Employee Experience Transformation
Leveraging AI

HUMANé

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White Paper

Discover how Artificial Intelligence can assist CHROs with talent acquisition, retention, and management.

The CHRO function is critical to organizations as they are in the people's business, and employees are the most important asset for any organization. Businesses worldwide expect their CHROs to improve and future-proof workplace productivity while continually optimizing costs. A pandemic like the current COVID19 crisis leading to lockdowns and social distancing only makes this job more taxing.

With rapidly changing business requirements, volatile hiring volumes, unprecedented talent attrition rates, and digitization, CHROs face an uphill battle.

Challenges faced by CHROs

Businesses and functions like HR have been embracing digital transformation for the last few years. But the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated this adoption. In 2020, as we see a major shift towards new ways of working, businesses have no option but to embrace digital transformation fully. However, implementing it, especially in Human Resources (HR), is complicated as most processes such as talent acquisition, onboarding, management, and retention are mostly executed manually.

Besides, HR is also responsible for the overall employee lifecycle—performance reviews, career advancement, learning and development programs, employee wellness—and future-proofing the workplace for next-gen employees (millennials and Gen Z).

Consequently, CHROs today are juggling cost-cutting measures due to a global pandemic along with organizational priorities, using a plethora of processes and systems, all of which can be extremely daunting.

What CHROs need are meaningful ways to improve the experience (for candidates, employees, and managers) while managing expectations. That's where smart technologies powered by AI can come to their assistance.

How AI can help CHROs alleviate some of the toughest HR challenges

We live in a world where employees and customers lay the highest emphasis on experience over other metrics. In a study by Deloitte University Press, 80% of executives rated the employee experience as extremely important (42%) or important (38%). Great experiences lead to positive employer brand image, increased workplace happiness, and higher productivity.

That's why CHROs are focusing on reimagining experience for candidates, employees, and managers while managing their expectations. Let's see how CHROs can leverage the power of AI to alleviate some of the most pressing challenges in HR.

1. Enabling HR for Strategy

HR teams in businesses worldwide are exploring the potential of AI in reducing human grunt for enabling advanced HR capabilities. AI can automate repetitive, rule-based processes in HR functions to empower HR professionals to focus on the aspects of HR that add business value, such as employee performance, wellbeing, and satisfaction.

2. Talent acquisition and onboarding

Talent acquisition is one of the most time-consuming HR functions as recruiters have to manually sift through applications to screen resumes, shortlist candidates, and analyze candidate fit. Recruiters have to liaise with internal teams and external candidates for interviewing and choosing the right talent from the shortlisted pool. With AI, they can fast-track most of these aspects of talent acquisition. For example, AI can help recruiters write better job postings, procure top candidates from several job sourcing portals, and discover the best talent.

With AI, recruiters can analyze candidate thought processes during interviews to examine them better and detect lies or deceit. Also, by looking beyond CVs (for example, a candidate's social media presence) and removing bias from hiring, AI has the potential of making talent acquisition more inclusive and accurate. This would ensure the detection of poor culture fit at the hiring stage itself, thus avoiding misfit hires.

Another aspect of AI that can help recruiters immensely are chatbots or personal assistants. Using machine learning (ML) and natural language processing (NLP), chatbots can take over from humans to answer commonly asked questions, schedule meetings, and write emails to speed up hiring and provide enriching experiences.

Chatbots can also transform aspects of HR into self-service, such as applying for time offs, scheduling developmental feedback, or looking up company policies.

3. Removing bias and learning from human behavior

Unconscious biases often triggered by our brain, like making snap judgments about people based on socially accepted norms, can influence hiring. While not malicious, it can still adversely create an environment of discrimination, stereotypes, and toxic culture.

When HR professionals use AI to make decisions, personal biases are removed, leading to more transparency and decisions making based purely on merit. However, it is still at an evolutionary stage. As the trained data provided to the AI could be biased, AI could sometimes be biased as well while hiring candidates. Technologists are working to remove bias by implementing an AI governance model. Hence with proper measures in place, employees won't have to worry about being judged for their age, gender, ethnicity, health records, or the likes.

Besides, AI-powered systems continuously learn and improve their capabilities to stay more relevant. They analyze human behavior using data from employee communications, performance records, backgrounds, skills, and interests.

Equipped with such data, the ML algorithms that power these systems learn how employees, as well as candidates, will respond to specific events or how they prefer to learn and grow at work.

4. Employee wellness and feedback

One of the principal responsibilities of HR is ensuring employee wellbeing. It includes setting up employee wellness programs, offering rewards for workplace accomplishments, health insurance, and food and travel coupons, among others.

Additionally, HR also needs to ensure that its employees are participative and feel heard. This includes periodically conducting pulse surveys to learn about the good and bad aspects of the workplace and identifying room for improvement. It also involves cultivating open-door policies, setting up quarterly corporate town halls/all-hands meetings, and making employees feel safe about approaching their managers.

