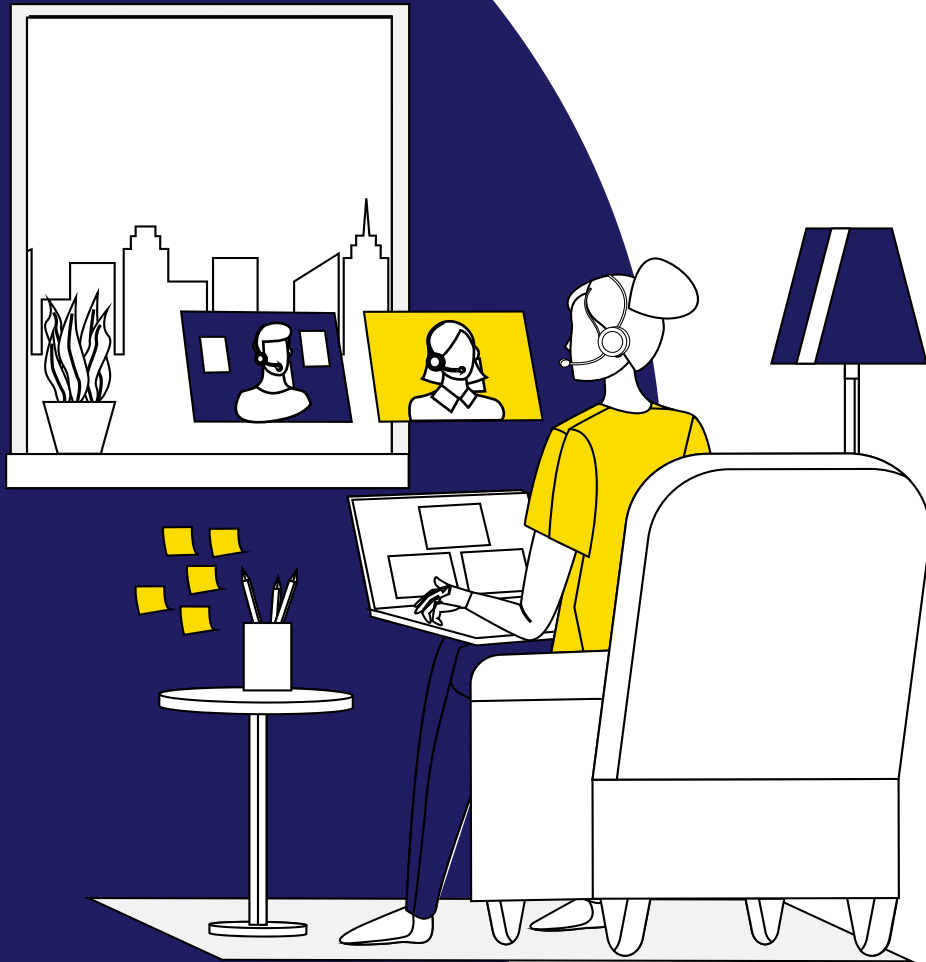




Building a Resilient HR for the Future of Work

A forward-looking HR must reinvent itself to empower digital workplaces shaped by COVID-19.





The COVID-19 pandemic has ushered in many changes. For one, it has forced organizations to look inwards and find answers to questions like – what sets top companies apart? While responses vary, there is consensus on one aspect – agile and flexible companies that turn challenges into opportunities for growth lead the pack. They adapt, evolve, and change to stay efficient and productive even during unforeseen events. Many business leaders now realize the value proposition in a function that has sprung into the spotlight: Human Resources, which manages the most critical asset of an organization — its workforce.

The impact of COVID-19 on HR

No one predicted that a healthcare crisis of such a massive magnitude would engulf the world. With over 200 countries and 175 million people impacted, it brought the world to a halt. Businesses suffered and they responded to the situation through massive financial restructuring, speedy adoption of transformative digital technologies, and increased focus on the well-being of the workforce for business continuity.

The pandemic brought in a drastic change in the nature of workplaces. The work-from-home model and workforce resilience became critical to business continuity.

As the focus moved to workforce, the HR function came into the spotlight.

