WHERE PURPOSE MEETS PERFORMANCE

Can HR Tech Solve Culture?

How Technology is Helping the Middle Market Rise to Deliver Strategic HR

Author
**George LaRocque,
Founder and Principal Analyst, #HRWINS**

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When it comes to the American workforce and culture, a dramatic transformation is taking place; the pendulum is swinging to favor the employee. It can be seen in the regulatory environment with the advent of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), in the introduction of new overtime laws that impact both exempt and non-exempt employees, in the race at the state level to increase the minimum wage, and in the widespread introduction of contingent-based flexible work models.

Perhaps nowhere do these changes have more impact than in companies with less than 5,000 employees. The "middle market". The segment of employers in which nearly 90% of employment happens in the U.S. This transformation doesn't come without challenges for employers. For some companies, it also presents strategic opportunities for their workforce and culture.

Studies show that companies with performance enhancing cultures far out-perform those without it in terms of revenue growth, stock price growth, and net income growth. Yet, it remains nearly impossible to tie HR and people programs to business results. Business leaders and HR practitioners have looked to employee engagement as a measure of successful corporate culture but first even defining employee engagement presents a challenge. There have long been efforts to standardize its definition and measurement, and the result has been just the opposite. We've seen a proliferation of science and methods narrowly looking at everything from happiness to community embeddedness, social network analysis, motivation and incentives, collaboration, personality and culture assessments, and more.

We set out to understand how companies with performance based cultures are getting it right. How are they engaging employees and what HR technology are they leveraging to enable and reinforce their strong cultures?
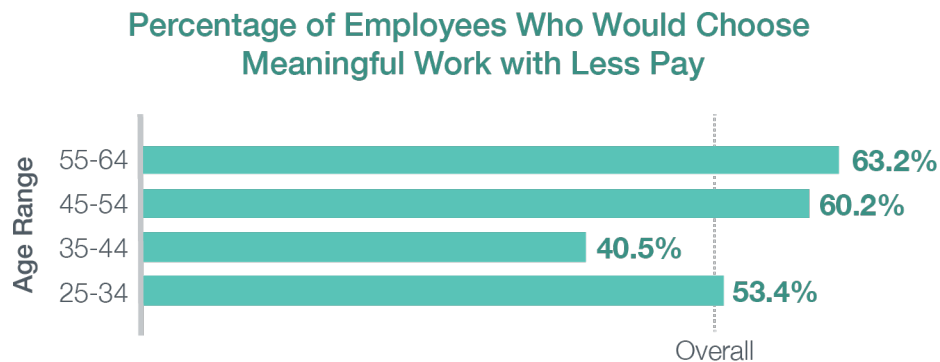
We surveyed employees to better understand what they feel engages them in their work. We also surveyed U.S. employers to understand where they perceive the best ROI in terms of engagement. We interviewed dozens of employers and their HR leaders to understand how culture and HR are driving business results. The results buck some of the trends currently pontificated by many thought leaders, consultants, and market analysts covering the topic. In this executive brief we expose that employee engagement is not an outcome, but one strong supporting pillar to culture and business results. We discover that perhaps the strongest component of culture that resonates with employees, of ALL generations, is having purpose and meaning in their work. We found that employees are first interested in employers earning the right to engage them via core benefits and compensation before moving to areas like recognition, wellness, or rewards. The road to a performance based corporate culture must first align with core benefits delivered via modern core HR technology, including HRIS, payroll, and benefits administration. Only by solving core HR and benefits, and centering engagement on meaningful work, can companies balance purpose and performance. Core HR and benefits programs, and the technologies that deliver them, create the foundation to engage employees in a corporate culture and then drive results via work with purpose and meaning. Once established, HR leaders can turn their attention to employee experience and later, delivering strategic HR. When they do, the challenges are measuring results, partnership with finance, and making engagement about a meaningful work environment (the priority for employees), not beer and ping pong.

