



Change agenda

HR AND TECHNOLOGY BEYOND DELIVERY

Introduction

The use of technology in human resource management has grown considerably in recent years. Human resource information systems (HRIS) have developed – from being largely used for administrative and data recording purposes to being used in processes such as recruitment and selection, flexible benefits, development and e-learning. Technology is now being used to support integrated call centres, shared services and self-service environments. As technology improves, organisations can use information systems to manage an increasing number of HR processes in an effective manner to contribute to the availability of information and knowledge. This in turn can lead to improved competitive advantage. Despite this expansion, the impact of HRIS is something that still requires further examination.

Previous CIPD research relating to this area includes:

- survey reports examining HR practitioners' experiences of HRIS implementation
- an executive briefing on decisions around HR outsourcing
- a review of the literature relating to people management and technology.

This Change Agenda draws on the latest findings from a new research project, that seeks to look at HR and technology in more holistic terms and which will be largely based on insights from a selection of case study organisations.

There are three main strands in our latest research:

- How does technology facilitate the efficient delivery and support of HR activity and processes?
- What is the effect of HRIS on employee communication and engagement?
- What is the impact of technology on the changing roles and skills for HR and other managers?

This Change Agenda is arranged in four parts, which allows us to:

- 1 introduce the area of technology and HR and the current CIPD study
- 2 take a look at the delivery and support of HR activity and processes via technology
- 3 examine the issues surrounding employee communication and engagement with regard to technology in HR
- 4 focus on the impact of technology on the role and skills of HR and other managers.

And, where appropriate, we include examples from our case study organisation to illustrate research findings.

CIPD research into HR and technology: the project so far

The CIPD commissioned a research study looking at HR and technology within organisations, focusing on HR activity and processes, employee communication and engagement and the impact on the roles and skills of HR and other managers. This study is in an interim stage, with the full research due to be completed by the end of 2006. So far, the work has concentrated on:

- a review of the existing literature regarding HR and technology, with particular attention paid to the focus areas detailed above
- interviews with a number of experts in the area of HR and technology in order to identify the current themes within this area
- one detailed case study regarding an organisation's use of technology in HR, and the impact of this technology within each of the areas of special interest.

The finished study will consist of around ten detailed case studies in a range of organisations in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the use and impact of HR and technology. The project is being overseen by an experienced steering group of senior practitioners, academics and consultants. This research is being led by Dr Emma Parry and Professor Shaun Tyson of the Human Resource Research Centre at Cranfield School of Management with support from consultants Doone Selbie and Ray Leighton.

Use of HRIS

For the purpose of this research, we will define HRIS as:

any system that helps an organisation to 'acquire, store, manipulate, analyse, retrieve and distribute information about an organisation's human resources' (Tannenbaum 1990).

The HR technology can range from simple spreadsheets that enable complex calculations to be performed easily, to comprehensive HRIS solutions. Technology may be used within particular HR functions – for recruitment and selection, performance evaluation, compensation and benefits, training and development, health and safety, employee relations and legal issues, retention and work-life balance – or to manage HR and employee information across the entire employment cycle.

Figure 1: HR capability model



Taken from the National Grid HR Capability Framework

Adapted from Reddington et al (2005)

Figure 1, taken from the National Grid Capability Framework, provides an illustration of the main areas in which HR practitioners traditionally need to develop capabilities. Additionally, the HR function may be involved in organisational development, industrial relations and change management. Technological systems can support all of these areas. Some examples are shown in Table 1.

Martinsons (1994) classified HRIS use into 'unsophisticated' use of systems, such as payroll and benefits administration, and 'sophisticated' use in recruitment and selection, training and development, HR planning and performance appraisal. The advent of web-based technology has also allowed HR departments to extend services directly to managers and employees through the provision of self-service systems, although the extent to which these systems are fully operational remains low. A distinction may also be made between the use of modern technology to manage HR activities and other technology that can be used to drive new policies on substantive areas of HR such as recruitment or training. This depends somewhat on whether organisations are using the data produced by an HRIS strategically or whether they are just using the system to manage HR more effectively.