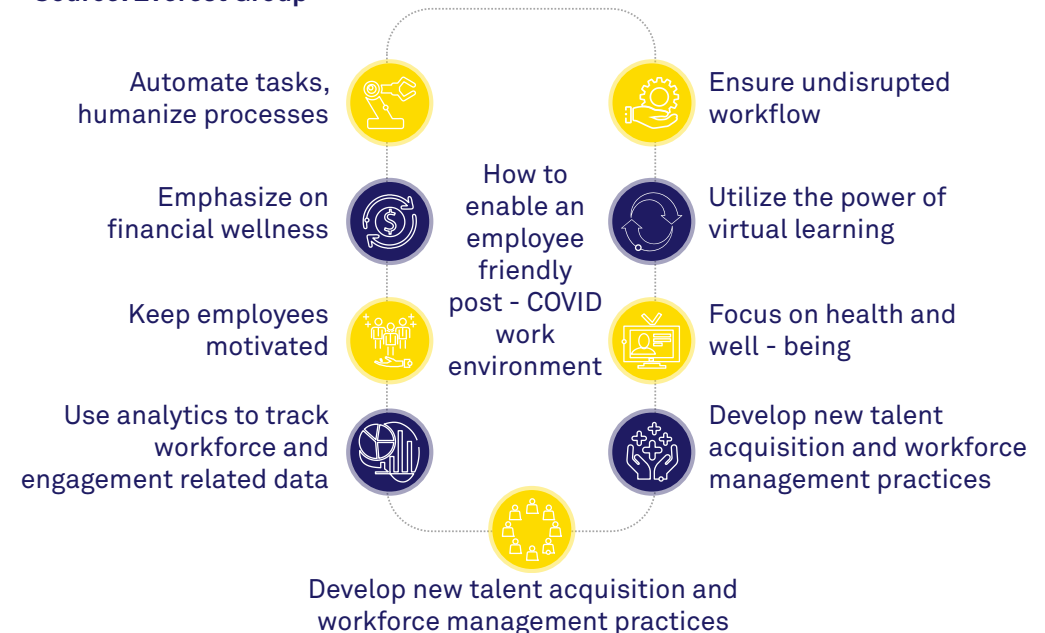
Business leaders now understand that a robust and resilient HR is critical in empowering an organization to navigate disruption. Today, HR is leading the response of organizations to the pandemic-induced crisis and the resultant changes in the workplace. They are adopting new ways to support employees and the organization leadership through the changing times. By ensuring a human connect with the workforce and not letting employee productivity dip during turbulent times, they are steering businesses through the uncertainties and disruptions.

A forward-thinking HR has been a byproduct of the pandemic. In the new normal, HR has to be agile and flexible to enable a transformation from a brick and mortar office to a virtual workplace. They need to factor in the evolving workplace, workforce and technology landscape, leading to challenges and requirements like:

- Managing remote workforce, remote hiring, and changes in skillset requirements
- Ensuring quick and effective communication with remote employees and taking employee experience to the next level
- Digitizing recruitment processes, enabling speed in decision making, and creating value from data
- Creating cohesive policies for a diverse workforce
- Ensuring employee skill upgradation through virtual learning and training programs
- Building an agile digital HR platform

HR of today is arming up to prepare for the reality of future

Source: Everest Group



HR is gearing up to meet these challenges and needs of the post-COVID future of work. It is focusing on creating an employee-friendly work environment led by technology and the human connect.

A proactive HR is leading the change

The changed dynamics of the workplace is here to stay. Progressive organizations are now preparing for the new normal by shifting 50% of their workforce to working remotely permanently. This implies that the new ways of working and the post-COVID workforce will need an HR that is equipped to meet the new requirements.

HR practices are evolving to meet this change in workplace and workforce. In a virtual workplace, processes like recruiting, on-boarding, and training are going digital, creating a new paradigm.

HR is adopting a proactive approach to manage the reinvented workplace.

The modern, agile HR is adaptive and resilient. It works across functions, and is powered by latest technologies like intelligent automation, and prescriptive and predictive analytics. The focus is on being quick with response, prioritizing employee wellbeing, and relying on technology to achieve its goals.

