

2018 **TOP** **HR TRENDS** REPORT

A Study By

HR Summit
and Expo



The HR
Observer



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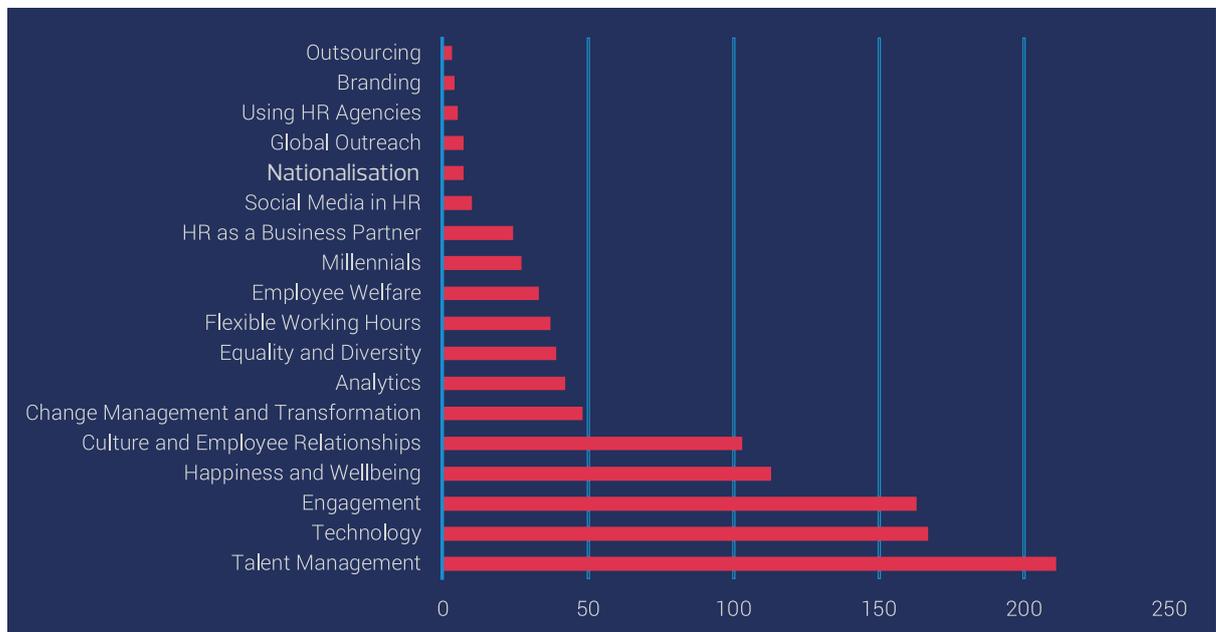
About this report

What are people professionals in the region focusing on as priorities right now? Exclusive research was conducted with over 1,200 HR and talent professionals at the 2017 HR Summit and Expo, to gauge the major trends that are likely to take place in 2018 and beyond.

The results of the research was further analysed by The Talent Enterprise and indicates that changes in the region's talent landscape are ever-changing and continue to unfold before us. The responses inspired confidence of the positive transformation not only in the way HR is perceived among employees, but also in the way it executes its priorities. At The Talent Enterprise, we are excited to witness the positive paradigm of change in the Human Resource sector.

Research results

18 HR Trends For 2018



Talent management

The majority of participants have identified Talent Management as the most prominent trend of 2018, that includes a wide array of activities, such as training, coaching, new recruitment practices, which showcases a clear direction of elevating the human capital of the organisation. This response showcases the true understanding of people's value, as one respondent pointed out that "employees are the heart of the organisation and drive it to ultimate success". This shift in attitude is a crucial step towards redesigning the future of work and transforming the workplace into truly an engaging and enjoyable zone.

HR technology and people analytics

Clearly, HR professionals recognized the importance of technology in the management practices of 2018, with particular emphasis on Artificial Intelligence. Participants mentioned, that "AI is likely to be integrated with current technological systems in 2018", "it is important to utilise the power of technology to streamline the current HR practices". Indeed, technological advances should be exploited to assist in decision making related to talent management.

Using analytics to aid in HR-related decision-making has also been highlighted as one of the trends in Human Resource of 2018. Unsurprisingly, respondents believe that "standard performance review practices are obsolete, and analytics are to take their place". Moreover, an HR expert with more than 20 years of experience assures that "analytics endorse objective, unbiased, data-driven decisions, as opposed to subjective performance reviews".



