



Bringing together an effective HR strategy for the

## **Future of Work**



Digital Employee Experience

Innovation post Covid

Talent for Tomorrow

Market Engagement









## **Contents**





- 10 | Psychological Safety and Innovation Post COVID
- Building Talent for Tomorrow
- The "Next Normal" for Market Engagement
- 24 Bringing it All Together: SmartHR Solutions





Prashant Pandey
Country Manager
Right Management India

## Foreword

Due to the ongoing pandemic, businesses are experiencing significant disruptions to their business models. Organizations are focusing on adapting their processes and systems to stay relevant and competitive. As an integral aspect to these changes, organizations also need to optimize employee experience in a largely dispersed, but digitally connected workplace.

With SmartHR 2021, the idea was to focus on addressing key organizational challenges faced by leaders across industries today.

Digital transformation is occurring at an unprecedented pace – and we strongly believe the changes in the way organizations function, will make

the role of the 'Human Resource' function both crucial and complex.

Some key questions that need to be addressed are:

- How does this movement impact employee experience across the work lifecycle?
- How do we control loss of productivity and attrition?
- How do we motivate, develop and engage today's remote workforce?
- Are traditional organizational structures still valid?
- How does culture get driven in a geographically dispersed workforce?
- Are old world market engagement models still applicable?

With SmartHR 2021 (a week-long virtual event), our focus was to address the aforementioned challenges faced by leaders across industries today. The theme for this event was "Dispersed, (yet) Connected".

As part of the event, we conducted a study to help us understand the current mindset of employees across levels and industries. Our study was broadly based on 4 broad themes – unravelling the future of employee experience, understanding what organizations need today to foster innovation, appreciating the need for and the latest trends in identifying and developing talent for the future, and re-visiting the rules of market engagement.

Through this report, we share with you the voice of the industry. We aim to help you unravel emerging trends and insights which organizations and leaders need to take cognizance of, to navigate the way forward.

It was important before the pandemic, and is even more critical now – to create a dynamic workplace where everyone is able to unleash their full human potential and have a more equitable share of the prosperity. I invite you to read this report and hope you find the findings insightful!

Prashant Pandey
Country Manager
Right Management India

## A Note on Our Methodology

As a global leader in talent and career management, Right Management engages with organizations in building and aligning their people and business strategies. The last one year has been one of turmoil and change; with the pace likely to accelerate over the next 5-10 years. With this change, the context in which HR departments were operating has also been altered. With a view to demystify these changes, we recently partnered with ETHR in curating and leading a series of conversations with HR and business leaders in India – SmartHR 2021 – Dispersed, (yet) Connected.

As a precursor to this event, we conducted a study with an endeavor to uncover emerging trends – identifying top priorities from an employee standpoint and key areas of focus for organizations. The purpose of this note is to provide our readers an overview on our chosen approach.

Our study sought information regarding the **Importance** of the following impact areas for individual employees, and the current level of **Organizational Proficiency** in the same:



Our study / survey elicited responses from over 120 organizations across 10 sectors, and provided us with striking and meaningful data which is revealed in the following pages.



## A Note on Our Methodology

The survey had 30 statements based on the aforementioned 4 impact areas (~ 10 mins) and each participant was prompted to respond to the following two parameters against each statement:

(1 being the lowest score, 5 being the highest score)

- The *importance* of the statement for their organization, which indicates how imperative it is for the actionable in the statement to be implemented in the company (according to the respondent)
- The current level of proficiency of their organization on the statement, which indicates the as-is status of the said actionable within the organization (according to the respondent)

To complete a question, both the parameters had to be answered. The responses were then pooled into aggregate measures for reporting, without highlighting any person or organization, but taking sectoral views. We have used simple statistical tools to indicate the degree of alignment amongst the responses. We have identified the coefficient of Variance (Standard Deviation/Mean %) to figure out the degree of alignment within our sample data set.

Variance measures how far a set of data is spread out. High Variance indicates that the data points are very spread out from the mean, and from one another; and low variance indicates that the data points are more or less in line with each other.

We have defined the following as:

High Variance ≥ 67

Medium Variance > 33 < 67

Low Variance ≤ 33

We encourage you to go through our findings and hope our insights add direct and indirect value to you and your organization.

Happy reading!