The use of technology in HR has rapidly increased in recent years, with a CIPD (2005) survey showing that 77% of organisations used some form of HRIS in 2005. Recent research from Cranfield School of Management (2003) found even higher levels of use, with 82% of UK organisations having some form of HRIS, although the nature of these systems varied significantly. Despite the considerable growth in the use of technology in HR, this area is still under-researched in terms of comprehensive examination of the impact of technology on people management, communication and the HR function itself. This study is therefore designed to address this gap in the research.

Throughout this Change Agenda, we include details from the Cancer Research case study (pages 4–5) to illustrate how the use of technology within HR can affect HR activity and processes, employee engagement and communication, and the role and skills of the HR function, and to provide a flavour of the research. The final research outputs will include a further nine or so cases in order to create a comprehensive picture of the impact of technology in these areas in different organisational contexts.

Table 1: Potential uses of technology to support HR activities

People development and performance management	Online appraisal systems such as 360-degree feedback Training needs analysis Career management and succession planning
Resource management	Online recruitment and selection Induction packages HR planning and forecasting Time and attendance
Employee relations and communications	Intranet Shared services centres Organisational development (OD) approaches Team development
HR information and accounting	Intranet Employee and manager self-service HR metrics/human capital
Retention and reward	Payroll Total rewards statements Employee self-service in creation of flexible rewards packages Reward modelling Pensions administration

The case study – Cancer Research UK

Cancer Research UK is the world's leading independent organisation dedicated to cancer research and was formed in 2002 following the merger of the Cancer Research Campaign and the Imperial Cancer Research Fund. The organisation's objectives are to carry out world-class research, develop effective treatments, reduce the number of people affected by cancer, provide authoritative information regarding cancer, and work with the UK Government to ensure that cancer stays at the top of the health agenda. The organisation is almost entirely funded by donations from the public and therefore conducts a large amount of fundraising using over 30,000 volunteers. The charity has a network of around 650 shops and 1,000 local fundraising groups.

Cancer Research UK has approximately 3,500 paid employees, including over 3,000 doctors, scientists and nurses who are based (bar one) in the UK. The HR team is based in London and payroll has historically been outsourced. The organisation has expanded considerably since its formation in 2002 and recruits to approximately 1,000 vacancies per year. Recruitment is also managed by a single team, based in London.

This case study was conducted in March 2006 and included interviews with the Head of Resourcing, the Head of Employee Services, the project manager for the implementation of the online recruitment system, plus members of the resourcing team and line managers.

Cancer Research UK has adopted, or is in the process of adopting, three main technological systems: an online recruitment system; a number of spreadsheets to carry out complex calculations; and a comprehensive HRIS that will eventually facilitate self-service HR processes.

Online recruitment system

An online recruitment system was introduced in 2005 in response to a number of business needs. This business case included reduction of costs, faster and more efficient recruitment, reduction in paper-based administration, increased reach to international job seekers, efficient management of speculative applications, and maintenance of the organisation's 'cutting edge' image. An off-the-shelf recruitment system was chosen based on the developed specification and on price. This system is used to manage the recruitment process from end to end.

Vacancies are advertised on the corporate website and applicants are encouraged to apply online either by completing an online application form or by submitting a CV, depending on the vacancy. Each new application for a particular vacancy is sent to the relevant manager directly via email. The system allows the resourcing team to manage both the vacancy and candidates through to the end of the recruitment and selection process. It is also used to respond to candidates, to provide information regarding vacancies (by downloading role profiles), provide email or text alerts to candidates and to store candidate details. The system also has the capacity to search the database of candidates for particular characteristics and to provide online selection tools, but this functionality has not yet been adopted by the organisation.

The system was implemented for internal applications (via the intranet) in March 2005 and for external vacancies (via the Internet) in September 2005.

The case study – Cancer Research UK (continued)

Spreadsheets

The HR department has developed spreadsheets in order to perform a number of calculations that were previously problematic. These calculations currently fall into four main areas:

- redundancy payments
- maternity pay
- top-up payments for workers who are funded by a different institution but are paid less
- annual leave.

The use of spreadsheets has meant that these calculations are now both transparent and consistent, and has therefore increased the perceived credibility of the HR department to management. The use of this technology has also saved a large amount of time as, previously, it was very time-consuming to do these calculations manually. The department is planning to extend the use of spreadsheets to make calculations that are commonly used in the department.

