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How to Choose the Right HR Software

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Whether you're just starting a company, prepping for expansion or simply looking for ways to be more efficient in human resources, choosing the right software for your needs is essential. It can also be daunting. Selecting the wrong system could mean missing out on qualified candidates, dealing with disgruntled employees, and falling out of state and federal compliance.

What you need is the ability to find the right people, onboard them efficiently (so that they can be productive more quickly) and retain them for the long-term.

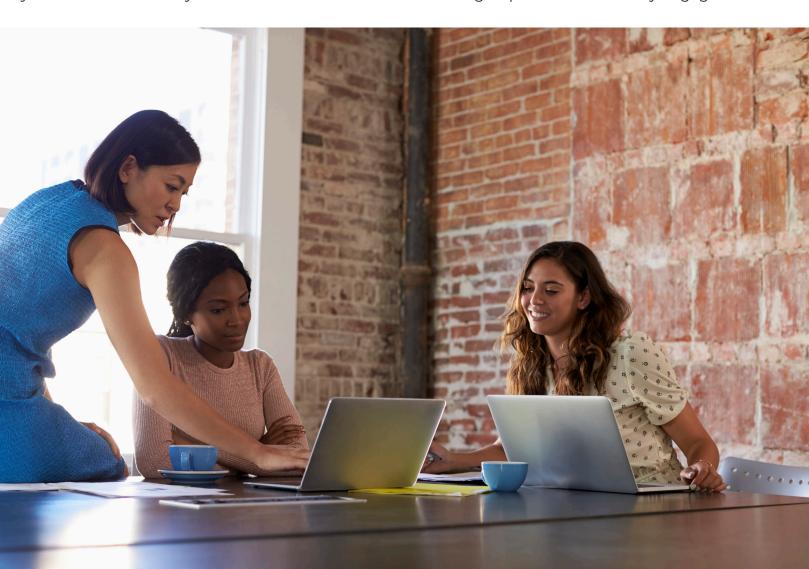*Let's explore a few factors to think about before you decide on an HR system:*

✓ What should my HR system to do?

Sit down with all of your HR team members and outline their regular tasks. This could include anything from time and attendance to PTO tracking, to maintaining documentation and communicating with employees. Can a digital solution assist with some or all of those duties? Is it primarily an onboarding tool, or is it also a library of resources for employees throughout their tenure?

Once you determine the things you want your HR solution to accomplish, you can narrow down options that are capable of meeting your needs.

✓ Who will the use the system?

Depending on how you plan on using it, your new system may require that additional teams or employees who are not in HR be granted access. If this is the case, the solution will likely require a different experience for each user group. The HR team may engage with

it the most, but the executive will likely want to see summarized reports. You may also want employees to have access to company policies and procedures or even educational information to help them perform their jobs better.

It's important to know from the beginning how many different types of users will engage with the system. From there, you may want to find solutions that can be tailored to each group.

✔ How much does the software cost?

Consider how much time the solution will save you - tracking labor hours, managing time off requests, updating employee information, onboarding new employees – and how much that savings is worth.

Then do a cost-benefit analysis to determine whether the time and money it takes to switch systems is worth it.

When you are researching cost, inquire with the provider if there is an incentive for a long-term commitment. Often you can save 10-20% by paying annually for a solution instead of monthly.

✔ How long does it take to implement?

Between installing a new system and training users, implementation won't happen overnight. Nonetheless, the goal is to start using the solution as quickly as possible without negatively affecting productivity.

As you research options, work with the software company to determine a realistic timeline to get your account up and running. To ensure that their product is properly implemented, Workful advises users to set up their account about two weeks before rolling out the software, and to anticipate spending two hours configuring the system. Keep in mind your current HR workload and factors such as high seasons, vacations schedules and budget deadlines. Those will need to be considered as part of the rollout process.

✔ Is the system easy to use, and does it come with support?

If the system you choose is easy to implement and offers online tutorials and wizards, your employees will have a good base to build on. Once it's set up and users are trained on the software, there will be times when additional help is needed. Review what support options each solution provides, whether it's a repository of documents, a frequently asked questions page on a website and/or a direct line to support services. That could play a big factor in your decision.

✔ Is the solution scalable for your business?

Some systems are more flexible and adaptable than others. And since industry trends, legislation and business goals evolve over time, it's important to find a solution that will be able to accommodate your organization for an extended period of time. Do you anticipate the number of your employees to grow slowly or dramatically over the course of a few years?

Make a list of the things you anticipate your system will need to be capable of in one, two and even four years so that you won't have to change it in a short period of time.

✔ Will the solution improve productivity and ROI?

The ultimate goal is to see a return on investment. Implementing a new system could improve employee morale and better educate your sales force, thereby enhancing your company culture, boosting individual job performances and decreasing turnover. These are only some of the intangible impacts of your purchase that, subsequently, could increase your bottom line.

ROI can also be measured in productivity. Implementing an effective HR software can automate repetitive tasks, freeing up your employees to spend more time on bigger issues.

Take the time to do your research, determine what functions the system needs to perform, and anticipate the effects it will have on our company culture, employee retention and overall productivity.

Workful offers an online HR solution that is perfect for small businesses. Get your free 30-day trial now.