

Individual Report: Simple HR Response to Organisational Change at Tesco

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Introduction

Organizations operating in the United Kingdom today experience unprecedented change due to business transformation projects, rapid digital progress, and shifting worker needs for flexible work arrangements. The essential developments for organizational success and sustainability create employee confusion, workplace complaints and resistance when organizations fail to handle these changes properly (CIPD, 2024a). Human Resource (HR) functions maintain a vital strategic position because they need to achieve organizational performance targets while protecting employee welfare and maintaining equitable workplace conditions.

The report presents the perspective of a new HR professional working at Tesco, a major UK company based in London and Birmingham. The company Tesco serves as an appropriate research example because it operates at a large scale, employs people from diverse backgrounds, and has made various organizational changes through restructuring, automation implementation, and growth in hybrid work programs. The process of organizational change creates conditions that lead staff members to feel uncertain about their work status, worry about their abilities, and perceive unfairness in the workplace, resulting in more official complaints and worse workplace relationships (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023).

The main objective of this report consists of three essential elements. The document starts by identifying crucial organizational elements that drive business change and digital innovation, and flexible work practices that affect employee relations at Tesco. The research evaluates current HR practices that address these problems, using methods that maintain fairness and ethical standards and comply with all applicable laws. The third section evaluates methods that departmental managers can use to implement these practices immediately to achieve employee stability and reduce employee complaints.

The report presents evidence-based recommendations which Tesco's HR and management teams can use to establish sustainable people management practices when their organization transforms.

1. Organizational Factors Affecting Employee Relations

1.1 Business Transformation

Business transformation involves extensive organizational change programs which organizations use to enhance their operational performance and market position and achieve their strategic goals (Burnes, 2017). Tesco has executed major organizational changes through two main initiatives which involved streamlining leadership positions and planning to cut down staff numbers at headquarters and operational sites. The changes which businesses implement for their needs create problems for the working relationship between employers and employees because they break the psychological agreement which employees expect from their jobs (Rousseau, 1995).

Research shows that inadequate transformation management creates higher employee stress while decreasing team morale and making workers feel treated unfairly which leads to workplace complaints (Kearns, 2021). The restructuring process creates uncertainty for affected staff members because they must deal with unclear job responsibilities and increased work demands and restricted possibilities to move to different positions. The implementation of change becomes more difficult when employees experience irregular or slow communication because they tend to predict unfavorable results which lead to their opposition against change (Kotter, 1996). The London and Birmingham offices of Tesco experience workplace interactions more strongly because they operate under intense business demands and employ staff from diverse backgrounds.

1.2 Digital Technology Trends

The operational strategy of Tesco now centers on digital transformation because the company implemented automated checkouts and AI-based stock management and algorithmic scheduling and digital HR systems. These technologies enhance operational efficiency while improving data precision, but they create significant changes in work responsibilities and necessary competencies (CIPD, 2023a). The digital literacy level of employees determines their experience of technostress which leads to anxiety and decreases work confidence and fear about losing their employment (Tarafdar et al., 2019).

The implementation of digital performance monitoring tools creates two main issues which affect both ethical standards and employee trust levels. The practice of watching employees too closely creates feelings of excessive control which damages staff relationships with their superiors (Moore, 2020). Digitalization will lead to increased formal complaints and staff disengagement because employees will view it as a budget reduction initiative instead of an organizational development project when organizations fail to provide proper training and consultation and clear explanations.

1.3 Flexible Working Arrangements

The UK workforce now demands flexible work arrangements as a fundamental requirement because of the changes brought by the pandemic. The Employment Relations (Flexible Working) Act 2023 establishes a legal entitlement for employees to request flexible work arrangements from their first day of work. The corporate roles at Tesco now offer hybrid work arrangements but frontline retail staff members cannot access comparable flexibility which leads to feelings of unfairness (CIPD, 2025).

Research shows that organizations face most of their grievances because they make decisions about flexible work requests unpredictably (McCartney & Fu, 2022). The absence of training and policy guidance for line managers leads to their use of personal judgment which produces discriminatory treatment that appears unfair to employees. The hybrid work environment creates three main challenges which affect team communication and team unity and manager success in keeping remote workers and office-based staff motivated and performing at their best.

2. Evaluation of Contemporary HR Practices

2.1 HR Practices Supporting Business Transformation

The current HR practice requires organizations to implement change management through methods which involve employee participation and complete openness. The process of early consultation together with employee involvement and open communication helps organizations decrease employee resistance while preserving trust according to Armstrong & Taylor (2023). The HR-led change communication strategies which include briefings and employee forums and Q&A sessions help staff members understand change reasons and express their worries.

