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HRBP Quarterly

Authors

Royce Brosseau
Abhilasha Gupta
Chad Moore
Khrystian Pereira
Akshita Singla
Shaileja Verma

Creative

Brittany Fritz

Editor

Meghan Cortez

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Letter From the Editor

HR leaders find performance management to be an ever-important issue and consistently a top priority. It can be hard to get right; yet getting it right can be critical for business outcomes. Our featured article and infographic discuss performance management strategies HRBPs can help their organizations adopt to support leaders and managers to get the process right.

Performance management can also be a common pain point for managers who are tasked with helping their teams achieve greater outcomes, making it a critical, yet sometimes painful, element of the talent management process. Managers, as well as HRBPs, also play a key role in cultivating a team culture and ensuring the well being of their employees. Explore our new spotlight article to uncover how to deal with team and personal burnout in the workplace.

While this issue aims to prepare you for performance management conversations and processes that typically occur at the end of annual review cycles, it also equips you to address ever-evolving issues such as pay transparency, AI and enhancing the employee experience.

We hope you enjoy this issue.

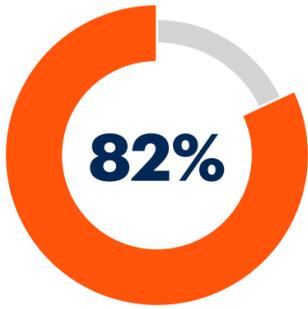


Why Performance Management Is Failing

By Royce Brosseau



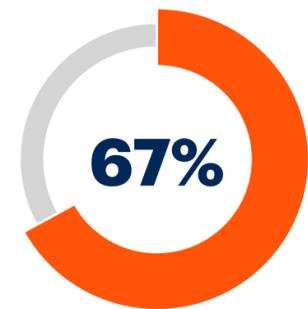
Performance management is top of mind for HR professionals, especially as performance reviews are approaching. However, performance management is frequently viewed as not worth the time and effort. Past fixes focused on reducing effort, but HR should reprioritize and focus future changes on increasing performance management's utility.



82% of HR leaders say **performance management is ineffective** at achieving its primary objective.



The good news is that **81% of HR leaders understand this and are making changes.**



67% of organizations said the purpose of their performance management changes focus on **reducing the time and effort of performance management.**

HR leaders are focusing on the wrong thing.

Counterintuitively, **decreasing effort** actually has a **negative impact on workforce performance.**



Effort Is Too High

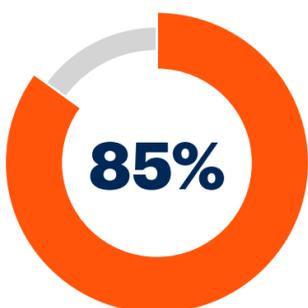
- Not user-friendly
- Too much time required
- Requires extensive energy
- Asking too much of managers and employees
- Cumbersome technology
- Overly complex

Utility Is Too Low

- Disengaging and unmotivating
- Built for individuals, not collaboration
- Not aligned with business needs
- Little line of sight to business priorities
- Not relevant to work
- Inaccurate and unfair



Focusing on reducing effort reduces workforce performance by **16.6%**.



85% of employees perceive performance management to be **worth the time and effort when it has high utility.**

The focus should be on increasing utility, not decreasing time and effort.

Regardless of how much time and effort is actually spent on performance management, employees perceive performance management to be worth the time and effort when it has high utility.

n = 132; 9,438
Source: 2019 Gartner Performance Management Benchmarking Survey

3 Strategies to Increase Performance Management Impact

By Abhilasha Gupta



Changing employee and business expectations cause HR professionals to rethink performance management approaches. Learn how HR professionals can help organizations drive performance management impact for employees and the business.

Throughout industries and geographies, organizations have relentlessly pursued improvements to performance management. Many are focused on improving the quality and frequency of performance feedback; others are updating their processes to make them more informal and less time-consuming for employees and managers. Despite these investments, most managers and employees continue to be dissatisfied with performance management. Our research shows 48% of managers view their organization's performance management systems as ineffective.¹

Traditionally, performance management's primary goal has been to assess employee performance. However, today it provides input for many elements of the talent management process. Organizations rely on performance management data to inform compensation, promotion and succession-planning decisions as well as to drive employee performance,

development and engagement. Moreover, employees increasingly look at performance management to provide development opportunities, recognition and evidence of how their work affects organizational priorities. These changes in the business environment place new pressures on performance management.

Our research indicates 62% of HR leaders agree performance management does not keep pace with business needs.² They recognize current performance management processes ineffectively drive business performance. The most common complaints about performance management are:

- It's a time-consuming process.
- It holds employees accountable for past performance instead of focusing on the future.
- It is not adaptable to different business contexts.
- It undermines effective teamwork.

To address these issues, 81% of HR leaders are trying to fix their performance management systems.² Many are focused on reducing the effort managers and employees must put into performance management by instituting fewer documentation requirements, eliminating ratings or reducing the number of formal performance management steps.

While these efforts have helped many organizations, they are not significant enough to diminish the widespread discontent with performance management among managers and employees. Interestingly, our research indicates focusing on reducing the effort managers and employees must put into performance management has significant negative effects.

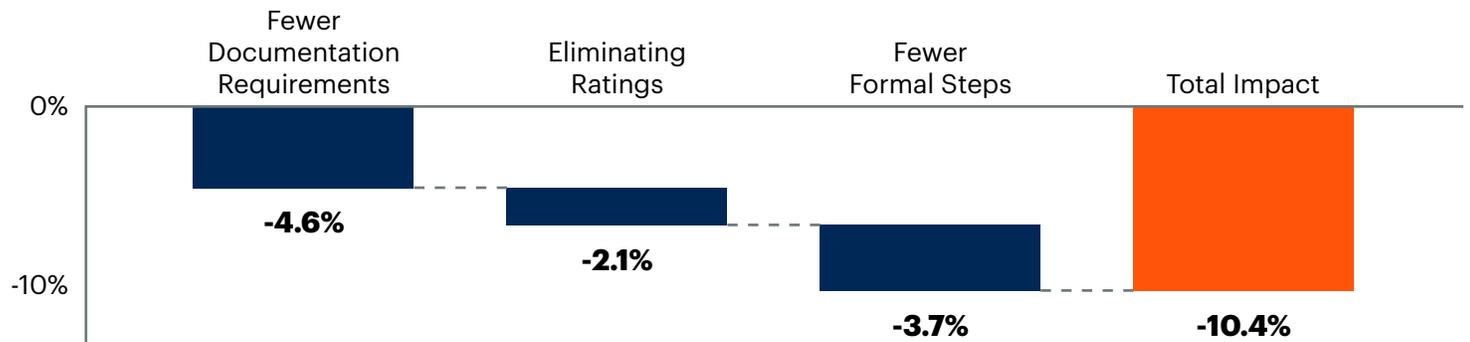


62% of HR leaders agree performance management does not keep pace with business needs.²

It diminishes employee perception that performance management is worth the time and effort. Common strategies for reducing effort include instituting fewer documentation requirements, eliminating ratings and reducing the number of formal performance management steps. However, if employees don't perceive performance management to be worth their time, they will not believe it can meet their needs (see Figure 1).

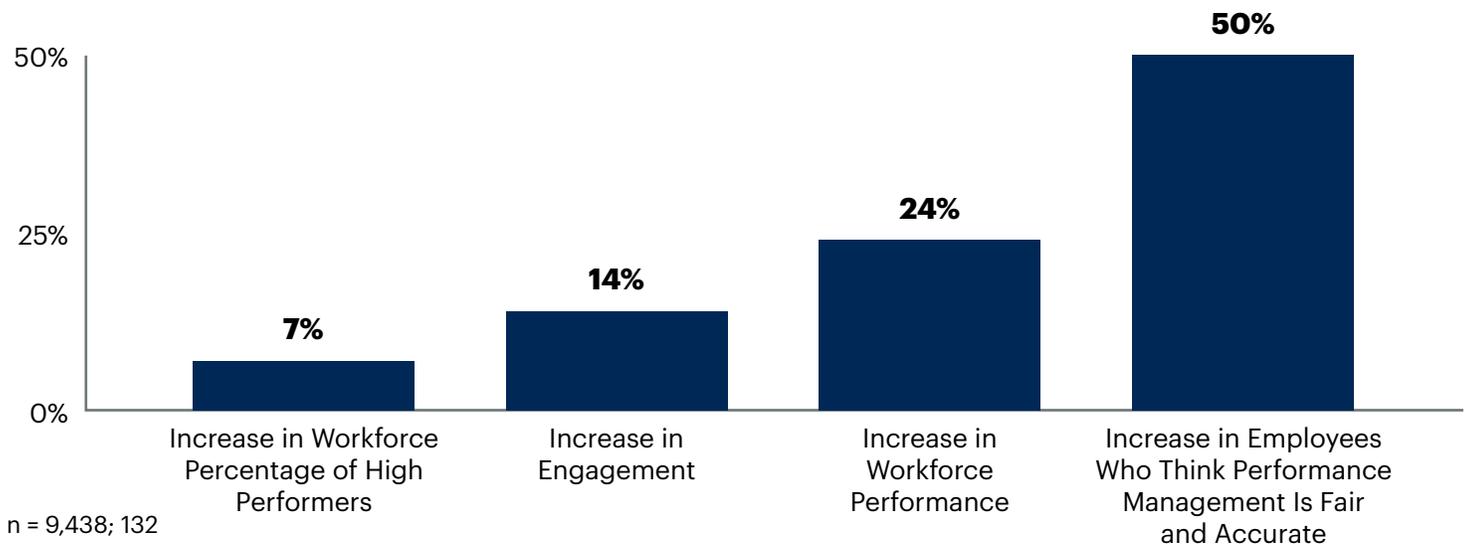
To better drive impact, organizations need to look beyond traditional practices to increase the utility of performance management. Performance management utility shows how performance management demonstrably delivers what employees need to perform and helps the organization achieve business goals. Maximizing utility has substantial positive effects on workforce performance, engagement and employee perceptions of performance management's fairness (see Figure 2).