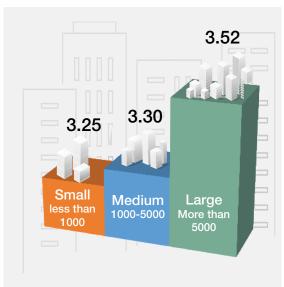
Digital Employee Experience

**Talent for Tomorrow** 

Businesses have seen a rapid shift to newer workplace formats and structures in the past few months. Today, most companies are focusing on adapting and finding ways to reinvent systems and optimize their employees experience in largely dispersed, but digitally connected workplaces.

The trends that have been predicted before the crisis are accelerating at speed. The most critical factor for organizations in terms of Digital Employee Experience is to have digital platforms to share, communicate and remain connected with employees, and this is where organizations are focused on developing a high level of proficiency.

While organizations have invested substantially in improving internal digital and technological capabilities in the last one year, there is lack of uniformity in the individual components of the employee life cycle. Overall, organizations have been making progress on aspects like onboarding and digital collaboration, which was the need of the hour after COVID. However, we see potential for organizations to improve in the later stages of the employee life cycle enabling digital performance reviews for continuous check-ins, which has been an ongoing challenge.



Large organizations (more than 5000 employees) and MNC's organizations are more proficient in DeX

There is alignment across industries on the importance of performance feedback in real-time, supported by technologies and allied processes, however, a high degree of variation is seen in the proficiency of organizations to do so.

Additionally, while our respondents feel that their organizations have systems to share and communicate, a significant number feel that the current state of technology enablement is not enough to drive home a seamless experience for employees.

> Companies that are doing better in DeX are investing in digital platforms to share, communicate and remain connected



76% of the respondents believe that digital employee experience is vital for their organization



49% of the respondents believe that their organizations are making progress

Digital Employee Experience

Innovation post Covid

Talent for Tomorrow

Market Engagement

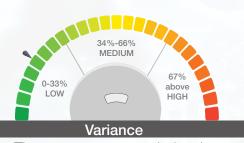
Our data also suggest that organizations have made advancements in leveraging e-learning platforms; nonetheless, a considerable amount of investment needs to be made to link these systems with real-time performance data, as platforms will only work if the employees have access to real-time feedback.



Our analysis also suggests that sectors that have embraced technology to offer better solutions to customers and drive internal efficiencies in the early stages of the digital revolution are more proficient in providing a better employee experience.

Alignment is seen in the BFSI and Services sectors, while responses appear to be distributed in the Manufacturing and the Life Sciences sectors.

## Sectors that consider DeX is important are making progress barring the Manufacturing and Life Sciences industry



The responses across industries are mostly aligned

Sectors that are leading in DeX:







Sectors that are behind in DeX:







Employee experience is much more than an organizational cloud strategy. How is a move to DIGITAL impacting retention, engagement and time to productivity?





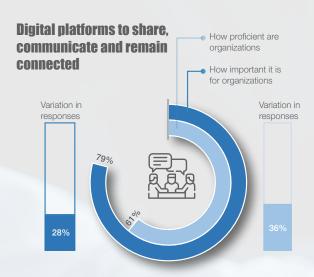


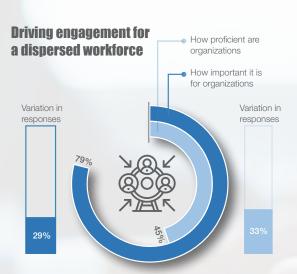
**Digital Employee Experience** 

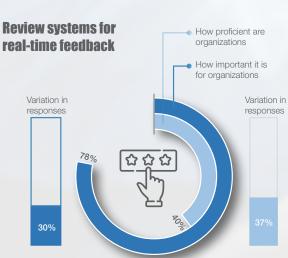
Talent for Tomorrow

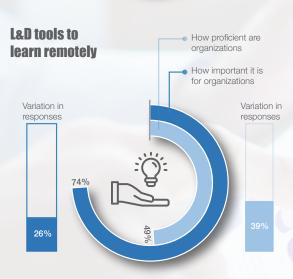
Market Engagement

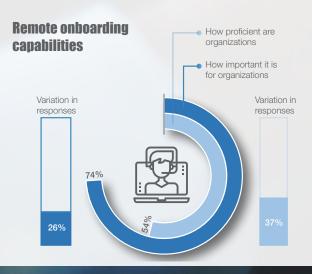
#### As pointed out by our study, companies lack focus in key aspects which contribute towards an Optimal Digital Employee Experience

