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Talent Management: flexible, fast and personal

How change and employees new demands are changing the face of HR

MICHAEL BERNET | SENIOR CONSULTANT

The needs of companies are changing due to new demands from employees and digitalization. The new dynamic nature of companies means Human Resources (HR) has to change. HR has to move away from just monitoring processes. **tts** Senior Consultant Michael Bernet gives his assessment of how companies will adapt to the changes in the role of HR.

What is the future of talent management? There are two driving factors behind the push, according to Michael Bernet: the **rapid transformation of the business world**, as evidenced by globalization and digitalization, and the **changing needs** of a new generation of employees.

Both of these force talent management to become increasingly flexible, fast and personal. It has to react to rapid business changes, but also meet the demands of employees who expect prompt feedback about their work and expect employers to cater to their personal needs.

"However, in a world where processes are increasingly flexible and run for ever-shorter periods, coupled with the fact that they are personalized to individuals, this inevitably leads to a loss of control for HR. After all, it's really difficult to keep abreast with all these highly refined processes. Maintaining a clear overview will be ever more of a challenge," predicts Bernet.

Demands of self-sufficient learners

The growing trend in talent management has been toward a flexible, fast and personal approach in recent times. Meanwhile performance management is increasingly morphing into 'continuous performance management' and learning is moving in the direction of 'continuous learning'. 'Continuous performance management' has mirrored the changes in talent management by also becoming flexible, fast and personal. Managers are able to provide tools for employees in various roles including individuals and global teams, or those who are involved in project work. Additionally, the new resources are provided at shorter intervals allowing goals to be achieved efficiently. With regard to learning, Bernet has noticed a move away from

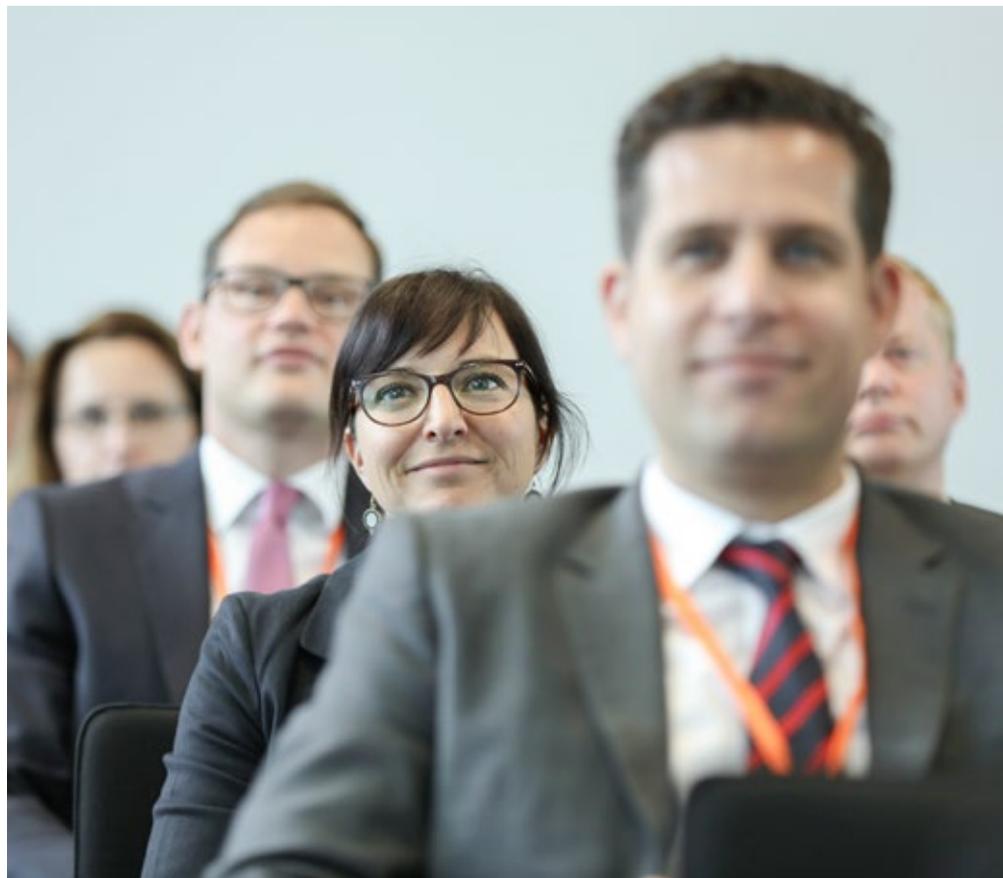
the push strategy toward a pull strategy. Self-sufficient learners no longer limit themselves exclusively to courses provided by their company. They opt instead to actively seek out suitable opportunities elsewhere, meaning that they have access to an abundance of content. Not only do they demand a learning experience that has been customized to suit their needs, but they also want to be able consume content at any time and in any place.

To win the favor of such demanding learners, HR has to put together an attractive package of measures. In addition, HR has to be open to things which are not under its control, such

as content created by employees or course evaluations from catalogs. "As an educational leader, I have to demonstrate greater flexibility and no longer just limit myself to courses, but also include concepts," Bernet elaborates, "I have to present employees with suggestions, allowing them to navigate their way through my offer in accordance with their personal preferences."

How do companies adapt to this?

Despite the rapid shift in expectations and ever-changing employee needs leading to a loss of control for HR, technological advances can limit the loss. But they also add to the



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pressure to change quickly. Michael Bernet has noticed six trends that help companies meet these demands.

1. Simplification: despite sounding rather paradoxical, processes can become more flexible through standardization and the associated decline in complexity.
2. The Cloud: allows quicker access to innovations and increases the speed and agility of projects.
3. User experience: is gaining traction as employees increasingly expect interfaces to be easy-to-use.
4. Analytics: involves the compiling of information using sophisticated tools which helps to offset the partial loss of control by HR.
5. Integration: in the form of systems are crucial to the success of cross-process analyses and automation.

6. IT budgetary control: is being re-directed from IT to HR, as the HR department wants to assume control of their company’s IT projects and of the corresponding financial resources.

The advancing pace of digitalization is a huge opportunity for talent management. “All these developments mean that HR work is about to change beyond recognition – moving away from the monitoring and management of processes toward increased strategic control and a new perception of the HR role as that of an ‘enabler,’” says Bernet, summing up his market observations.

Facts & Figures

- Rapid change and employees new demands call for talent management that is less rigid, leading to a partial loss of control for HR.
- But new technologies also mean new opportunities for handling the transformation and ever-evolving requirements.
- New role for HR as a strategic controller and ‘enabler’