Figure 1: Effects of Reducing Effort on Employee Perceptions of Performance Management



n = 9,438
 Source: 2019 Gartner Performance Management Employee Survey

Figure 2: Utility Increases Effects on Performance, Engagement and Fairness



n = 9,438; 132
 Source: 2019 Gartner Performance Management Employee Survey; 2019 Gartner Performance Management Benchmarking Survey

Organizations can align performance management practices with key business needs by implementing these three key strategies:

- 1. Business-Driven Strategy** — Enable the business to customize performance management to meet changing business needs.
- 2. Employee-Owned Strategy** — Align performance management to employee needs by providing employees with the individualized support and opportunities they need to learn and grow.
- 3. Work-Centered Strategy** — Adapt performance management practices to drive performance in interconnected workflows.

Business-Driven Strategy

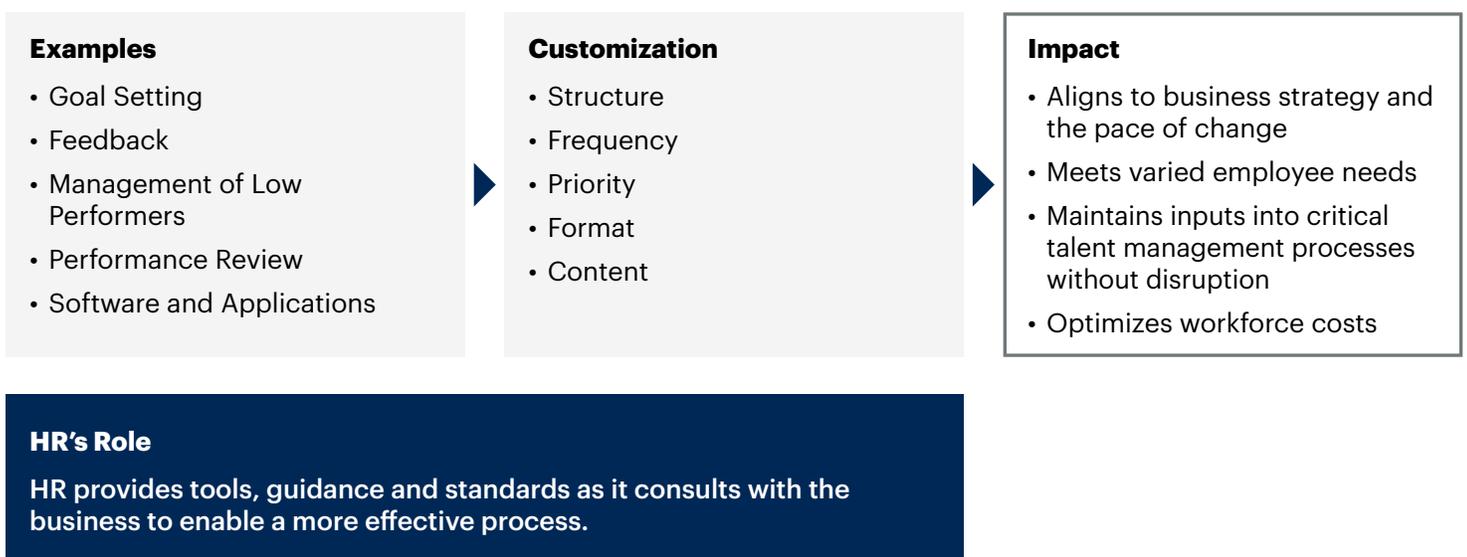
To maintain consistency and quality standards, organizations rely on HR to design and communicate the performance management process to the business. However, this centralized process fails to align with rapidly changing business needs because HR is not connected closely enough to the business to gather frequent, high-quality feedback and make effective design decisions.

Enable the Business to Customize Performance Management

HRBPs must help business units customize the performance management process to meet changing business needs. If implemented effectively, this strategy can have up to 10% positive impact on performance management utility. HRBPs can (see Figure 3):

- **Act as Performance Consultants** — HRBPs can act as consultants to the business and provide them with knowledge and tools to tailor the process. They can help business leaders evaluate the best opportunities for customization.
- **Ensure Core Standards** — HRBPs can partner with the central performance management team to establish core standards that ensure performance management continues to provide inputs to other talent management processes.
- **Establish Credibility** — HRBPs can facilitate communicating the business rationale for customizing performance management to business leaders and ensure the organization’s goals for performance management are consistently shared with all employees.

Figure 3: Business-Driven Performance Management

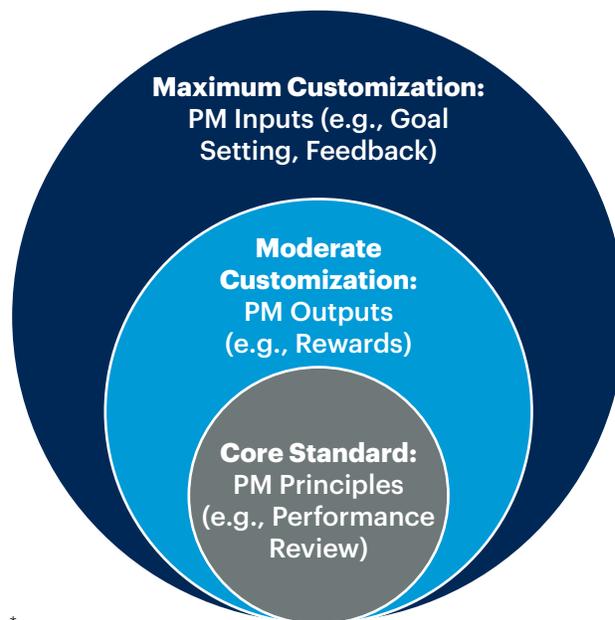


Source: Gartner

JadeAdvantage's* Model of Performance Management Flexibility

JadeAdvantage* clearly outlines the boundaries for business-unit-level innovation based on performance management's core philosophy and value drivers (see Figure 4). Rather than directing the design, HR acts as a consultant, advising the business on approaches for customizing performance management.

Figure 4: JadeAdvantage's* Model of Performance Management Customization



Source: Adapted from JadeAdvantage*

* Pseudonym

Examples of Each Type of Customization

Maximum Customization: PM Inputs (e.g., goal setting, feedback)

- Goal-setting process and timing is adaptable for leaders throughout the business, providing the opportunity to emphasize different strategies.
- Coaching and performance feedback structure and cadence are frequently adapted, as leaders emphasize different time frames for success and different growth models for their business' unique talent needs.

Moderate Customization: PM Outputs (e.g., rewards)

- Merit increases are kept standard throughout the organization for consistent planning.
- HR partners with the business to enable flexibility in timing of incentive programs when annual incentives do not effectively drive performance through spot bonuses or quarterly incentives.

Core Standard: PM Principles (e.g., performance review)

- Core standards include specific practices (the performance review) and overarching philosophies (identifying high and low performers).
- The performance review, a key component, provides consistent data for the business, ensures legal compliance and facilitates other talent management processes.

