THE FUTURE OF HR

HR Tech is Key to Overall Business Agility

Oct 04, 2021 - Cat DiStasio

What is Business Agility?

> *Business agility (n): the consistent ability to respond quickly to market changes and emerging opportunities in productive and cost-effective ways. Leaders who cultivate business agility in their organization are better prepared to compete and thrive regardless of what new challenges arise.*

The degree of your organization's business agility can impact your bottom line. Business agility has long been a buzzword in sales, operations, and product development circles. But the reality is that the true measure of an organization's agility relies on the ability to recruit and hire the right people, to scale up recruiting for growth, and to respond quickly to changes in the talent market that affect competition for top candidates. HR technology holds the key.

Amid the coronavirus pandemic, we've watched this dynamic come to the forefront of business conversations, as organizations grappled with the challenge of pivoting to remote work overnight, moving to virtual events, and finding innovative ways to attract talent online. Investing in the right HR tech now will prepare your organization for future challenges, so you can respond quickly to whatever happens. Research shows that organizations with high business agility have higher employee engagement, better customer satisfaction, and increase operational performance.

HR Tech Supports Business Agility

In the HR realm, there are endless examples of technology that supports and enables overall business agility. Here are a few key tools that every agile organization needs.

Virtual recruiting: The ability to attract and connect with the right talent regardless of location ensures sustainable staffing levels.

Virtual event platforms: Hosting events online when in-person isn't possible, or as a way to include people in different locations, allows businesses to keep moving forward.

Online interviewing: Having the capability to interview talent remotely broadens your talent pool and can save your recruiting team in time and money, especially important during challenging times.

Remote collaboration: Connecting dispersed teams with convenient, effective tools helps everyone do their job better, regardless of what they're working on.

Automation: Using automation tools to streamline processes and reduce mental strain frees employees up to tackle your organization's biggest challenges.

Virtual onboarding: Having a robust virtual onboarding program, and the platform to facilitate it, is essential in the age of remote recruiting and remote work. Welcoming new hires the right way helps prepare them to integrate with your organizational culture no matter where they work.

Learning and development: Investing in your employees is a key feature at organizations with high business agility.

HR Needs a Seat at the Table

Executive leadership may include HR but, historically, the role of HR has been to execute on the plans and strategies that other arms of the business devise. With the rapidly shifting workplace dynamics we've experienced over the past 18 months—and all the future changes still unknown—it's more important than ever for HR leaders to advocate for their part in driving the future of the organization as a whole. On an episode of the Talent on the Rise podcast, Tami Rosen, a Senior HR Executive with expertise at startups and Fortune 100 companies discussed how HR can be a strategic partner. She said HR leaders need a "triangle of traits" including relationship skills, quantitative skills, and creative problem solving abilities.

HR leaders need to invest time and energy in building relationships with other leaders in the organization to ensure their voices are heard when important decisions need to be made. Developing all the skills in Rosen's triangle can help HR leaders build their careers, broaden their networks, and advance their organizations.

Future-Proofing Your Business

Future-proofing has emerged as a popular buzzword this year but it's not all about supply chains and distribution channels any more. Investing in HR tech is like stocking your pantry before hurricane season. You may know some specific challenges are ahead, and you can anticipate a lot of what you might need to address them. But you also become more attuned to the fact that there are possibilities that are out of your control, and you want to be as ready as possible for the unexpected. Most importantly, you want quick and easy access to the supplies and tools that can ease your hardships and enable you to thrive, no matter what happens next. When shelter-in-place orders began, organizations that already had virtual recruiting tools in place were able to pivot quickly with little or no time loss. Likewise, organizations with virtual event and remote collaboration tools were able to stand up their suddenly remote workforce with less interruptions. For so many of the unexpected challenges during the past 18 months, HR tech saved the day.

Going into the future, there are many types of new challenges that organizations may face. Creating a framework of systems and tools that allow you to quickly pivot key business functions when needed so that your team is already up to speed on the tools that will help your organization.

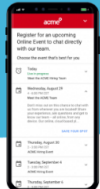## The Road to Business Agility is Paved with HR Tech

We've all been through a lot since the pandemic began. The past 18 months have also taught us a lot of lessons. Business leaders have learned the value of business agility, the importance of flexible recruiting and hiring strategies, and the need to lean on HR leaders for creative solutions during tough times. Organizations that invest in HR technology will be better prepared for whatever lies ahead than those who procrastinate. We saw this at the beginning of the pandemic, and we're continuing to see it now as competition for top talent increases in many industries. If you wait too long to stock your pantry, you may find it a lot more difficult to weather the coming storms.

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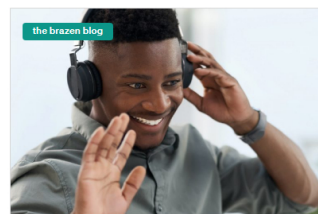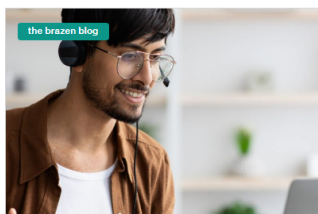
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