

EMPOWERING THE MODERN WORKFORCE

Aligning HR Practices with Employee Needs

*Including perspectives from ServiceNow partners
DELOITTE, EY, FUJITSU, & KPMG*

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Executive Summary

The corporate challenge of managing skills shortages, 'employer of choice' strategies, and flexible work programs have long existed.

However, like most strategic imperatives, they have been optional, even for the most competitive businesses. Every successful organisation today has gone through a transformation in how they do business, engage with their customers, and deliver their products and services. But perhaps the biggest change has been in how organisations have had to evolve their employee strategies and practices. Employees are an organisation's biggest asset. Given the changes and challenges that people have faced over the last few years, they have developed some strong work preferences and prioritise developing skills that enable them to adapt continually to a dynamic work environment.

Today, multi-generational workforces have greater access to and collaborate through technology, requiring HR teams to build efficient and equitable work environments. This highlights the importance of listening to the voice of the employee and responding to their needs and preferences. Identifying and addressing gaps for every employee builds an empowered, engaged, and productive workforce. This can be achieved if HR teams are technologically empowered to choose and integrate the best technology tools that allow employees to focus their time on where they can make the most impact.

Employee platforms and AI can help in evolving workforce strategies, reshaping roles and dynamics for HR leaders and employees. These technologies enhance experiences, streamline HR operations, and promote productivity.

Employee experience platforms mark a shift from traditional self-service models to a more holistic, human-centred approach, including AI-driven customisations to meet individual needs, seamless integration with diverse workplace tools for a cohesive experience, and sophisticated analytics providing critical insights into employee performance and engagement.

This whitepaper explores employee expectations, strategies for HR leaders to meet them, and the transformative role of technology in reshaping HR practices.





The Voice of the Employee: Insights for HR Leaders

The disruptions over the last few years have shaped employee expectations and preferences. Today's employees have become accustomed to the benefits of choosing their work location, reduced commute times, and flexible work schedules, with a strong emphasis on improved work-life balance and productivity.



What Employees Want in Today’s Dynamic Work Environment

#1 To Succeed in a Hybrid Work Environment

Navigating the hybrid work landscape has brought about a profound shift in approach to both personal and professional lives. Adapting to this blend of remote and in-office work has presented challenges – but many have seen unexpected rewards. Today’s workplace is a unique blend that allows the benefits of working from home with the collaborative and social aspects of the office environment. In most cases, this has improved employee productivity while allowing more flexibility.

To succeed in a hybrid work environment, employees need the right communication and collaboration tools that give them the same experience irrespective of their work location. Hybrid work goes beyond the physical workspace; it involves policies and technologies that redefine success and productivity in a constantly evolving professional landscape.

86%
of Asia Pacific
knowledge workers
prefer the hybrid
work model.

*Ecosystem Voice of the Employee
Study, 2024*



#2 A Continued Focus on Employee Experience

Improving employee experience (EX) has emerged as a key business priority for organisations. Initially, EX measures were focused on giving remote access to organisational assets and systems and enabling remote collaboration. However, EX has evolved into a powerful tool for talent attraction and retention (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Effective EX Matters to Employees in Asia Pacific



Q: Why do you think your employer should focus on improving employee experience?

N=1,053

Source: Ecosystem Voice of the Employee Study, 2024

Employee effectiveness and productivity can be enhanced through access to advanced tools and technology, particularly those that are AI-enabled. State-of-the-art technologies streamline processes and facilitate human-machine collaboration, significantly reducing time spent on redundant tasks. However, technology is just one aspect of EX. Providing opportunities for continuous learning and skills development is crucial as AI eliminates many manual and tactical roles. Clear communication of goals and expectations aligns employee efforts with company objectives, while recognition of hard work and achievements maintains motivation and commitment to excellence. An organisation's EX strategy needs to focus on all these aspects.

#3 Personal and Professional Development

Professional development activities are vital for today's employees, as they recognise the importance of continuously enhancing their skills and knowledge. Employees want organisations to prioritise upskilling through Learning & Development practices. This includes ensuring the relevance of the training material, responding to employee expectations of just-in-time workplace training, encouraging transition from one talent competency to another, and enhancing career paths.

The technology exists to seamlessly deliver training to employees and monitor their progress, using interactive modules and gamification to enhance learning impact. The challenge that organisations face lies in institutionalising the process of regular training sessions, identifying the gaps where employees need upskilling, and providing opportunities for talent mobility — all of which are crucial for employee retention.

