wipro

Transforming Employee Onboarding for New Workforce Expectations

A case study by Human Resources Shared Services (HRSS) of Wipro Limited

Contents

Preface

Onboarding is a critical task. Getting new hires acquainted with the organization, its culture, and the ecosystem in which they will be working is essential for their proper assimilation and productivity right from the start. Onboarding is a process, not an event, beginning before the employee shows up for their first day and lasting until they are one with the organization and proficient. To ensure success throughout this process, organizations need a comprehensive plan for onboarding employees. Today, such an onboarding process must be digitally powered but also have human elements to ensure a holistic employee experience.

Wipro embarked on its onboarding transformation journey two years ago when it began digitizing its global onboarding processes. HR teams had sensed the need to reinvent Wipro's onboarding process to improve the employee experience and align it with the organization's vision of going digital.

Wipro's transformation aimed to standardize the onboarding process across geographies to provide a future ready, One Wipro experience, while also creating a robust, customizable process that leverages Wipro's digital capabilities.

Then the pandemic hit, disrupting most daily business activities and pressuring businesses to adopt digital HR initiatives to support the new normal. While Wipro's early adoption of digital HR prepared hiring teams to respond to these some of these new challenges, employee expectations for Day One were radically different. Wipro acted quick, overhauling its induction across geographies, eliminating non-value-adds, improving engagement, and providing post-onboarding support. Onboarding during such an uncertain period is difficult, but Wipro has been able to keep the business running — perhaps even better than before.

The Need for Transformation

Digital transformation, pre-pandemic

The pressure to go digital isn't new; it's simply been brought into sharper focus. Prior to the pandemic, a paradigm shift towards a digitalized economy was already underway. Businesses were looking at technology as a means of engaging customers, increasing workplace flexibility, introducing automation and faster processes. The pandemic accelerated this transformation, turning digitalization from a nice-to-have to a must-have.

Voice of customer

Early on, Wipro recognized the need to redesign its onboarding process to deliver the enhanced One-Wipro experience to all its employees globally. Wipro's commitment to process transformations had significant impact from a business standpoint, significantly reducing the concerns of new joiners. However, the "delight" factor in the onboarding journey was somehow still missing. Our customer satisfaction ratings (CSAT) hovered around 80%. Elevating customer experience would require more effort to better understand the pain points of new hires.

Wipro redesigned its feedback survey and did extensive analysis to gather deeper insights on the new hire, employee experience. Through verbatim analysis, which uses algorithms to identify patterns in text or communications and translate them into themes, we were able to identify three clear areas for improvement: before the day of joining, day of joining (DOJ), and after the day of joining. We also developed a clear plan of action with clear timelines, which we prepared and executed in phases across geographies.

Remote work environment: A catalyst for reshaping the employee onboarding process

One of the clearest business responses to the pandemic — particularly in HR — has been the expansion of the remote workforce. To reduce the spread of the virus, physical distancing was introduced, meaning a large number of employees were required to work from their homes. This fueled growth in remote working that was already evident before COVID-19.

Big companies like Twitter and Slack gave staff the option to work from home permanently, while Salesforce declared "The 9-to-5 workday is dead" and is set to introduce a hybrid model that will see most of its employees combining remote and office-based working.

The December 2020 Randstad Workmonitor report identified two work arrangements that had broad appeal for employees during the pandemic:

A hybrid schedule combining some days in the office and some days at home

Flexible hours enabling an easier balance between work-life and home-life.

More than a third of worldwide respondents (35%) said a hybrid schedule would be their ideal arrangement, while 24% favored flexible hours.

All these factors suggest that remote work will play an increasingly important role in how businesses function in the future, which raises the question: How organizations can prepare themselves to onboard this large, distributed workforce?

The Three Building Blocks

Transformation of Wipro's global onboarding process was supported by three building blocks: Process Excellence, Candidate Experience, and Business Value Proposition. These building blocks provided functionality defined to meet employee and business needs across organization.

3 **Business Value Proposition**

A process transformation is successful when it generates value for the business.

Transformation efforts must resolve problems and generate value. Added value can range from enhanced learnings to the invention of a new product that will benefit the industry in long run.

2 **Candidate Experience**

Transformation is not only about digital amplification. Human touch is essential.