For the new proactive HR, the world is the workplace. It follows a resilient model that empowers the regional or local HR teams to manage concerns proactively, while the central HR function acts as a guiding force. This model lends efficiency through quick decision-making as detailed in Figure 1. The resilient HR model successfully offers the reassurance and compassion employees seek in times of uncertainty.

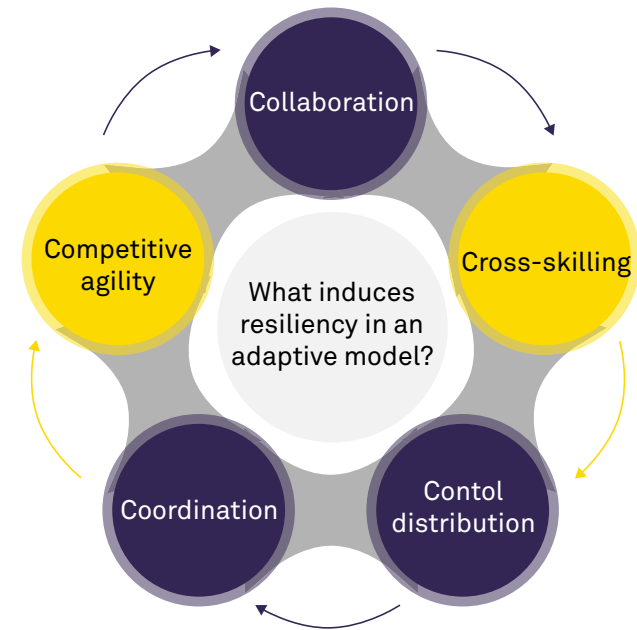


Figure 1: The Resilient HR Model

A recent study by SHRM (Society for Human Resource Management) finds that organizations that successfully adopt sophisticated HR technology tools to embrace a resilient HR model outperform those that don't.

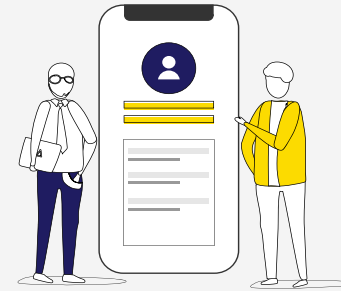
Cognitive automation, Robotic Process Automation (RPA), and Artificial Intelligence (AI) are helping HR functions to turn more collaborative, cross-functional, and agile. The implementation of talent acquisition solutions, time and attendance platforms, digital payroll processes, and learning and development are changing HR functions. Technology to implement uniform global practices, improve employee experience, offer enhanced HR services, and provide easy access to employee data is being leveraged, which is allowing managers to get insights into employee well-being via analytics tools.

To keep the employees engaged, motivated and safe, HR is adopting options like automating tasks, humanizing processes, using analytics to track employee data, developing new talent management practices, ensuring uninterrupted workflows, and leveraging virtual learning, among others.

Building the future workplace with a resilient HR

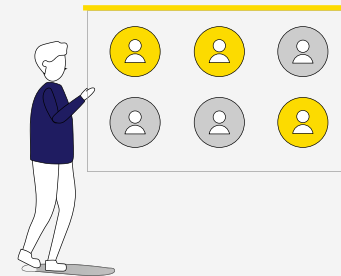
Today, a resilient HR is led by technology.

Technology is delivering HR the transformation it seeks in the workplace. It is helping organizations reimagine their workplace to meet the changing expectations and requirements and stay prepared for the future. Figure 2 shows the empowered HR reinventing recruitment, payroll, talent management, employee benefits, and well-being. Technologies like AI, automation, and analytics are speeding up the transformation journey to the workplace of the future.