Only 18%
of organisations in
Asia Pacific have
increased access to
digital learning for
their employees in the
last 2 years.

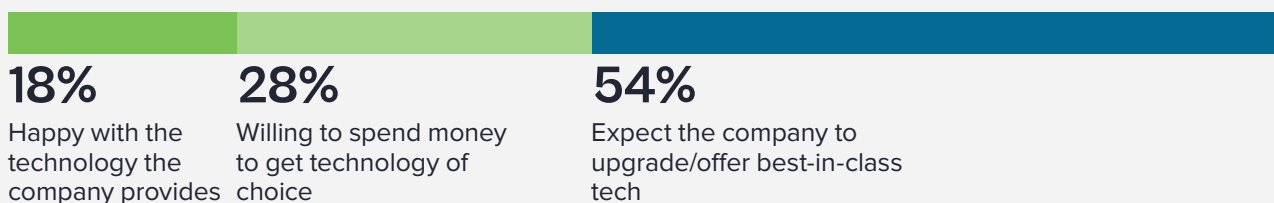
*Ecosystem Voice of the Employee
Study, 2024*



#4 Constant Technological Empowerment

The proliferation of digital tools and applications has led people to prefer best-in-class technology for both personal and professional use. This trend is shortening the technology life cycle in organisations, as employees increasingly seek the latest upgrades and technologies (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Employees in Asia Pacific are Driving the Adoption of Newer Technologies



Q: What are your thoughts on the technology you use for work?
N=1,053

Source: Ecosystem Voice of the Employee Study, 2024



Integrating innovative technology fundamentally transforms how employees approach and execute their work. Automation of routine tasks frees up time, allowing employees to focus on more strategic aspects of their work. Access to AI-driven insights provides a deeper understanding of business trends and customer needs, enabling more informed decision-making. This tech-enabled environment promotes continuous learning and adaptation, encouraging employees to explore new ideas and innovative solutions, leading to greater personal growth and professional excellence – and as a result, better business and customer outcomes.

#5 More Digital Experiences

Employees increasingly seek digital experiences that enhance their productivity, flexibility, and overall experience. They value the convenience of accessing resources and collaborating with colleagues seamlessly, regardless of location or device. From streamlined communication platforms to intuitive project management tools, the demand for digital solutions is driven by a desire for efficiency and connectivity. However, employee portals are often compartmentalised by business or department, creating internal silos between corporate communication, HR, and IT, which lead to disjointed employee experiences.

Employees want digital experiences to empower them to personalise their workflows, allowing them to tailor their work environment to suit their unique preferences and needs. This can be achieved through a comprehensive employee portal that seamlessly integrates all aspects of employee requirements, including functional, operational, and informational needs, providing updates from leadership, and keeping employees informed about the business they work in.

66%

of knowledge workers in Asia Pacific prefer a digital experience over an in-person interaction at work.