Exploring the Tie Between Culture and Business Performance

Companies of all sizes are finding themselves on a rapid one-way course to a new age of work—a new age being thrust upon us by the convergence of several significant trends. Rapid technology innovations and their adoption by consumers and workforces alike are changing how work gets done. The nature of the employer-employee relationship is rapidly changing with the emergence of flexible work and the contingent workforce. As baby boomers exit the workforce and Generation X falls short in numbers to replace them, employers are facing urgent short-term needs in leadership and development with an increasingly younger and less experienced workforce. To keep up with so many of these critical changes in today's new world of work, companies are looking inward to their corporate culture as a strategy to increase employee engagement and productivity to drive results internally, and in turn achieve external business performance. They look to HR technology to enable this shift to an increased focus on company culture and forge their march into this new age of work.
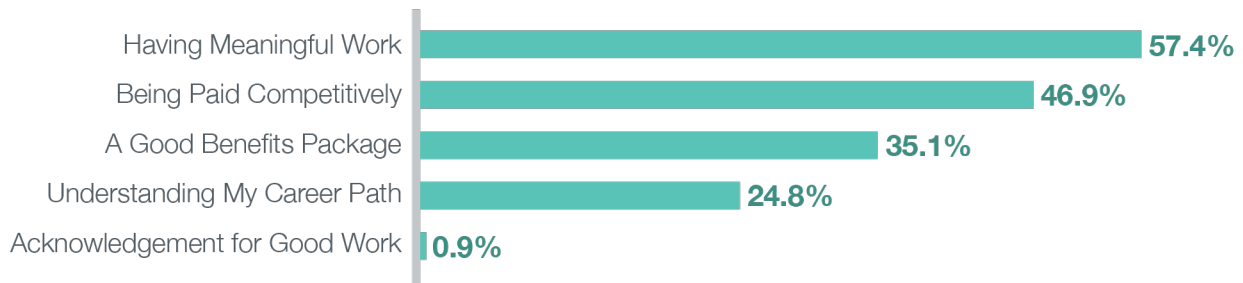
Indeed, engaging company cultures may be just what today's businesses need to thrive. Company culture is the set of beliefs and behaviors that shape a team and all of their interactions. It's the meaning attached to those behaviors that impacts so many touchpoints of how the workforce interacts internally with each other and externally with customers and the marketplace. Understanding the meaning of work illuminates its purpose—how one's actions impact the organization, and for what greater good. Every organization has meaning and purpose. However, it's a well-understood culture that relates this to the team in a way that impacts business performance. Answering how a company's product or service impact the customer, consumer, or world in a positive way. And, what purpose any individual's work serves to that end.

We surveyed more than 400 people and 53% said that they would choose meaningful work with less pay over less meaningful work with higher pay. In some age groups as many as 63% selected the same.

Percentage of Employees Who Would Choose Meaningful Work with Less Pay

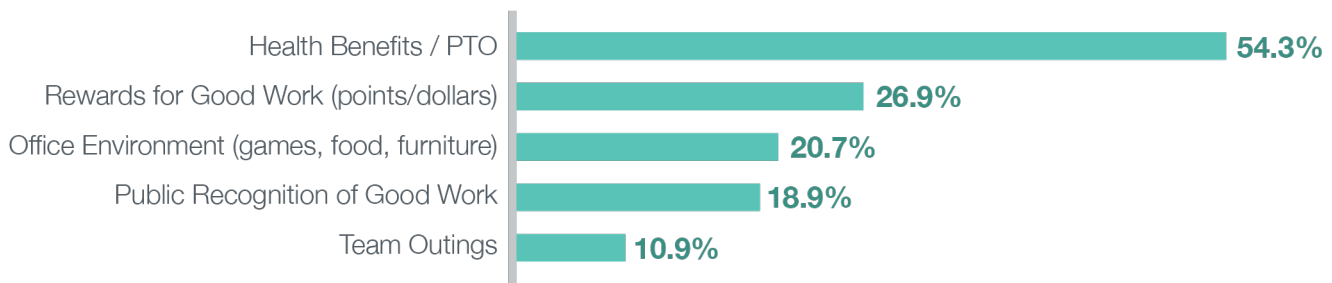| Age Range	
55-64	63.2%
45-54	60.2%
35-44	40.5%
25-34	53.4%

Overall

Furthermore, 54.7% of respondents said that meaningful work with a purpose is the factor that most impacts their feeling of engagement in their work. They chose this over competitive pay (46.9%), benefits (35.1%), and a clear career path (24.8%). Surprisingly, acknowledgment of a job well done rated the lowest, with only .9% of respondents stating that it was a major impact in their feeling of engagement at work.

What Factors Most Impact a Feeling of Engagement at Work?