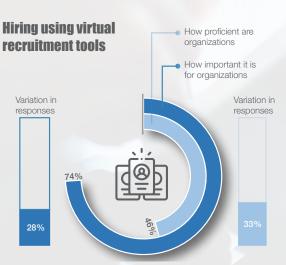












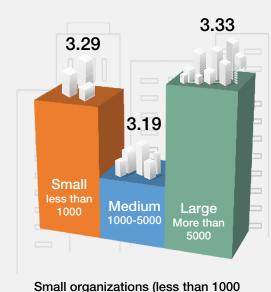


Digital Employee Experience

**Innovation post Covid** 

Talent for Tomorrow

Market Engagement



Small organizations (less than 1000 employees) and large organizations/MNC's and PSU's (more than 5000 employees) are moderately better in promoting innovation and providing a psychologically safe environment to support continuous improvements.

Business is rapidly transforming - continuity today requires continuous agility and a culture of creativity and innovation.

Today, it's more important than ever for leaders to create and promote a culture which allows everyone to think freely and openly. This can be made possible when employees bring their whole selves to work every day, and feel "psychologically safe" in their roles. Organizations need to drive inclusive and open cultures which thrive on individuals showcasing leadership in whatever roles they may be in. This will ensure innovation not only in limited pockets of brilliance, but will create agility across every part of the enterprise.

A majority of *respondents in our analysis feel that to* emerge, win and sustain the business in the new normal, being open to new ways of working and innovation is *imperative.* However, in general, the progress organizations are making on this front is limited.

Further evaluating the enablers of innovation, we found that organizations are making progress in promoting collaborative teamwork augmented by technology and encouraging employees to voice their opinions in a virtual set up to generate new ideas. However, regarding implementation, organizations are still not open to employees challenging the norm and

adopting new ways of working - our data showcases a high divergence between expectation and reality. Moreover, another observation was that while employees may feel open to voicing their opinions, they are not sure if different divergent viewpoints will be appreciated by their organizations.

While open and free-flowing conversations and freedom to express opinions contributes towards keeping engagement levels high and helps innovate in the new normal; a dispersed workforce and the psychological impact of the pandemic creates insecurities, impedes ideation and collaboration in a virtual setting.

> Companies are promoting collaborative teamwork augmented by technology and encouraging employees to voice their opinions in a virtual set up to generate new ideas

80% of the respondents believe that fostering a culture of innovation and psychological safety is important



47% of the respondents believe that their organizations are offering such an environment to their employees

Digital Employee Experience

**Innovation post Covid** 

Talent for Tomorrow

Market Engagement

Our data further showcases that while organizations are increasingly promoting the use of technology to collaborate, they need to ensure a risk-free environment for the employees to innovate and be creative.

Overall, sectors with a relatively younger workforce, like BFSI, IT/ITeS, and Services are making good progress. Interestingly, Manufacturing and Engineering companies are also taking strides in the right direction as they constantly innovate for their customers. The Pharmaceutical / Life Sciences sector scored the lowest with a high variation in the responses.

> Sectors with a younger workforce and more pressure from customers to innovate are offering a psychologically safe environment to employees

Sectors that are leading in innovation and psychological safety



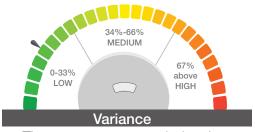


Engineering

Sectors that are lacking in innovation and psychological safety



Life Sciences



The responses across industries are mostly aligned

What is expected of the organization and it's leaders and what kind of culture is required to promote open and freeflowing conversations, which motivate teams and individuals to innovate in the new normal?



Digital Employee Experience

**Innovation post Covid** 

**Talent for Tomorrow** 

Market Engagement





Digital Employee Experience

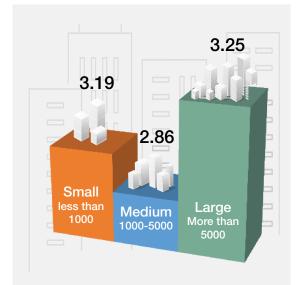
Innovation post Covid

**Talent for Tomorrow** 

COVID is bound to transform industries, but one does not yet know how. With a changing business environment, it has become pertinent to continuously evolve talent philosophies and strategies to develop a strong talent pipeline for tomorrow. Regardless of the industry or demographics, human capital, workforce planning and development have become a topic of global concern. Talent availability and agility are critical for organizational sustainability.