Employee-Owned Strategy

The high variability of employee needs makes it difficult for HR to diagnose and implement performance management solutions. Moreover, HR has inadequate insight into and understanding of employee needs. Managers lack the ability and bandwidth to properly coach and develop employees. Forty-five percent of managers lack confidence to develop the skills employees need today.³

Align Performance Management to Employee Needs

HRBPs must engage employees as owners, and not consumers, of performance management. If implemented effectively, this strategy can help increase performance management utility by up to 19%. They can:

- **Collect In-Depth Feedback** — Conduct detailed interviews with individuals in their business

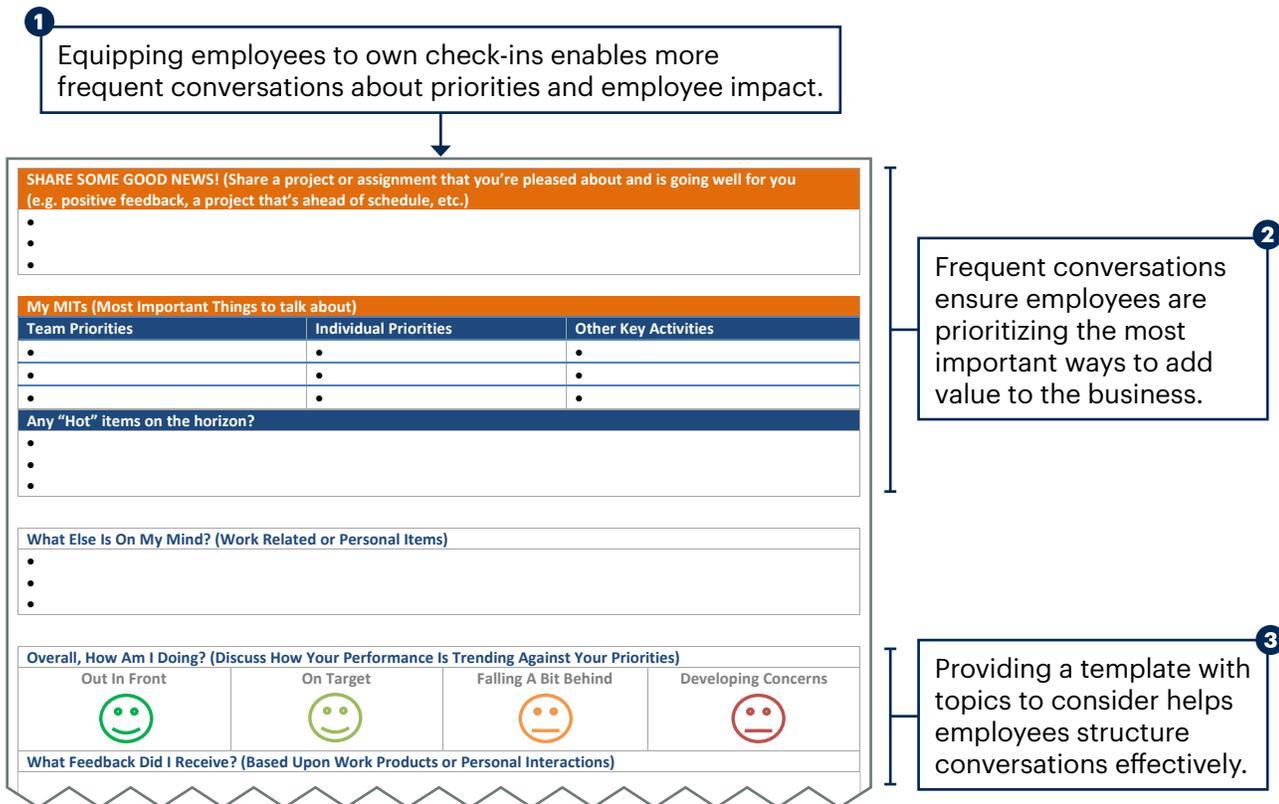
units to identify specific pain points related to the current performance management process and help the central design team understand ground-level challenges faced by employees.

- **Provide Structured Guidance and Tools** — Provide tools and guidance to employees to help them create their own individualized experiences.

BP US Lower 48's Guide for Employee-Owned Conversations

In 2016, US Lower 48 began providing employees with a check-in guide they can use to structure conversations and receive frequent feedback to keep up with business priorities. US Lower 48 also encouraged employees to share their check-in agenda with their managers in advance to ensure their manager has an opportunity to prepare and consider what feedback to provide (see Figure 5).

Figure 5: BP US Lower 48's Conversation Guide for Employee-Owned Check-Ins



Source: Adapted from BP US Lower 48

Work-Centered Strategy

Many organizations have organized work around teams, where tasks cannot be accomplished without diagnosis, problem solving and collaboration among all team members. However, typical performance management practices limit employees' insight into how their work connects with the work of their colleagues.

Employees who set goals individually lack the understanding they need to prioritize and understand how their individual goals fit into their team and peers' objectives. Furthermore, individual development approaches encourage employees to only share development areas with their managers and hide them from their peers.

Adapt Performance Management Practices to Drive Performance Across Interconnected Workflows

HRBPs can improve performance management utility by adapting current practices to drive the performance of employees with interconnected workflows. If implemented effectively, this strategy can have up to 8.5% positive impact on performance management utility. HRBPs can:

- **Establish Accountability** — Help employees establish exactly what outcomes they are accountable for delivering and how they fit into the priorities of the rest of the business.
- **Catalog Team Strengths and Development Areas** — Encourage teams to maintain a shared repository where team members can log individual strengths they can teach to others and areas they are seeking to develop.

GFG Alliance's Collaboration-Mapping Worksheet

GFG Alliance's new approach to performance encourages employees to establish their individual accountability for delivering outcomes aligned to the business plan. Employees then share their individual objectives with their teams and peers to give and receive feedback on what they should be accountable for delivering. Their accountability-mapping process helps employees purposefully map out with whom and how they will need to collaborate to deliver on their piece of the plan (see Figure 6).

Conclusion

In today's digital business environment, HRBPs must help organizations drive new processes aligned with rapidly changing business needs. They can help organizations increase performance management's utility for business and employees by acting as consultants and providing the required tools and knowledge.

Endnotes

* Pseudonym of JadeAdvantage is an amalgamation of multiple research conversations presented to represent tactics companies can employ.

¹ 2018 Gartner Manager Insight Survey, n = 4,949

² 2019 Gartner Performance Management Benchmarking Survey, n = 132

³ 2017 Gartner Manager Effectiveness Survey, n = 7,309 employees; "Email Statistics Report, 2015-2019," The Radicati Group, Inc.; "How Much Time Do We Spend in Meetings? (Hint: It's Scary)," The Daily Muse.

Figure 6: GFG Alliance's Collaboration-Mapping Worksheet

Excerpt

For Priority Accountability #1:				
1	2	3	4	5
People I need help from	What I need from this person	Impact of this help being/not being received	Health of this relationship/availability of this resource	What I need to do to secure this help

Source: Adapted from GFG Alliance

Real Estate's Insights Into Employee Workplace Preferences

By Staff



HR professionals can use these insights and strategies from real estate executives to work together to create workplaces that meet employees' work needs and drive employee performance.

In many workspaces, significant opportunities exist to improve not only the employee experience but also employee performance, through workplace layout and complimentary amenities. While a great workspace can enhance the employee experience, it can also support better business outcomes. In fact, employees satisfied with their workplace are 16% more productive, 18% more likely to stay and 30% more attracted to the company over competitors.¹ In the workplace, there may be silent sufferers: those who don't speak about workplace issues, such as temperature, noise or space, to not disturb the status quo.

People may be embarrassed or hesitant to ask for what they need in the workplace to make it more

comfortable. However, as an HRBP, you are well-positioned to identify what those in your client groups need and value the most in the workplace. With these insights, you can effectively support a partnership between HR and real estate to cultivate workspaces that address employees' needs and wants, ultimately supporting better business outcomes. To create a favorable workplace, real estate strategists and HRBPs must understand:

- **Ways of Working and Happiness —** Understand what types of workstyles and spaces various employee groups prefer and where they're most productive.
- **Elements to Get Informal Shared Spaces Right —** Build business cases for the right workplace design choices to meet employee preferences in informal shared spaces.
- **Worthwhile Workplace Investments —** Discover which amenities are most valuable to gain a competitive advantage in the talent market.

While many of the direct insights from our real estate partners focus on changes that are easily made in office settings, the teachings and strategies illustrated here can be applied in a wider range of spaces to find a solution that is right for your organization.

5 Insights From Real Estate

You have the opportunity to adapt these five insights from our real estate partners to enhance employee performance and business outcomes within your client groups.

1. Flexible Work Is Key to Employee Satisfaction

After compensation, work-life balance is the most important attribute when attracting prospective employees to one company versus a competitor. Globally, employees rate work-life balance policies, such as partial telecommuting, as equally important as a 5% increase in current base pay.² Our 2017 Digital Workplace Survey shows 36% of employees considering a future career change to move outside of their company would do so because of work-life balance challenges.³ This presents an opportunity for you to build a case to introduce a formal telecommuting policy for employees.

In fact, employees who spend between 25% to 75% of their weeks working remotely are more likely to be satisfied with the office workplace overall.⁴ On average, employees said they would ideally spend 29% of their time working from home and 56% of their time in the corporate office.³ Flexible work can take many forms; complete teleworking isn't the only option. Flexible work can be adjusted work schedules, compressed workweeks or flexible shift and break arrangements. Overall, a balance of working inside and outside of the physical workplace is key to driving employee satisfaction.

2. Address Temperature, Technology and Noise

In many workplaces, informal shared spaces are places you can focus on to significantly increase employee satisfaction. The top three areas to address in shared spaces are temperature, technology and noise. By not focusing on satisfying employees' needs relative to these issues, organizations are forgoing major productivity gains (see Table 1).

Addressing temperature can significantly increase employee satisfaction. Temperatures in offices generally reflect a temperature formula tailored for men, leaving women feeling cold in the workplace.⁵ In response, our partners in real estate have seen some success with self-controlled thermostats and smart thermostats that adapt to an individual employee's preferences. These have the added benefit of reducing operating expenses and can even be leveraged to track space utilization, not to mention addressing the satisfaction of a large demographic of the workforce.

