

The current state of the labour market in the UK, The emerging changes in Human Resourcing Strategies in the post Covid, post Brexit external environment.

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Introduction

The recent COVID-19 outbreak and the fallout from Brexit have left the UK labour market in a somewhat turbulent and unsettled situation. Due to the forced closure of numerous enterprises and the resulting massive job losses, the labour market is extremely competitive. In the three months before December 2020, the UK's unemployment rate rose to 4.9%, the highest level in more than four years. But as of June 2021, the jobless rate has somewhat dropped to 4.6%.

The epidemic has led to an increase in remote work and virtual hiring in various businesses, as well as a surge in the popularity of flexible work schedules, remote employment options, and distance learning courses. Some industries, including those in the healthcare, retail, logistics, and technology sectors, to mention a few, have seen increasing demand. The epidemic has also caused a major change in the kinds of talents that employers are looking for in potential workers. These include adaptability, inventiveness, flexibility, and technologically focused talents.

However, the Brexit transition continues to be fraught with uncertainty for businesses, and its ramifications for the labour market are compounded by growing living expenses. Migrant workers make up a sizable section of the workforce in the UK, and they may encounter difficulties as a result of Brexit's impact on work visas. The labour market in the UK is currently characterised by distinct problems and uncertainties caused by the changes that have occurred

as a result of both the pandemic and Brexit. Additionally, it could grow more complex, and there may be a larger demand for trained labour. There are still prospects for job seekers with the necessary abilities and agility to succeed in this difficult external climate, despite the uncertainties.

Few more points on the current state of the labour market in the UK:

Governmental Action

Through job protection programmes like the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) and other initiatives, the UK government has interfered in the labour market to lessen the effects of the epidemic. By reducing employee pay and promoting job retention in impacted industries including hospitality, aviation, and retail, this support has decreased job losses.

Skills Deficit

Even though the UK has a high rate of unemployment, there is a growing skills gap in fields like engineering, programming, and healthcare. The current economic situation and the uncertainty caused by Brexit are largely to blame for this shortfall. Employers are looking for workers who have the abilities needed to effectively advance their businesses.

The significance of retraining and upskilling employees

Employers are looking to invest in upskilling their present employees as the job market changes so they can keep up with the most recent industry trends and requirements. Employees from industries that may have been negatively impacted by the pandemic, such as the hospitality industry, can be repurposed into industries with increasing demand via reskilling.

Increasing Demand for Jobs in Technology

Due to the epidemic, more companies now rely on online services for their regular company operations. The IT, software engineering, and cybersecurity industries now have more job prospects because of this shift. These technologically oriented professions require a greater level of skill, thus businesses will need to upskill their staff to keep up with market developments.

Remote employment with a flexible schedule

For many UK-based workers, remote employment has become the new standard as a result of the pandemic. Because a sizable majority of employees prefer flexible working arrangements, firms are becoming more willing to offer flexible working hours and work-from-home rules. Work-life balance and employee retention have been significantly impacted by the trend towards flexible work schedules and remote work.

Employment Dynamics

As the epidemic progresses, the characteristics of the UK labour market are changing, with some industries going through considerable changes. Jobs in tech-related industries, such as software engineering and artificial intelligence, are in high demand. Other industries, like hospitality and retail, are going through major transformation as they adjust to newly developed business models.

Rising Rate of Unemployment

The pandemic significantly affected the UK's unemployment rate, which peaked in 2020 at 4.9%. Since then, there has been a decrease in the number of unemployed persons, with a rate of 4.6% in June 2021. The UK's labour market, however, may face further uncertainty and difficulties as a result of the pandemic's aftermath and Brexit.

Wanted: Skilled Workers

Significant shifts in skill demand are occurring in the UK labour market, which are being made worse by Brexit and new pandemic-related realities. To transition into new industries or adapt to new responsibilities, many UK workers need to retrain or upgrade their skills. Employers are increasingly looking for qualified candidates with experience in fields including programming, data analysis, cybersecurity, and engineering.

Worries about job security

Despite the UK's unemployment rate beginning to decline, many UK employees continue to have serious concerns about their job security due to the pandemic's persistent uncertainty. The pandemic has made already existing Brexit uncertainty and quick shifts in

technological needs worse. Employee engagement issues stemming from job security worries hurt performance.

Greater Attention Paid to Mental Health and Well-Being

The pandemic has negatively affected mental and emotional health in addition to job security. This shows how important it is for firms to put their employees' mental health and wellbeing first. Companies have been implementing policies to support their workers, such as consultations, flexible work schedules, and mental health programmes.

Entrepreneurship and the start-up culture

A wide range of alternatives, including entrepreneurship and start-up ventures, are made available by the skills and information gained through educational and training opportunities. Young people in the UK are becoming more entrepreneurial as a result of the pandemic as they look for employment options that provide greater flexibility and control.

Shared Ownership

In particular within the public and third sectors, the pandemic has turned attention to alternate kinds of economic organisation, like common ownership models. With a personal connection to the company, a sense of purpose, and opportunity for creative projects to increase job happiness, these models draw personnel.

