



Developing and Managing Individuals and Teams

Component 2 – Individual Report

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Lecturer Name: Toyin Adisa

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Student Name: Moyez Uddin

Student ID: 2410661

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1. Introduction

I was able to notice a lot of employee complaints when I first joined this NatWest's HR department. I think this may require serious organisational change. This analysis report will include the three main factors which drives this instability: adopting digitisation, implementing flexible working conditions and finally overall business transformation. It will also critically analyse these factors and discuss solutions that may solve these issues. This report will also discuss the role of the department manager in the implementation of these solutions.

2. Certain Factors Contributing to Increased Grievances

The high grievance rate is not random but, rather, a direct symptom of the unmanaged change across NatWest. In our present environment, the following factors are likely to trigger formal complaints due to unfair treatment, excess workload, and poor management:

2.1. Business Transformation and Organisational Change For NatWest

This results in significant role ambiguity and insecurity in the current business transformation. As operating models speed up, job descriptions usually lag, at best, making employees feel their contributions are not valued or that they are performing tasks outside their contractual scope. This structural flux causes "change fatigue," which can be manifested as high stress and lower tolerance for minor workplace friction; it often results in formal grievances about workload and scope. The most damaging consequence of this structural confusion is the breach of the psychological contract-the unwritten expectations between employer and employee. Disputes will be formalised more readily by employees if they feel their loyalty and past performance is being ignored. Especially due to the new digitally focused culture. Employees might feel that they are being set aside due to skill gaps which will make them feel unappreciated. If high level roles are filled by new employees, that will also create resentment among colleagues. Instead, they should be allowed to get access to training for the new role.

2.2. Digital Technology Trends

The increased utilisation of digital technology, particularly for performance monitoring, has brought along ethical concerns that directly lead to complaints about privacy and stress. This is often referred to as the "Digital Panopticon" effect, where employees are literally under constant surveillance-even if the monitoring is benign, such as tracking keyboard strokes or login times. Grievances in this area usually concern micromanagement and unfair performance evaluation, based solely on quantitative digital metrics of active time or ticket volume, rather than qualitative output and complex problem-solving. This shift undermines trust and job satisfaction. Another major factor is the pervasive "always-on" culture. Digital communication tools (Slack, Teams, email) erase the physical and temporal boundaries of the working day. Complaints often cite excessive working hours or an implicit expectation of responding outside of agreed working hours to non-urgent messages, explicitly in violation of the psychological contract regarding the employee's personal time. Due to digital pressure of always being within reach of communication employees feel the pressure to work outside their designated hours. It creates the necessity for burnout related sick leaves. Furthermore, due to the pressure from managers either directly or indirectly there is a risk of non-compliance with working time regulations (1998). All these factors can lead to the company having to deal with more complaints regarding compensation and breaks.

2.3. Flexible Working Arrangements (Hybrid Model)

Designed to benefit employee welfare, the current flexible working model is nonetheless the source of major equity and fairness grievances. Therefore, employees who work remotely full-time or even those coming in on low-visibility days are more than likely filing grievances with regard to perceived bias in performance reviews or career stagnation because of this unequal exposure. This is further exacerbated by the fact that there are no defined hybrid model policies, leading to boundary blurring and managerial inconsistencies across the board. One manager might require 4 days to be spent in the office without stating any clear justification for it, while another one allows full remote work, creating a wide basis for internal friction and complaints of unequal terms and conditions of employment across the organisation. This 'boundary blurring' is

not only causing internal friction but also can be perceived as a breach of duty of care to the organisation. If remote employees face chronic stress or other health issues because they're not set up to succeed in an unstandardised environment, the lack of standardised policy leaves the organisation open to potential legal liability. Last but not least, managers are really struggling with performance visibility, substituting trust with intrusive time-tracking, which often leads to formalised grievances with reference to accusations of a hostile work environment and lack of professional autonomy.

3. Contemporary HR Practices Evaluation

To effectively address identified factors, a suite of contemporary HR practices needs urgent deployment. The solutions move beyond traditional compliance into embedding fairness, trust, and accountability into the new working model.

3.1. Business Transformation: Addressing Strategic Workforce Planning and Transparent Change in NatWest.

The solution to role ambiguity and change fatigue is Strategic Workforce Planning. Instead of reacting to skill needs, SWP involves forecasting future requirements and designing clear career pathways. This proactive approach involves detailed gap analysis, identifying specifically what skills are required post-transformation-for example, cloud security and data science-and quantifying the available internal talent pool that can make the transition. SWP provides the necessary foresight to prioritise internal mobility, a process that directly counters grievances related to exclusion and age bias by offering transparent Reskilling and Upskilling Programmes. When any new digital role becomes available, internal candidates must be given first access to training, which reinforces the psychological contract of loyalty and development. In respect of grievances about the implementation of change, the HR practice should follow Kotter's 8-Step Change Model, which provides clarity through frequent, clear communication from the Executive Board-which creates urgency and vision-down to departmental level. This is a transparent, structured approach that will reduce insecurity and pre-empt grievances through clarity on why and how the changes will affect the individual.