Ecosystem Voice of the Employee Study, 2024



CASE STUDY

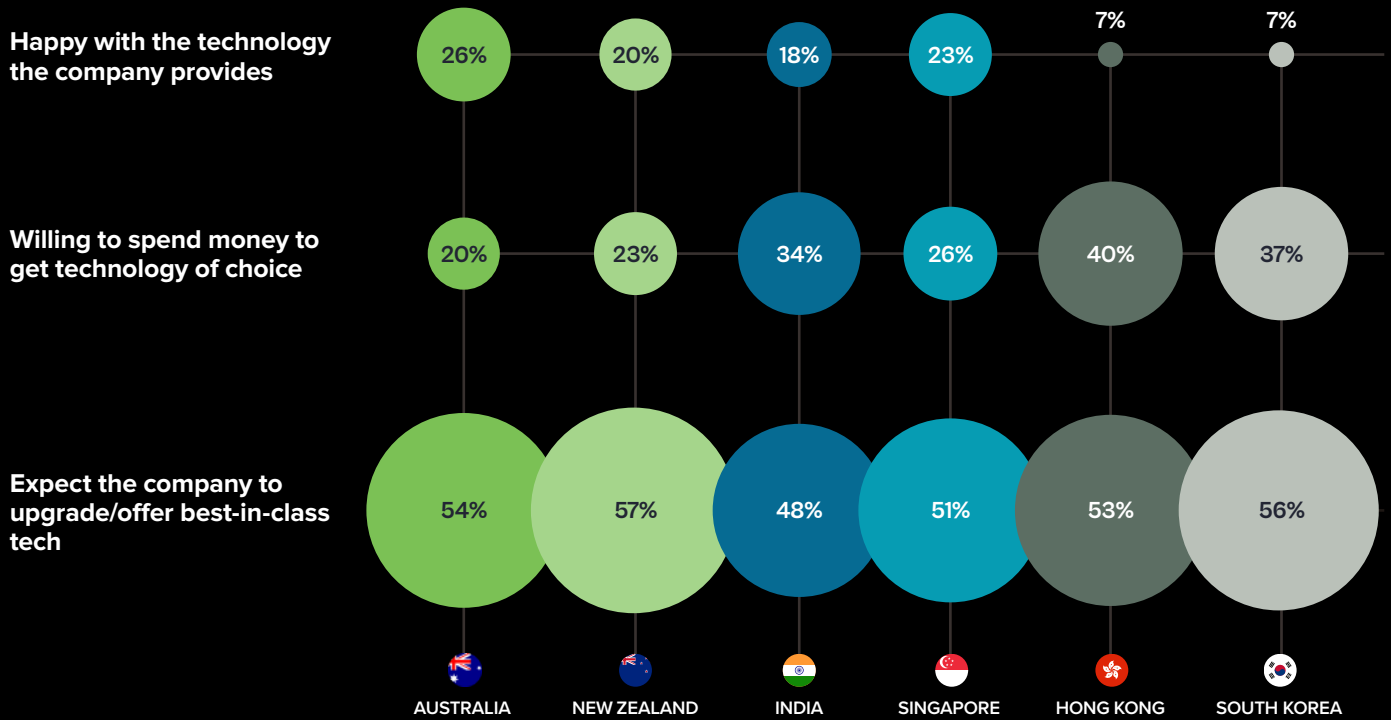
Listening to the Voice of the Employee

A [multinational financial services company](#) that operates over 1,200 branches across 60 markets, with more than 80,000 employees, conducted an online survey via their HR portal. The aim was to gauge preferences regarding working hours and location flexibility. Employees voiced a preference for a blend of remote work to accommodate personal commitments and in-office collaboration. With **80% of employees expressing support for more flexible work**, business leaders initiated pilots across eight markets to explore effective integration of flexible work arrangements.





Employee Demands for Technology Upgrades - By Countries



Q: What are your thoughts on the technology you use for work?
 N=500 (across countries mentioned in the figure)
 Source: Ecosystem Voice of the Employee Study, 2024

As employees take more ownership of their work technologies, technology upgrade life cycle has significantly shortened across all enterprise technologies, including HR tech. Frequent upgrades and latest capabilities ensure that all employees are happy with the solutions offered by the organisations.



Modern Workplace Challenges for HR

The evolving demands of employees and the need for greater organisational efficiency create distinct challenges for HR professionals.



Technology Sprawl

HR management is complex, requiring multiple interconnected systems and processes essential for workforce administration, talent acquisition, onboarding, performance management, and employee development.

As organisations adopt various digital tools and platforms to address specific HR needs, they face a ‘technology sprawl’ and a fragmented technology ecosystem. Disparate systems and data silos hamper data visibility, coherence, collaboration, and HR’s ability to derive meaningful insights and deliver holistic workforce strategies. Navigating multiple systems also consumes valuable time and resources, hindering the HR team from focusing on strategic initiatives to drive organisational success and employee engagement.

Legacy Limitations

As employee preferences and expectations continually evolve, HR teams must operate with agility to adapt swiftly and effectively.

However, many organisations find themselves constrained by legacy HR systems that lack the flexibility and analytical capabilities required to identify and respond to emerging trends and needs. They struggle to detect patterns, anticipate changing preferences, or pinpoint areas for improvement within their workforce strategies. Lack of access to comprehensive and real-time data insights prevents them from proactively addressing gaps in employee experiences – whether related to benefits, policies, training, career development, or workplace culture. HR teams often struggle to identify the most common questions their employees ask them. This can have immense impact on the business as organisations run the risk of falling behind competitors in attracting, retaining, and engaging top talent.