Organizations unanimously agree that it is important to keep up with the changing trends and talent priorities post the pandemic; however, many respondents feel that their organizations are unable to update strategic talent programs to ensure relevance in the new normal. Once again, one of the most critical aspects is where we see the highest divergence – not many organizations seem to have revisited their talent strategies post the pandemic. Some of the areas where organizations could improve are evaluating and identifying emerging skills and competencies, and having frequent talent development interventions.

Our data clearly showcases that the capability to develop people on relevant skills is the most important component for organizations and this where a majority of investments have been made.



Small organizations (less than 1000 employees) and large organizations/ MNC's and PSU's (more than 5000 employees) are proactively adopting agile talent strategies after the pandemic and using digital aids to manage their talent pipeline

In addition, organizations can progress by leveraging analytics to proactively recognize emerging talent trends and deploying digital capabilities to map people and responsibilities, which appears to be more relevant considering a largely dispersed workforce.

## Companies that have agile talent strategies are investing in digital tools for talent management 41 % of the **78%** of the respondents believe that respondents believe that agile talent strategies and their organizations have the capability to manage the using digital in talent management are important talent for tomorrow

Digital Employee Experience

Innovation post Covid

**Talent for Tomorrow** 

Market Engagement

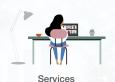
The Pharmaceutical and Life Sciences sectors appear to be the only ones lagging, while other sectors are making significant progress. Our analysis shows with a high degree of alignment that – industries that have experienced high attrition and engagement issues in the past like BFSI, IT / ITeS and Services have made investments in digital capabilities to manage talent. However, alignment of responses in the Manufacturing / Engineering sectors are comparatively distributed, which indicates that the approach may be fragmented here.

## Sectors that have faced high attrition and engagement issues in the past have been investing in digital talent solutions

Sectors that are leading in talent agility and digital talent management











Sectors that are lacking in talent agility and digital talent management



Pharmaceuticals



The responses across industries are moderately aligned

Regardless of the industry or demographics, human capital, workforce planning and development have become a topic of global concern. Talent availability and agility is critical for organizational sustainability. How is India Incresponding to this?

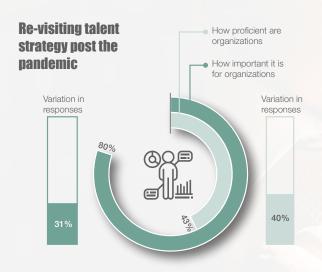


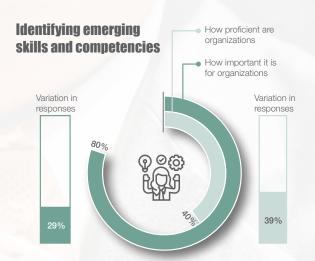
Digital Employee Experience

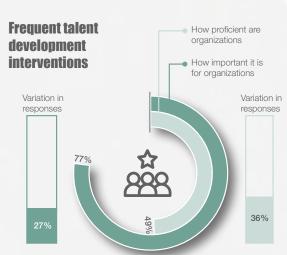
**Talent for Tomorrow** 

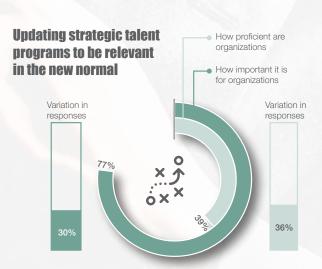
Market Engagement

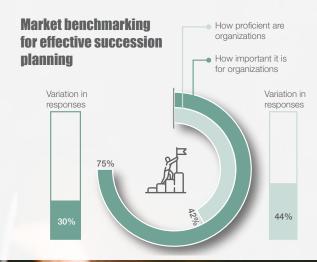
#### Not many organizations seem to have revisited their talent strategies post the pandemic