Technology should be top of mind, particularly when it comes to providing client groups with technology that can be used in an untethered environment and enable optimal use of shared and informal spaces. Dissatisfaction with technology in informal shared spaces can range from something as operational as not nearby power outlets to something more entrenched, such as IT's execution of the company's digital workplace strategy. In many organizations, the IT strategy is not well-aligned with the workplace or vice versa. Our research shows, for example,

Table 1: Informal Shared Space Attributes

Satisfaction Level	Attribute	Effect
<10% Dissatisfaction	Lighting	Improves employee productivity by 71%
<10% Dissatisfaction	Furniture	Improves employee productivity by 60%
>10% Dissatisfaction	Temperature	Improves employee productivity by 71%
>10% Dissatisfaction	Technology	Improves employee productivity by 71%
>10% Dissatisfaction	Noise Levels	Improves employee productivity by 66%
>10% Dissatisfaction	Variety	Improves employee productivity by 63%

Source: Gartner

almost half of employees' work is performed on a desktop PC (see Figure 1). In that environment, employees can't take optimal advantage of shared spaces if their main work technology is tethered to a workstation.

3. Design Choices Affect How Employees Work

Rather than focusing on providing the greatest variety of space types, teach employees how to use their existing space in a variety of ways (see Figure 2). While many people are comfortable working from a shared space at home, such as the kitchen table, people expect their own space at work because many employees have been socialized to feel entitled to a space. However, if cost pressures and shrinking capital budgets make that impossible for your business, choice — or at least the illusion of choice — can compensate. If employees can't have their own spaces, you can at least build a business case for them to have freedom in shared, informal workspaces.

Figure 1: Average Time Spent Across Devices Used for Work
Percentage of Respondents

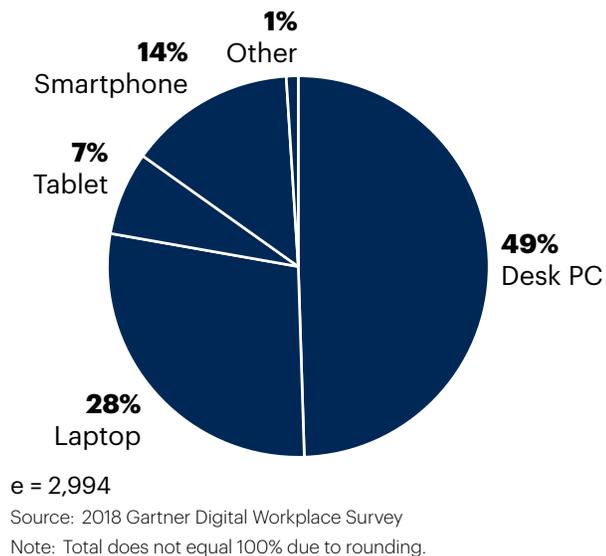
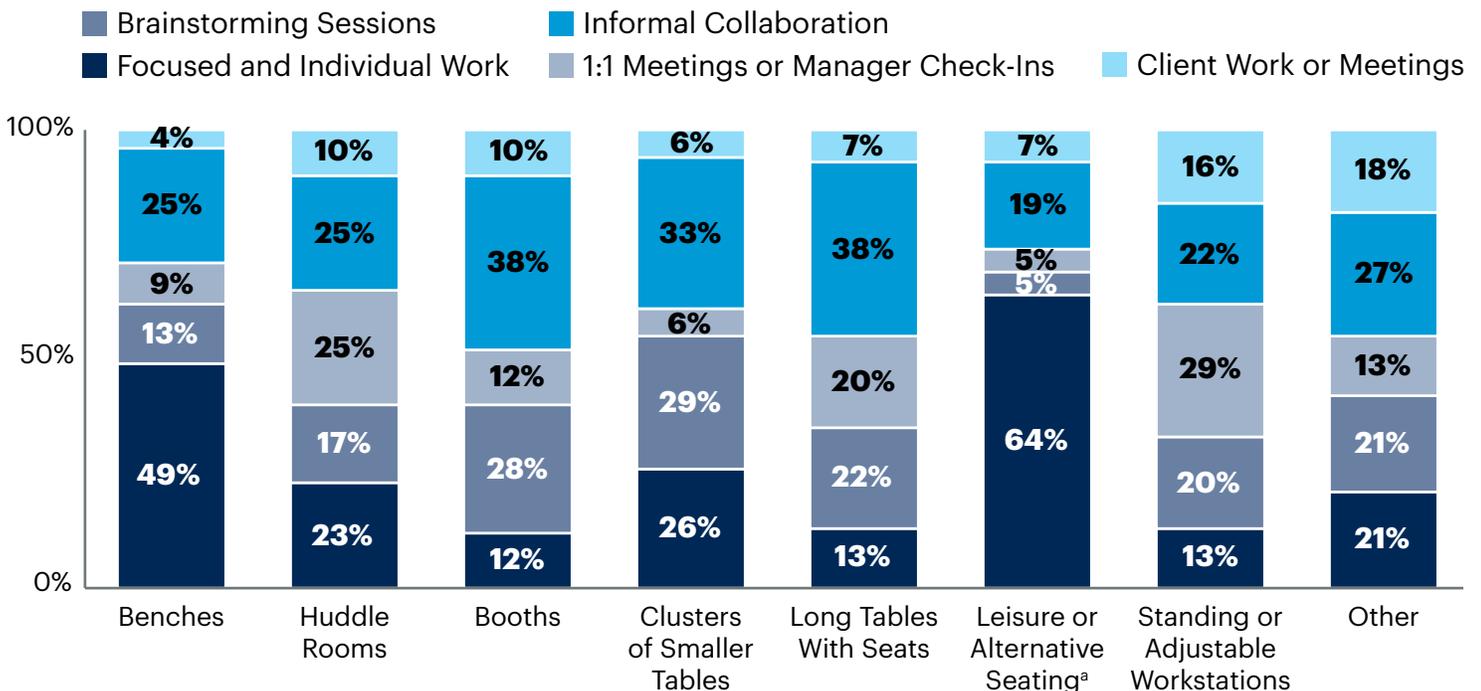
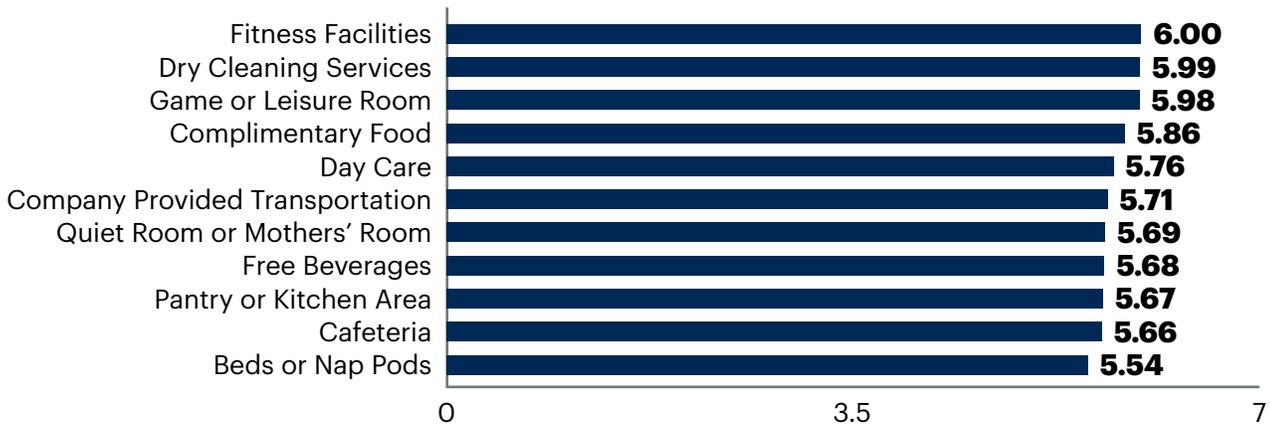


Figure 2: Types of Work Done at Each Space
Percentage of Respondents



n = 2,994
Source: 2018 Space Standards Spot Benchmarking
^aCategory includes couches, sing pods, coffee bars, etc.

Figure 3: Average Productivity Score of Respondents Satisfied With Each Amenity
Enterprise Contribution Index^a



n = 5

e = 658

Source: 2018 Gartner Workplace Impact Assessment

^a 1 = Lowest Productivity, 7 = Highest Productivity.

4. Services and Amenities Provide an Advantage in the Talent Marketplace

Smart amenity investments can help companies build an emotional connection between employees and their organization. Leisure rooms, company-provided transportation, fitness facilities and free food provide the biggest advantage in the talent marketplace.⁶ They are the top drivers of ongoing emotional connection to the workplace (such as pride and gratitude) and are a factor in employee attraction (see Figure 3).

5. Workplace Decisions Based on Generational Preferences Have a Shelf Life

Work preferences throughout generations are relatively flat since these preferences are typically dictated by life stage rather than age. Avoid making decisions based on generational preferences because — as with previous generations what makes sense for the millennial workforce today will shift to what preceding generations need in the future. For example, perceived demand for day care will likely shift and increase as millennials get older, whereas demand for game and leisure rooms could decrease.