Legal Complexity

In the contemporary globalised business environment, many organisations have cross-border operations, which requires a comprehensive understanding of the legal frameworks in each geography.

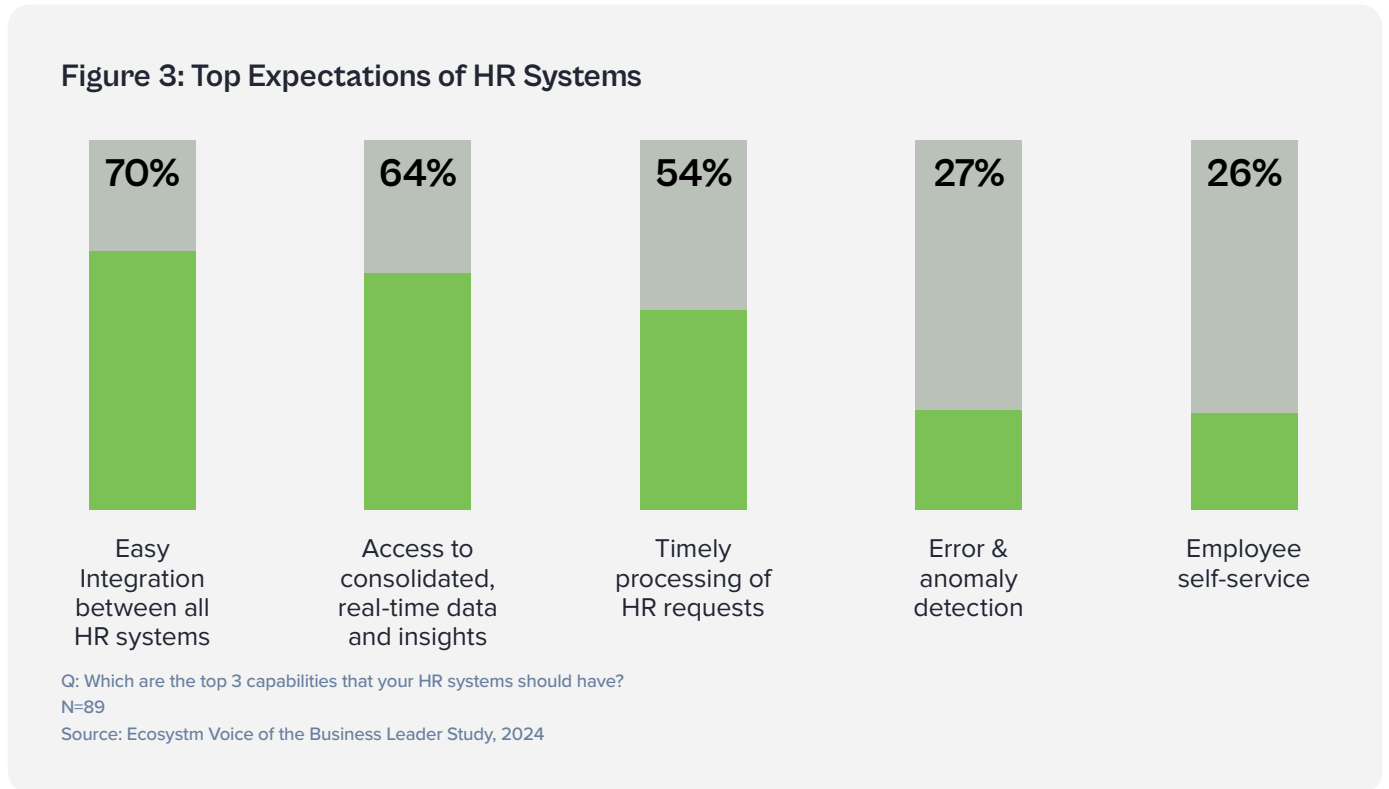
Navigating the evolving legal landscape across various states and countries poses significant challenges, demanding substantial time and resources from legal and compliance departments. The complexity arises from the interplay of diverse regulatory regimes, including employment laws, taxation policies, data privacy regulations, intellectual property rights, and trade agreements. Failure to comply with cross-border legal requirements can result in serious consequences, including fines, litigation, reputational damage, and even operational disruptions. Off-the-shelf, best-of-breed HCM systems often struggle to comply with and adapt to global legislation and requirements.