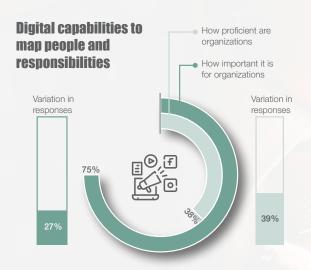
Digital Employee Experience

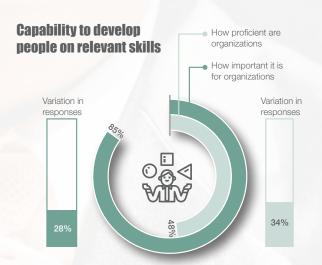
Innovation post Covid

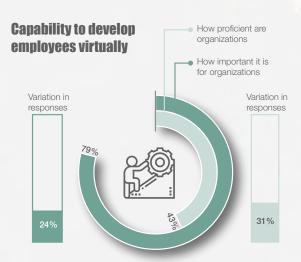
**Talent for Tomorrow** 

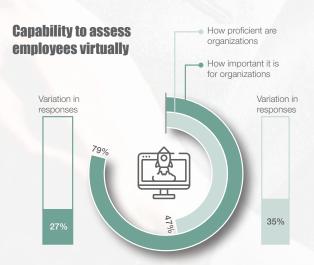
Market Engagement

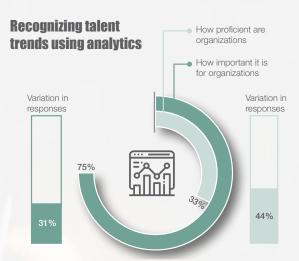
## Digital capabilities to map people and responsibilities is the hardest to implement

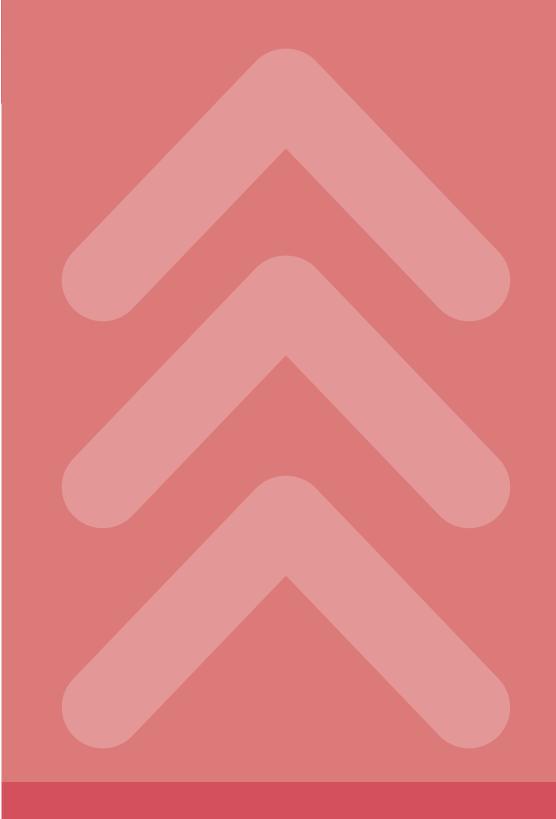












Digital Employee Experience

Innovation post Covid

Talent for Tomorrow

Market Engagement

Given the events of the last 10-12 months, the speed of change is driving many successful organizations to relook their market engagement strategies, while others are still struggling to come to terms. To keep up with a rapidly evolving consumer, businesses must gear up to remain relevant and competitive.

A majority of our respondents feel that to thrive in the next normal it is important to understand the market dynamics and revisit their sales strategy and approach. Interestingly, while organizations are comparatively proficient at recognizing changing customer preferences, not many believe that their sales strategy is aligned to meet changing market dynamics. One of the reasons for this could be a lack of motivation and engagement in sales teams. A lack of direct interface with customers is likely to affect both productivity and engagement levels for front-ending teams.

Responses also indicate that organizations' focus has to be two-pronged – addressing evolving customer preferences and focusing on developing and motivating their sales 3.26
3.43

Small less than 1000

Medium 1000-5000

More than 5000

Large organizations like MNC's/Large Indian Conglomerates and PSU's are better positioned to respond to the changing market dynamics using technology.

teams to take the market. To improve engagement levels, organizations may conduct thorough diagnostics of sales competencies, link it to changing customer/business goals, and identify and act upon the development needs of the sales force – to equip them to succeed in the new normal. Organizational proficiency scores in our data show a divergence here – as many participants feel that sales training content does not incorporate relevant sales scenarios, and fails to challenge. Our data further indicates that organizations need to look at new sales models that not only enhance customer experience, but also enable the sales team to be more effective and remain engaged.