Interestingly, people in seat less than a year have the strongest emotional connection to the workplace, and that emotional connection's strength diminishes over time. This is because most workplace education occurs at the start of an employee's career at the company — for example, onboarding — but then drops off. This finding suggests a parallel trajectory to employee

engagement and underscores the importance of continuous improvement to workplace identity.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Overall, workplace amenities can be used as more than just a means to attract and retain top talent; an effective use of amenities can boost productivity and improve business results.² To increase employee workplace satisfaction and productivity, HRBPs can:

- Partner with leaders in client groups to develop flexible or remote work options that make sense for their organization and clients.
- Identify and prioritize what clients need from shared spaces, and consider adjustments that support the whole workforce, rather than one demographic.
- Work with their real estate function to create shared spaces that truly address the needs of the workforce.
- Encourage leaders to invest in facilities and amenities that employees value to boost employee productivity at work.

Endnotes

- ¹ 2014 Gartner Real Estate Employee Impact Assessment
- ² 2015 Gartner Total Rewards Employee Preferences Survey
- ³ 2017 Gartner Digital Workplace Survey
- ⁴ 2018 Gartner Workplace Impact Assessment
- ⁵ "Chilly at Work? Office Formula Was Devised for Men," The New York Times.
- ⁶ Gartner Workplace Impact Assessment

How to Deal With Personal and Team Burnout

By Akshita Singla

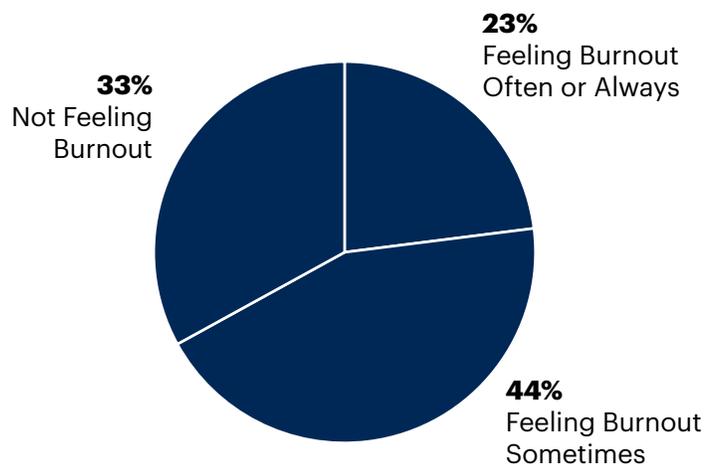


This article helps HR professionals recognize the signs of burnout in themselves and their team and provides them with strategies to mitigate burnout.

Organizations are facing an employee burnout crisis. Research shows that about two-thirds of full-time workers experience burnout on the job (see Figure 1).¹

Employee burnout is accompanied by high levels of absenteeism, turnover and low productivity. These are a direct cost for organizations, along with costs associated with psychological and

Figure 1: Percentage of Employees Experiencing Burnout



n = 7,500

Source: "Employee Burnout, Part 1: The 5 Main Causes," Gallup

physical problems of burned out employees. The average cost of psychological and physical burnout is \$125 billion to \$190 billion annually (see Figure 2).²

Burnout: An extended period of time where someone experiences exhaustion and a lack of interest in things, resulting in a decline in job performance

Therefore, you must understand and notice the signs of burnout and take active steps to prevent burnout among your employees to support business outcomes.

6 Signs of Burnout

The first step to deal with burnout is to recognize the signs of burnout among your employees and yourself.

1. Slipping Job Performance

One of the first signs of burnout in employees could be low productivity. Compare your team's past performance with current performance to assess productivity. As burnout tends to happen over an extended period, taking a long-term view might reveal whether you and your team are in a temporary slump or are experiencing more chronic burnout that needs to be addressed.

2. Silly Mistakes on Easy Jobs

A burned out employee may find it difficult to pay attention and concentrate, even on routine tasks. During burnout, employees feel stressed; therefore, their attention narrows to focus on negative elements. When stress becomes chronic, employees' narrow focus inhibits them from focusing on other fundamental elements of their role. This continues for a long time, and employees have difficulty paying attention to other things. Silly mistakes may be a symptom of burnout and can be a red flag or alert for managers and HRBPs to better support the employee in question.

3. Becoming Disengaged in Meetings

Another sign is lack of interest in meetings or discussions. Burned out employees are easily distracted and lack internal motivation for work, which leads them to disengage during meetings and discussions.

4. Absenteeism or Later Arrival

Burned out employees find it harder to get going in the morning and drag themselves into work every day. Additionally, over a long period of time, serious chronic stress can create serious health problems, such as digestive issues, heart disease, depression and obesity, among burned out employees. As a result of these issues, burned out employees are more likely to take sick leave and arrive late to the office.

5. Looking Tired and Run-Down

A clear sign of burnout is when your employees exhibit signs of extreme exhaustion or sleep deprivation. Exhaustion can be emotional, mental or physical.

Figure 2: Impact of Burnout on Employees



63% more likely to take sick leave



2.6 times as likely to seek a different job



13% lower confidence on performance

n = 7,500

Source: "Employee Burnout, Part 1: The 5 Main Causes," Gallup

6. Interpersonal Problems at Work

Burned out employees may exhibit extreme behavior when interacting with other colleagues or peers. For example, they may get into conflicts with colleagues more frequently or they may withdraw and stop talking to peers.

4 Strategies to Prevent Burnout

Take active steps to prevent yourself and your employees from burning out. Don't wait for employees to burn out to take action, as nearly seven in 10 people (69%) said they feel their employer "does not do enough to minimize burnout."³ HRBPs and managers can take the following steps to prevent burnout.

1. Encourage Work-Life Balance

Twenty-seven percent of employees cite work-life balance as an attrition driver.⁶ Managers and HRBPs can encourage work-life balance by encouraging healthy sleeping behavior. Managers and HRBPs should avoid bragging about how late they worked and setting an expectation among employees to deprioritize sleep. If managers absolutely must compose an email at 3 a.m., use a delayed delivery option so the message isn't sent until 8 a.m. If you must pull an all-nighter on a project, don't hold that up as exemplary behavior. Some organizations have started ensuring no employees stay in office late at night.⁴ In fact, organizations should promote work-life flow where employees integrate their personal life into weekdays as well rather than just waiting for weekends. Work and personal life should be allies rather than enemies.

2. Advocate for Your Team

One of the causes for burnout among employees is undue work pressure. Therefore, managers and HRBPs must stand up for themselves and their team when they see either suffering under a heavy workload. You must explain to management the dedication of your team toward the project, but at the same time, highlight the negative consequences of burnout on employees and the business. When managers or HRBPs see employees stretching beyond office hours every day for

a long period of time, it may be a sign that managers or HRBPs should quickly reassess the employee workload.⁵

3. Encourage Real Weekends and Holidays

Another cause of burnout is when people aren't given enough time to disconnect from work to rest, focus on other aspects of life and recharge. Less than half (43%) of employees said they use all their vacation days.³ Even employees who take time off check their email or take phone calls instead of totally taking a break from work. The top reason cited for this behavior is the worry of missing expectations and deadlines set by their managers. Therefore, managers and HRBPs must create an environment where taking time off is not only allowed but championed.

4. Promote Flexible or Remote Work Arrangements

Remote working policies improve productivity 80% of the time, and attrition is lowest among remote workers. Organizations have started investing in remote work arrangements due to the increasing benefits of it. Managers and HRBPs should promote remote and flexible work arrangements by maintaining visibility into team and individual workflows, connecting remote employees to the rest of the team and using multiple channels to maintain constant communication.

Stress is inevitable in the workplace and in life, which can contribute to burnout; however, organizations can and should play a more active role to prevent burnout and support the health and wellness of their employees.

Endnotes

- ¹ "Employee Burnout Is a Problem With the Company, Not the Person," Harvard Business Review.
- ² "Employee Burnout, Part 1: The 5 Main Causes," Gallup.
- ³ "How Managers Can Prevent Their Teams From Burning Out," Harvard Business Review.
- ⁴ "Sleep Well, Lead Better," Harvard Business Review.
- ⁵ "How to Help Your Team With Burnout When You're Burned Out Yourself," Harvard Business Review.
- ⁶ 2019 Gartner Departure View



Understanding AI in HR: Incorporating AI Into the HRBP Workflow

By Royce Brosseau

As AI becomes increasingly utilized, the HR professionals will likely evolve to accommodate this shift. This article looks at where AI will have the most impact in HR, its benefits for HRBPs and how HRBPs can prepare the workforce for an AI transformation.

AI's Benefits

As discussed in our Q2 HRBP Quarterly, artificial intelligence (AI) is a large umbrella term under which many different methods sit. These methods include:

- **Machine Learning** — Computer algorithms that perform a specific task without explicit instructions by utilizing statistical analysis to discover patterns
- **Natural Language Processing** — Algorithms that allow for the processing and analyzing of

large amounts of natural language data (e.g., articles, news stories)

- **Optimization** — Algorithms that find the optimum solution to a big data problem when given a set of parameters to optimize (e.g., where to put our next store given a set of demographic, rent, and location parameters)

AI will benefit HR primarily by augmenting existing time-intensive processes, making them more manageable at a greater scale and automating administrative tasks — allowing HRBPs to spend more time on strategic work. Again, these AI methods are very good at doing one task but fail when putting many pieces together. This is where HRBPs can step in and bridge the gap to make informed and effective strategic recommendations for the business.