HRIS and self-service

The department is also in the process of transferring the majority of HR processes to an off-the-shelf HRIS. This system was introduced to satisfy a number of business needs, including the provision of reliable and accurate information, the ability to cross-reference information from different HR functions, and the reduction of costs. The system was chosen following a series of open workshops and one-to-one meetings with 100 employees in HR department sections and representative areas across Cancer Research UK, in order to establish the requirements of such a system. Eleven requirements were identified and, following a tendering process, a system was selected. The system was initially introduced to perform basic HR record keeping in December 2005 and to perform transactional payroll functions from March 2006. It was extended to carry out a wider range of functions, including vehicle management, expenses, occupational health, development and training and succession planning. The system has the capacity for self-service but this is not currently being used. Self-service will be introduced after a comprehensive change management programme in 2007.

This case study focuses mainly on the organisation's use of online recruitment as this is the area of technology that is currently most developed in the organisation.

Delivery and support of HR activity and processes

The introduction of HRIS can have a great effect on the delivery and support of HR processes in terms of, among other things, speed, efficiency and cost. According to the CIPD (2005) survey on people management and technology, the business case for introducing an HRIS is commonly based on the following:

- improving the quality of information available (91%)
- improving the speed at which information is available (81%)
- improving services to employees (56%)
- cost reduction (35%).

Indeed, the introduction of technology may produce all of the above benefits for HR and organisations by increasing the speed and quality of information and driving down costs. Commonly, the drivers for the introduction of technology in HR may be operational, relational or transformational (see Figure 2).

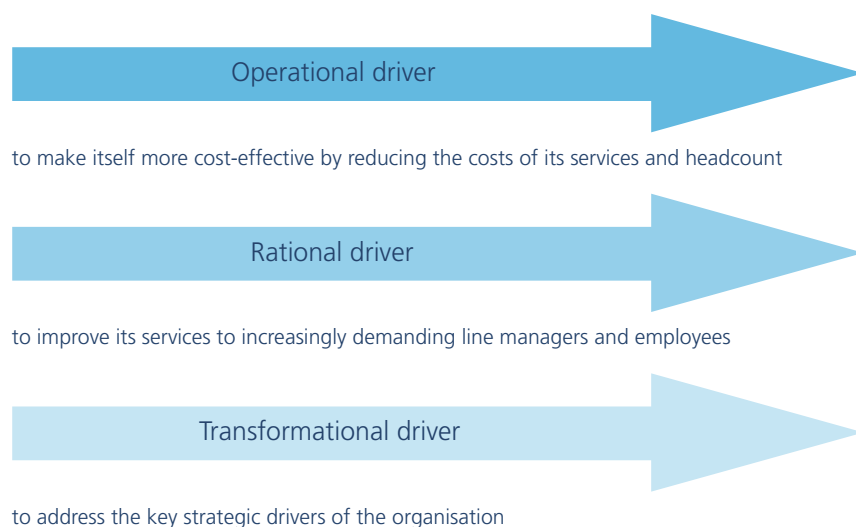
A key question is whether these drivers are actually realised. We will address this question in the next stage of our research with a number of case study organisations.

We can examine more closely the impact of technology on HR activity and processes by looking at the use of technology within individual HR functions. According to the CIPD (2005) survey, organisations commonly use technology across a range of functions, including:

- absence management (85%)
- training and development (75%)
- rewards (75%)
- managing diversity (57%)
- recruitment and selection (51%).

If we take recruitment and selection as an example, the use of an online system in this case can

Figure 2: HR capability model



Adapted from Reddington et al (2005)

significantly reduce both the cost and turnaround time needed to fill most positions. In addition, the use of the Internet for recruitment means that companies are no longer limited to the local geographical labour pool and can therefore access a wider range of job seekers. This can, however, have some negative effects in terms of an increased number of applications from unsuitable candidates. Results from the CIPD (2006) recruitment, retention and turnover survey indicate that almost two-thirds of organisations used e-recruitment in 2005. Of these, 71% said that the main reason for using the Internet to recruit was to reduce recruitment costs, while 47% said that the main reason was to increase the speed of time to hire.