By analyzing keywords, emojis, tone, speed of speech, and gathering continuous feedback, HR can track sentiments and identify the most disengaged employees. This sentiment examination lets managers gain insights into the personalities of their employees, understand their expectations, and take active measures to tackle workplace dissonance before it's too late. Such sentiment analysis also makes it easier for managers to tailor learning and development programs that are incredibly relevant to the career aspirations of their employees.

However, the bigger the organization, the execution of such programs is more chaotic, leading to delays in employee benefits and feedback, fomenting employee dissent.

By rethinking some of these aspects using AI—performance reports, rewards/bonuses, and scheduling feedback sessions—HR can enhance employee experiences and effectively manage their expectations.

5. Workforce management

Yet another function that AI solves is contact-less attendance scheduling with facial recognition, which is highly advantageous, especially during the COVID-19 global crisis. AI assists with workforce management by charting out schedules and rotating staff to cover for the sick without overworking healthy employees or disrupting business operations.

Integration of the multitudes of systems that HR functions use for talent management into a single, unified platform will result in a unified data lake that will enable CHROs to have a 360-degree view. Also, this will lead to the utilization of this unified data for predictive analytics and Artificial Intelligence capabilities.

Zensar's Employee Experience Transformation solution Humané, leverages AI to drive employee engagement and happiness. This includes an AI-enabled virtual assistant for real-time grievance redressal, AI-enabled compatibility match of employee profile vis-a-vis requirements of internal job postings, targeted learnings based on employee profile and aspirations, and sentiment analysis to gauge employee emotions.

6. Talent management and career advancement

A core function of HR is talent management. It requires continuously tracking the progress of employees and knowing their core strengths. It also involves recognizing which employees are suitable for cross-training and job rotations to improve employee engagement, advance their careers, and reduce absenteeism.

HR can leverage AI capabilities for better talent management by tracking employee behavior, performance, and development for faster succession planning and filling vacancies with in-house talent.

Lastly, AI also empowers managers to analyze their employees' soft skills, hard skills, and past projects more accurately to determine which employees and skillsets will collaborate better together. This helps managers build high-performance, collaborative teams.

7. Learning and development

Employees, especially next-gen talent, are looking for opportunities to solve problems and contribute meaningfully to the success of their organizations rather than working in a monotonous 9-to-5 routine.

With AI, HR can monitor employee performance, identify interests, track skill levels, and predict future skills that employees will need to do their jobs well. Armed with these insights, HR can create a personalized career advancement plan to help employees grow their skillset and progress at the workplace.

AI personalizes learning experiences by analyzing employee behavior, interests, aspirations, previous job roles, prior education, and gaps in knowledge. Such programs help keep employees engaged, skilled, and satisfied at work while saving time and effort for HR.

8. Talent retention

Since the cost of acquisition is high, losing talent or making poor hiring choices can significantly impact any organization's business. People leave when they're at the wrong job, don't like their managers, or when they're working in a toxic and non-inclusive environment.

That's why retaining top talent is a principal HR mandate. Unfortunately, with manual processes and decision-making based on human intuition, identifying flight risks (employees planning on leaving) becomes difficult, and the overall morale to tackle attrition goes down.

AI helps HR fight attrition with enhanced performance tracking by providing continuous feedback to managers and employees. With enough training data, AI can also examine subtle cues such as changing behaviors, the participation rate in HR initiatives, or erratic attendance to look for signs of disengagement.

Equipped with these insights, HR can identify flight risks and intervene by working one-on-one with high-value talent and combat attrition.

The way forward

Talent is an organization's biggest asset and expense. So, safeguarding and retaining this talent is a top priority for businesses. CHROs need to look beyond traditional HCM systems because they have been built for scale and efficiency and not for happiness and experience- which the employees have been increasingly preferring. They must start looking at 3rd party solutions and other add on solutions that can put an experience layer above the existing solutions.

Since AI capabilities in HR are being explored extensively, businesses should find new ways to solve some of the toughest problems that recruiters face with next-gen technologies such as blockchain and the internet of things (IoT). That's why, regardless of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, CHROs shouldn't ignore innovation in HR that can help enrich experiences and fulfill expectations of both employees and managers.

Zensar's point of view

To tackle the challenges that the human resource function faces, Zensar has launched Humané - an Employee Experience Transformation Solution. Humané accommodates emerging preferences of the employees by focusing on experience and leveraging it to enhance productivity, engagement, and overall employee satisfaction. With its exclusive focus on experience KPIs, AI-enabled decision making, and analytics-driven approach, Humané is a one-stop employee experience platform for an enterprise's HR needs. It takes cares of HR functions like Induction and Onboarding, Talent Management, Employee Pulse and Connect, Career Advancement and Employee Wellness.

For more information visit - https://humane.zensar.com/

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