Where AI Matters Most in HR

While AI will have a sweeping effect throughout HR, AI will have the most substantial impact on few processes. These processes are enabled by AI's ability to sift through massive datasets or perform highly repetitive tasks quickly, and they are augmented by AI's ability to find patterns in noisy data.

AI excels in the automation of high-volume repetitive tasks. For example, as online job searching sites such as LinkedIn and Indeed

become more ubiquitous, recruiters must sift through an ever-increasing amount of job applications. As these services simplify the process for the applicant, they increase the workload for the recruiter, but AI can help. AI methods — in particular, machine learning and natural language processing — are adept at filtering resumes and other application materials to the level where recruiters can apply their necessary judgment in later rounds of the application process.

AI's potential to affect learning and development (L&D) is also substantial. Online learning platforms can utilize AI to craft custom learning trajectories for each employee. Using data on current and future skills needs, these systems can help assure employees are accessing content that will help them in their current role but also prepare for future skills needs before they are required. Furthermore, AI analysis on existing and future skills requirements for roles can unlock the potential for those in the L&D space to develop trainings on skills for the future, not just for the present.

HRBPs are frequently expected to act more strategically, and 84% of HRBPs say their internal clients expect them to use data when making talent-related recommendations.¹ AI can augment this increasingly necessary capability of HRBPs, allowing them to make more informed and data-backed recommendations.

HRBPs have access to massive datasets on talent and employee data that are frequently very hard (or impossible) to analyze without significant mathematical knowledge, but AI can bridge the gap. This transition will likely require HRBPs to develop more advanced data analytics skills to interpret the outputs of AI. AI can do much of the heavy lifting and summary analysis, enabling the HRBP to use that analysis to make strategic recommendations for the business, ultimately boosting HRBPs' value in an HR function.

Preparing for AI's Workforce Transformation

Both CHROs and CEOs agree the number tasks conducted by AI will increase over the next three years, with CHROs expecting a tripling of tasks conducted by AI and CEOs expecting the number to double.² Regardless of the exact

impact, HRBPs will be at the forefront of this transformation, serving as the most frequent connection between the business and HR.

HRBPs wear many hats in the HR function, and therefore, they are frequently familiar with many HR processes. This ultimately means HRBPs can be some of the best evaluators of their function's ability to incorporate AI into existing workstreams. HRBPs without this advanced knowledge of AI won't be able to do this on their own. But professionals with more AI technical experience will work in tandem with HRBPs to identify what processes are preserved in an AI world and which are enhanced, enabled or eliminated. This culminates in the creation of a capability inventory that can set the foundation for the future of AI in HR at an organization.

Since HRBPs are valuable partners with deep insight into HR processes, they can play a strategic role in analyzing AI's potential impact on the business. Similar to creating an inventory of processes, HRBPs can work with other HR professionals and HR leaders to identify how roles in the business will exist once AI is fully implemented. Roles can be factored into four buckets:

- 1. Eliminate and automate** — Roles that are completely eliminated due to AI methods' complete automation of their tasks.
- 2. Rightsize** — Especially where tasks can be augmented or simplified with AI, roles may not need to exist at their existing capacity, with AI doing much of the heavy lifting.
- 3. Preserve** — Some roles will not see much change in an AI world.
- 4. Enhance** — Some roles will be expanded and become more developed as a result of AI. These are roles that will see a large increase in demand as more and more organizations facilitate widespread AI implementation.

Endnotes

¹ 2019 Gartner HR Professional Priorities Survey

² CEO 20 Pulse on the Next-Generation Workforce

HRBPs' Role in Pay Transparency

By Khrystian Pereira

HR professionals are well-positioned to build a case for pay transparency to boost employees' confidence and increase their intent to stay, ultimately bettering business outcomes. This article will help HRBPs understand the state of pay equity and partner with relevant stakeholders to support a pay transparency strategy.

Pay Transparency Today

In order to understand pay transparency you must first understand pay equity can help ensure individuals inside and outside of protected groups are compensated fairly for comparable work. We have concluded that the average gender pay equity gap across industries is 27% of total compensation (see Figure 1).¹ This pay discrepancy often manifests as a pay gap between men and women doing comparable work. While much of this gap can be explained by an individual's choice of career, organizational factors and human capital factors, gender is the only reason that explains the 7.4% of the role-to-role gap that remains.¹ To correct role-to-role pay gaps, you can support pay transparency initiatives to change the narrative around transparent compensation at your organization.

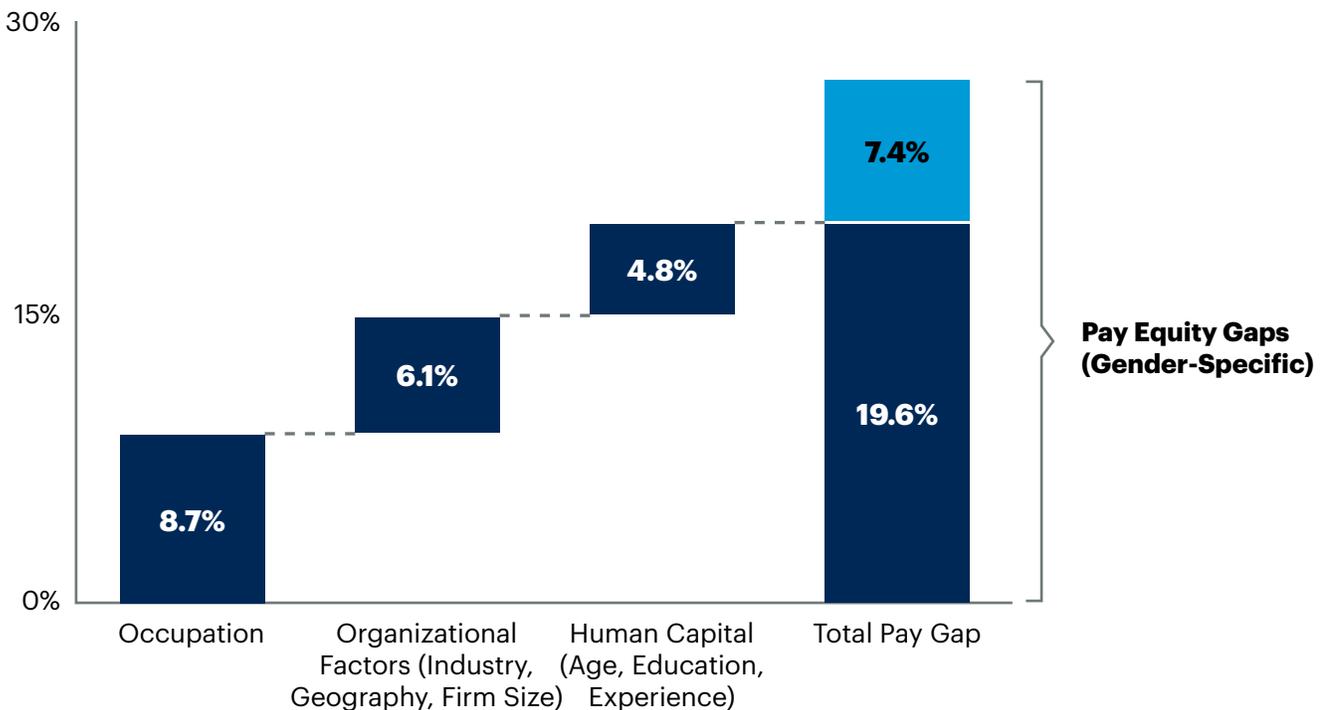
In recent years, organizations have had an increased focus on pay equity, though few have completely eradicated pay gap discrepancies. Organizations in countries with low rates of unemployment find it tougher to compete for

Gartner defines pay transparency as the extent to which an organization proactively shares compensation information with employees.

critical talent. This limited pool of qualified candidates causes organizations to experience bubbling up in pay inequality. When organizations compete externally to attract the best possible talent, internal pay equity tensions arise.

Rather than adopting sustainable practices and processes to correct and prevent pay gaps, a handful of companies made ad hoc adjustments in 2018, leaving the door open for pay gaps to reemerge. Brian Kropp, chief of HR research at Gartner, predicts “organizations will make ad hoc adjustments that do not lead to lasting change.” Therefore, organizations must take steps to cultivate a culture of sustainable transparency to avoid compensation misunderstandings among employees.

Figure 1: Factors Explaining Gender-Specific Pay Equity Gaps



n = 505,438

Source: Adapted from Glassdoor data; Gartner (October 2018)

Organizations must consider the many readily available competing sources of pay information for employees. Social media and salary benchmarking websites (e.g., Glassdoor, Payscale, LinkedIn) have increased the availability of information and alert employees on a regular basis where they stand in the labor market. In addition, these online tools encourage discussions around pay and galvanize social and legislative emphasis on equity and fairness. As an HRBP, you play a vital role in influencing the implementation of pay transparency and managing perceptions of the topic within your client groups (see Figure 2).