The organization needs three essential HR interventions which include Redeployment and reskilling programs and voluntary redundancy schemes. Research indicates that organizations which focus on employee movement between roles during organizational transformation will achieve better results in employee satisfaction and reduced workplace complaints (CIPD, 2024a). The implementation of these practices needs major financial support together with active leadership involvement which might create difficulties when organizations try to reduce costs.

2.2 HR Practices Supporting Digital Adoption

The primary focus of Strategic HR during digital transformation should be to build employee capabilities rather than cut staff numbers. The implementation of structured digital skills training together with blended learning methods and peer-support systems which include "digital champions" enables staff members to learn new skills at different speeds (Bondarouk

& Brewster, 2016). These practices help employees feel more confident while simultaneously decreasing their anxiety levels.

The same level of ethical oversight needs to exist for digital monitoring systems. The organization needs HR to provide clear information about data acquisition processes and performance measurement indicators and data application purposes because this approach protects employee trust and fulfills GDPR requirements. The success of digitalization depends on how well employees accept it and how they perceive its fairness in their decision-making processes.

2.3 HR Practices Supporting Flexible Working

Flexible working policies need to maintain consistency while managers must demonstrate their abilities to enforce these policies with equal treatment for all employees. The CIPD (2025) states that organizations should establish company-wide policies which define who can apply and how to apply and what criteria will be used for fair decision making to minimize confusion and complaints. The process of training managers to evaluate requests based on business requirements rather than individual tastes is vital.

Frontline employees will experience better inclusivity through innovative flexibility options which include compressed hours and job sharing and predictable scheduling. The implementation of these practices requires strategic workforce management to prevent service breakdowns, as HR and operations teams must work together.

3. Managerial Responsibility for Urgent Implementation

Line managers serve as essential connectors, transforming HR policies into operational realities. Research studies show that poor line management practices lead to most workplace grievances, according to Kearns (2021). Managers need to focus on people management together with operational performance during times of organizational transformation.

The change model developed by Kotter (1996) requires organizations to create a sense of immediate need. Managers at Tesco need to understand that employee grievances serve as warning signs of potential risks to the organization rather than simply requiring paperwork. The CIPD (2024b) suggests that mandatory training in conflict management, inclusive leadership, and hybrid team management will improve managerial abilities.

The implementation of accountability systems serves as a vital tool to create a sense of immediate action. Managerial performance evaluations should include people management metrics that combine grievance resolution times, engagement scores, and absence rates to demonstrate accountability (Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007). HR Business Partners need to provide managers in high-risk departments with coaching services and data-based information, and establish procedures for seeking help.

Managers need to handle multiple requirements, which they can only fulfill during their available work hours. Senior leaders need to demonstrate their backing for HR programs through active support and by providing necessary funding. The absence of this support system would make it difficult for HR practices to maintain their intended effectiveness even when they are appropriately designed.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

The research shows that business transformation, together with digital technological trends and flexible working arrangements, has created major factors that lead to rising workplace grievances at Tesco. The elements that drive organizational competitiveness create major threats to employee health and workplace trust when organizations fail to handle them correctly. The research shows that modern HR practices, including participative change management, digital capability development, and flexible work policies that promote equality, will reduce these risks when organizations implement them properly and adhere to ethical standards. The departmental managers who serve as leading practice enablers need support through training and performance accountability to achieve prompt implementation of these practices.

Recommendations

- ***Implement a Proactive Change Communication Framework***

The organization should create formal communication strategies that include staff representatives from the beginning of the organizational change, according to Armstrong & Taylor (2023).

- ***Establish a Digital Skills Academy***

The organization should offer digital training and mentoring programs that provide continuous learning opportunities to help employees manage technostress and decrease their resistance (CIPD, 2023a).

- ***Standardize Flexible Working Decision-Making***

The organization needs to create a specific policy that all staff members must learn through required managerial training to meet legal requirements and ensure equal treatment for all employees (CIPD, 2025).

- ***Introducing a Grievance Analytics Dashboard***

The organization should use HR analytics to track employee grievances and their resolution duration so they can take prompt action (CIPD, 2024b).

- ***Link Managerial Rewards to People Management Performance***

Organizations should integrate employee engagement and grievance prevention performance indicators into their performance evaluation processes, which determine employee rewards (Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007).

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