If we look at benefits administration, we can see that this has also been radically changed because of technology and the Internet. The use of self-service HRIS has allowed managers, or in some cases the employees themselves, to go online and create benefits packages. This has significant implications in terms of freeing up HR personnel (and in some cases reducing headcount) and reducing the costs associated with this function.

Training and development is another area in which technology has made a vast difference. Online training offers a number of advantages such as delivering learning free of the limitations of time and space, helping employees learn faster and at their own convenience, and tracking the effectiveness of training more effectively. The use of e-learning can also lead to direct cost reductions in terms of travel, the production of training material and payment for trainers, and indirect cost reductions in terms of the time spent away from the job.

From these three examples, we can see that the use of technology within individual HR functions can have a great impact in terms of cost, time and efficiency. If we take this alongside the advantages of easier and more efficient record keeping and the accessibility of accurate information, we can propose that the use of technology in HR will have an enormous impact on HR activity and processes in organisations. Indeed, an examination of the impact of technology on HR activity and processes in our case study organisation demonstrates the significance and size of this effect in an organisation. We consider the impact of technology on the role of HR practitioners themselves later in this Change Agenda (page 11).

Before the implementation of the online recruitment system, Cancer Research UK's recruitment processes were largely paper-based. A copy of each CV that had been received for a particular vacancy would be sent to the appropriate line manager for consideration, while another copy would be filed and stored by the resourcing team. This process was described by members of the resourcing team as 'slow' because of the reliance on the postal service and also 'cumbersome' because of the need to process and store large quantities of paper. In addition, candidate details were entered into a computer database manually, which led to a number of mistakes due to human error.

These processes are now conducted entirely online, and communications are conducted via email. Candidate data is entered by the candidates themselves via the online application process. This has had a number of effects on recruitment processes. Firstly, the process is considerably faster. Closing dates for applications can be maintained due to the increased speed of communicating via the online system (they no longer have to 'wait for the post'), applications are sent immediately to line managers and the data is readily accessible via the recruitment portal. Secondly, as the candidate data is now entered directly by the candidate, there are fewer errors in the information, therefore making the process significantly more accurate.

The use of spreadsheets for calculating annual leave, maternity pay, redundancy entitlements and 'top-up pay' has also led to considerable improvements in terms of speed and accuracy. The HR operations manager described how, previously, it could take two to three hours to collect the relevant information and make the calculation, whereas the process now takes a matter of minutes. The fact that these calculations have now been standardised and automated also means that they are accurate. The HRIS is in the early stages of implementation. However, the system is already having some effect on HR processes in that HR data is now readily available and can be produced easily, quickly and accurately.

Cost savings

The HR department has not yet conducted a full analysis of the impact of any of the three technological systems on cost. However, the resourcing manager explained that, in terms of the resourcing budget, cost savings had already been achieved in two areas. Firstly, because candidate data no longer needed to be entered into a database manually, the headcount within the resourcing team has been reduced by one. As the price of maintaining the online recruitment system is lower than this individual's salary and costs per annum, this represents a significant cost saving. In addition, the move from a system that used a large amount of paper to an online system has saved administration costs, although an exact figure wasn't available for either of these cost savings.

The use of an HRIS is also expected to lead to significant cost savings in the HR department, although the exact extent of these won't be known for some time. The payroll function has historically been outsourced to an external company. The use of the HRIS for payroll has therefore enabled the organisation to bring this back in-house, saving those outsourcing costs. The eventual move to a self-service system may also lead to cost savings in terms of headcount.

Employee engagement and communication

In addition to HRIS, technology is used in HR for communication between managers and employees. Communication in this case is two-way as we have both downward communication from management or HR to employees and upward communication in the form of feedback from employees to management or HR. Effective communication systems in organisations can have a significant effect on the motivation and commitment of employees. This is demonstrated in evidence from CIPD research (Guest and Conway 2004) on the psychological contract which finds employee voice is one of the HR practices which contributes to commitment, motivation and loyalty to the organisation.

Employees who are kept well informed and who are made to feel that their feedback is valued by the organisation are more engaged with the organisation and therefore more likely to stay with that organisation. Organisations in which communication flows freely between peers and between managers and employees enjoy significantly higher effort levels than organisations where information is 'siloed', delayed by bureaucracy or communicated only reactively.