Digital Employee Experience

**Talent for Tomorrow** 

Market Engagement

With respect to the use of technology as organizations engage with their markets, our respondents feel that organizations must leverage technology as much as possible for analytics and improve the readiness of the sales team to use inside-sales models to deliver results - leveraging technologies such as video-conferencing (VC) / phone / web sales platforms to engage with customers.

While sectors like BFSI, IT / ITeS and Manufacturing / Engineering are relatively better placed than others, we have seen high variance in responses within these sectors, indicating organizations across industries are responding to changing customer preferences differently.

#### Organizations within sectors are responding to changing customer preferences differently



The responses across industries are moderately aligned

Sectors that are leading in digital sales and customer service







Sectors that are lacking in digital sales and customer service





In order to keep up with a rapidly evolving consumer, businesses must gear-up to remain relevant and competitive. Are sales and customer service leaders equipped to address this changing scenario?



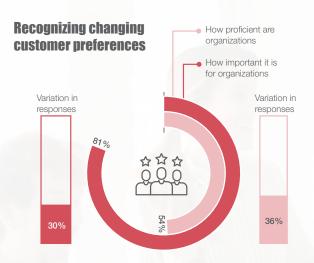
Digital Employee Experience

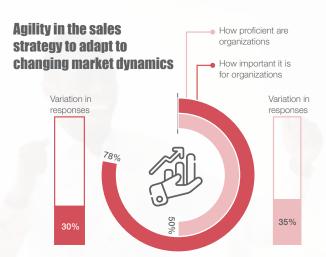
Innovation post Covid

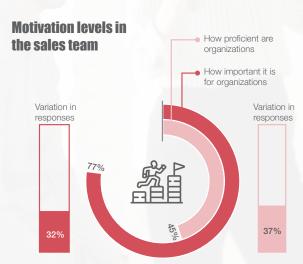
Talent for Tomorrow

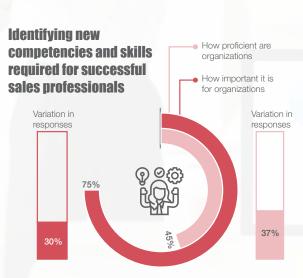
Market Engagement

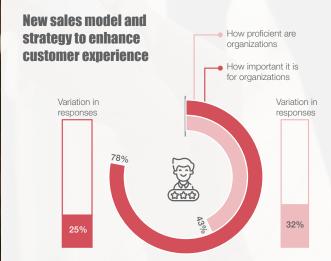
Organizations need to look at new sales models that not only enhance customer experience, but also enable the sales team to be more effective and remain engaged











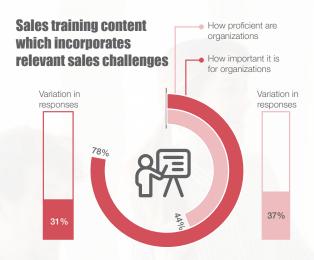
Digital Employee Experience

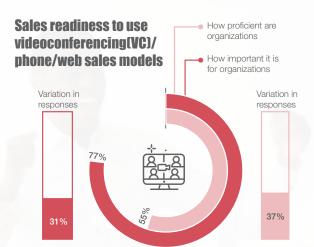
Innovation post Covid

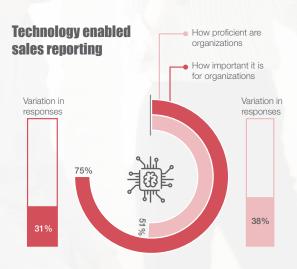
**Talent for Tomorrow** 

Market Engagement

#### Organizations must leverage technology as much as possible for analytics and improve the readiness of the sales team