3.2. Addressing Digital Technology: Digital Ethics and the 'Right to Disconnect'

The main contemporary HR practice for mitigating digital risk is the implementation of a comprehensive 'Right to Disconnect' Policy. This policy needs to be legally robust, drawing upon precedents from countries such as France and Ireland that have codified the employee's right to avoid work-related digital communications outside contracted hours. It needs to formally define what constitutes acceptable communication hours and penalise those managers who enforce or encourage out-of-hours responses, other than in true, documented emergencies. This practice will directly combat the pervasive 'always-on' culture and greatly reduce burnout-related grievances and related legal exposure under the Working Time Regulations (1998). A rigorous Digital Ethics and Privacy Policy should be instituted in order to counter the Digital Panopticon effect.

For example: The policy should be regarding the quality of work rather than the quantity. It cannot be something like 'active time' since that will just pressure the employees to find loopholes to meet that metric. It is important to be transparent about supervisor feedback and required output.

3.3. Addressing Flexible Working: Hybrid Charters and Output-Based Management

NatWest should adopt a formal, binding Hybrid Work Charter to eliminate the systemic sources of inequity and managerial inconsistency inherent in the current flexible work setup. This standardises expectations across all departments for core collaboration hours, minimum required in-office days (if any, but with clear justification), equitable resource allocation-e.g., remote workers have necessary technical equipment-and guidelines for virtual meeting etiquette that guarantee remote participants an equal voice. These are practices that directly address the grievance factor of managerial inconsistencies. Mandatory Output-Based Performance Management (OBPM) is the most crucial practice for proximity bias. The application and approach change managers' focus from 'time spent' or 'presence' (input) to measurable, pre-agreed results (deliverables, milestones, goals). Mandatory Unconscious Bias Training for all departmental managers must target hybrid work biases and teach managers to consciously

track that there is equitable access, irrespective of work location, to high-profile projects, mentoring, and development opportunities. By offering this type of proactive training, the duty of care is fostered through equipping managers to be fair in a non-traditional environment.

4. Critical Evaluation of Managerial Implementation

Failure to implement contemporary HR practices is almost invariably a failure of departmental management. Managers are the main interface between the organisational policy (HR) and the employee experience. Therefore, ensuring urgent implementation requires a focus on managerial capability, accountability, and reinforcement.

4.1. Managerial Capability and Training

The necessary first step is compulsory, rigorous training focused not on what the policy is, but on how to implement it with emotional intelligence. For example, making the Right to Disconnect happen requires managers to restructure their own workflows and habits of scheduling; this will require an unusually high degree of self-management and planning. Training needs to address explicitly how to run hybrid team meetings equitably (e.g., actively rotating the virtual floor) and how to give Output-Based Performance Reviews without falling back on metrics of presenteeism. Investment here is nonnegotiable; untrained managers will fall back into old patterns, rendering the new policies null, while triggering more grievances.

4.2. Accountability and Reinforcement

Policies are never enforceable until managers are held accountable for adopting them. This will be achieved by incorporating certain "People Management and Policy Adherence" KPIs into the annual performance reviews of the departmental managers. Such KPIs include the following quantifiable end results:

Reduction of Grievance Rate: The grievance rate in the employee's department should be below the organisational average.

Policy Adherence: Auditing the Hybrid Work Charter on aspects such as proper documentation and equitable distribution of high-profile assignments.

Employee Feedback: Improvement in the manager-specific scores on internal Pulse Surveys relating to fairness and work-life balance.

Executive Leadership must lead by example, most importantly by adhering to the Right to Disconnect and publicly championing the new OBPM metrics. A manager who sees the Executive Board sending midnight emails will disregard the policy, making any efforts by HR for naught.

4.3. Resource Allocation and Continuous Review

HR department and general managers need to work together in order to solve various issues in each department. To solve communication issues the best way to do so is to have periodic meetings both in person and online. There should also be an established feedback loop among the departmental managers and HR managers. Every team member needs to be clear about their duties, responsibilities and their goal related to the job. The company and HR department needs to make sure that all the departments are provided with adequate resources, examples of such resources include: Time to schedule meetings, authority over their own departments for the managers and the budget to organise necessary events.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1. Conclusion

The current high grievance rate is a clear warning signal resulting from the mismanagement of change. Business transformation has brought about role insecurity, while digital technologies have imposed an 'always-on' surveillance culture and flexible working arrangements have brought about proximity bias and inequity. The way forward is through the urgent implementation of the following contemporary HR practices: Strategic Workforce Planning, the 'Right to Disconnect' policy, and the mandatory adoption of Output-Based Performance Management. However, the success of these policies relies entirely on the capability and accountability of our departmental managers. If these well-intentioned policies are not actively bought into, trained, or sponsored at an executive level, they will fail to embed. This will lead to further erosion of trust and continued organisational instability.

5.2. Recommendations

Therefore, to address the situation as a matter of urgency, I recommend the General Manager initiates the following actions immediately: Mandate Hybrid Leadership Training: Institute immediate, mandatory training for all managers within the departments solely on unconscious bias in hybrid environments, along with the practical application of Output-Based Performance Management. Formalise the Digital Boundary: Officially endorse and publish a full Digital Ethics and 'Right to Disconnect' Policy in the next 30 days and back it up with an internal communication campaign and line manager accountability measures. Embed Compliance in Management KPIs: Adapt the performance review structure for all department managers by introducing specific and measurable KPIs related to their respective teams' adherence to the Hybrid Work Charter and their grievance rate at the department level. This makes them accountable for the implementation of the policy at an operational level.

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