Business Case for Pay Transparency

Knowing the benefits of pay transparency can help you build a business case for transparency initiatives at your organization to help manage employee perceptions. Organizations can increase employees' confidence in the organization by up

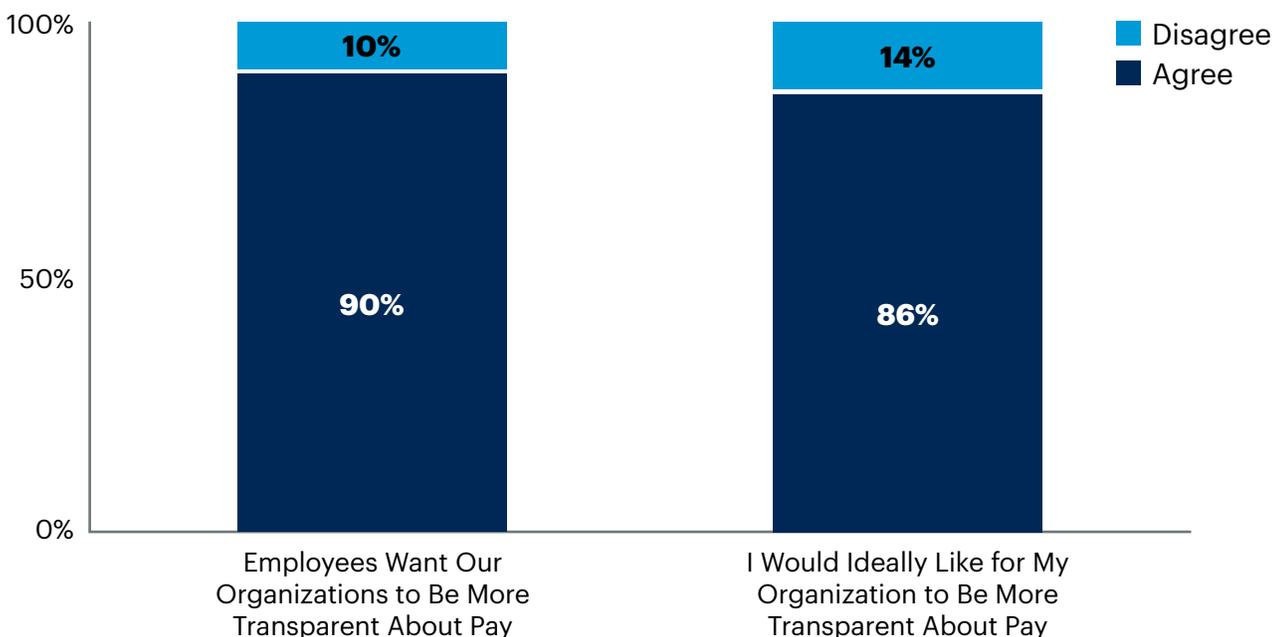
to 23% on average when they determine what pay information to share based on how pay topics:²

- Affect employees confidence.
- Align communications with already existing culture.
- Leverage managers to reinforce transparent messages initially communicated by business leaders and the rewards function.

This leads to an average of 9.6% increase in engagement and a 6% increase in intent to stay.² By cultivating a culture of pay transparency, you can help your business gain the trust of current and prospective employees. Ninety percent of employees and 86% of executives want their organizations to be more transparent about pay.³ Sharing the logic behind your organization's compensation strategy with employees can make it easier for them to understand and accept their compensation package. A blanket solution to sharing a compensation strategy across all organizations does not exist. Work with your business leaders to determine how to effectively

Figure 2: Employee Preferences and Total Rewards Executives' Views on Pay Transparency

Percentage of Total Rewards Executives



n = 109

Source: 2018 Gartner Pay Communication Benchmarking Survey

share information with employees based on what your workforce values and how pay topics affect their confidence in the organization.

Culture and Pay Transparency

If your organization wants to implement pay transparency, you can support these initiatives (and drive the effort forward) by connecting transparency to the integrity and accountability values already existing in your organization to drive the effort forward. You can incorporate elements of salary transparency, such as explanations for salaries of employees at different seniority levels, to help your business give employees an explanation of compensation without revealing every individual salary.⁴ The total rewards function is typically responsible for communicating compensation, yet as a business partner, you can help train managers to reinforce pay transparency messages.²

Actions HRBPs Should Consider

- **Gain Leadership Buy-In:** Discuss pay transparency with senior leadership. When making a business case for pay transparency, you must show the benefits of pay transparency. Thus, having executive team buy-in when implementing pay transparency initiatives will increase the likelihood of seeing the ROI on this initiative.
- **Embed Compensation Philosophy Conversations Throughout the Employee Life Cycle:** Partner with your total rewards and L&D teams to train managers and relevant HR groups to embed conversations about pay where relevant. For example, train managers to talk about pay during regular compensation cycles and train recruiters to integrate discussions about the compensation philosophy into the recruiting process. Having compensation conversations regularly throughout the employee life cycle can reduce the need of ad hoc solutions to counteract pay discrepancies and, in turn, create a transparent and sustainable methodology of setting and conducting pay.
- **Deliver a Transparent Message:** Be clear how you arrived at specific pay determinations. You can prepare your team to explain the differences in pay scale by providing the

details, such as education requirements, job description and tenure, used to arrive at the denominations. Consider partial transparency as a step toward full transparency. Your organization's values may be better suited for sharing salary ranges rather than specific amounts for every position. While partial pay transparency gives employees some idea of how their compensation compares to their colleagues, it still allows the organization some room to maneuver when determining the proper amount to pay each employee.⁵

Conclusion

As an HRBP, you must be ready to support your organization to address employees' growing demand for pay equity and transparency. Since ample compensation information is already publicly available, you can help your organization control the narrative by implementing pay transparency initiatives to avoid misunderstanding and wrong information from spreading among the employees in your organization.

Endnotes

- ¹ Adapted from Glassdoor data; Gartner (October 2018)
- ² 2018 Gartner Pay Communication Employee Survey
- ³ 2018 Gartner Pay Communication Benchmarking Survey
- ⁴ "Should You Share Your Salary With Co-Workers? Here's What Experts Say," Time.
- ⁵ "The 3 Levels of Salary Transparency," Recruiter Box.



How HRBPs Can Build Effective Business Cases

By Chad Moore

HR professionals must demonstrate their value by selling solutions that affect business goals. Building an effective business case for programs is a critical component of that role. This article explains how to construct an effective business case that connects to your client's objectives.

Today's HRBP role is multifaceted in its requirement of filling four very different, often competing, roles within the organization: operations manager, emergency responder, employee mediator and strategic partner.

Often, the strategic partner role falls to the wayside due to the urgency of the other three roles. It's not that HRBPs don't want to be strategic; they simply do not have the time. In fact, 83% of HRBPs say how much time they spend on strategic activities determines their overall effectiveness. Yet only spend 4% of their time with business partners outside of HR.¹ The top barrier identified by 48% of HRBPs is that senior leaders do not expect strategic support from them, and 45% say the design of their role also does not support this.

However, the role is changing, and as HRBPs, you are increasingly expected to be drivers of the business through talent initiatives. In fact, from 2015 to 2018, there was a 396% increase in the appearance of marketing and sales being a mentioned skill in HRBP job descriptions.¹ In the future, you will be business leaders who drive results through people. It will no longer be good enough to embark on a new performance management approach or employee engagement initiative because it's best practice. You will have to prepare a business case that demonstrates how HR connects to strategic goals, improves business performance and ultimately impacts the bottom line.

Follow these three steps to build an effective business case:

1. Identify critical business challenges.
2. Craft talent solutions to address challenges.
3. Develop and present your business case.

Identify Critical Business Challenges

To develop effective business cases, it will be imperative to have a deep understanding of your clients' goals, concerns and daily challenges. This connection builds your credibility as a partner and provides you with a framework to build talent solutions that meet your clients' unique needs. By taking these steps, you can become an HRBP that grows talent with your client rather than a top-down approach of imposing programs on your client groups.

A thorough needs analysis is the foundation of building a business case:

- **Meet with key stakeholders** — Set up meetings with leaders, managers and employees to better understand their work and challenges. During this meeting, seek to identify key business challenges, understand the process complexities and understand the biggest talent challenges from their perspective. If you don't have a solid grasp of how work is done, shadow an employee at meetings or through a key workflow to get more hands-on experience with their work.
- **Analyze internal and external data** — Review high-quality internal and external sources of information to improve your understanding of your client group's and organization's contexts. Potential sources of data include: sales volumes, employee engagement data, turnover statistics, recruiting metrics and diversity data. External information to be aware of can include an understanding of your top business and talent competitors, labor market trends and broader economic trends.
- **Review financial information** — Independently review the financial statements of your client group or organization, listen

to earnings calls and then debrief both experiences with your line client to ensure you understand the client group's and organization's recent performance.

- **Summarize a business unit's strategic plan** — Find and summarize a business unit's strategic plan and discuss key takeaways from your analysis with your client group's leaders. Brainstorm with colleagues how a business unit's stated strategic goals connect to ongoing talent goals.

Once you have identified your client group's needs, think critically about the solutions that address these challenges and how you might gain buy-in from the business to invest in those solutions.