Factor	Percentage
Having Meaningful Work	57.4%
Being Paid Competitively	46.9%
A Good Benefits Package	35.1%
Understanding My Career Path	24.8%
Acknowledgement for Good Work	0.9%

Clearly, a strong culture providing meaningful work and a purpose creates an opportunity to engage the workforce. But, can HR technology fix culture? Our respondents shed light on where HR technology may have the biggest opportunity to help HR solve for culture. 54.3% of respondents chose core benefits as the perk or benefit that contribute most to their feeling of engagement, with health benefits and paid time off (PTO) having exceeded other perks or benefits by as much as 40% to 60%. These included employee recognition, rewards programs, team outings, and office environment. It is time to re-think employee engagement as a contributor to culture. And it is time for employers, via HR, to meet the employee where they are, engaging them with core benefits and engaging core HR technology.

What Employer-Provided Perk or Benefit Contributes Most to a Feeling of Engagement?

Perk or Benefit	Percentage
Health Benefits / PTO	54.3%
Rewards for Good Work (points/dollars)	26.9%
Office Environment (games, food, furniture)	20.7%
Public Recognition of Good Work	18.9%
Team Outings	10.9%

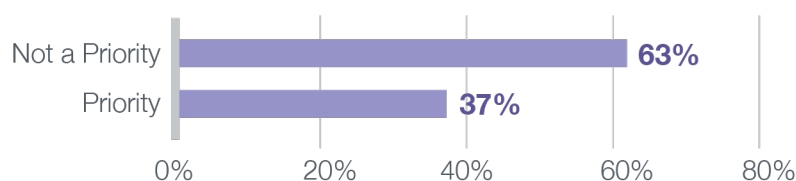# Rethinking Employee Engagement

It's difficult to research, write about, or discuss culture without the topic of employee engagement entering the picture. Employee engagement, defined as the feeling of commitment an employee has to their organization and its goals, has been positioned by some technology vendors, thought leaders, and analysts as the golden ticket to increased employee retention rates and better business performance. Its measurement has, on one hand, gained popularity among HR thought leaders and pundits, while on the other becoming a growing frustration with practitioners uncovered in our research. Surveying the workforce to find your company's level of engagement can be a straightforward proposition. Understanding the contributing factors that drive engagement ratings, and then enabling and supporting managers to address them, is anything but a direct line. Tying employee engagement to any direct business outcome or ROI is even more elusive.

To understand the employers' perspective on culture and engagement, we surveyed more than 600 employers and interviewed dozens, specifically those with less than 5,000 employees in North America.

Deloitte reports that 87% of executives rate culture and employee engagement as their biggest HR related challenge.[1] They further state that "mission driven" companies have 30% higher levels of innovation and 40% higher levels of employee retention.[1] Myriad studies show that companies with performance-enhancing cultures far outperform those without it in terms of revenue growth, stock price growth, and net income growth. Yet, it remains nearly impossible to tie HR and people programs to business results.

To understand the disconnect between the measurement of employee engagement and its tie to business results, look no further than the level of priority the CFO does—or doesn't—put on it. Only 37% of respondents in our survey characterized Finance's priority level on measuring employee engagement, satisfaction, or happiness as a **priority** or **significant priority**. At the same time, with regard to strategy, 58% of respondents said there was no strategy in place for measuring employee engagement with metrics, while only 8% had implemented a strategy across their enterprise.

Is Measuring Engagement a Priority?

Not a Priority	63%
Priority	37%

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%

Based on the established difficulty in tying employee engagement to business outcomes, this isn't totally surprising. However, it should come as fair warning for HR leaders looking to budget new employee engagement programs or technology without a larger value proposition for the CFO.

Employee engagement is not an outcome. At most, it is one of several important contributors to corporate culture, along with the components of talent management and the overall employee experience. Incorrectly used as a proxy for company culture since its measurement started gaining in popularity, employee engagement has historically been introduced as an annual survey measuring a varying number of contributing dynamics. Largely administered and analyzed by management consultants, the survey results have been used to inform and direct HR strategy, programs, and budgets implemented on an annual basis.

Employee engagement metrics are provocative and have long been easier to calculate than a standard measurement of culture. This has led to an onslaught of engagement measurement methodologies and tools. One of the challenges associated with employee engagement measurement has been its frequency. Normally measured on an annual basis, it represents a point in time measurement. Considering the pace of business cycles today, as well as the myriad factors that can impact one's "feeling" of engagement, engagement measurement alone has failed to do much more than put a finer point on an already identified problem. The workforce is largely disengaged. Only about 30 percent of us have seemingly been engaged in our work since they started measuring it.[2] That metric seems to remain unchanged since it started being measured widely more than 25 years ago.

