

Component 2- Individual Report

MODULE: DEVELOPING AND MANAGING INDIVIDUALS
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Introduction

After graduation I joined the HR department in a UK company based in London. The role felt exciting at first. The skills in leadership and management seemed useful. During the first month I faced many staff problem. The number of cases felt alarming. Many issues linked to change in the business. Digital tools and flexible work had changed how people worked. Some staff felt uncertain and stressed. Senior leaders asked for a formal report. The aim is to explain the main factors behind these changes. The report also evaluates modern HR practices. It then reviews how managers can act fast. Clear steps are given to reduce conflict. The main goal is to improve working life and stability.

Specific Factors Related to Business Transformation Digital Technology Trends and Flexible Working Arrangements

Business transformation refers to deep change in how a company works. Many UK firms now change their structures and systems. This change often aims to improve speed and profit. It also aims to improve service. Transformation affects roles and job security. Staff may feel anxious during this process. Research shows that change without support raises stress and conflict at work (Kotter 2012). In the current organisation many roles have shifted. Digital technology trends play a central role in this change. Cloud systems now store most work data. Online platforms support daily tasks. Data tools guide many decisions.

Automation now completes some routine jobs. These systems increase speed and reduce cost. They also change skill needs. Staff must learn new tools fast. Many workers report a lack of training. This leads to mistakes and pressure. A UK study found that poor digital support increases staff frustration and absence (CIPD 2023). When workers feel unable to cope they often raise complaints.

Remote platforms now shape daily work. Video meetings and shared files are now the norm. These tools allow flexible work across locations. They also blur the line between work and home. Many staff struggle to switch off.

This creates tension between staff and managers. ACAS reports that unclear digital rules raise the risk of conflict (ACAS 2023).

Flexible working arrangements now shape most UK firms. Many roles use hybrid work. Some roles are fully remote. Flexible hours are also common. This system offers freedom and balance. It also creates new risks.

New starters may struggle to settle. Managers cannot always observe staff effort. This can reduce trust. A UK government review found that poor flexible work design increases dispute risk (UK Government 2022).

Some roles suit home work. Others must stay on site. This can lead to feelings of unfair treatment. Workers may believe that some groups receive better terms. This belief often links to pay and workload issues. Such feelings drive formal grievances.

Technology also allows close monitoring of work. Many systems now track output and time. This can improve planning. It can also feel invasive. Some staff fear being watched. Trust can weaken when tracking rules are unclear.

Business transformation also affects leadership style. Traditional control models no longer fit well. Staff now expect voice and involvement. When leaders fail to engage staff in change this increases resistance. Research shows that lack of staff voice during digital change predicts long term conflict (Heifetz 2010). In the current company many changes were rushed. Staff felt excluded from decisions. This caused a rise in complaints.

All these factors combine. Technology changes work pace. Flexibility changes work space. Transformation changes job meaning. When poorly managed these forces create fear and mistrust. This explains the high grievance levels seen during the first month in the HR role.

Evaluation of Different Contemporary HR Practices to Address Each Aforementioned Factor

Modern HR practices aim to support staff through change. One key practice is change communication. Clear messages reduce fear. Staff need early notice of change. They also need reasons for change. Open updates help build trust. Kotter states that change fails most often due to poor communication (Kotter 2012). In this firm regular briefings would reduce confusion and rumours.

Digital skills training is another key practice. When staff gain new skills they feel safer. Training also reduces error and stress. Modern HR focuses on lifelong learning. Online courses and coaching now support this aim. The CIPD shows that firms that invest in training report lower conflict levels (CIPD 2023). In this case structured digital training would ease many grievances.

Wellbeing support is now a core HR function. Remote work raises new health risks. Eye strain anxiety and burnout are common. Modern HR promotes mental health services. This includes counselling and wellbeing days. US studies show that firms offering mental health support see lower absence and dispute rates (APA 2022). Introducing such services would help staff cope with digital pressure.

Flexible work also needs clear policy. Modern HR designs fair flexible work systems. These set clear hours of contact. They protect rest time. They define who can work from home. The UK government stresses that clear flexible work policy reduces disputes (UK Government 2022). In this firm unclear rules caused many complaints. Fair access would reduce resentment.

Performance management has also changed. Modern HR moves away from strict control. It focuses on results and support. Regular feedback helps staff improve. It also reduces surprise discipline. Research shows that supportive performance review reduces formal grievance use (Ulrich 2016). Applying this approach would improve trust during transformation.