HR transformation is not just about implementing a digital strategy; it's also about increasing enhancing the human experience. While digital transformation highlights a direct link between implementing the latest technologies and producing results, HR transformation invites human emotions to take center stage. To deliver an exceptional candidate experience, digital interventions must be accompanied by human involvement.

1 **Process Excellence**

Bringing in digitalization to achieve process excellence

In the current era of digitalization, embracing digital capabilities is not a choice but a necessity. Before initiating its digitalization journey, Wipro streamlined its onboarding process by eliminating any gaps. Teams then used digital initiatives to make the process more reliable, efficient, and effective, while aligning it with the intended employee experience.

Streamlining

- Removed multiple hiring tools and process gaps to streamline the process

Digitalizing

- Synchronized multiple hiring tools
- Kept only one interface between new joiners and onboarding team

Pre-Transformation : The Current Onboarding Process

Process Excellence

A well-equipped onboarding lays a foundation for long-term success for both employees and the organization. Onboarding is not merely a process for getting new employees to sign off on their new-hire paperwork. Rather, the process is the start of a partnership between the employee and employer, adding value for both in various ways.

Every year, Wipro onboards close to 60,000 employees in various businesses, across 59 countries. To onboard employees in different businesses, in different geographies, we needed to customize our onboarding process to meet each group's unique requirements. But all these customizations led to rise in exceptions. Soon, different regions had their own processes, and Wipro had four different hiring tools, each with its own way of hiring. Without a standard approach to onboard new hires, teams could not provide the ideal, One-Wipro onboarding experience.

This lack of disjointed process also made shifting to virtual onboarding more complicated. Hence, the primary task was to standardize the onboarding process across geographies. Figure 1 shows Wipro's onboarding process before the transformation.
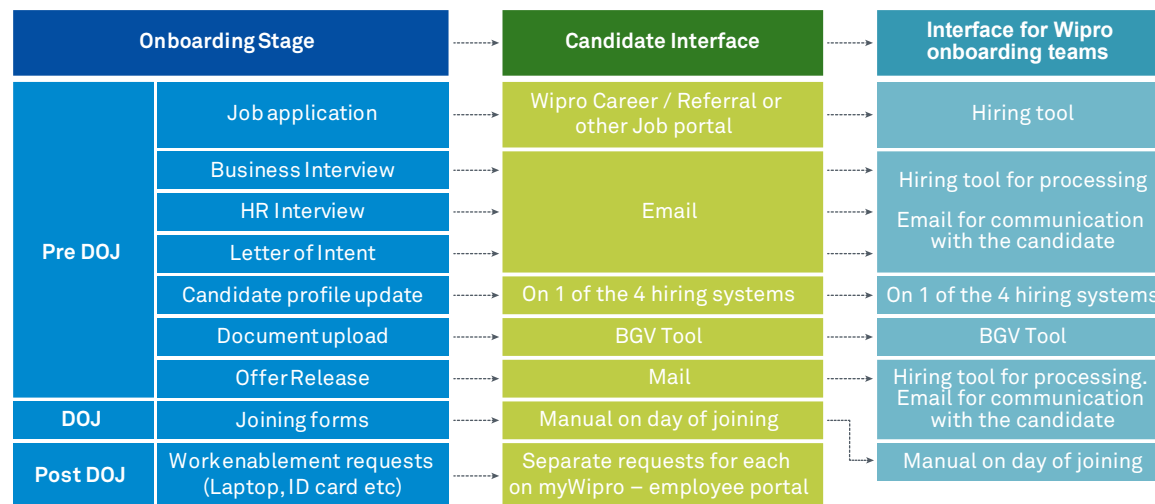
Onboarding Stage		Candidate Interface	Interface for Wipro onboarding teams
Pre DOJ	Job application	Wipro Career / Referral or other Job portal	Hiring tool
	Business Interview	Email	Hiring tool for processing Email for communication with the candidate
	HR Interview		
	Letter of Intent		
	Candidate profile update	On 1 of the 4 hiring systems	On 1 of the 4 hiring systems
	Document upload	BGV Tool	BGV Tool
	Offer Release	Mail	Hiring tool for processing. Email for communication with the candidate
DOJ	Joining forms	Manual on day of joining	
Post DOJ	Work enablement requests (Laptop, ID card etc)	Separate requests for each on myWipro – employee portal	Manual on day of joining

Figure 1: Typical onboarding experience for new hires at Wipro, prior to the transformation.