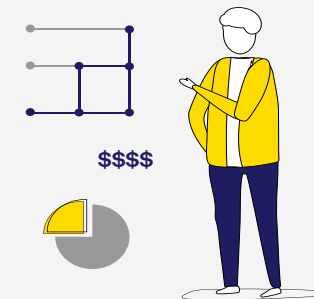
Intelligent recruitment

- Cognitive screening
- Integrated assessments
- Integrated interviews
- Automated offer contracts
- Personalized onboarding



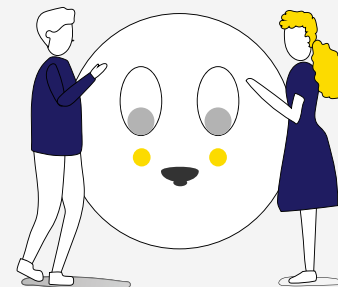
Multi-gen talent management

- Bite size learning
- On the go access
- Simulations
- Automated development plans



Unified payroll

- One payroll platform
- Global view reporting
- Cognitive anomaly detection
- Automation solutions



Personalized benefits & well being

- Personalized well - being
- Customized benefits
- Rewards & Recognition

Figure 2:

Some key areas that HR leaders should focus on include:

Creating best employee experience and digital practices

Every employee has a unique set of capabilities, challenges, and aspirations. Organizations need to respect this uniqueness to foster a high-performing culture. With AI in HR, they can personalize employee journeys from recruitment to onboarding, leading right up to a candidate's exit.

Technology solutions that scan applications to check eligibility and leverage games and quizzes to assess job fitment of candidates are already transforming recruitment processes. They help organizations screen the most suitable candidates for virtual interviews and enable digital onboarding using an automated background verification system. This saves time for the HR team and is effective in competing for global talent.



“Wipro’s cognitive, intuitive and scalable talent acquisition solution can enhance recruiter efficiency upto 65% and 50% reduction in hiring timeline. These efficiencies are made possible by enabling one-click requisition creation, AI-based skill suggestions, one-click posting to multiple channels, machine learning-based match making, and integrated, seamless and quick assessments.”

“In another case, Wipro set up a virtual environment with 150 laptops and 540 desktops to enable virtual payroll to all clients with 100% accuracy during the pandemic lockdown. We also deferred payroll tax payments of \$3.7M to enable cash liquidity for our clients.”

Ensuring employee well-being and skill development

Employers who focus on an employee's mental and financial well-being will have a competitive advantage in the upcoming war for talent. In the work-from-home world, technological services and solutions offer an important way to deliver mental health services. Managers can rely on the company intranet, apps, bots, and social tools for promptly appreciating and rewarding top-performing employees.

Digital solutions that ensure learning on the go, simulated testing, and 100% virtual training can promote skill development and inspire employees to take on future work challenges.



“Wipro enabled virtual trainings to initiate knowledge acquisition and transition for a top global technology company during COVID-19. This ensured on-time go-live.”

“For a leading retail organization who had to furlough 70K employees and yet wanted to continue paying them their benefits, we implemented a customized automated process to enable benefits and switch premium payments, ensuring zero drop of coverage for employees.”

Creating value with data to redefine HR

Predictive analytics helps create reports that support managerial decision-making. Tools today can analyze advanced statistical data to discover relationships among policies, procedures, practices, and employee productivity. Common uses of data mining techniques include questions related to manpower planning, predicting turnover, validating tests, and monitoring HR practices for disparate impact.

HR dashboards are increasingly becoming popular. These dashboards allow managers to examine information in greater levels of specificity, which can help identify and focus on potential problem areas or even identify the strengths of an employee.

“Wipro designed query-based control frameworks to help identify and resolve data issues in all aspects of employee data for a client. This led to 90% reduction in manual work, corrections and reconciliations, and 50% reduction in employee queries around those specific correction topics.”

Adapting and evolving with technology

Technology offers HR the opportunities to meet the evolving challenges and transform seamlessly to the future of work.

An organization can choose a strategy to drive enterprise-wide HR transformation and scale and ease data integration from multiple HR functions. They can implement a suitable application for each functional area of HR. The prevalent trend is to deploy global platforms that provide a unified and consistent HR experience. Such systems are amplified with new-age point

solutions to accelerate their processing abilities.

The recent developments have transformed HR into a strategic function that helps build a dynamic and resilient organization. It is critical that HR accelerates its transformation and embraces agility, the new ways of working, and digital capabilities to become future-ready.

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