Engagement

A close runner up was engagement, identified as the main HR trend for the 2018 by more than 150 participants. Ever since Gallup released “A state of the Global Workforce” report in 2017, which has identified that about 85% of the employees are not engaged in the Middle East, there was a growing recognition of the importance to engage the workforce. Participants believed, that “engagement is a key to ensuring a productive and successful workplace”, “engaged employees dramatically increase profitability”, as well as “engagement is crucial to ensure sustainable progress of the company”.

Employee wellbeing and happiness

Ensuring happiness and wellbeing also appeared frequently among the responses, alongside fostering positive culture and employee relationships. Participants noticed, that “Allocating sufficient budget to wellbeing of the employees is an important investment in the workforce”, that pays off in the long run with flourishing and engaged workers. A plethora of research shows that employees place the value of workplace relationship above salary and other conventional incentives. “Positive relationship in the organisation is a number one factor that ensures retention”, noticed one respondent. Undoubtedly, without a well-functioning network system, it is unlikely that the organisation will develop, and HR department has a crucial role in fostering supportive and positive culture.

Results overview

When it comes to the composition of the future workforce, HR enthusiasts see it as a strongly bonded team, which promotes equality and diversity. Some professionals have noted that “2018 will be the year of millennial leadership”, and were aware that a transformation in the current leadership practices will arise as a result. On the subject of transformation, about 5% of the professionals noted, that transformation is going to be the biggest trend of HR management in the new year. Certainly, all of the identified trends may be classified as a positive transformation to the outdated HR practices, that created a negative perception among the employees.

Flexible working hours were also outlined by some participants, indicating a dynamic movement occurring in the workforce. It is clear that to deliver high quality results, the workers do not need to be tied to a conventional concept of the office. However, some HR professionals identified the importance of the traditional incentive system comprised of worker’s welfare and other benefits as a means of retention. Contrary to what it may seem to indicate, this trend certainly has its place among the others, as it showcases that HR managers truly value and appreciate their employees.

Furthermore, with globalisation continuing to define the organisational strategy, several participants outlined the importance of spreading the positive attitudes on a global level through outreach events, like the HR Summit. Others agreed that “HR needs to be further included in strategic decision making” and that “organisations need to treat HR as a business partner”, rather than an unapproachable and fairly redundant department. On the same note, several professionals pinpointed the significance of using Social Media to not only improve the image of responsiveness of the HR department, but to revolutionise hiring practices. Moreover, few participants noted that branding is



crucial to ensure recognition of HR in the global market. Indeed, the public perception will definitely be enhanced with appropriate image that the discipline sends across. Lastly, participants believed that outsourcing and the use of HR agencies would define the new recruitment practices alongside the use of social media in the human resource department.

There were quite a few miscellaneous responses that did not fit into any category, yet presented some interesting ideas, such as “transforming the workplace into an environmentally-friendly and paperless practice” or “spending more time on value creation for employees”. Interestingly, one person highlighted the importance of introducing evidence-based practices and “stronger relationships between academia and HR”, which is an important comment, as management practices that are instituted in the organisations are rarely scientifically tested.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the HR professionals see positive changes occurring in the practices within their field. Trends such as innovative talent management, increased use of technology and analytics to assist decision-making, working towards an enhanced corporate culture and an engaged workforce – all paint a picture of a modern, dynamic workplace that values its employees and works towards their personal development alongside professional growth. The 2018 year is certainly going to witness a lot of exciting transformation in the current practices, which will hopefully translate into positive changes in the climate within the organisations, and hence productivity and profitability. HR can no longer be perceived rudimentary and hostile, rather, its importance should be elevated to the strategic level and decisions need to be made in collaboration with the department that manages the most important assets of the organisation – its people.



David Jones is the Co-Founder and CEO at The Talent Enterprise. With a background in labour market economics, David is a senior advisor to policy makers and organisational leaders on their most pressing human capital priorities. With over 28 years of work experience, David has worked with over 200+ public and private sector organisations, in 25+ countries on a broad range of talent, leadership, assessment, performance, transformation and inclusion projects.



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The Talent Enterprise is a bespoke human capital 'Think' and 'Do' tank focused on emerging markets. We work with clients on their most compelling assessment, talent and leadership opportunities, leveraging powerful analytics and technology. We partner with governments, employers and educators in providing locally relevant, evidence-based solutions. We work with our clients to question status quo, disrupt traditional models of practice and demonstrate business impact. We are an inter-disciplinary team with diverse backgrounds in human resources, psychology, leadership, psychometrics, behavioural economics and education.

Visit www.thetalententerprise.com for more information.

HR Summit and Expo

The HR Summit and Expo is the region's largest show dedicated to HR professionals in the region. The Show has grown to become the ultimate platform to feature the latest innovation, strategies, insights and international best practices by the most influential and respected HR leaders and practitioners from around the globe.

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The HR Observer

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