Before Transformation of Process against the building blocks

Process Excellence

Pre-Onboarding
- Issuance and acceptance of letter of intent
- Background screening of candidates

Onboarding & Induction
- Time-consuming and fragmented process
- A lot of paperwork on the DOJ

Candidate Experience

Pre-Onboarding
- Multiple interfaces to complete pre-joining formalities

Onboarding & Induction
- Little to no engagement
- Day one spent on completing joining process

Business Value Proposition

Long lead times impacted the talent supply chain

Unsatisfactory candidate experience

Pre-onboarding

Pre-onboarding involved issuing a letter of intent to select candidates. Once they accept, the candidate verification process would use a background-screening tool to gauge the authenticity of the information provided. If details submitted were found to be genuine, then the final offer letter was sent via email. This phase also involved lengthy sub-processes.

Candidate Experience

Pre-onboarding

The candidate had to go through a series of steps and be interfaced with different systems. Candidates used various platforms from the time they applied for a job to the time they submitted their forms on the day of joining.

Business Value Proposition

Due to manual interventions in the onboarding process, the talent supply chain faced long lead times. It lacked a good candidate experience, as well.

There were, therefore, plenty of reasons to update the process and enhance the employee experience across touchpoints.

Onboarding & Induction

Upon accepting the offer letter, the onboarding process for the candidate would begin. There was little engagement between the candidate onboarding and the day of joining. On the day of joining, new hires were required to complete a few forms and initiate work requests to get familiar with their work setup. The induction for them was conducted one week after their DOJ, and would continue once every week, indefinitely. Not only was the process complex, it was time-consuming and fragmented, requiring extensive work hours. As Figure 1 illustrates, the screening process for a candidate was complex and required multiple tools.

Onboarding & Induction

The original onboarding lacked any sort of engagement, and the DOJ was spent addressing formalities. An ideal induction should acclimatize new joiners with the organization, its culture and practices; the career ecosystem, their compensation and benefits, and leave them with an idea of what to expect in the first few days. However, new joiners typically had to wait a week before they could complete their orientation, and the information they received barely scratched the surface. The induction delivery also lacked uniformity across geographies and businesses.

Post-Transformation : The Refreshed Onboarding Process

Process Excellence

Fully digital, paperless onboarding

Initiatives to streamline and digitalize initiatives led to Wipro's launch of Embark, an onboarding portal which mapped the candidate journey from selection to their date of joining. With Embark, candidates' interface with only one system, rather than multiple legacy systems. Embark also provides candidates a visually appealing interface for stronger pre-joining engagement.

Although Embark acts as a layer above the legacy systems, the systems continued to exist in the backend. To integrate those systems, Wipro used ICIMS, our application tracking system (ATS). Not only did this benefit recruiting and onboarding teams, but it was also a significant step towards embracing a full-featured and enduring platform from a business perspective.

Figure 2 shows how the transformation simplified processes by eliminating complexities and multiple interfaces for both candidates and the global onboarding team. It also reduced the huge manual intervention required.
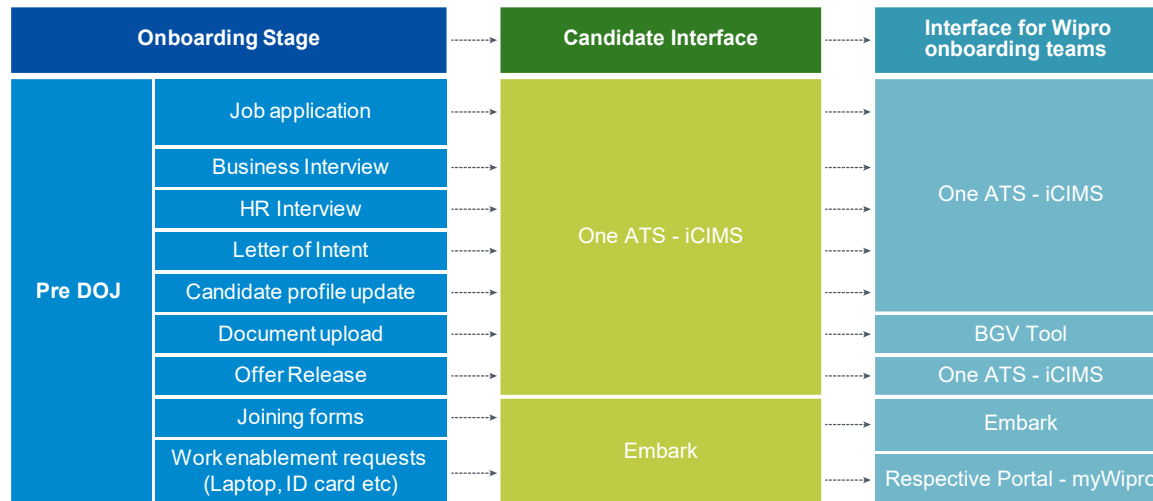
Onboarding Stage		Candidate Interface	Interface for Wipro onboarding teams
Pre DOJ	Job application	One ATS - iCIMS	One ATS - iCIMS
	Business Interview		
	HR Interview		
	Letter of Intent		
	Candidate profile update		
	Document upload		BGV Tool
	Offer Release		One ATS - iCIMS
	Joining forms	Embark	Embark
	Work enablement requests (Laptop, ID card etc)		Respective Portal - myWipro