We've grown to understand that a company's culture, the core beliefs and purpose shared by the entire organization, are the special ingredient to drive their success. For decades we've watched industrial giants like General Electric, manufacturers like W.L. Gore, retailers like Nordstrom, and consumer products firms like Procter & Gamble have their unique cultures tied to sustained growth and business performance. More recently computer innovators like Apple, new media firms like Facebook and Google, or online retailers like Zappos have all had culture at the root of their success stories. The most remarkable failures have also consistently shed light on the failings of company culture.

Employers are sensitive to the potential adverse effects of introducing too many new surveys or applications to their workforce in the interest of facilitating culture or engagement. They are looking for ways to introduce this more seamlessly, where employees are already interacting with technology.

[2]Gallup Report: State of the American Workforce.

Meeting Employees Where They Are: Pay, Benefits, and Benefits Administration.

Many employers we've interviewed are now focusing on the total employee experience. Employee experience spans the entire employee lifecycle, from pre-hire through offboarding. It accounts for factors in and out of the workplace. It also calls attention to the fundamental employer-employee relationship. Even more than a relationship, a social contract that the employer takes when building a workplace and culture in the knowledge economy where people are largely becoming the product and the service.

While many thought leaders find it provocative to talk about a generational shift in the workforce bringing on a focus in culture, with the Baby Boomers departure in process, our data shows that employees of every generation in the workforce today prioritize meaningful work with a purpose to the alternative, even with less pay.
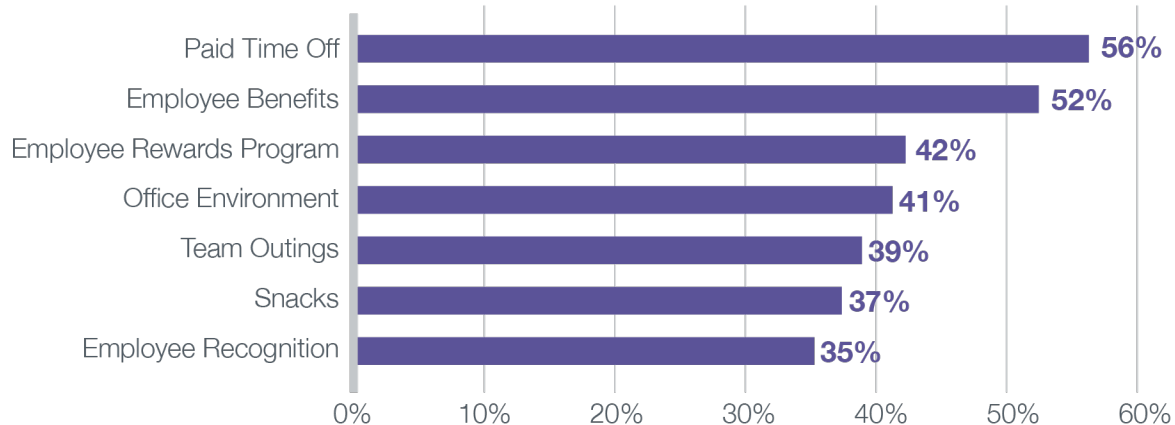
Our data also shows that employees of all generations prioritize core benefits over HR programs that are more commonly associated with employee engagement. Current trends in the market support the worker with increasing consequence. With portable and affordable health insurance via the Affordable Care Act, new and emerging pay laws that favor the employee, and new flexible work models growing into the norm, the modern worker has more of an opportunity than ever to choose their employer based on a focus on culture and how meaningful the work at hand will be. Especially with the backdrop of a job market that still favors the knowledge worker so heavily.

Employees selection of meaningful work, competitive pay, and benefits as their top three drivers of engagement suggests that the social contract between an employer and employee requires first meeting the employee's basic needs. This is true from a compensation and benefits perspective during the employee's entire tenure. But, also during times of transition like onboarding into, or even offboarding from, an employer. Or, when an employee is considering their performance, whether during a formal cycle or ad hoc discussion. Data from the core HR system can illuminate new opportunities for supervisors and managers at all levels across an enterprise. The core HR platform enables the employer to meet employees where they are and then empower them with new perspectives.

Employers and employees both value core benefits more than other potential perks and benefits, further establishing the system administering these benefits for employees as a strategic point of engagement.

