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Steering growth & navigating talent transformation in 2024: CHRO perspectives

This exclusive gathering provided a platform to explore the critical priorities, potential pitfalls, and emerging challenges that CHROs need to address in the evolving landscape.

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The role of a CHRO today is that of a growth catalyst – who needs to align HR practices with the contemporary demands of workplace. There's a need to adapt to a forward-looking approach that aligns workforce priorities for 2024-25. This includes balancing growth, navigating skill gaps, and elevating experiences through emerging technologies like AI.

In an exclusive roundtable in partnership with PeopleStrong, leaders discussed a number of focus areas on the theme – Balancing Growth and Navigating Challenges: CHRO Outlook 2024-25 at the TechHR Pulse in Mumbai. This exclusive gathering provided a platform to explore the critical priorities, potential pitfalls, and emerging challenges that CHROs need to address in the evolving landscape.

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Emerging priorities

Mrigank Tripathi, President - Growth at PeopleStrong touched on several themes that are emerging as key priorities including: the need for talent transformation, bridging skill gaps, digital leadership, and customer experience.

"As we reflect on our experiences, one principle stands out: agility is paramount. While resource allocation is often a part of the conversation, it's not the sole focus." He added." We've learned that not every challenge requires a hefty budget increase; sometimes, it's about finding innovative solutions within existing frameworks."

"Despite claims to the contrary, Payroll continues to remain a cornerstone of organisational functionality. Alongside this central pillar, we understand the value of incorporating bespoke elements tailored to specific needs," he added.

HDFC ERGO's HR Transformation

The roundtable also featured a fireside chat with Sudakshina Bhattacharya, President & CHRO, HDFC ERGO and Sandeep Chaudhary, CEO, PeopleStrong who spoke about the effort at HDFC ERGO to streamline operations and empower its dispersed workforce of over 11,000 employees across 600+ locations.

Your opinion matters: Tell us how

The company faced challenges ranging from disparate HR processes consuming valuable resources, which led to the company seeking to revolutionise its HR technology landscape.

With eight different HR platforms creating operational complexities and 60% of processes managed manually, HDFC ERGO confronted the need for unification and automation. Engaging and empowering a distributed workforce posed additional hurdles.

Strategic Objectives and Tech Interventions:

Aligning strategic objectives with technological interventions became paramount. HDFC ERGO focused on delivering a seamless mobile-first experience by leveraging a super app, integration capabilities, and the PeopleStrong talent OS. Prioritising user experience, automation, and high performance, the company aimed for a singular interface to empower its employees.

Impact on HR Business Partners and Employees:

The implementation of the Super App was swift, taking only 60 days to roll out across the organisation. The response was overwhelming, with 97% employee adoption within the initial 15 days. The app streamlined processes, freeing HR teams from transactional activities, enabling seamless data flow, and delivering a consistent employee experience.

The impact has been transformative: For HDFC ERGO, it has liberated HR bandwidth for strategic initiatives, facilitated seamless data exchange and employee interactions, ensured a consistent employee experience across all touchpoints and providing meaningful insights through analytics

Priorities for CHROs

Walking the audience through the discussion along with Ester Martinez, CEO of People Matters, Mrigank highlighted that today's business landscape has shifted to prioritising customer experience and digital. Emphasising talent rotation and adaptation to evolving business requirements, the discussion delved into leveraging digital tools and leadership development to enhance the employee experience.

Talent leaders participating in the Roundtable reflected on the challenges and opportunities of implementing HRMS systems. They emphasised the importance of **balancing agility** with consistency in system implementation, noting that overly rigid systems can become constraints over time.

They highlighted the need for HR solutions to evolve towards greater agility, allowing organisations to pick and choose modules tailored to their specific needs.

Creating a seamless employee experience, especially for frontline workers in diverse locations, calls for a focus on simplicity and accessibility. A leader from the retail sector noted that when technology is accessible, one can easily create brand ambassadors within the organisation.

Another leader highlighted the importance of aligning HR systems with both business and employee needs, particularly considering the changing expectations of younger generations entering the workforce.

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Throughout the discussion, the evolving needs and expectations of both businesses and employees emerged as a crucial focus area - with an emphasis on leveraging digital tools to enhance HR processes and employee experiences.

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800 new AI jobs in Ireland: Is IBM proving AI can create jobs?

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IBM's announcement of 800 new AI jobs in Ireland challenges the prevailing narrative of AI as a job destroyer. Could this be a sign of a shift in the job market?



In a move that may challenge the narrative of AI as a job destroyer, IBM announced its plans to create up to 800 new high-value tech jobs in Ireland. The company will focus on developing advanced AI-powered software, making this the largest multinational job announcement (https://www.idaireland.in/latest-news/press-release/ibm-ireland-to-create-up-to-800-high-value-tech-jobs) in the country this year, state investment agency IDA Ireland said.

The new roles will span research and development, digital sales, and consulting, highlighting the diverse skill sets needed to build and deploy AI solutions. This significant investment by IBM, already one of Ireland's largest multinational employers with 3,000 staff, signals a strong belief in the potential of AI to drive innovation and economic growth.

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"As IBM continues to help organisations transform their businesses with hybrid cloud and AI, attracting, developing, and retaining talent remains a key priority," said James Kavanaugh, IBM senior vice president and chief financial officer. "Today's announcement is a testament to the calibre of talent here in Ireland."

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Ireland's Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Peter Burke, welcomed the news saying "this is fantastic news". He emphasised the country's commitment to technological advancement and the opportunities these roles present for the skilled workforce.

The announcement comes at a time when the impact of AI on the job market is a subject of intense debate. While concerns about job displacement persist, IBM's investment suggests a more optimistic outlook, where AI is not only creating new jobs but also driving demand for specialised skills in areas like research, development, and consulting.

Deborah Threadgold, IBM Ireland country general manager, expressed enthusiasm about the initiative, stating, "We're thrilled to announce this landmark and transformational initiative that will position the Irish operation at the cutting edge of next-generation technology development within IBM globally."

This move by IBM could be a bellwether for other tech companies, demonstrating that AI is not just a threat to jobs but also a catalyst for new employment opportunities. As AI continues to evolve, it will be interesting to see how it reshapes the global workforce and what new roles and industries emerge in its wake.

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An Editor with People Matters, Mastufa decodes the evolving talent and tech industry through in-depth conversations with global influencers. Explore our latest initiative, LeadingEdge for exclusive chats with CEOs. Join the conversation with him at

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