where human intelligence is more important than technology.

Just think about it. Even with all the applications, it's still a big ask to expect one person to be an expert in reviewing performance, an excellent coach and a great communicator. Not only this, with the increasing emergence of agile and remote working – managers are spending far less time with their direct reports.

Where performance reviews are linked to reward, they can be particularly flawed by the simple fact that those in charge of the review (especially where the outcome is linked to bonus allocation) are only human and cannot be perfectly impartial. Traditional performance reviews are also ineffective in capturing employee behaviours that are difficult to quantify... such as teamwork, problem solving, creativity, self-discipline and initiative.

What's more, those organisations that have established themselves in social networking sites such as Twitter, LinkedIn or Yammer have still not explored the potential of these tools as a ‘new language of business.’ This is important because these collaborative approaches offer a means by which

employees can regularly rate, comment and make suggestions about their colleagues' performance.

Groups rating individuals?! I can see why managers would regard this as potentially chaotic and a risk too far, but the idea that individual performance shouldn't be rated by the group is starting to look out of date.

In society in general, community collaboration is emerging as an effective approach to providing feedback and exchanging knowledge and information. Just look at the group reviews on TripAdvisor or Amazon.

So what's stopping HR from integrating social technologies (and culture) into performance reviews?

Yes, there are only a handful of companies that have started to explore these opportunities. But what they are finding is that not only can collaborative performance reviews be more engaging (employees can give and receive feedback from everyone including their managers) feedback can also be delivered in real-time and not several months later.

Essentially, the integration of feedback from social technologies into performance reviews can make them more objective and can effectively reduce the demands on the manager.

What's more, group feedback on individual performance can lead to better recognition of achievement on the ground.

In other words, employees are asked to nominate colleagues for recognition awards: for showing initiative, exerting discretionary effort, etc. This is where your mass-performance evaluation culture exists. Not with the line manager, but with everyone sitting next to the person in question.

For me, introducing HR 2.0 like this feeds more into human instinct than technology. Continuous feedback in this way also creates a culture where people start to think about where they can add the most value to their organisation.

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