Transactional versus Strategic
use of HR Software and Technology

"Corporate strategy is usually only useful if you get people engaged with helping you to make it work." – *Max McKeown, The Strategy Book.*

If you have all your HR systems working towards your strategic goals while meeting all your transactional compliance requirements, if your people are engaged and using them effectively, you must be at the top of the world.

There is nothing quite like the elation and satisfaction of designing systems to support your teams and celebrating on completion as you admire the perfection you have created.

When people ask you how your HR technology is working for you, do you tell them "it's wonderful"? HR software and technology is only useful if your people are engaged, facilitating an effective and productive workforce.

HR software and technology can be a tease as we view the perfect configuration and we see the perfect scenarios in action. We imagine the perfect use within our own organisations and hold onto the dream of moving beyond day to day transactions to being innovative, changing our impact and changing how we add value to our people and our organisations. We look at those ahead of us with admiration and envy and we look behind happy that we have moved beyond the paper wars of the past.

Many of our teams are solely operationally focused, ensuring that all transactions and administrative functions are completed. This is an essential part of a well-functioning business and in essence reactive.

Strategically focused teams need to be, and benefit from being, HR technology focused and business aware – solving real business problems by the application and use of technology that suits the business.

Today keeping up with technology is like a race, we live in a world of fast paced change, technology changes at the speed of light. However keeping up with the latest technology and embracing new opportunities is not enough to ensure success, it's about how we use our technology. A strategically focused HR team will take advantage of these opportunities by being proactive with their respective IT, finance and management teams.

You can move from being transactional to strategic

HR systems and technology touch all people in the organisation and the way we use the resources at our disposal can greatly enhance our teams and our interactions and relationships through the whole business.

Getting the basics right – never underestimate how important it is for you to perform well on transactional business that you have to do. There is little point in trying to be strategic if your transactional activities are dragging your business down.

Enhance the efficiency of your current systems – Enhancing the efficiency of your current systems to support well designed processes will not only strengthen compliance, it also has the potential to deliver significant cost and time savings. Ensuring that your functional teams are operating efficiently and accurately is one way to ensure transactional excellence. Everything we do must have purpose, add value and meet the business's requirements.

Technology is only as good as how it's used – at a recent conference I asked

the participants, "who had a manager/ employee HR hub or self-service in 2005?" Only three participants raised their hands. When asked who used this technology in the current day, 95 percent of the room raised their hand. Yesterday's innovation to save man hours and increase efficiencies is today's norm.

Get the best people – Some people are happy and content working at the transactional level and there is nothing wrong with that. Good HRIS systems managers make a huge difference ensuring that systems are running efficiently, maximising functionality, training users, adding value by meeting business requests, initiating operational improvements and integrating systems.

Supply the business accurate human capital data – a foundational requirement for successfully providing the analytics, reporting and metrics needed to drive business decisions. Your credibility is built on getting it right.

How can you support the business goals, objectives and directions if you, your employees and managers do not understand them? Without direction how can we align what we do with business strategy? Your HR systems must support your business plans and objectives – herein lies a key to becoming more strategic.

Communication, transparency and cultivating relationships – Technology

alone is never enough – how are your teams connected to and interacting with other parts of your business? Are we adding value and making contribution's that help all employees and managers perform effectively? When we know what success looks like we all can have a sense of clarity by contributing towards the goal.

85 percent of managers can't get the information they need to make informative decisions – Sierra-Cedar 2013-2014 HR Systems survey

Are your teams identifying and owning outcomes? This includes service delivery excellence in transactional and operational as well as strategic delivery to stakeholders. To offer initiatives you need to be business savvy, develop and present business cases and manage change. The best business cases are collaborative and involve the stakeholders the initiative will impact.

An incredible 70 percent of organisations have suffered at least one project failure in the prior 12 months!

50 percent of respondents also indicated that their project failed to consistently achieve what they set out to achieve! – KPMG survey of Project Management NZ 2010.

Effective project management will determine the success or failure of your technology initiatives – The single most important action to ensure a higher rate of success is to have executive management commitment and support. Change

management and communication strategy are paramount, typical challenges can often be avoided. An experienced project manager can ensure that the planning and execution of your project along with stakeholder engagement mitigates the risk of failure. Never underestimate the resource required or complexity!

Understanding and managing risk – are your teams demonstrating the ability to proactively manage risk? Supporting managers by providing data that offers early indications and providing information to support possible solutions is a way of proactively adding strategic value.

Trends for 2015 – Multi-country, multi-currency, multi-language global solutions. Advances in dashboard reporting and analytics, mobile technology, gamification, apps, cloud based technology, workflow applications. Outsourcing and shared services are still high on the list for adding value through strategic modelling.

Reporting and Analytics - The Navigo Research 4th Australian HR Tech report survey found that predictive analytics and big data were the second and third most important technologies for HR service delivery. The Cedar-Crestone 2013-2014 HR Systems survey found only 15 percent of organisations deliver data and analytics capabilities to their managers.