Personalising Employee Experience: AI-Driven Platforms

Organisations embracing AI solutions to enhance the employee experience see a significant uptick in both employee satisfaction and workplace productivity. AI integration fundamentally alters how employees engage with their work environment, transitioning from traditional methods to a more dynamic, people-centric approach.

The evolution of employee platforms has transformed HR operations, fundamentally reshaping the function of HR teams and addressing their biggest challenges.

HR teams want a system tailored to address their pain points, with easy configuration, seamless integration, and embedded intelligence (Figure 3).



Interactive employee platforms serve as centralised hubs for all HR activities, ranging from onboarding, training, significant employee moments (such as parental leave, promotions, and role changes), and communication channels. The integration of digital tools can streamline workflows, empowering HR teams to allocate resources strategically and prioritise critical initiatives for organisational success.

AI integration into HR systems further enhances operational efficiency by automating tasks and empowering HR professionals with data-driven powerful insights into employee interactions and process bottlenecks. This empowers CHROs and HR teams to create personalised employee journeys, fostering connections between HR, IT, Finance, Legal, and other departments. It facilitates the development of career advancement tools, wellness programs, and incentives, leading to significantly improved engagement and retention rates. When designed well, these platforms can support employees holistically, ensuring that professional growth aligns with personal well-being.



Ecosystem Opinion

While HR leaders recognise the role of AI and automation in enhancing employee experience and optimising resources, they often underestimate the potential of these systems to also enhance the experience of internal HR teams.

Figure 4: Biggest Perceived Benefits of HR Automation



47%

Improve user experience for all employees



22%

Reduce processing time



22%

Reduce processing cost



8%

Improve employee experience of HR team

Q: What is the biggest benefit of HR automation?
N=89
Source: Ecosystem Voice of the Business Leader Study, 2024

Employee experience platforms have an immense role to play in improving the efficiency of HR operations and the experience of HR teams.



Refactoring HR Processes through AI and Interactive Employee Platforms



Enhanced Productivity and Operational Efficiency

Consolidation of various tools and resources streamlines processes and reduces inefficiencies. By providing a centralised hub for employee interactions and tasks, organisations can optimise workflows and drive overall performance.



Seamless Implementation of Service Delivery Solutions

With a unified platform, organisations can standardise processes and ensure consistent service delivery across different functions such as IT, HR, Facilities Management, and Legal. This scalability enables efficient resource allocation and enhances the overall employee experience.



Personalising Employee Experiences

Analysis of employee data and preferences can generate personalised recommendations for simpler support, career development, training opportunities, and project assignments. This tailored approach enhances employee engagement and satisfaction by aligning individual interests with organisational goals.



Customisation of Communication

By leveraging data analytics and segmentation techniques, organisations can deliver personalised messages that resonate with individual employees, based on their roles, locations, or job types. This ensures that employees receive relevant information and fosters employee engagement.



Empowering People Leaders

Access to employee data, performance metrics, and support resources, helps managers make informed decisions and provide timely assistance to their teams. This empowers managers to better support employee growth and development.



Identifying Areas of Improvement and Intervention

A holistic view of employee progress, metrics, and requests, analysed in aggregation can provide valuable insights into team dynamics and performance trends. This comprehensive view allows managers to identify areas for improvement and implement targeted interventions to drive team success.



Supporting Professional Growth

By mapping out clear pathways for career development and advancement, organisations can support employees in achieving their professional goals. This proactive approach helps employees navigate challenges and identify opportunities, promoting career growth and employee retention.



Anytime, Anywhere Access

Giving access to the centralised hub to employees, irrespective of their location or device, ensures that organisations are meeting them where they prefer to engage.

Ecosystem Opinion

CHROs and HR professionals are realising the immense potential of advanced AI technologies and employee platforms.

By leveraging these tools, HR teams can access invaluable data-driven insights that allow organisations to stay ahead of unique workforce trends and identify career opportunities that align with individual employee strengths and ambitions. The strategic intention of AI and employee platforms solidifies the organisation's position as a leader in innovation and a robust competitor in the ever-evolving landscape of modern business.

However, organisations must exercise caution and ensure the implementation of a trusted AI platform. Concerns regarding data privacy and AI governance may lead to employee reluctance in using unproven solutions. HR leaders also face the challenge of gaining employee buy-in for AI implementations through targeted messaging. AI enhances rather than replaces employees, streamlining their daily tasks and adding value to their roles.

