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Evolution of Human Resources in the Digital Age – Some Thoughts & Perspectives

In one of my previous article, I shared about digitization and its impact on the future of work. The digital economy is going to transform the way we view work and also how jobs are being managed. Technology will change the way companies operate and digital disruption and social networking are altering how organizations hire, manage and support people. The Human Resource function will have to move from managing to organizing talent with data analytics. We will also need to move from functional to multi-disciplinary work teams to solve complex problems. The three key questions for HR professionals will be:

1. How will HR revolutionize its processes?

This will involve ways in which we can revolutionize our HR Delivery models. It means moving away from transactions and processes to an integrated HR Platform, using mobile apps instead of the traditional desk top applications, using Human Centric design to look at our processes, as well as real time interactive dashboards to help us become better Business Partners.

2. How can HR lead business leaders and employees to shift towards a digital mindset and new ways of managing and organizing?

HR can lead the way by being a change agent and an early adopter of technology. They need to educate business leaders and employees about the importance of using technology to manage their operations in a lean and efficient way and to sell in fast growing markets while keeping virtual teams connected through digital platforms. Being a change agent, they also need to help others understand that digital disruption and social networking will alter the ways in which talents are being hired and managed. The new workplace will be different by design, with the emergence of the gig economy, digital HR, and different models of engagement and culture building. This is summed up by Deloitte Consulting in the diagram below:



3. How can HR use Design Thinking to make work easier, more productive and more enjoyable for employees in a digital economy?

Design Thinking (DT) will be the new buzz word for HR Practitioners. Tim Brown (2008) in his HBR review discussed the use of design principles in the daily processes that happen at work. The three stages of design are, Inspiration, Ideation and Implementation. “Inspiration” triggers a problem, “Ideation” is the process of generating, developing and testing ideas that may lead to solutions, and “Implementation” is for the charting of a path to market. Design Thinking when used as a methodology in IT project implementation, can lead to innovative outcomes and productivity at work. HR practitioners can lead the way by employing the use of Design Thinking in their HR Projects and digitization strategy. They can also form multi-disciplinary teams to look at complex problems with the use of Design Thinking tools.

The revolution has already begun. We need to jump on the bandwagon and start the process of change. All the best in your digitization strategy!