Technology can play a vital role in ensuring effective communication in organisations. Communication is commonly facilitated through the use of an intranet system across the organisation. The CIPD (2005) survey into people management and technology showed that 71% of organisations possessed an intranet. Ninety-eight per cent of these used the intranet to provide access to HR information, 88% allowed the download of HR forms via the intranet and 48% used the system to facilitate staff feedback. Almost two-thirds (63%) of organisations felt that their intranet was an effective tool for communicating with employees.

The use of the Internet or an intranet can also enable an organisation to communicate with and engage a dispersed or even an international workforce. Some

Martyn Sloman of the CIPD, in a Reflections essay accompanying the CIPD (2005) people management and technology survey, envisaged an ideal scenario, where everything is perfect:

'Line managers, who are fully trained in the system, regularly use the HRIS to obtain the information that they need at local level for effective staff management ... All staff, irrespective of level, can use the system to obtain information on HR policies and procedures, and download and print forms; the interactive facility allows them to book holidays and training courses. The portal contains a range of customised e-learning modules. Staff also give feedback on aspects of HR policies which concern them and take advantage of the FAQ ... So that this involves two-way communication and is not seen as top-down, there are facilities to raise questions by email and participate in online discussion groups.'

universities in the USA have established e-learning programmes that involve both lecturers and students from around the world. Similarly, widely dispersed organisations, such as IBM, use their intranet to facilitate their matrix management system and to communicate with employees who are on the road, at home, or in other countries.

The impact of technology in HR on communication and employee engagement isn't, however, limited to the use of an intranet for those functions described above. The introduction of self-service HRIS so that employees can modify their own personal details will also have a direct impact on employees. Indeed, it's essential that the issue of employee engagement should be addressed if the introduction of technologies in HR, particularly those that directly affect employees such as self-service

systems, is to be successful. Giving employees round-the-clock access to their critical personal information, as well as the responsibility for ensuring that information in the human resources system is accurate and complete, may empower the workforce and allow employees to develop some ownership over this data by making them self-sufficient.

Allowing employees access to a higher degree of personal HR information can also have beneficial results. Many organisations have compelling benefits packages, but they're not communicating them to their employees. So, many employees don't know what the value of their benefits package actually is. As better benefits is often cited as a reason for changing jobs, companies are beginning to realise that reward communication can be an important retention tool. This has resulted in the development of online reward statements that allow the employees to see what they're entitled to and how much this is worth. Being transparent about reward helps engage and retain employees, reducing their interest in looking for moves externally. It also helps companies get better value from reward spend due to enhanced and improved employee understanding of the total reward

offering. O₂, the mobile telecommunications company, has recently deployed an online Total Reward Statement tool that all its UK employees can access from work or home. It enables employees to see all the elements of their total reward package, including salary, bonus, commission, allowances, the value of their pension and all their other benefits. In the first few months, around 50% of the workforce had accessed the system, many doing so outside working hours. The reporting capability of the tool is able to show HR what pages (therefore what types of elements) are of interest to employees, which in turn helps HR to prioritise further employee communication. In other organisations, such as the Nationwide Building Society, employees are able, within the costs agreed for their role, to decide on a package that suits their needs.

This research will also examine the issues of employee engagement and communication with regard to the introduction of technology in HR. By way of illustration, the effect of technology on communication with regard to our case study organisation is discussed below. The impact of technology on employee engagement is not illustrated here but it will be addressed in further case studies.

Cancer Research UK

The introduction of the online recruitment system has been sponsored and conducted entirely by the resourcing team as they are the main users of the system. The outputs of the system are used by line managers but, otherwise, only those employees who apply for positions internally will have used the system. The organisation isn't highly unionised, therefore no unions were contacted as part of the implementation process. So any impact of the system on employees is limited largely to the resourcing team and line managers.

The implementation of the online recruitment system was not without some resistance from employees. There was some concern among the resourcing team as to whether the system would mean that they might all lose their jobs. This hasn't happened. The team are still 'learning with the system' and tailoring it to their needs, so it's a continual learning process. In addition, the organisation traditionally has a strong internal labour market but employees were reluctant to apply online while at work. This has been overcome by allowing people time after work to use the system. There has also been a need to retrain individuals' thinking so that they are prepared to do this.

