

HR HEALTH

LINKING SICKNESS TO ROI

**Feeling under the weather?
Your sniffles may soon be
turned into data.**

"Wellness does not have to be fluffy. It can be data-driven and return-on-investment-oriented."

This is the view of Dr Wolfgang Seidl at Mercer's health management consulting group. The idea is to correlate information when each member of staff phones in sick and takes time off.

The idea is to correlate information when each member of staff phones in sick and takes time off. The next step is to look at the bigger picture to identify any health trends. Finally, firms can then offer health and wellbeing initiatives that are beneficial for staff while providing a return on investment for employers.

Simon Macpherson, agrees employers can't manage what they don't measure: "It starts with capturing that data, then mining it to see how to address potential issues, whether these are occupational health needs or particular working practices that cause people issues."

Kevin Hollick at Screenetics, added: "We ask a lot of questions, such as: do employees work shifts and how old are they? Employers can then determine, for example, how many staff over the age of 45 work shifts and have high blood pressure, cholesterol or stress levels. They can then target their money in the right place, so there can be a better return on investment."

HR TECH

TOTAL TRANSPARENCY

**How the new age of social networks is
driving through increasing levels of openness
and transparency in organisations**

In a world of work that has become increasingly social, organisations are finding themselves under increasing pressure to become more open with their people. You could call it the rise of mass transparency and, to a large extent, a reflection of the state of wider society.

We know, for example, from glassdoor.com that 94% of Google employees approve of their CEO Larry Page, and 90% of employees would recommend the company to a friend. In other words, company vagueness and organisational secrets will soon be a thing of the past.

As instant feedback is given by consumers and customers through social media, organisations are also being forced into becoming more transparent. The result is an increased expectation of how employees want to be heard inside their organisations, in the same way that they are able to voice their opinions rapidly and vociferously externally.

The question for HR is how can an organisation become transparent with its people and what should this look like?

On the one hand, there needs to be a free flow of information within the organisation and between the organisation and the public. To achieve this, organisations must adapt to keep up with the evolution of social media interactions. Ultimately, social and digital technologies need to be embraced if organisations are to take advantage of the opportunities they afford, and avoid the potential setbacks.

This is easier said than done because in many organisations barriers exist that can inhibit the adoption of social media in the workplace. For instance, there may be difficulties in creating a robust business case and measuring return on investment.

A lack of knowledge and understanding of social media can lead to a deficient overall strategy.

**“Collaboration and
transparency will
make all the difference
in the digital era.”**

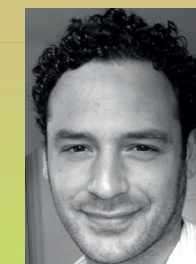
The fact is, social media still presents a generational split where many senior leaders lack the skills and awareness to understand its business critical role. This can stifle their view of tangible organisational benefits, prevent them from embracing change and make them dismissive and distrusting on the subject.

Today's need for total transparency may seem scary, unpredictable and risky to senior management. But in the age of social media, not being open is even more risky.

Top-down hierarchical organisations fuel secrecy, whereas organisations that run on values are more likely to be transparent due to the levels of open communication required. Nevertheless, it appears that many organisations are yet to be convinced of the potential value that openness and honesty are able to provide.

The fact remains, we are entering an age of mass transparency where the expectation is that information should be accessible to all. Indeed, whether leaders like it or not, information about their organisations is already available through various discussion forums and review sites.

Within organisations, co-operation (as opposed to rivalry) will be the main determinants of business success... and an important mindset for HR to promote.



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