We asked employers about the value perception of various employee perks and benefits including Health Benefits, Paid Time Off (PTO), Company provided food, Office Environment, Team Outings, and Employee Recognition. Health Benefits and PTO both had a high-perceived ROI with nearly 60% of the respondents. The rest of the perks and benefits were all perceived as having a high-perceived ROI, but by only 30% to 40% the respondents.

Percentage of Companies Who Perceive a High ROI by Perk

Perk	Percentage
Paid Time Off	56%
Employee Benefits	52%
Employee Rewards Program	42%
Office Environment	41%
Team Outings	39%
Snacks	37%
Employee Recognition	35%

Employers and employees are in direct alignment with each other's value perception of core benefits and PTO. The opportunity for employers to engage their teams in culture starts with core HR and core HR technology. Benefits enrollment during onboarding and open-enrollment periods, or at the time when payroll and PTO information is being reviewed, these represent unique opportunities to align with the employee, reinforce culture, and engage.

The U.S. Department of Labor has called the workplace "the central institution of American society".[3] There is a higher proportion of our population working than ever before. Our employers and workplace are directly linked to our financial well-being via our pay, and our health via health benefits. Even with the Affordable Care Act (ACA) starting to offer benefits to the previously uninsured, the workplace is still the primary provider of benefits to the population in the U.S., as opposed to most all other modern countries. The workplace is the center of the U.S. economy and the primary source of training and skills for the American workforce. It's been long documented that we spend more time at work than anywhere else, including with our families. If the workplace is truly the central institution of American society, the combination of fundamental pay, benefits, and the established workplace culture represents the "social contract" between the employer and employee. Especially as we've transitioned from the industrial and information age into the new media age. An age when people are not only connected at unprecedented levels, but their sentiments are also shared and connected. Not only does focusing on culture, creating an engaging workplace, mean good business for employers. It behooves them from the perspectives of brand, recruitment, and sustained growth.

If history repeats itself, the new age of work could very well be the new age of corporate culture. In our own history, when we improve the workplace, business productivity soars.

There is no greater place to establish culture and engagement, especially in light of today's data and trends, for middle-sized employers than in the selection of the right core HR platform.

[3]DOL: Futurework - Trends and Challenges for Work in the 21st Century.

Employers Aligning Core HR Programs and Technology with Business Results

Aligning core HR programs and data to business results is the key to getting them funded. But, the CFO isn't just skeptical about employee engagement. Even in areas like talent acquisition, we found a surprising lack of alignment between Finance and HR. When asking for the level of alignment between Finance and HR on hiring strategy for this year, 30% responded that Finance was not aligned with HR on this point. Given the long-standing challenges for employers in talent acquisition, especially in smaller, lesser-known brands, we expected much more alignment here.

The need to align business results with data found in core HR transactions is urgent if HR is to continue to demonstrate its value in the new age of work. As we found in our field interviews, it's happening with higher frequency in innovative middle market companies that inherently put culture first.

CASE STUDY #1
Meeting Employees Where They Are: Core HR As a System of Engagement

CASE STUDY #2
Performance First: Engaging Employees with Performance Data

CASE STUDY #3
Enabling Employees & Managers to Build a Performance Culture with HR Data

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Meeting Employees Where They Are: Core HR As a System of Engagement

During our research for this report, we met with a growing East Coast global media firm with less than 400 employees that focuses on financial markets. The firm implemented a new core HR platform in January 2015. The impetus behind the move to a new HR platform was based on the frustration with their existing payroll solution. The legacy payroll system was clunky, inefficient, and wasted HR's time. They were also looking to provide a better experience for employees. They found an opportunity to leverage the core HR and payroll system as a means to engage employees and build trust. Their legacy payroll provider's, payroll and supporting HR systems like benefits administration and HRIS were separate modules that didn't talk to each other. Compensation, pay, and benefits related data was not fluid for even the most rudimentary of HR "transactions." We've found that this fundamental breakdown in HR data quality is still rampant in the middle market. This not only caused frustration for the HR and Finance professionals administering the system, but for employees accessing their data. Employees refused to log in to the payroll system based on the difficulty associated with deciphering their earnings and deductions.

The manual process of updating data across several systems is then compounded by the queue of employees after every payroll "run"—a queue of individuals that have basic questions about their pay stub. HR was spending more of their time entering and chasing data, and correcting bad data than actually supporting the employees.

The implementation of a new, fully integrated platform addressed the core issue of employee usability and data quality the moment it was implemented. While this increased employee satisfaction, the story doesn't end there. The increase in employee satisfaction allowed HR to implement more strategic features, and engage employees with the platform based on this newly found trust.

