

**HR & PAYROLL  
SOFTWARE**

 **Cascade**  
IRIS Human Capital Management



## **A BEST-PRACTICE BUYERS' GUIDE**

Facing Common Challenges  
with Smart HR Technology

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## Introduction

The Human Resources landscape is a tricky one; everchanging factors that are outside of a team's immediate control, such as legislation or business strategy, mean an HR professional will face a number of challenges on a daily basis. Reflection and planning is a pivotal part of any business success, and HR is no different.

In a recent study commissioned by Cascade HR, nearly 500 UK HR directors, managers, and executives were asked to look back on the past year, as well as share their predictions for the coming 12 months.

Though the organisations represented in the study ranged in location and size, and spanned a variety of industries, a number of the themes and challenges remained consistent throughout.

Many of those surveyed said they felt overstretched in their roles and were facing, or expecting to face, a variety of challenges that most notably included automation, absence management, employee engagement, people analysis and recruitment.

For more information on facing your most common challenges with the help of smart HR technology, or to see Cascade in action, contact us to book a demonstration.

## Recurring Challenges

Interestingly, the challenges that appeared most commonly in the reflection portion of the study, also appeared most commonly in the predictions for the coming year, with over 90% of participants also stating that technology, and more specifically automation, had an important role to play in their HR department becoming more effective and efficient.

Five of the common pain points for HR professionals cited in the study were:

1. **Automation**
2. **Absence Management**
3. **Employee Engagement**
4. **People Analytics**
5. **Recruitment**

One characteristic that these recurring pain points share is that their impact on a business (and the HR team) can be significantly lessened with the use of smart HR software to alleviate administrative burdens, and to streamline processes.

*"We now save between 20-30 hours per week due to the implementation of our improved systems."*

- HR Manager, Havebury Housing Partnership



## Automation



Creating workflows to suit your individual needs is one of the easiest ways to relieve the administrative burden felt by HR. This tool enables you to devise a route for all tasks from start to finish; whether

they be managing holiday requests via authorisation routes, or moving through your organisation's own new starter process.

Developing automated workflows is the real difference between HR software working intelligently to help you, or not getting the most from your system and creating more work for yourself. In addition, the ability to build these in the system yourself will allow you to map out your organisation's objectives and have them reflected in the system, rather than trying to work to 'cookie cutter' processes.

The introduction of HR technology with these capabilities will enable the HR team to manage workflows throughout the organisation whilst creating efficiencies. This can be achieved by rerouting responsibility for task completion to line managers and employees where appropriate, and guaranteeing the completion of tasks (by specified deadlines where required).

***"These streamlined and more intelligent processes mean we are able to concentrate on the most important part of our roles - looking after our people."***

- HR Manager, CPM

## Absence Management

The introduction of a system that has a Self Service component is the best way to combat the administrative headaches that can result from Absence Management tasks. Self Service puts the power (and the responsibility) back into the hands of the employee. Basic functions such as requesting holidays then sit with the employee to initiate.

Requests can be routed to the correct person within the organisation, meaning that if leave requests are able to be approved by line managers, the HR team never even have to see the request (assuming that company process allows for it).

The system can easily track real-time information on holiday requests and flag potential issues, or escalate requests as required. For example, if no more than two people in a team are able to be on leave at once, and a third request from that team is raised, the software is able to flag that for the authoriser's consideration.

## Employee Engagement

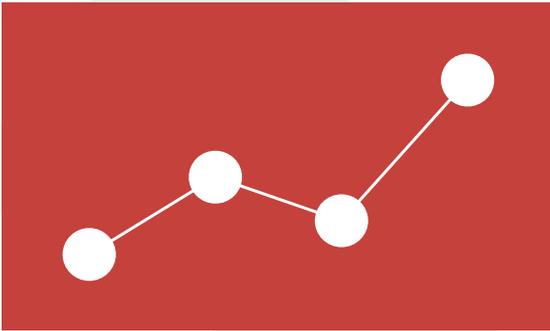
In addition to supporting the Absence Management functionality in your HR software, the Self Service component also engages employees, giving them the opportunity to be more hands on, and creates an effective communication channel for the relationship between HR and the rest of the business.

In addition to empowering employees to update and manage much of their own personal data, the business can also utilise Self Service tools to issue regular Pulse surveys, encouraging honest employee feedback and suggestions.



## People Analytics

Reporting and People Analytics is an important part of the HR team's contribution to organisational strategy, as it helps drive bottom line business outcomes by providing a birds-eye view of a company's greatest asset.



HR software, where the information held is easily configurable and reportable, makes this detailed level of reporting (in real time) a possibility for all organisations, even when employee numbers exceed 5,000.

Pre-packaged reports exist within the software to help extract commonly-used information at the click of a button, and Query Builder tools that make it easy to build your own bespoke reports, offer the HR team one of the most powerful tools at their disposal. When coupled with automation/Workflow, bespoke reports can be run and sent directly to senior management, line managers, or anyone else in the business without a second thought!

## Recruitment

There are a wide range of recruitment solutions available, and the right one for your business will be largely dependent on the company size and the annual number of vacancies processed. It's also worth considering whether your team has a dedicated resource for managing recruitment, or if it is being taken care of by a member of the HR team who also has a number of other responsibilities.

A stand-alone 'back office' recruitment solution may be enough if you have a smaller business, only fill a small number of vacancies a year, or already have a dedicated recruitment resource.

Otherwise, you may want to consider a comprehensive option that can deliver a more well-rounded solution, designed to reduce administration and ensure best practice is followed, whilst maximising the opportunity to recruit the very best staff available to you.

Some of the features recruitment software can offer include integration with your website and branding, simple vacancy uploads, the creation of application forms and a CV and skills search. It will enable you to build your own talent pool, and can offer an improved candidate experience and reduced cost per hire.



***“The ongoing hunt for talent in a competitive employment landscape means recruitment and retention pressures are unlikely to ease, so HR teams need to be thinking about their strategy to source, select and keep their greatest asset.”***

- Oliver Shaw, CEO, Cascade HR



## The Cascade Difference

There is no better way to consider the HR industry's likely direction of travel, than to speak to the professionals working in the heart of it. It would be naive to suggest that the next 12 months will be without challenges, but it is now a little clearer as to where those challenges may lie.

As a modular system, Cascade offers a truly integrated HR and Payroll software solution, which can be tailored to meet the challenges you face regularly, and adapt to reflect changing business needs.

As a one-stop shop for our clients, Cascade's Leeds-based office houses product development, sales and ongoing customer support. Research undertaken by our marketing team is used to inform our programme of customer webinars, training sessions, networking events and white papers.

In addition, the product team continually reviews the product roadmap to identify and implement additional functionality. This then better supports clients with the obstacles they are facing regularly.



## Summary

Surrounded by a sea of change, the HR profession continues to evolve and stand its ground in the face of employment, economic and wider business changes. In addition, the role of the HR team is becoming ever more apparent in the boardroom, with senior management paying closer attention to the lessons that can be learnt from real-time information on people analytics, and the impact that information can have on a business' bottom line.

HR (and Payroll) Software has an important part to play in getting the most from the HR team in any organisation – large or small – and though it may require a considered investment from the business, the returns often largely outweigh the cost.

***“Our key HR staff are now saving approximately one day a week each.  
That equates to 3,000 hours - or up to £40,000 - saved each year.”***

- Project Manager, Sofgen





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