In the future, responsive modern workplaces prioritising employee needs, agile service implementation, and cost-efficient HR operations will rely on robust AI-powered employee experience platforms.

CASE STUDY

Responding to the Voice of the Employee

The [multinational financial services company](#) mentioned previously opted for a flexible work model end-to-end, with a focus on seamless employee engagement. Nearly 48,000 employees across 28 markets have applied for flexible working, with plans to expand the solution further. Features such as people leaders' dashboards and automated workflow design have been implemented to enhance the employee experience and save manual effort. The HR portal offers flexi-work options and knowledge articles, with live chat support available for further assistance. Performance analytics dashboards are used for tracking uptake and insights, with knowledge base articles receiving a high effectiveness rating and minimal queries raised among applicants.

Outcomes

**4.63**

VoC score for flexi-work service

**15,900**

Productivity hours saved by self-service





Perspectives from ServiceNow Partners

Deloitte.



FUJITSU | **enable**
a Fujitsu company



FastForward EX powered by ServiceNow provides the digital experience that is based on Deloitte’s thought leadership.



Benefits of *FastForward EX*



Accelerate speed to Value

Reducing design, development, deployment, and costs through faster implementation, allowing more time for high-value opportunities and essential localisations, rather than starting from scratch.



A unified platform

Empowering the workforce with one primary platform to maximise technology investments, streamline workflows, increase knowledge sharing, and enable better insights.



Transform workforce experience

Offering personalised digital experiences for the workforce that match the quality of their experiences outside of work and enabling seamless work from anywhere, at any time, and on any device.



Improve operational effectiveness

Providing a platform to improve HR operational effectiveness and a path to migrate to a leading practice operating model through enabling technology practices and automation.



Drive productivity and growth

Creating a competitive edge. Companies in the top quartile of workforce experience achieve 25% higher profitability than those in the bottom quartile; those with highly engaged workers see a 2.3x greater 3-year revenue growth rate than the average.



Companies that use *FastForward EX* are up and running on the ServiceNow platform in as fast as **9 weeks**



30% Cost efficiency versus starting from scratch

EY Beyond HR combines top HR practices and EY's digital people experience expertise, delivered via the ServiceNow platform. Using EY Beyond HR, EY works with HR and IT leaders to transform clients' people processes, enhancing employee and leader experiences, cutting costs, and delivering innovative services.

EY Beyond HR has been developed with three organisational outcomes in mind:

Technology@speed

- Consolidate HR service delivery onto the Now Platform, to ensure consistent and connected global services across boundaries and functions.
- Digitally transform HR with an integrated, evolving, and future-ready solution, harnessing the power of AI.
- Facilitate seamless integration with top HCM platforms using pre-built integrations and playbooks, to create end-to-end digital journeys.



At a large Beverage company, EY implemented an integrated talent acquisition and onboarding journey. It united data from the client's Candidate Management platform and cloud Core HR system, leading to digital offer generation, contract storage, and initiating the ServiceNow digital onboarding journey.

Humans@center

- Design and implement agile employee journeys with scalable, AI-driven workflows to expedite resolutions.
- Provide user-friendly, human-centric experiences across service catalogs, mobile apps, and virtual agents.
- User experience analytics to extract actionable insights from behavioural data.



At a major global bank, EY used pain-point analysis, system usability scoring (SUS), and iterative user-labs to design, test, and refine the usability of the new ServiceNow system. Embedded usage analytics post-launch informed ongoing improvements, ensuring a continuous process of experience enhancement.

Innovation@scale

- Enable HR transformation by merging ServiceNow HRSD with EY People Consulting expertise, establishing value and change roadmap.
- Achieve unified HR data view, including interaction analytics, for ongoing improvement insights and innovation backlog generation.
- Empower HR to scale strategically with EY's rapid execution capabilities using templated ServiceNow solution components.



At a large global insurance organisation, EY is using EY Beyond HR to kickstart redesigned onboarding, offboarding, and cross-boarding journeys in Australia. This will serve as a template for a larger global program planned in Germany, speeding up the journey to a single, global "digital all-boarding" solution.



Fujitsu HRSD Launchpad co-created with ServiceNow, is a pre-configured, scalable solution that accelerates HR digital transformation. It offers operational visibility, process optimisation, and the agility needed for modern, efficient shared services in a hybrid work environment.