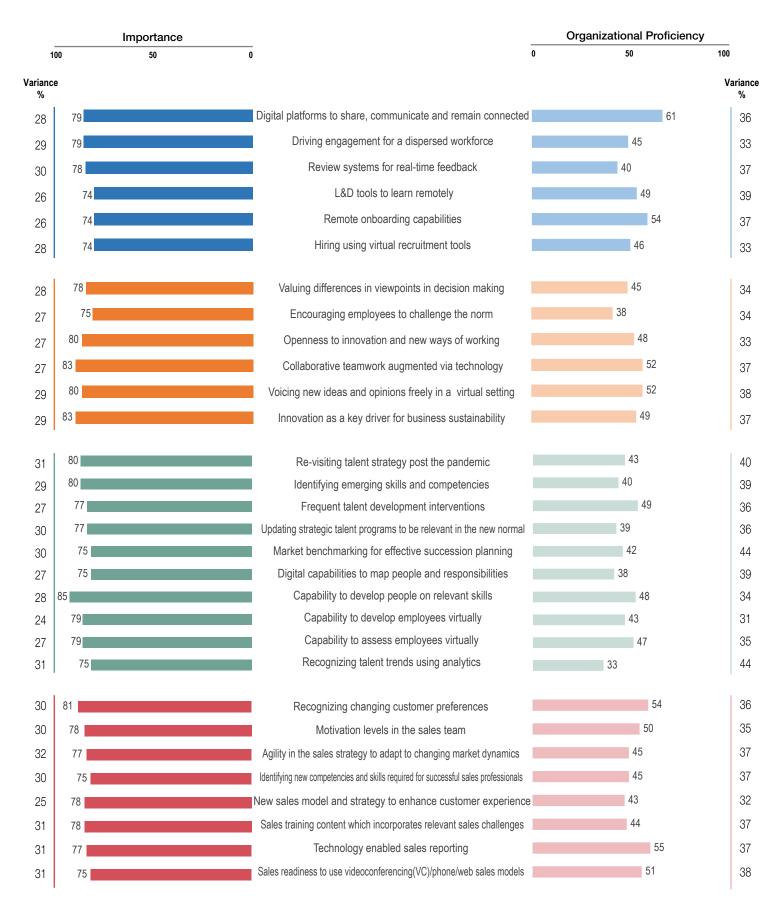






Bringing it all together: SmartHR Solutions

## Bringing it All Together - Statement Wise Analysis



## **SmartHR Solutions**

The pandemic has accelerated the trends predicted for the "Future of Work" in an unprecedented manner. With parameters for success being redefined with every passing year, the only way forward is by identifying, improvising and implementing systems that help us flourish in this 'New Normal."



#### **Smart Learn**

Use Smart Learn to link PMS data with LMS to offer immediate skill upgrades and improve results. Align with current and emerging business needs combining bite-size online learnings, perceptive inputs and stimulating conversations through peer learning.



## **Smart Culture**

Keep track: What gets measured, gets done: Developing a culture of high performance, accountability, collaboration and respect is rewarding for all. Use of advanced analytics to improve managerial effectiveness and guide targeted internal communication campaigns to reinforce organizational values



Dispersed, (yet) Connected



#### **Smart Talent**

Know the talent you have and the talent you need: Use quality assessments to help your people understand talent strengths, gaps and skills development needs through highly customized digital assessments platforms that offer automated and role specific assessments with no human intervention



Strategy, People and Execution – alter strategy to capture changing customer preferences, redefine the success profile to assess the current capabilities and align with the new requirements and use technology to leverage data-based insights to improve on-ground execution.



#### **SmartHR Solutions**



#### **Smart Learn**

To improve the overall proficiency of organizations in managing employee experiences digitally, HR departments need to look at balancing all aspects of the employee life cycle and exploring new ways in which technology can be leveraged to interact with existing and new systems.

In our analysis, we specifically uncovered challenges organizations face in managing performance reviews digitally and in improving the effectiveness of learning mechanisms and platforms.

The changing business environment today requires organizations to adapt to an always-belearning approach. A potential area where organizations can look at investing are Smart Learn Solutions, which can help integrate real-time performance data with a learning management system, offering skills based on real-time requirements.



#### **Smart Culture**

Free-flowing conversations and the freedom to express opinions contributes towards keeping engagement and innovation levels high. A largely dispersed workforce and the psychological impact of the pandemic, however, is likely to fan insecurities and impede ideation and collaboration in a virtual setting. In addition, as organizations are increasingly showcasing a lack of tolerance for errors, which is further likely to inhibit inclusion and appreciation of divergent viewpoints – directly impacting engagement levels and the rate of innovation.