New employees logged into the core HR system before they started their new roles, driving the effectiveness of onboarding at this firm. Managers have the ability to engage with new hires in the platform. Employees have a better experience on their way in, and a culture of self-service and trust with HR is established from day one.

Starting with more complex workflows around compensation, supporting processes like structured and ad hoc bonuses, elective benefits, PTO, and expense reimbursement, HR was able to capture the attention of the employee base within their platform on an ongoing basis. "Help" calls to HR to decipher the earnings and deductions went down. And, HR has been freed to engage with managers and employees on HR programs and issues.

Additionally, the C-suite has been able to access core HR data ad hoc, via a series of analytics built into reports and dashboards that has shifted the conversation away from the common, "get me a report" conversation to a more strategic discussion about the data and analysis of it. This data is used for financial modeling in everything from workforce planning to budgeting, etc.

Even in the most basic of examples, selecting and implementing the right core HR system frees limited HR resources to support and engage with staff and managers. It engages staff and builds a culture of self-service and trust. It also empowers HR with the C-Suite via the integrity of the data provided for decision support along for the analysis of it.

Performance First: Engaging Employees with Performance Data

Another company that emerged in our research was a Southeast based cloud-based content marketing and advertising firm with less than 100 employees. The company set out to revamp their internal performance management, and ended up implementing an entire HR suite based on what they found.

Three years ago this firm's performance management process was like most firms of their size: manual, driven by spreadsheets, and varied widely from department to department. Like so many firms today, they set out looking for a performance management system that offered some desired core functionality, like 360-degree reviews, cascading goals, and tools for ongoing team feedback. These features are what led them to the HR suite they selected. It wasn't until exploring the rest of the platform available that the Director of HR and Operations discovered the value to the business of implementing an entire suite.

For a dyed-in-the-wool HR professional, the concept of not knowing that a full HR suite is available is unconscionable. But, the middle market is full of HR professionals that originate from within the business. HR and people programs exist for one reason in the middle market—because they are necessary for the business to execute and reach their goals. Whether that necessity is driven by the need to engage employees and bolster culture, or whether it's driven by the need to cut administrative overhead out of the business, the tie to business results is more than clear, it's the reason for existence. This fundamental tie to the business normally puts the formation of the HR role in Operations or Finance. In the past, as companies grew the placement of HR in Operations or Finance temporary until a firm gained more scale. What we've discovered in our research is that the tie to operations or finance is not only sustaining, but it is sustaining by design.

The employee experience is commonly broken down into three environments: technology (the systems and tools we use), physical (the actual environment we work in), and culture (what it means to us to work for an employer). If you consider HR fitting within that landscape, you can see how it can be considered more of a "People Operations" function. In fact, in our research we've discovered several firms that have even aligned the facilities function to HR based on the impact the physical work environment has on the employee's day-to-day experience.

So, what were the additional capabilities that drew this People Operations leader to bite off an entire HR suite implementation over a performance point solution?

As with our first case study, payroll represented an incredible pain for both the business and employee population. A recurring process once manual and rife with errors is now consistently error-free. The foundation of trust in HR is built. There is no sentiment of "they can't even get my paycheck right" eroding HR's credibility.

Reporting was another key driver of this case. The organizational structure and reporting fell to People Operations. Prior, this process was manual and manifested itself on index cards and a white board. Now, as employees move in the organization departmentally or physically, all changes are tracked in the HR platform. This information tied to core financial and performance data is invaluable when making high-impact business decisions and budgeting.

The combination of benefits enrollment and onboarding has taken a process of ramping up a new employee from chasing forms from pre-hire through the first few weeks of employment and created an opportunity to engage the employee and train well.

In this example, the performance management experience, onboarding, benefits, and payroll process are all contributing to a better employee experience, building trust within the employee base, and freeing up People Operations to spend time enhancing it. The strategic value of the core HR data has increased dramatically, empowering managers to have more insightful and personal conversations with their staff as part of the performance management process.

Enabling Employees and Managers to Build a Performance Culture with HR Data

Our final case study is a San Francisco based technology firm with less than 500 employees. In this example HR is aligned with facilities and People Operations is a distinct function within HR. People Operations is responsible for all of the systems and processes related to the employee experience. Other HR roles would be responsible for programs and partnering within the business.

