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Improved HR service delivery
Focusing on process transformation plus technology transformation

Managing people is challenging. But it can sometimes be more challenging to manage technology projects that support better people management.

As emerging technologies such as cloud, social, mobile, and analytics rapidly drive business demands and shape expectations for HR interactions, many organizations are looking for technology solutions that can quickly transform the enterprise on the employee front.

The opportunity

The delivery of HR services continues to evolve beyond the self-service portal model—to a more robust "software as a service" (SaaS) model. The shift to SaaS can offer increased HR ownership of solutions and data, enabling a broader transformation of the HR service delivery model. A SaaS-based approach can provide highly usable Web-native applications, smooth functionality and data integration, advanced analytics capabilities, and a deeper level of self-service through mobile applications.

It's the type of shift that many employees expect—as they look to perform more functions on their own, using systems that deliver customized HR content at the time of transaction. And it's the type of shift that can make sense for businesses seeking to boost employee retention through greater engagement, to implement HR shared services, and to better control costs.

As organizations seek to transform HR through heightened employee engagement, standardized processes, and increased service effectiveness and efficiency, SAP SuccessFactors® Employee Central can offer one solid SaaS solution to help improve HR service delivery. The solution comes with features and functionality that can offer businesses an opportunity to create an integrated 360-degree view into employee data, to serve up that data as actionable information for decision-making, to support meaningful employee transactions from "hire to retire," and to integrate tightly with SAP SuccessFactors® Talent Solutions.

But as organizations shift to SaaS solutions such as SAP SuccessFactors Employee Central as a way to help improve human capital management, it's easy to miss the opportunity to undertake a deeper transformation.

A decision to move to a new technology solution offers an opportunity to take a step back, ask deeper questions, and modify processes to bolster the foundation of your HR activities—ahead of the efficiencies that a new technology solution such as SAP SuccessFactors Employee Central might bring.

First things first

Understanding the critical questions to ponder—and working toward answers that are right for your organization—can help position your business for more effective delivery of HR services and, in turn, help drive efficiencies throughout your organization. Failing to take a "business first" approach can lead to bigger failures. Without a strong business- and process-related foundation, any technology you add might fail to deliver the enterprisewide benefits you anticipate—meaning you might miss the mark when it comes to return on investment (ROI).

Here are some key strategic steps that can get you moving toward a broader business-focused process transformation before tapping in to the broader transformative power that a solution such as SAP SuccessFactors Employee Central can offer. A guided, comprehensive approach to HR service delivery can help you improve your overall operational posture and enable your organization to focus more of your efforts on growing and improving your core business.

Understand how you deliver HR services today.
The delivery of HR services within an organization can be far more complex than leaders imagine. It's easy to overlook small but significant paths of employee interaction and pockets of data that should fall under the heading of "HR services." Determine what exactly constitutes an HR service. Look diligently for activities and employee-related data that fit the description. And determine how the HR services you identify are being delivered today. Is enhanced and increased self-service (as opposed to high-touch HR support) part of the approach? Are HR services limited to desktops and laptops, or is mobile part of the picture?

Find the shortcomings in your current processes.
Develop an ideal vision of how HR service delivery should work within your organization. Work to build a consensus on how the process of HR service delivery can work best within your organization. What's not working? Where is there room for improvement? What would that improvement look like? Drive toward enterprisewide standardization of processes that will support the business.

Look to the future. Beyond determining the immediate improvements you can make in the delivery of HR services within your organization, consider how your enterprise might evolve in coming years, and consider more broadly how the realm of HR service delivery is evolving. What capabilities do you foresee needing in coming months or years, and how are emerging technologies shaping your ability to deliver those capabilities? For example, do you expect employees to begin demanding self-service features for HR functions that have traditionally been performed by supervisors or HR managers?

Consider employee needs alongside business needs.
Employees are at the receiving end of HR service delivery. Failing to deeply examine what works and what doesn't work for employees—in the context of business needs— could be a setup for bigger failure. Without understanding the employee experience and its impact on the organization, you might actually transform HR service delivery into something that is less effective for the workers on whom your business relies. Approach transformation design and decisions from a customer-centric viewpoint— with employees and business managers as customers of HR.

Emphasize leadership. Make sure someone within your organization owns the HR service delivery transformation process—in a role that encompasses both business processes and technology oversight. And make sure that such a leader understands the need to broadly solicit feedback and, when appropriate, to delegate decisions and responsibilities to internal specialists.

Develop a clear view of both business processes and HR processes. Understand that HR processes are discrete from revenue-generating business processes and customer-facing interactions. But understand also that they're connected. For example, excellent HR service delivery processes can bolster and enhance business processes. Consider a holistic approach to balancing and blending business processes and HR processes as you undertake an HR service delivery transformation. Know what type of process you are transforming and why. Know what results you're driving toward.

Keep service delivery, not technology, your first priority. Human capital management is about managing people and related processes within your organization. Know which people-related goals you are trying to achieve before you ask how a specific technology product can help your organization. Put people—and people-related challenges—first.

Understand what a technology solution can and cannot do for your organization. Putting processes before technology to transform your HR service delivery doesn't mean you hit the pause button on technology considerations. Knowing the capabilities of the solutions you're considering can help keep discussions realistic as you approach your people-centric challenges. And asking a question such as "How could we best leverage SAP SuccessFactors Employee Central's features for our organization?" can lead to deeper questions and answers on how your HR processes work today.

Drive toward a return on investment. Enhancing HR service delivery by improving processes and putting in place new technology can represent a significant investment in time and money. Determine the types of returns you expect on such an investment, and know what controls you will need to put in place to help ensure that you meet and sustain your ROI objectives.

Know what works for your organization.
As you work toward discovering how your organization can operate better through transformed HR service delivery, capture the insights that you gain along the way. Develop a library of leading practices. When you find out what works, make sure you document it and make it easily shareable. If one slice of your HR organization understands that employees interact more effectively using a specific method or platform, for example, help ensure that other leaders within your organization know about it. Having relevant examples, data, anecdotes, and value statements at the ready can help you slice through the organizational resistance that can sometimes come during an HR transformation.

Superior service
Taking advantage of SAP SuccessFactors Employee Central and related SAP offerings for improved HR service delivery requires more than technology know-how. It requires a deep understanding of your big-picture processes, challenges related to emerging technologies, and the evolving needs of your workers. Organizations that take the time to examine and improve their foundational processes before a technology implementation can build a stronger foundation for transformation and deliver more meaningful value to the business. Organizations that move forward hastily—even with the best technology—could fail to see the ROI they envision.

Let's talk
Beginning the process of getting more value out of an HR service delivery transformation is simple. It starts with a conversation. Deloitte has extensive, hands-on experience with the people, process, information, and technology challenges involved in managing human capital. We know SAP SuccessFactors Employee Central and SAP well, and our suite of supporting consulting and technology offerings builds solidly on the SAP insights we've gleaned over the years. Contact us to get the conversation started and to find out how we can help you transform your HR service delivery.

For more information, please contact

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