HRSD Launchpad Capabilities:

Unifies Employee Experiences

Engaging experience platform that meets modern workforce expectations, whilst optimising service delivery.

Drives Shared Services Efficiency

Optimising workflow processes, freeing employees to focus on high-impact work and reducing service redundancy across HR teams.

Delivers Employee Engagement

A unified service platform streamlining support and engagement and enabling agile service scalability to meet changing organisational needs.



Designed using a human centred approach, Fujitsu's Human Resources Service Delivery (HRSD) Launchpad leverages the best of ServiceNow HRSD to accelerate time to value for our customers and great experiences for their employees. Our partnership with ServiceNow is enhanced by our shared commitment to innovation. HRSD Launchpad showcases that partnership, in the important market of Employee Workflows and HR digital transformation.

Bruce Hara, CEO, Enable, a Fujitsu Company

Case Study

An Australian mining company, a major supplier of metallurgical coal, faced challenges in scaling HR services due to rapid organisational growth. Their HR team struggled with manual processes, limited capacity, and outdated workflows.

Fujitsu's HRSD Launchpad, implemented in partnership with ServiceNow, provided a comprehensive suite of HR services, case management, and knowledge sharing within a cohesive digital ecosystem.

Outcomes



Implemented a single, unified portal and mobile app for employee self-service.



Established a foundational platform for efficient HR service delivery.



Enhanced the overall service, support, and communication experience for employees, offering continuous improvement insights.



KPMG's Powered HR, enabled by ServiceNow, helps organisations manage the entire Employee Lifecycle – recruitment, onboarding, training and development, performance management, career progression, and offboarding – to ensure their positive experience and contribution to the organisation's success.

It delivers **consumer-grade employee experiences**, supported by an **agile HR operating model** that evolves with company growth, and **assists employees in embracing change** and **leveraging new technologies** to enhance value and performance.



Digital transformation is all about addressing the talent imperative on the minds of many organisations today - attracting, retaining, and growing top talent through exceptional and individualised workforce experiences.

John Doel, Principal, Human Capital Advisory, KPMG in the US

KPMG's Powered HR allows organisations to:

Attract, retain, and grow top talent

- Empower crucial employee moments with a human-centric platform.
- Maximise people management efficiency and support employee wellbeing.
- Enhance understanding of performance using internal and external data.

Enable workforce productivity

- Propel digital transformation by aligning the CHRO agenda with growth-focused business model changes, making talent the engine.
- Integrate HR with back-office functions to enable interconnected omnichannel experiences.
- Customise employee experiences with mobile capabilities and analytics to meet diverse needs.

Elevate HR service delivery

- Automate all employee interactions through: Rapid Visioning & Discovery, Prioritise & Design the Experience, and Road Mapping & Activation.
- Create a holistic Target Operating Model encompassing people, processes, technology, service delivery, performance, and governance.
- Enable decision-making with pre-designed digital experiences, such as dashboards and predictive analytics, for senior leaders.

CASE STUDY

Multinational auto manufacturer's HR transformation



CHALLENGE

Rapid growth left HR processes disorganised and lacking in tracking capabilities for employee issues and sentiment.



RESPONSE

KPMG implemented an HR shared service organisation model, integrating processes and technologies like ServiceNow Knowledge Portal and telephony.



OUTCOME

Improved employee satisfaction, operational management, and cost efficiency through a flexible, scalable, and sustainable system.



About the Author



Clay Miller

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Clay Miller is a trusted advisor and speaker; and provides thought leadership and guidance in the areas of Cloud, Core Insurance and Core Banking Transformation, Artificial Intelligence, Agile, and DevSecOps. For the past 4 years he has been a Senior Advisor supporting Financial Services clients in Asia Pacific. Before that, he was JP Insurance Thailand's Executive Vice President and Chief Technology Officer (CTO). While at JP, they were successful with being the first Thai Insurance Company to be 100% on the Cloud and leveraging InsurTech and other leading-edge technologies. He has also worked as Chief Information Officer (CIO) and Chief Human Resource Officer (CHRO) for luminary companies such as IBM, AMD, Motorola, Kulicke & Soffa, Lattice Semiconductor, and Paradigm Geophysical.

Clay is originally from Texas, USA, and has lived and worked in Asia for over 25 years. He has a permanent home in Thailand and has many globally trusted C-Level connections in the government and private sectors.



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