Craft Talent Solutions to Address Challenges

As you address each challenge, map out the key elements of the challenge and potential solutions. Your solution must connect not only to talent metrics but also key business goals. Below is an example of how you could draw that connection for yourself using the data you collected during your needs analysis phase (see Table 1).

Table 1: Example of Connecting Business Challenges to Talent Solutions

Business Challenge	Connected Talent Challenge	Supporting Data	Proposed Talent Solution(s)	Measures of Success
Our clients are expecting the digital user experience of our product to improve. Our competitors are already outpacing us, and clients are leaving for better services.	Senior product managers have limited expertise in the latest trends in digital experience. We are losing specialists fast and struggling to find replacements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attrition is up by 15% year over year. • Average time to fill for product specialists is 120 days, up 30% from last year. • Turnover of product specialists is 2.5% higher than the overall company. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a campus hire program to bring in new talent with expertise in the latest technology. • Create a high-potential development program for product specialists. • Establish professional development resources for senior product managers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve client retention by 10% in two years. • Reduce time to fill for product specialists to 60 days. • Reduce the turnover of product specialists to company benchmark.

Source: Gartner

You will also want to work with your colleagues to test the reality of some of your ideas before proposing to your clients. For example, if your proposal is to create a campus hire program, you will want to meet with your recruiting manager to understand:

- If they have the capacity to support this type of program
- What the financial needs of a campus program are
- If the organization can support additional head count

If the program is not reasonably viable, you will not want to expend effort to gain buy-in from your client, who will later be disappointed by HR's inability to deliver the solution.

A critical component of your business case will be to identify the measures of success. Leaders will want to know, "What's in it for me?" By establishing these measures ahead of time, you can give them a preview of your initiative's expected return on investment. By clearly connecting your ideas to the outcomes that matter to leaders, you can secure buy-in for your program and demonstrate that HRBPs can drive business outcomes. However, be sure to track progress against these metrics. Leaders will hold you accountable to these measures, and you will need to continually evaluate and communicate the progress toward these.

Develop and Present Your Business Case

As you approach this step, your time with clients is typically limited. So, being efficient and effective with the presentation of your business case will be key to garner the support needed to move forward. Develop a short elevator pitch that explains your initiative so you can concisely and articulately present your case and build support.

As you craft your business case for leaders, ensure the following components are presented in this sequence:

- **Succinct summary of the business challenge** — Use the data gathered during your needs analysis and provide an overview of key business drivers requiring a talent intervention.

- **Best-practice data** — Highlight data supporting your solution (e.g., best-practice case studies from companies with similar challenges).
- **Details of the talent solution** — Connect the talent solution to the business challenge and provide a summary of what it involves. Provide enough detail for leaders to understand the solution without overloading the audience with excessive process details.
- **Call to action** — Tell your leaders what you will need from them, what you will need from their line managers and what you will need from their people. Provide them with talking points so they can become champions of the initiative with their teams.
- **Next steps** — Clearly outline the timelines for next steps as well as who will be responsible and what additional support will be required. Establish a cadence for follow-up on progress with the leadership team.

Common Pitfalls to Avoid

If you're embarking on this journey, you will inevitably face a few roadblocks and maybe make a few mistakes. That is OK. Below are a few of the most common pitfalls and how you can plan to avoid them.

- **Failing to forget preconceived notions:** When you work with your clients long enough, you develop some preconceptions about their business and about the individuals in that group. This process works best when it is as objective as possible. Be aware of your own biases and take time to reflect on where they may be influencing your conclusions.
- **Failing to get buy-in from business partners:** HRBPs often engage in this exercise, gather the data and return to their teams to come up with solutions. Be sure to pressure-test the solutions on a regular basis with your business partners before launching a full proposal. You may have to go back to them several times to refine your ideas, but the end result will be their full support.
- **Failing to clearly connect to business outcomes:** One of the key objectives of this process is to craft talent solutions that drive business results. Be sure to keep

that connection clear for your clients by drawing a direct line from your proposal to dollar/productivity results. For example, “by launching training in project management, we would expect projects to be completed two weeks faster and achieving \$50,000 more in revenue per quarter.”

Conclusion

As the HRBP role becomes more strategic, you will continually be called on to demonstrate value to the organization’s overall goals. By connecting these goals to the business goals you can create meaningful change for your clients. It’s no longer enough to be administrators. You will become stewards of the business and key players to help the organization achieve its goals.

Endnotes

¹ Gartner The State of the HRBP Role and Function for 2019



Market Assessment for Validating Job Descriptions

By Shaileja Verma



HR need to help the organization meet changing business needs. Traditionally designing job descriptions has been an internal assessment process. This article highlights how an external assessment framework can aid HRBPs in validating the job descriptions more effectively.

The state of the business environment is changing constantly. This reality has caused HRBPs to work in tandem with business leaders to ensure workforce skills are aligned

with current and future business needs. The requirement of skills is primarily dependent on the business need and is based on subjective evaluation of the business leaders' internal requirements.

These requirements are the basis for job role and job description creation and are subject to discussions between leaders and HRBPs. This approach can potentially lead to a skewed perspective on skills requirements because it does not factor in market trends and competitive intelligence.

Competitive job description analysis is a tool to confirm the job requirements created align with the industry standards and evolving business needs of industry leaders and key competitors.

The process ensures job descriptions are specific, including essential and evolving skills for the role that align with market standards and attract the right candidates.

What Is Job Description Analysis, and How Is It Conducted?

Job description analysis involves analyzing competitors' and market leaders' equivalent roles and job descriptions in terms of the role title, required job span, preferred job span, basic skills required and skills preferred. Depending on the role, this analysis can be used to compare roles inside and outside of your given industry.

To carry out an external assessment of job description analysis, HRBPs can:

- Assess the relevant job descriptions of a few key competitors from their career websites and build a basic framework (worksheet) of competitors' equivalent titles, job span, skills and overall qualitative job description design.
- Collaborate with their internal data analytics team to set up a system that crawls equivalent job descriptions of peers within or outside the industry and an internal algorithm that publishes results for common alternate titles, job span and job skills based on the relevant keywords or job title.

- Connect with third parties that offer extensive job description analysis reports based on customers' requests.

Gartner TalentNeuron is one such third-party vendor that provides comprehensive solutions and reports for market assessment of job role.¹ It harnesses company websites and job aggregators' websites as the key sources for gathering job descriptions. Once the job descriptions for a specified number of competitors are collected, a comprehensive summary is constructed as follows (see Table 1):

- The most common titles for each role
- The average years of experience for each role
- Basic skills and preferred skills common

The skills requirement is further analyzed as follows:

- 100% skills that represent the skills (basic) that are common for all peers
- 75% skills that represent the skills (basic) that are common for three-fourths of peers
- 50% skills that represent the skills (basic) that are common for half of peers
- 25% skills represent the skills (preferred) that are common for one-quarter of peers

Table 1: Example of Skills Summary Analysis From Gartner TalentNeuron

Role	Most Common Titles	Average YOE	Basic Skills	Preferred Skills
Risk Analyst	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security Risk and Compliance Analyst • Cybersecurity Risk Analyst 	3+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of compliance frameworks • Data analytics • Scripting experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security certification such as Certified Information Systems Security Professional or equal
Application Security Engineer/ Software Security Engineer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application Security Engineer 	3+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network/application/firewall security experience • Experience in security tools and coding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of network and web-related protocols • Project management

Source: Gartner TalentNeuron

The above analysis helps construct a skills-based funnel that gives insight into the percentages of skills requirement for the peers (see Table 2). This helps establish the levels of skills hierarchy (from 100% to 25% scale) of a role in terms of the skills that are imperative for the job role and the skills that are evolving as per market standards.

Limitations of Job Description Analysis

Job description analysis largely depends on the public availability of competitor’s job descriptions across their career websites or job aggregators. The composition of a competitor’s job description may not have all the key parameters outlined for the roles being analyzed. The titles of the competitor’s equivalent job roles may not be an exact match and can be overlooked as irrelevant during the analysis.

Conclusion

External assessment of job descriptions can help HRBPs set up the right job role requirements and better understand the business requirement. Although it does have a few limitations, if utilized optimally, it can aid in smoothing the role creation and recruitment process.

Endnote

¹ Gartner TalentNeuron provides talent analytics and advisory insights for areas such as strategic sourcing of labor, workforce planning, competitor analysis and diversity analysis.

Table 2: Example of Skills Funnel Analysis From Gartner TalentNeuron

Role	100%	75%	50%	25%
Risk Analyst	Knowledge of compliance frameworks	Data analytics skills and tools to create metrics and insights	One security certification such as Certified Informations Systems Security Professional or equal	At least one common scripting language (PERL, Python, Visual Basic Script, Bash, PowerShell, JavaScript or Ruby)
Penetration Tester	One with: Knowledge in various disciplines such as security engineering, system and network security, authentication and security protocols, cryptography or application security	Experience with penetration testing and pen testing tools	Scripting and programming experience (Python, Java, JavaScript, Ruby, C/C++, Java, Perl, Ansible, Docker) AND Understanding of Open Web Application Security and other software security best practices/testing frameworks	Security certifications such as Certified Informations Systems Security Professional or equal

Source: Gartner