Voice systems are also vital. Staff now expect involvement. Modern HR uses surveys and forums. These allow early detection of problems. Staff who feel heard are less likely to complain formally. OECD research confirms that worker voice reduces workplace conflict (OECD 2021). A clear staff voice system would suit this firm well.

Conflict management training is another key practice. Managers often face disputes without skills. HR can train leaders in early resolution. Mediation skills reduce formal cases. ACAS states that early informal resolution cuts grievance numbers by over half in many firms (ACAS 2023). This practice would directly help the current HR workload.

Fair reward systems also support digital change. When staff see fair pay they accept change more easily. Modern HR links reward to skill growth. This encourages learning. Fair systems also reduce jealousy and claims of bias. This supports stable flexible work environments.

Diversity and inclusion practices also matter. Remote work can hide bias. It can also increase exclusion of some groups. Modern HR monitors inclusion through data. This ensures fair access to roles and promotion. US research shows that unfair access during flexible work raises legal dispute risk (SHRM 2022). Strong inclusion policy would protect this firm.

Each of these HR practices targets one or more change risks. Communication and voice address transformation fear. Training addresses digital stress. Wellbeing and clear policy address flexible work pressure. Together they create a stable change environment.

A Critical Evaluation of How Departmental Managers Can Ensure These Contemporary Practices Are Being Implemented as a Matter of Urgency

Managers play a central role in fast implementation. HR can design policy but managers apply it. The first duty of managers is visible leadership. Staff must see that leaders support change care. When managers use the new practices staff follow. If managers ignore them staff lose trust. Kotter argues that visible leader action is the strongest driver of fast change success (Kotter 2012).

Managers must first model good digital behaviour. They should respect online boundaries. They should avoid sending late messages. They should use tools properly. When managers misuse systems staff copy bad habits. This weakens wellbeing policy. Urgent change needs leader example more than rules.

Managers must also protect learning time. Training fails when workloads remain high.

Leaders must release staff for training. This may slow short term output. It protects long term

skill and morale. Ulrich states that learning only works when managers protect time for it (Ulrich 2016). Without this protection digital stress will remain.

Performance reviews must also change fast. Many managers still use control based methods. These drive fear during transformation. They must move to support based reviews. This requires skill and will. Some managers resist change due to habit. HR must challenge this resistance. Delay leads to rising grievance levels.

Managers must also enforce flexible work fairness. Some leaders allow home work only to close allies. This breeds distrust. Policy alone is not enough. Managers must apply rules evenly. HR should audit use across teams. Managers who fail must be corrected fast. Delay allows resentment to grow.

Wellbeing actions also depend on managers. Staff rarely seek help if managers ignore stress signs

Change adds to this load. Some delay action due to fear of making mistakes. This creates further harm. Senior leaders must clearly prioritise these practices. They must link them to performance goals. When practices affect appraisal managers act faster.

Discipline systems must also align with new rules. If managers punish remote workers unfairly trust collapses. Leaders must understand flexible work law. HR must train them fast. UK law gives workers rights to request flexible work (UK Government 2022). Managers who break this face legal risk. Fast training is essential.

There is also a risk of uneven skill among managers. Some adapt quickly. Others struggle. HR must identify weak areas and give direct coaching. Blanket training often fails. Targeted support works faster. ACAS supports targeted manager training during organisational change (ACAS 2023).

Managers must also share responsibility with HR. They must not pass all conflict to HR. Early resolution stops escalation. This saves time and trust. HR must push this duty strongly. If managers delay early action grievances multiply.

In summary urgent implementation depends less on policy design. It depends more on manager behaviour. Without active manager support even the best HR practices fail. Fast action requires clear priority strong coaching and strict accountability.

Recommendations

The company should launch a clear change communication plan. This plan should explain all digital and flexible work changes. It should use simple messages. Staff questions should be answered openly. Digital training should be rolled out to all staff. Training should be paced and practical. Wellbeing services should be promoted by managers. Flexible work policy should be reviewed for fairness. Managers should receive urgent training in conflict handling. Their use of HR practices should affect appraisal. Surveys should track staff trust

and stress. HR should audit flexible work access across teams. Early wins should be shared to rebuild staff confidence.

Conclusion

The rise in grievances links to rapid business change. Digital systems and flexible work altered daily life. Fear and stress rose as a result. Modern HR practices offer effective support. Their success depends on urgent manager action. With strong leadership trust can be rebuilt. Grievance levels can then fall.

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