Two years ago, this growing tech firm had three HR technologies implemented: performance management, training, and applicant tracking. Disappointingly, none of them talked to each other. Difficulty with, or lack of, integration capabilities is a sad reality of legacy HR systems for most employers that we talk to. This firm set out to implement core HR with modern integration capabilities and open APIs as their foundational HR system.

Like the examples in our two other case studies, the new HR platform immediately filled the gaps in foundational HR data and reporting—headcount, organizational structures, and financials—support for strategic business decisions, and trust in the data increased upon implementation. They were also able to build workflows extending into the organization that eliminated the manual effort involved in everything from stock option grants to PTO requests, approvals, tracking, and more. These fundamental processes that touch the employee and the managers are high-impact when considering the employee experience.

This firm established a goal of managing cost per employee and revenue per employee more strategically. People Operations stepped up to this challenge by syncing the application programming interface (API) of the core HR platform with the company's directory level information (employee names, offices, desk locations, manager's names, etc.), and with the company's financial system, CRM, and data visualization tools. This has opened up new possibilities for the firm's executive leadership when it comes to managing toward these financial goals.

This open integration became a jumping off point to address other challenges. Now, as changes are made in any of the integrated systems, they automatically flow through the enterprise. A good example would be the case of a new hire, or an exiting employee, where accounts, passwords, desk locations, and reporting relationships need to be either provisioned or eliminated. This automation of data flow provides an incredible impact on the employee experience for all involved in the process.

Based on the success with the core HR system across the enterprise, the People Operations team turned its sites to an area of compensation that can be off limits to HR at times – sales variable compensation. Sales variable compensation can be a quagmire of complexity. In order to get it right from a technology perspective integration is required to the CRM and any systems used in quoting. While sales variable comp is always spelled out in detail, it is also notorious for making exceptions the norm with regard to commission and bonus calculations. It's an environment where deals get made between reps, regions, departments, and managers in order to get revenue booked every month or quarter. Payout terms can sometimes be as variable as the core compensation plan.

The sales team at this employer had established sales variable compensation outside of the HR process and across several independent sales apps that were integrated into the firm's CRM. This entire process was simplified, workflows, forms, and reports were replicated, and the sales management team given reporting and analytics access. The result? The firm, including the sales team, have a view of sales compensation as a part of the entire compensation picture.

Sales teams can be one of HR's toughest internal customers. This is an example of core HR technology establishing an engaging platform for what can mean most to reps—their comp—and what means most to sales leaders—their budgets.

The integration of core HR data with several other mission critical systems across the enterprise, reinforced HR and People Operations as a core contributor to the performance culture.

The middle market is innovating HR and investing in HR technology.

Perhaps nowhere are the stakes higher for employers to foster and maintain engaging cultures than in the middle market. In employers with less than 5,000 employees, many firms are emerging from long managing their workforce via spreadsheets and word processing documents, or with retrofitted, cumbersome legacy enterprise software or payroll services. They now find themselves in the center of an HR technology revolution.
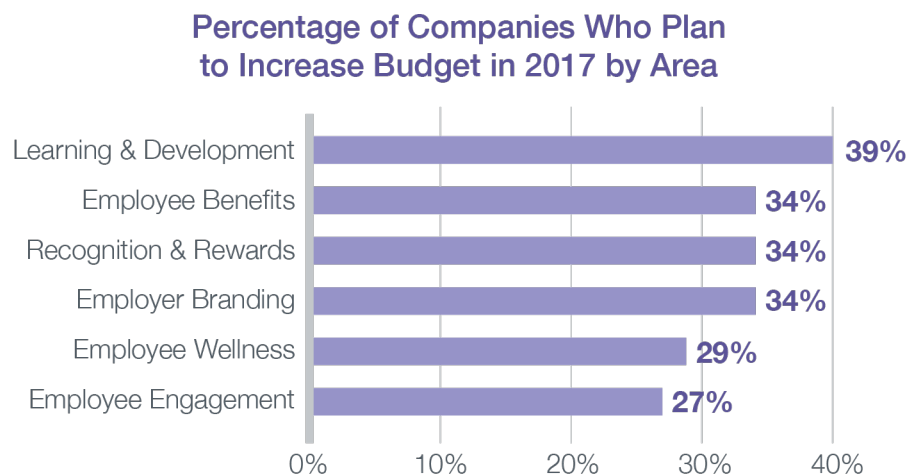
This segment of the market, being nearly 20 times larger than the rest of the market in the U.S., is where HR technology is being innovated and implemented more rapidly than ever before. In the middle market, HR is the business of getting work done. And, as the home of nearly 90% of the U.S. workforce, the middle market is where America gets work done. Middle market businesses are able to more rapidly innovate in HR: They can enable innovative technologies at a pace far more rapid than larger, less nimble, enterprise colleagues. Seldom is a technology platform implemented in the middle market without an inherent understanding of the tie to business results. New modern HR platforms are enabling these firms to engage their workforce and reinforce their culture in interesting ways.

