

HR INSIGHTS

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6 HR Trends to Monitor in 2018

HR departments must constantly adapt to new requirements from both internal and external sources. Unexpected factors like new regulations from the White House and additional workplace responsibilities commonly disrupt HR departments. These disruptors can influence HR's trajectory for the rest of the year.

Below are the top six trends that could impact your organization in the coming months.

1. Taking Advantage of Technology

HR departments across the country are incorporating technology into their roles to do their jobs more efficiently. Why spend hours manually tracking things like employee enrollment and applicant data when there are systems that can do it for you? The answer: you don't—let the software do it. At least, that seems to be the consensus among HR departments.

Employers now have the ability to use systems to quickly evaluate complex data and streamline recruitment. Onboarding talent swiftly can be a struggle for many organizations and drawing the process out can cost lots of time and money. Taking advantage of new technologies will make or break companies moving forward. Stay ahead of the curve and start reviewing your software options now.

2. Paying Attention to Gen Z

Generation Z members—those born in the mid- to late-1990s—are quickly gaining attention from employers. Gen Zers are often described as motivated and tech-savvy individuals, making them ideal candidates for developing businesses. These young business leaders could be exactly what your company needs to succeed in the digital landscape.

Growing up alongside smartphones and the internet, Gen Zers are both creative and adaptable. They can help bridge the gap between seasoned employees and emerging technology workflows. If you need talent that can explain technical functions to more senior employees, Gen Z might be the answer.

Given that it costs 20 percent of an employee's annual salary to replace him or her, the stakes are high to hold onto talent.



3. Retaining Your Workforce

Retention remains a critical focus point in 2018. While that responsibility is technically shared by the entire company, it mostly falls to HR. The HR department is now expected to both recruit and retain top talent, in addition to its other responsibilities. Given that it costs 20 percent of an employee's annual salary to replace him or her, the stakes are high to hold onto talent.

HR should explore new ways to bolster its existing retention programs. Given the high cost of turnover, ignoring retention is unacceptable this year.

4. Staying Flexible

Now more than ever, employees are looking for flexibility from their employers. Technology makes it increasingly feasible to work remotely while still keeping in contact with co-workers. One no longer needs to be physically present to participate in a meeting, and cloud software allows for simultaneous collaboration. With these software tools, it is difficult to justify rigid scheduling.

Businesses are realizing that even minor flexibility can go a long way with improving employee morale and retention. Flexibility can help employees handle family responsibilities, feel in control about their workloads and schedules, and maintain a healthier work-life balance.

5. Keeping an Eye on Harassment

Anyone who turned on a TV in the last few months is aware of the heated climate surrounding sexual harassment in the workplace. Media icons and top executives are facing increased scrutiny over harassment allegations. This trend will likely increase in 2018, so it is critical that your company is ready to handle these cases effectively.

HR should review and revise sexual harassment policies, examine workplace culture and establish an open door policy for employees who feel harassed. The department must be seen as a safe place for employees. Effective employee communication is the first step to solidifying a good relationship. The Insurance Exchange can help you get the communication resources you need.

6. Opioids

While the opioid crisis has lurked behind the scenes for years, it is now showing its ugly face in the workplace. There are over 63,000 drug overdoses each year in the United States, according to the National Center for Health Statistics. Over half of those deaths are from opioids alone. With more and more people falling prey to prescription medication, employers are seeing the effect.

HR has a crucial role to play in the opioid crisis. Employees may now require access to drug treatment programs and counseling, among other resources, so they can stay healthy enough to work. Opioid abuse is likely to increase negative patterns like absenteeism and decreased performance. Teach managers how to recognize the signs of drug abuse and let employees know what resources are available to them.

The Insurance Exchange can help assess your need for additional benefits to keep your employees healthy and productive.