Figure 2: Wipro's transformed onboarding process.

Transformed State of Process against the building blocks

Process Excellence

Fully digital, paperless onboarding
- Removed multiple legacy systems with arrival of ICIM.
- Launched Embark: a candidate-focused, all-in-one solution that was visually appealing and enabled pre-joining engagement

Enhanced Candidate Experience

IT infrastructure enablement
- Day One Delight program prepared all employees with the necessary resources from day one

Revamped Induction
- Reworked the induction program to keep up with changing times and new hire expectations:

  Centralize, Standardize & Customize – The "One- Wipro" Experience.
  Hybrid model of content delivery – Video & text
  Support Ecosystem – post joining support

Business Value Proposition

Outcome
- Reduced lead time of hiring
- Streamlined complete onboarding process
- Revamped Day One induction, aligning with latest trends and prospects
- Improved CSAT scores significantly

Enhanced Candidate Experience

IT infrastructure enablement

The Day One Delight program aimed to help new hires to get through system setup — laptop and desktop allocation, access to important portals — as quickly as possible. This program was spearheaded by Wipro's IT management team and envisioned to equip new employees everything they needed from Day One, including laptop, understanding of the system, and access to all the required portals. The only pre-requisite for this was the creation of employee IDs, the responsibility for which lay with the onboarding team.

The onboarding team started pro-active ID creation so that work laptops and systems could be tagged to new joiners' IDs and delivered to them before their DOJ. However, the systems and laptops could only be used upon the activation of the IDs. The IDs are activated when the new joiner shows up for the induction on their day of joining. When they log in to the virtual collaboration tool for induction on their first day, an automatic trigger activates their ID and enables full access.

Revamped induction program

The existing induction process lacked uniformity and completeness, and therefore needed a substantial overhaul. Important aspects like overview of the organization, culture and practices, career ecosystem, compensation and benefits were not previously covered or were only briefly discussed.

The revamped induction program would also need to better address changing needs and expectations, such as support for a more distributed, virtual workforce. Wipro developed a detailed plan of action based on the analysis of industry best practices and employee feedback. Figure 3 shows the timelines and action items of the induction revamp.

Induction Revamp - Actionable & Timeline

Timeline of Planning

Sept 2019	Dec 2019	Jan 2020	Jan 2020	Feb 2020	March 2020
Redesigned Feedback Survey Roll out Customized to Geos	Beginning of Content Curation Based on business acumen & interim feedback analysis	Clear actionable based on feedback	Final Induction revamp plan prepared based on actionable & signed off by leadership	New Induction agenda and content delivery model incorporated	Initiation of Onboarding host Program