Job Automation

The UK labor market is changing as a result of recent technological advancements like robotics and artificial intelligence. By automating some routine tasks, automation can help some industries with their labor shortages. However, upskilling and reskilling programs are necessary for workers to remain relevant in the developing "smart" economy because some workers may be replaced by automation.

Sector-specific Difficulties

Despite the fact that the epidemic has been one of the key factors driving change in the UK job market, various industries face particular difficulties. For instance, demand on these

crucial labor groups has increased as a result of healthcare workers dealing with the infection directly. Just as hospitality-related industries are experimenting with new service delivery methods, the retail sector wants to enhance online operations and adapt to changing consumer expectations.

Environmental Concerns

The fundamentals of the UK labor market now place an emphasis on environmental issues. The push for net-zero emissions by 2050 affects labor demand and opens up opportunities for reskilling and upskilling that target the problem areas. Plans for sustainable development, like those focused on clean energy, intelligent transportation, and circular economy principles, also generate new job opportunities.

CONCLUSION

The UK labor market is being significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the post-Brexit external environment, technological advancements, environmental concerns, and shifting market demand. The pandemic has changed the workplace, highlighted the trend toward remote work, and decreased the amount of office space, which has prompted HR departments to adopt technology that encourages employee collaboration and communication. New HR policies have also been developed as a result of how crucial diversity and inclusion in the workforce are to the operations of businesses in the modern era. In order to attract a larger workforce that will increase productivity and innovation, businesses are now implementing diversity policies that promote equality and inclusion. The pandemic caused many businesses to doubt their ability to remain stable, which led the UK government to step in and regulate the labor market. The government's implementation of job protection programs and subsidies to affected industries reduced the rate of job losses. The government put programs in place to safeguard jobs and gave aid to the affected industries, which reduced the rate of job loss. In order to increase productivity and efficiency, employers are putting more of an emphasis on attracting and retaining employees with the appropriate skills. As they adapt to the post-pandemic and post-Brexit realities, organizations are placing a higher priority on upskilling and reskilling initiatives. Due to new trends like remote work, digital jobs, mental and emotional support, increased entrepreneurship, and environmental sustainability, the dynamics of the labor market are also changing. In light of the current trends, employers must adopt a fluid

organizational strategy, be dynamic, and embrace fluidity. Investments in workforce upskilling, mental health support programs, project-driven motivational programs, embracing environmental sustainability concerns, common ownership models, and cutting-edge employment models like entrepreneurship would undoubtedly make the UK's labor force more resilient and successful.

The emerging changes in Human Resourcing Strategies in the post Covid, post Brexit external environment.

Human resourcing strategies have undergone some significant changes as a result of the post-Covid and post-Brexit external environment. Below are a few recent trends:

1. **Remote Workforce:** As a result of the pandemic, businesses were forced to quickly adopt remote work models. In a world without Covid, this change is probably going to persist. Businesses are probably going to give employees more flexibility so they can work from home either full-time or a few days per week.
2. **Upskilling and reskilling:** As a result of Brexit, the UK's talent pool has significantly shrunk. As a result, businesses have been spending a lot of money on retraining and upskilling their employees. As businesses adopt cutting-edge tools and methods of operation, this trend is probably going to persist.
3. **Diversity and Inclusion:** Businesses are putting more of an emphasis on fostering an inclusive and diverse workplace. Hiring people from underrepresented groups and fostering an inclusive workplace environment

that encourages employee engagement, innovation, and productivity are two examples of this.

4. **Employer branding:** To attract and keep top talent in this cutthroat job market, businesses must actively promote their employer brands. Showing off their corporate culture, values, and mission are part of this.

5. **Flexible Work Arrangements:** The pandemic has demonstrated the effectiveness of flexible work arrangements. Companies will therefore probably continue to provide options like part-time, flexible hours, job-sharing, or condensed workweeks.

6. **Digital Transformation:** Businesses must use digital technologies to stay competitive as they adjust to the post-Covid and post-Brexit realities. To simplify HR processes, this might entail making investments in automation, AI, and digital communication tools.

7. **Health and Well-being:** Employers are recognizing that employees' health and well-being are critical components of a successful workforce. As a result, employee assistance programs like wellness initiatives, mental health services, and others are spreading more widely.

8. **Gig workers:** Employers may need to change their hiring procedures in light of the growth of the gig economy. Instead of hiring full-time employees, businesses may decide to use freelancers, contractors, or other gig workers as needed.

9. **Remote Onboarding:** Due to the rise in remote work, employers must rethink their onboarding procedure to make it more convenient for remote workers. Virtual check-ins, digital training materials, and other kinds of remote support may be included in this.

10. **Trust between employers and employees:** Trust between employers and employees is more crucial than ever in the new reality of remote work. By being open and effective in their communications with their employees, businesses can earn their trust and provide assistance when it is required.

11. **Employee Engagement:** In the post-Covid and post-Brexit world, HR leaders must now pay special attention to employee engagement. Businesses are investing in engagement strategies that place a strong emphasis on communication, recognition, and chances for personal and professional growth.