High percentages of middle market employers plan to invest in HR technology across all major categories. Payroll leads the way with 20% of firms looking to make a change in that category. There were equally high numbers in talent management, performance management, etc.

Planned Area of HR Technology Investment
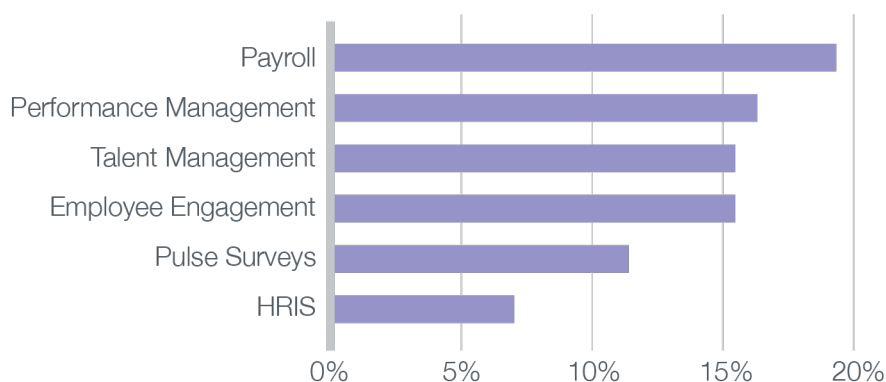
Respondents expect that budgets for HR programs and technology in the coming year will remain at their current levels or increase across all categories. Budget increases were anticipated in most categories, with benefits and learning/development leading.

Percentage of Companies Who Plan to Increase Budget in 2017 by Area

Area	Percentage
Learning & Development	39%
Employee Benefits	34%
Recognition & Rewards	34%
Employer Branding	34%
Employee Wellness	29%
Employee Engagement	27%

HR platforms with a focus on talent and analytics should be strongly considered by middle market employers evaluating new solutions for the remainder of 2016 and into 2017. Looking at the correlating support for health benefits and its high-perceived value, benefits administration and brokerage may be differentiating features for buyers of HR technology moving forward.

The middle market finds itself at the nexus of change in the modern workplace—always the largest segment of employers, but long the underserved in terms of HR technology. Historically their buying power in HR tech has been more latent beyond payroll and transactional talent acquisition products or services. However, advances in enterprise cloud computing, the consumerization of software interfaces, and the easing challenges of data integration via open application programming interfaces (APIs) have introduced long lists of available technologies packing an enterprise level punch, with an ease of use that their large, enterprise level counterparts can't really imagine.

There will always be a place for point-solution programs and technologies that will address a specific nuance to one firm's culture and workforce. Even within a specific employer, the differences between departments (Accounting vs. Sales vs. Operations) are more than nuanced. Point-solutions as a part of an overall solution are valid. Classically the larger employers have tried to standardize on an HR platform to manage regulatory compliance, leverage cost-reductions by minimizing the number of technologies purchased, and to contain overall IT and ongoing support costs. This won't change very quickly. However, as demonstrated in our case studies and again and again in our field interviews, employers with less than 5,000 employees see an opportunity to implement newer, more usable, HR platforms and implementing them with a tie to business results as an expectation for core features.

Innovative new HR technology designed for the middle market is also taking HR in new directions, based on the power of the data harnessed to help drive strategic business decisions. As demonstrated in the array of the functional expertise of our survey respondents, and as identified in Case Study #3, HR is innovating itself into roles like People Operations—aligned with facilities—as well as Finance and core business operations in the middle market where HR data is considered people data.

People, meaningful work, and strong corporate cultures are leading us into the new age of work. Modern, new core HR technology is illuminating the path.

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Namely is the first HR platform that employees actually love to use. Namely is powerful, easy-to-use technology that allows mid-sized companies to handle all of their HR, payroll, benefits, and talent management in one place. Coupled with dedicated support and benefits consulting, every Namely client gets the software and service they need to deliver great HR and a strong, engaged company culture.

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