Induction Revamp - Timeline

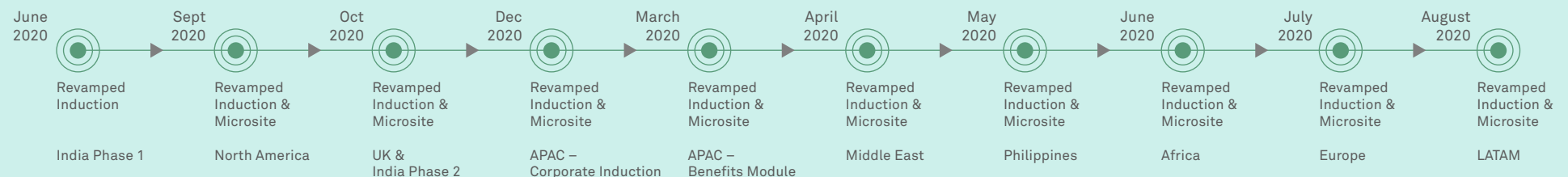| June 2020	Sept 2020	Oct 2020	Dec 2020	March 2020	April 2020	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020
Revamped Induction	Revamped Induction & Microsite	Revamped Induction & Microsite	Revamped Induction & Microsite	Revamped Induction & Microsite	Revamped Induction & Microsite	Revamped Induction & Microsite	Revamped Induction & Microsite	Revamped Induction & Microsite	Revamped Induction & Microsite
India Phase 1	North America	UK & India Phase 2	APAC – Corporate Induction	APAC – Benefits Module	Middle East	Philippines	Africa	Europe	LATAM

Figure 3: Timeline of Wipro's induction revamp, with action items.

Centralized, standardized, customized: The One-Wipro experience

Centralize

In Wipro's existing setup, induction ownership was distributed, and different parts were delivered by the SPOCS. This caused the experience to vary from session to session. To deliver the One-Wipro experience, it was imperative that one single function with a dedicated set of SPOCS conduct the induction. Wipro began by upskilling the onboarding SPOCS from its HR shared services function to be able to deliver the required induction content. This initiated an onboarding host program where hosts were picked from an existing pool of onboarding SPOCS and trained to become SMEs in delivering induction content.
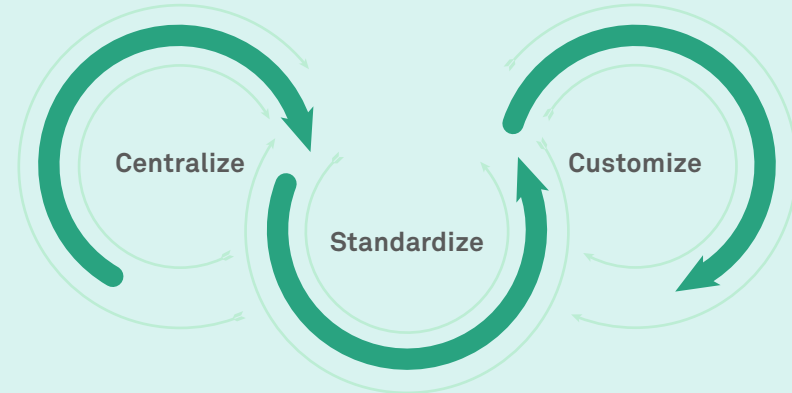
Standardize

Wipro created a new, standardized agenda that covers all the important aspects of the induction. The aim was to provide more complete information and uniformity across geographies.

Session	Coverage
Sneak Peak Into Wipro	Wipro's vision, its global footprint, business mix, leadership & organization structure
Wipro in Geography	Overview of Wipro's presence in the geography in context, clientele, area of business
Spirit of Wipro	Wipro's 4 core values, five habits, commitment to Inclusion & Diversity, Representation of diversity in the workforce, Community Initiatives
Wipro Policies & Practices	Career ecosystem (encompassing performance management, capability building, career growth), Essential policies and Everyday Guide
Walk-through of myWipro - Employee Intranet	Video tutorials of important application of the employee intranet
Compensation & Benefits	Overview and basic knowledge sharing on compensation & benefits structure
What Next?	Guide to making first login, Reiteration of some important points, checklist of good to-do and must-do activites during the first 30 days, important contacts

Ownership of Induction : **Multiple** functions
After transformation : **HRSS**

Content : Customized to cater to geographical nuances
Delivery: optimized

Centralize

Standardize

Customize

Induction Agenda **before** transformation : **Varying** across Geos
Induction Agenda **after** transformation : **Standard** across Geos

Figure 4: Modified induction to deliver One Wipro experience organization wide.

Customize

While the scope and coverage of the agenda was standardized, the content and its mode of delivery were kept customizable. As the quantum of hiring is not uniform across geographies, the onboarding team chose a split model of induction agenda delivery in which corporate Induction covers the common aspects while the benefits session covers mostly the country-specific aspects.