There is a huge gap here waiting to be exploited by HR professionals. Are you

doing analytics in HR or are you using analytics to drive business decisions. Providing managers with the workforce data they crave is a key way to deliver strategic capability.

Build a roadmap to improve data delivery to the business - HR can build strong relationships in the business and deliver valuable insights if the organisation knows what it's looking for. Regular reviews of reporting practices and capabilities are essential. Operational reporting can advance to benchmarking and multi-dimensional analysis, the next stage is statistical analysis and development and finally predictive analytics and scenario planning.

Investigate better use of technologies – cloud services, social networking and mobile technology – Regular research will help you build a strategic HR technology roadmap that's scalable and flexible to change. As well as delivering business value - focus should be on user experience, collaboration, flexibility and mobility. Today more than ever we need to leverage our technology to support our culture and values while ensuring that we keep our workforce engaged.

Gamification – Is about leading not

> ❝ Yesterday's innovation to save man hours and increase efficiencies is today's norm ❞

following and creating content that is unique to your organisation. Telstra's Job Jam, a playful view into careers at Telstra, and Deloitte New Zealand's interactive pick a path graduate video are excellent examples of using technology for maximum impact.

Social media, digital technology and HR - Leading employers locally and overseas use Jobgram to re-imagine recruitment advertising. Most organisations will be using LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter. Fletcher Building had a successful augmented reality campaign in 2014. ASB Bank have launched a snapchat scholarship campaign to connect with school leavers. Facebook at Work has also recently been launched, so watch with interest who embraces this new direction.

"Our digital initiatives need to be snackable, bite-sized and highly visual

and immersive experiences…. As HR professionals we need to look to how and why people use Snapchat, Tinder and Uber, and to understand how the big consumer brands are becoming masters of storytelling and leveraging community in content development. We're living in #selfie generation times. We need to think and act more and more like community augmenters, marketers, brand experts, innovators and game designers." Paul Jacobs*

HR technology should be exciting, be bold, aligned with business goals and strategy, draw our users in, create value and enable each and every person in an organisation to be the best that they can be. What will your impact be in 2015?

However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results – Sir Winston Churchill 1874-1965, English statesman **HR**

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CROSSWORD
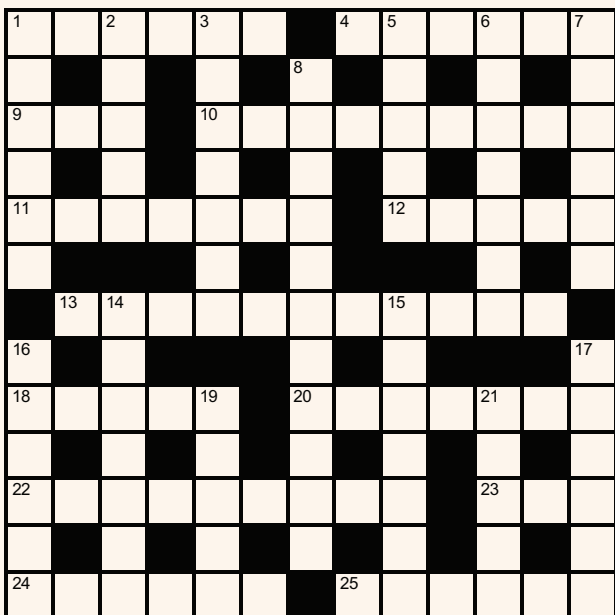
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ACROSS

1. Organisational structure or procedure (6)
4. Monetary reward for job (6)
9. Head of large organisation (1,1,1)
10. Acting as mediator to negotiate compromises and agreements between parties (9)
11. Person with instinctive aptitude for job (7)
12. Shift or trend from one direction to another (5)
13. Process of enabling employee to work autonomously and effectively (11)
18. Extra payment for results (5)
20. Monotonously boring - like repetitive jobs, eg (7)
22. _____ intelligence - important employee quality in dealing with others (9)
23. Keep your ____ to the ground - be alert to workplace changes (3)
24. Assigned particular project to (6)
25. Appraise employee's performance (6)

DOWN

1. Move employee to another organisation for set period (6)
2. Search for suitable job recruits (5)
3. Temporary hold on issue of press release (7)
5. Maslow's hierarchy of _____ - workplace psychology theory (5)
6. View or judgement offered at meeting, eg (7)
7. Hire for employment (6)
8. Work process based on establishing specific achievable objectives (4,7)
14. Experienced workplace guides and advisors (7)
15. Separate units forming part of training course (7)
16. Not on the job! (6)
17. Forces someone out of job and takes their place (6)
19. _____ card - use this to gain electronic access to workplace (5)
21. Get enough exercise to avoid becoming _____ through desk-bound job (5)