

Discover how to tackle the 5 biggest challenges for HR professionals in 2023

Several times in the past 3 years, companies have had to adjust their HR policies and respond to new developments: suddenly we had to adapt to a global pandemic, job interviews became digital, new employees got onboarded remotely and now we have to cope with an energy crisis and inflation. Obviously, this requires a lot of flexibility and adaptability from HR professionals.

It appears that 2023 will continue on this momentum. During our HR Lunch Sessions, we had 5 experts explaining 1 of the 5 challenges HR professionals will face in 2023. Their insights and practical tips for successfully dealing with the challenges around topics like company culture, employee wellbeing and talent attraction were compiled in the HR Report.

Boost employee engagement through HR data

Our first expert, Timothy Desmet, is an Entrepreneur and Professor at the Free University of Brussels and Hult International Business School in London. He is an expert when it comes to using data in HR and author of the book Reinventing HR data.

The use of HR analytics is getting more and more crucial. It is a mistaken belief that everything about HR is difficult to measure because it is about individuals and is very personal and you should trust your gut feeling. By collecting the necessary data, you will be able to gain certain insights and work much more targeted. This enables better and data-driven decision-making. Data can be collected by surveys, interviews, online tracking, ...

A couple of insights you can implement immediately in your HR-strategy when it comes to data:

Relying on your employer survey can lead to a false feeling of safety. Employees tend to answer these questions with socially acceptable answers. Avoid asking questions that can be answered with 'yes' to conform to social norms. Ask open questions that encourage your employees to innovate them & the team.

A.I. is and will keep on being the Holy grail for HR. Remember you don't have to understand the A.I. system completely, It's all about using it in a strategic way so it provides you with specific data about your employees/HR strategy.

Map your own employees' journeys. You can quickly recognize behaviors in the journey that tell a lot about the satisfaction and engagement of your employees. Data is more than just numbers, a lot of information can be collected from the behavior of your employees.

Practical tips for a successful pre-and onboarding process

Our second expert is Birgit Raes. As a sales enablement manager and onboarding expert, Birgit gave some great practical tips for a successful pre-and onboarding process.

We've heard a lot about pre- and onboarding the last couple of years. Yet this does not require a blanket approach that you can just copy for your own organization. Each organization needs to tailor this according to its own culture.

1. MAKE SURE YOU HAVE A FAST & TRANSPARENT RECRUITMENT PROCESS

We are in a war for talent. Those who want to win the war, better take care of their recruitment process. Gen Z likes to move quickly and wants to be in the loop. Involve them in every step and try to complete the hiring process within 2 to 3 weeks.

2. PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Do your new hires actively get feedback on their work? Don't let them just copy colleagues, but celebrate their own unique approach to things. Sharing knowledge is the best way to learn.

3. MAKE A BIG DEAL OUT OF ONBOARDING

Take your onboarding process seriously and expect new hires to do the same. If possible, gamify it and celebrate those who have completed the onboarding successfully.

How employee wellbeing can boost your business success

Dot Zacharias, Product Manager at Wenite, combines data with wellbeing. She is an expert in innovative projects that support people around the world to take care of their mental and physical health.

If the covid period has provided anything good, it is that there has been an increased focus on employee wellbeing. With the obligation of working from home, many people found that they had more time for their families, sports, ... This made them have more quality time outside of work, which adds to their happiness. In addition, since November there has been a European directive that gives workers the right to disconnect.

Here are 3 practical tips to keep in mind when it comes to employee wellbeing:

- Topics like working from home, work-life balance and employee wellbeing, have been transformed into standard criteria to improve and maintain mental health. 80% of people working from home feel lonely, 50% of people give a false reason for their burnouts. Improve the conversation about wellbeing and engage the employees top to bottom to ensure the impact.
- There is no standard strategy to improve the wellbeing of employees. Each organisation needs a tailored wellbeing strategy, this strategy has to be data-led. Data is the key to discover where the needs of your employees are situated. Following, to ensure impact the strategy needs to be integrated into your organisation.
- Employees will leave a company if the wellbeing strategy isn't integrated in all the aspects of the organisation. You can invest in resilience training for all levels of employees and managers, if the training doesn't grow as part of the core values in the company, your employees will feel the disconnect and choose to leave the company. Ensure that your wellbeing training becomes part of the core values of the company.

How to attract top talent from universities

Rebecca Fielding is Founder & Managing Director at Gradconsult. She is a Keynote speaker with expertise in careers, recruiting and future talent.

We abstracted 3 topics from her insights:

CONTRARY TO WHAT WE MAY THINK, GENERATION Z & ALPHA STILL NEEDS A FEELING OF SECURITY AND HUMAN CONNECTION BETWEEN CO-WORKERS

They anticipate in a world of continuous change, if you as an organisation can offer them security in their job and a opportunity to interact and learn from inter generational colleagues they will be keen to start their first job experience at your company.

QUALITY AND DEPTH ARE KEYWORDS IN THE OUTREACH FOR NEW TOPTALENT, INSTEAD OF QUANTITY AND BREADTH

If you shift your focus from the top 10 business schools or universities in Europe to smaller and local universities, you'll find more talents who are diverse and top-defined in their studies. Also you will not have to compete with many other organisations who want to target the same top talents. Use geo-targeting to find the right talents for your region

BUILD YOUR BRAND AND TRUST WITH THE STUDENTS

Use the power of peer to peer. They are looking for recommendations from their parents, peers and academics. Use these channels to build your brand and trust, so you become a natural topic between peers. Finally embed in their curriculum from the start. This will be a slow process, but if you can build that band from the start of their study career, they'll reach out for a job them-self at the end of their studies

How to maintain a solid company culture during times of hybrid work

We love to share 3 key takeaways from Adriaan Kolff, Co-founder and CEO at Matchr.

COMPANY CULTURE IS DEFINED BY THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Your leadership team is the mirror for all the layers of your company. Employees will adopt the behavior of the leaders at your organisation. When you begin to develop your company culture, start by defining your core values and ensure everybody, top to bottom, integrates these values.

YOUR COMPANY CULTURE IS ONLY TESTED IN DIFFICULT TIMES

The first step is defining your company culture. But the most important steps are making sure that your whole team has trust in your culture and to always apply transparent communication throughout every level. If difficult times arrive this will ensure that your team understands hard decisions that have to be made, but they will still stay loyal to your company.

ONBOARDING NEW HIRES IN A HYBRID WORKING MODEL HAS ITS CHALLENGES REGARDING COMPANY CULTURE.

When you're onboarding new hires remotely, there is a physical and emotional distance. If you want to make sure that they are properly onboarded in your company culture, you'll have to find tools and initiatives to overcome this distance. Creating your own 'Employee handbook' that guides your new hire through his first days and investing in fun, informal initiatives, assures the best onboarding experience in your company culture even remotely.

Want to have more practical examples about this subject?

[Here](#) you can read how Adyen welcomed all their new hires remotely with their customised onboarding boxes and boosted their employee engagement.

Conclusion

When we put all the insights of the 5 different experts together, we can extract 3 major similarities:

Data is super important! Collect the right data so you can start taking even more targeted action and better predict what behaviors to expect.

It is also important to start personalizing your HR approach. A general approach that is successful for every company unfortunately does not exist. Each company has its own way of working and its own culture. This will help determine what your HR policy looks like and what will work.

That same culture is the 3rd aspect to focus on. Organizational culture has a major impact on a lot of aspects related to your HR policies. Think about attracting the right talent, keeping good employees on board and keeping them happy. Employees who feel connected to the company's culture will feel a lot better overall, and this is something that will reflect in the company's success.