For organizations to succeed in the new normal and sustain in the long run, leaders need to foster a culture where employees can voice their ideas without fear of reprisal or admonition to enhance creativity and innovation. Most people recognize that culture takes time to build, and one way organizations can ensure adherence to the code is by measuring the progress made at each level.

What gets measured gets done: organizations can leverage technology to collect regular feedback from the employees using culture surveys, use the data to guide development initiatives to improve managerial effectiveness and launch targeted internal communication campaigns to reinforce organizational values.



#### **Smart Talent**

Our data shows that not many organizations have revisited their talent strategies post the pandemic, to ensure relevance in the new normal. Our data also shows that organizations do not leverage analytics to proactively recognize emerging talent trends and deploy digital capabilities to map people and responsibilities. When the skills required are changing faster than ever, and talent is at a premium, organizations need refreshed talent and workforce development strategies to attract, develop, engage and retain the best talent.

Covid-19 has accelerated digital transformation initiatives – CHRO's need to consider tools and methodologies that make it easier to connect people to responsibilities based on a deeper understanding of their skills and motivations, and connecting them with organizational goals. Digitization of talent strategy ensures higher efficiency and productivity for HR leaders and ensures a great end-user experience for their employees.

Knowing the talent you have and the talent you need is imperative in today's scenario. With a dispersed workforce, it is challenging for organizations to conduct in-person talent assessments, which have long

## **SmartHR Solutions**

provided critical inputs to HR to guide the talent strategy. A potential solution that organizations can consider is to use highly customized digital assessments platforms that offer automated and role-specific assessments with no human intervention for guick decision making.



#### **Smart Sales**

Our research shows that while most organizations are fairly proficient in recognizing changing customer preferences, not many are focused on re-aligning their sales strategy to meet the changing market dynamics. With a weak sales go-to-market strategy, organizations may find it difficult to offer a great customer experience, lose brand equity and fail to deliver consistent results.

To address these challenges, we believe that organizations need a transformative approach to relook their sales or customer engagement strategies from three main perspectives – Strategy, People and Execution. First, sales leaders need to reconsider the strategic focus of their sales engines – the vision, mission and strategy for the team and how it aligns to the organizations goals. Also, leaders need to relook their sales structures to ensure a high touch experience for customers in the new normal.

From a people perspective, organizations also need to redefine the sales success profile (this may be the hardest change), as digital fluency was forced on sales teams in the pandemic. Going forward, salespeople, managers, and leaders will need a refreshed skill-set, more in line with the changing rules of market engagement. This will help the organization align sales roles, incentive plan, and more which, will help uplift the motivation levels of the team.

And lastly, organizations must make use of technology to improve on-ground execution. To win in the changing world, sales teams need to excel at leveraging data-based insights using digital reporting tools. Organizations need the right mix of tools and practical process training for the sales team to communicate virtually, using methods such as online video, email, and social selling.

#### **Authors**

#### **Co-Authors**



Saurabh SavyaSachi Program Manager Right Management India saurabh.savyasachi@right.com



Archit Tandon
Project Leader
Right Management India
archit.tandon@right.com



Ishana Singh Sr. Consultant Right Management India ishana.singh@right.com

#### **Contributors**



Prashant Pandey
Country Manager
Right Management India
prashant.pandey@right.com



Ashish Jain VP-Consulting Services Right Management India ashish.jain@right.com



Shivpriya G. Project Leader Right Management India shivpriya.g@right.com

#### **Design & Marketing**



Ritesh Hellan
Sr. Manager - Marketing & Communications
Right Management India
ritesh.hellan@right.com

#### ABOUT TALENT SOLUTIONS RIGHT MANAGEMENT

Talent Solutions combines our leading global offerings RPO, TAPFIN-MSP and Right Management to provide end-to-end, data-driven capabilities across the talent lifecycle. Leveraging our deep industry expertise and understanding of what talent wants, we help organizations address their complex workforce needs. From talent attraction and acquisition to upskilling, development and retention, we provide seamless delivery, leveraging best in breed technology, and extensive workforce insights across multiple countries at scale. To learn more, visit www.talentsolutions.manpowergroup.com.

Right Management is our global talent management offering for outplacement, career management and leader development solutions.

#### JOIN THE CONVERSATION







For more information on Talent Solutions Right Management, visit: www.rightmanagement.co.in