Before the introduction of the online recruitment system, the majority of communication between the resourcing team and managers or between the resourcing team and candidates was conducted via the post and the telephone. The use of an online system means that most communication is now conducted by email. The system allows the team to send blanket emails out to candidates and also to email details of candidates directly to managers. This has made these communication processes faster and less labour-intensive. Communication by email is also perceived as being more reliable than using surface mail.

The impact on the role and skills of HR practitioners and line managers

Historically, the HR function has been an administrative function whose role is largely focused on administrative activities such as the maintenance of employee and payroll records. The use of technology in HR, however, may facilitate a change in emphasis to that of HR playing a more strategic role within the organisation.

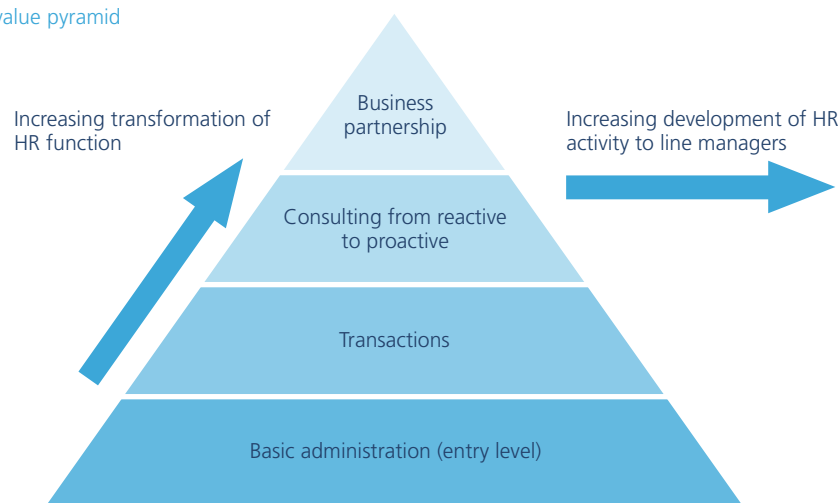
Figure 3 illustrates the hierarchical roles that the HR function may play within an organisation. Many people in HR have traditionally been involved with administrative activity, shown at the bottom of the HR value pyramid. The use of technology may allow HR practitioners to move up through this hierarchy and undertake more strategic work as business partners, firstly by freeing up time for strategic-level work and also by providing the managers with quantifiable data to drive this strategy.

As the recent CIPD publication (Tamkin et al 2005), *Managing and Developing HR Careers*, explains:

'Nearly all large organisations now have HR personnel in key business relationship roles, generally described as business partners... These individuals or at most small teams... are expected to support their line clients in strategic development, organisational design and change management.'

With the growth of information technology, much administration can potentially be accomplished using self-service or automated systems. The HR function can, and increasingly is, making strategic contributions to the performance of an organisation. The take-up of self-service is currently relatively low, but many organisations are planning to introduce it in the future (CIPD 2005).

Figure 3: HR value pyramid



Adapted from Reddington et al (2005)

By automating as many processes as possible, HR has been able to significantly reduce the time spent on routine administrative tasks, allowing them time to manage the HR function in a strategic manner and become true partners in the business. Indeed, 83% of respondents in the CIPD (2005) survey on people management and technology said that one of their reasons for introducing technology was to reduce the administrative burden on the HR department. But the system must be implemented effectively in order to achieve this benefit. HR can also play an important role in the formulation of strategy by making explicit the human capital resources required to support various strategies and strategic initiatives, by playing a leadership role in helping the organisation develop the necessary capabilities to enact the strategy, and by playing a strong role in implementation and change management.

In addition, one of the most significant outcomes of the use of technology in HR appears to be the availability of accurate and detailed information, including metrics regarding people and human capital. This can also help HR practitioners play a more strategic role in an organisation by providing management with tools and/or data to drive managerial decisions. This change in the role of HR practitioners will undoubtedly lead to a change in the skills needed as their role shifts towards more strategic issues.