12. **Agile Workforce Planning:** Due to the external environment's rapid changes, businesses are implementing an agile approach to workforce planning. This entails making decisions more quickly, being able to change course quickly, and putting an emphasis on developing a workforce that is flexible and adaptable.

13. **Data-Driven Decision Making:** HR leaders are using data more and more to make wise choices that affect business results. Companies are using analytics tools to gather information on productivity, engagement, and other important metrics to guide their HR strategies.

14. **Collaborative Technology:** For teams that work remotely, collaborative technology has become crucial. Slack, Zoom, and Microsoft Teams are just a few of the tools that businesses are investing in to keep their staff connected and ensure effective communication and collaboration.

15. **Employee Retention:** With the competition for top talent intensifying, businesses are concentrating on keeping their star employees. Using tactics

like upskilling, employee recognition programs, and flexible work schedules can help increase retention rates.

16. **Employer Reputation:** Companies must uphold a favorable employer reputation to attract top talent in a competitive job market. By emphasizing their culture, values, and benefits for employees on their websites and in social media, businesses are investing in building their employer brands.

17. **Leadership Development:** Organizations are investing in the training of their future leaders to give them the skills and knowledge necessary to guide their teams through times of change. This may involve mentorship programs, leadership training, and coaching for high-potential employees.

18. **Employee Feedback:** Companies are becoming more and more aware of the value of seeking employee feedback. One-on-one conversations, town hall meetings, and regular pulse surveys can all offer insightful information on employee engagement, satisfaction, and potential improvement areas.

19. **Inclusive Hiring Practices:** To build a more diverse and representative workforce, businesses are implementing more inclusive hiring practices. This entails eliminating bias from interview panels, assembling a diverse group of candidates, and making accommodations for candidates with disabilities.

20. **Cross-Functional Collaboration:** Businesses are encouraging cross-functional collaboration to foster innovation and maintain their competitiveness. This includes eliminating barriers and encouraging collaboration among different departments and functions.

CONCLUSION

Organizations' human resources (HR) strategies have been impacted by the significant changes in the external environment brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic and Brexit. The pandemic has caused HR to refocus on employee wellbeing, safety, and mental health. The shift to remote work has given organizations new ways to access talent around the world. Organizations have needed to be innovative and flexible in adapting to these changes and keeping their organizations operating efficiently. Brexit and the uncertainty surrounding the UK's potential immigration laws have made it more difficult to access talent. As a result, many businesses have concentrated on retraining and upskilling their current workforce in addition to looking into novel hiring techniques like remote work and gig work. As a result of the post-Covid and post-Brexit external environment, HR strategies have undergone significant changes, with a stronger emphasis now being placed on employee safety and well-being, remote work, upskilling, and reskilling. The challenges posed by these external factors are likely to be easier for organizations to overcome if they can adapt quickly to them. Additionally, the pandemic and Brexit have brought attention to the value of inclusion, equity, and diversity in the workplace. HR strategies are now concentrated on fostering a more diverse and inclusive workplace, ensuring that all employees—regardless of their backgrounds or identities—feel valued and supported. Businesses are realizing that a diverse staff contributes to improved innovation, creativity, and productivity. The use of technology, such as automation and artificial intelligence, for talent management and recruitment is another new trend in HR strategies.

Technology has made it possible for HR departments to streamline their procedures, making it easier for them to find and attract top talent. Additionally, the pandemic has sped up the transition to flexible work schedules, with remote work increasingly seen as a viable option. Companies are now investigating hybrid work models, which give employees the option to work from home or in the office and offer the best of both worlds. Overall, the external environment following Covid and Brexit has presented HR strategies with both opportunities and challenges. Long-term success is probably more likely for businesses that can put their employees' needs first while also changing with the times. The capacity to embrace technology, encourage inclusion and diversity, and provide flexible hours will be essential for attracting and retaining top talent in this new environment. The importance of employee retention and engagement has increased in the post-Covid and post-Brexit environment. Companies are increasing their investments in employee engagement and retention programs as a result of rising employee turnover rates brought on by the tight labor market and the need for a better work-life balance. HR tactics that emphasize fostering a positive workplace culture, offering opportunities for professional growth, and providing benefits and perks to employees are growing in popularity. HR strategies are also being influenced by the growth of the gig economy. The use of gig workers or freelancers to fill temporary or project-based positions is being investigated by As a result, businesses can access specialized skills and knowledge without entering into lengthy agreements or full-time employment contracts. The pandemic has also brought attention to the significance of crisis management and business continuity planning. HR departments are now concentrating on creating backup plans and making sure that workers have the tools they need to work remotely in an

emergency. Companies will be able to maintain operations and lessen the impact on their business if they use HR techniques that prioritize the welfare of employees during times of crisis. In conclusion, the HR industry is facing both significant challenges and opportunities in the post-Covid, post-Brexit environment. Companies that can innovate and adapt their HR strategies are more likely to succeed in overcoming these obstacles and luring and keeping top talent. Effective HR strategies in the new external environment must include the use of technology, the adoption of flexible work policies, the promotion of diversity and inclusion, and the emphasis on crisis management and business continuity planning.

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