Hybrid model for induction content

Considering the latest trends and how audiences consume content, the global onboarding team chose to deliver induction content through a mix of video and text. While there is no substitute for human onboarding hosts, several pieces of onboarding content were found to be standard across geographies and well suited for delivery as videos, rather than live or in-person. The team created videos for all such pieces of content giving the candidates a better experience and onboarding hosts a breathing space.

Support ecosystem

A post-joining support ecosystem was created to support delivery on Day One to avoid information overload.
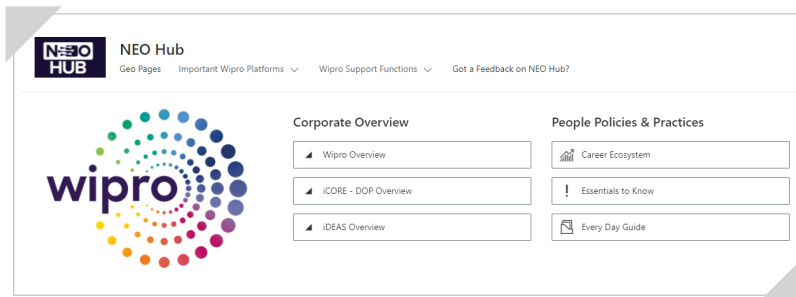
Pre-Joining Connect

Beginning with India, Wipro initiated a pre-joining connect program to ensure that candidates completed all joining formalities and knew what to expect on Day One.

NEO Hub

Wipro created Neo Hub to make all induction content and other necessary materials easily accessible to new joiners. The interface is user-friendly, and the content is customized according to the geographies and businesses. Figure 5 shows the home page of NEO Hub.

NEO Hub
Geo Pages   Important Wipro Platforms ∨   Wipro Support Functions ∨   Got a Feedback on NEO Hub?

Corporate Overview
- Wipro Overview
- iCORE - DOP Overview
- iDEAS Overview

People Policies & Practices
- Career Ecosystem
- Essentials to Know
- Every Day Guide

Customized view of myWipro, the employee intranet

myWipro is a consolidated platform for employee self–service and business transactions, where new hires can view all pending tasks, approvals, mandatory trainings, and updates for the first 90 days.

Video Guide on Salary and Benefits

Analysis of employee queries helped the global onboarding team realize that one area of concern is a lack of understanding of salary and benefits. So, the team developed interactive videos with complete information on the components of salary and benefits. These videos are hosted on Wilearn, Wipro's AI-powered personalized learning platform. This is in addition to the videos shared during the induction session. Figure 6 shows a series of modules that link to video content developed to clarify compensation and benefits.

- 42+ short videos on salary & benefits component
- Important information from lengthy policy documents presented through videos
- Accessibility enabled for all employees
- Personalization on the basis of band

With this transformation, Wipro successfully increased the flexibility of its hiring program, enabling it to meet the needs and expectations of its workforce, even as the industries change. CSAT ratings that had hung around 80% increased by up to 1,000 basis points, and now stand between 90% and 95% for induction across geographies, and 85% and 95% for onboarding.

The transformation streamlined the entire onboarding process, and multifaceted systems were integrated into one. Wipro also developed a standardized yet customizable process that can accommodate all geographical nuances, including the development and delivery of induction content.

Along with reducing the lead time of hiring, the transformation brought additional value as potential product to be sold, or as a service for consulting on start-of-the-art onboarding.

With every rollout, the global onboarding team discovers a way to do things better and adapts their approach to accordingly. The team follows one rule of thumb: reset, reimagine, replay.

About the author

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Putul Mathur is an innovative HR professional with over 20 years of experience. She has been instrumental in defining and designing the HR processes for the industry.

Putul's specialties include strategic HR, change management, leadership development, organizational transformation, and large-scale employee-engagement frameworks. She has designed and implemented shared-services models for all HR-related transactions, optimizing HR headcount in business partnerships and increasing efficiency by over 30%. Using advanced technologies like hyper-automation and AI (Wipro Holmes), Putul has driven the entire digital transformation of all HRSS processes, from hire to retire. Introducing these technologies has enhanced the overall employee experience and provided a more agile environment for all HR and employee processes.

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