An output of the online recruitment system is the production of accurate and accessible information. Information regarding vacancies and the recruitment process is now 'at their fingertips' and is always available. This means that the team can 'work smarter' by, for instance, targeting their recruitment advertising. At a higher level, the head of resourcing has access to faster, real-time information and can monitor who is applying for jobs and use this information to make better decisions. It's also possible to track the workload of each individual on the resourcing team in order to examine operational efficiency.

The HRIS system means that the HR team can now produce statistics regarding a variety of HR processes, which can then be used as a basis for HR and managerial decision-making. As the system has only recently been introduced, this information is being used to a limited extent at present, but it is envisaged that it will be used as a basis for management decisions in the future. For instance, the system can produce reliable information regarding the make-up of the current workforce with regard to age, gender and ethnicity. This information may be used to examine and revise recruitment and retention processes in order to improve the diversity of the workforce. The provision of reliable information has also led to an increase in the perceived credibility of the HR function and this has taken HR into an advisory role. It is hoped that it will eventually lead to them becoming a full 'strategic business partner'. HR advisers can now take hard data with them into discussions with managers and can provide better-argued remedies to problems as they have the necessary information at hand.

The automation of systems both in recruitment and in HR generally has meant that the HR team has more time to focus on other potentially more important issues, so they can add more value to the organisation. The fact that they have more time has encouraged the resourcing team to be more proactive with their work and to take more responsibility for vacancies. Their role has shifted to one that is more customer-focused as they spend more time interacting with managers. Individuals who previously were responsible for data entry are now responsible for producing information for management and acting as systems administrators, a more important and rewarding role. The online recruitment system isn't yet being used to its full capacity so has not had its full impact on the resourcing team. Indeed, some of the team felt that their workload had not gone down, as they were still learning how to use the system effectively. It's expected that the use of additional functionality will lead to more time savings and further opportunities for the team to carry out 'strategic' work such as shortlisting candidates and liaising with managers.

Impact on HR skills

The shift in the role of the HR team has led to a change in the skills requirements of HR staff. The HR team has had to develop their communication and consultancy skills so that they can work with their customers effectively. They've had to develop skills in analysing and interpreting data so that they can make effective use of the information that's now available via the HRIS. And they've had to develop their strategic thinking and business writing skills.

They have also had to develop skills in using the technology, which proved somewhat difficult initially. The resourcing team is also responsible for explaining the online recruitment system to managers, so they need a substantial knowledge of the system.

At this stage in the implementation of the system, line managers do not need additional training nor has their role been affected to any great extent. The impact on line managers will therefore be examined later in this study.

Key issues HR professionals need to address

From our research to date, there are a number of key issues and questions emerging that the HR profession needs to address. Our research will continue to focus on these areas in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the important factors with regard to HR and technology. The research will therefore include an examination of the following:

- In order to obtain the support of senior management, the HR function will generally need to put together a substantial business case. How is this case developed? What are the drivers for the introduction of technology in HR? What are the criteria for success, and how will these be assessed? How can the impact of an HRIS be measured?
- Who sponsors the implementation of technology in HR?
- How does the use of technology affect HR processes at each stage of the employment cycle? Technology is generally associated with increased efficiency and speed and reduced cost, but what other impacts does it have in terms of, for instance, accuracy?
- What is the impact of the technology on communication in the organisation? If the use of technology has facilitated two-way communication in the organisation, has this led to a more engaged and committed workforce?
- How have managers and employees been encouraged to engage with the technology?
- What has been the impact of the technology on the role of the HR function? Has the HR function gained a more strategic role as a result of using the technology? These benefits will generally only be achieved if the technology is being used to its full effect.
- What impact has the technology had on line managers? A recent trend in HR has been to devolve much of the transactional work of HR to the line. Does technology facilitate this?
- If HR business partners (or equivalent) are expected to encourage uptake of the systems in the business, how can they be most effectively supported?

Next steps

This Change Agenda has brought together the findings from the literature review, initial qualitative interviews and an illustrative case study from the ongoing CIPD research project on technology and HR. We hope it has provided you with a flavour of the issues that will be explored further in later stages of the research.

The research will continue to draw out themes from around ten case study organisations in order to build on the research reported here and to further inform and advise HR practitioners with regard to the use and impact of technology in HR. The findings will be communicated through the CIPD website and events as they become available.

For more information about this project, contact research@cipd.co.uk

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Further reading

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