5 Rules for Future-Fit Global HR

JT

Your workforce has changed. And it will keep on changing

Enabling technologies—including the cloud, social, mobile, and big data—have made it possible for organizations of every size to operate globally. Global operations require global workforces. In the past, it was generally accepted that employees at the home office would have a few more perks than their remote coworkers. Not so anymore. Today's mobile and dispersed workforce expects to have all the same resources made available to it wherever it is working—headquarters, branch offices, customer sites, on the road, or, yes, even at home.

For more than 120 years, Jersey Telecom (now JT Group Limited) had one, simple charter: as a government-owned sole operator, provide telecommunication services to the residents of the Bailiwick of Jersey and, more recently, Guernsey—part part of the Channel Islands that is linked to the United Kingdom by a rich and colorful history.

That all changed in 2003 with the deregulation of the telecommunication industry and subsequent change in structure of the company. After identifying the need for a clearer strategy in this increasingly competitive environment, JT announced the arrival of a new CEO in 2010 (Graeme Millar, formerly of Vodafone and Motorola) and embarked on an ambitious five-year global growth and diversification plan.

It worked. JT's global business has almost doubled with group annual turnover now at more than £160 million and a global workforce of 600 employees based out of six global offices including Boston, Massachusetts; Chicago, Illinois; and Melbourne, Australia.

JT now offers an expanded and compelling full-service portfolio of fixed line, broadband, and mobile telephony products along with related IT-managed services such as the cloud, service desk, and hosting. It services both consumers and enterprise customers of all sizes. While the company's headquarters remain on Jersey, sales revenue outside the Channel Islands now exceeds that from within its shores for the first time in its trading history.

In the wake of this impressive and accelerated growth, JT found itself operating with a heavily patched and modified HR.net HCM system not fully able to support the business and geographic growth. Customizations prevented the company from keeping up to date with upgrades. In reality, JT was left with just one person who could support the system remotely, so it also became a key risk. Furthermore, several key acquisitions had only spreadsheet-based systems that couldn't be integrated, so the ability to obtain real-time global HR information in a seamless manner was nearly impossible.

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Group Human Resources Director Richard Summerfield's Mandate: Make JT Group's HR "Future-Fit"

Hiring and retaining top talent is of paramount importance at JT. Accordingly, its Group HR Director, Richard Summerfield, sits on the executive board and spends more than half of his time on strategic and commercial business issues that go well beyond core human resources management.

Recently, Summerfield and the JT executive directors hosted more than 700 corporate customers, government officials, and staff at the famous Jersey Live music festival, which JT has sponsored for 10 years as part of an ongoing strategy to build a great customer and employee experience and something that the whole company is proud of.

"I fail or succeed based on my ability to engage the whole global workforce at JT," says Summerfield. "I am charged with driving the highest-possible levels of performance and productivity, and having the vision to look forward and create a workplace that is future-fit."

To fulfill that mandate, Summerfield set JT on a course to adopt Oracle Modern Best Practice for HR that exploits enabling technologies such as the cloud, mobile, and analytics. He knew that selecting an on-premises solution, along with the accompanying need to buy, install, and maintain a networking structure, would have a limited shelf life, as well as being slow to implement.

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"The world is moving toward such a different way of working," observes Summerfield. "In fact, many new startup companies are already there. One of my HR mentees just got a role at Booking.com, where they have no desks, it's a 'stand up, move about, or 'work wherever' environment. It's an entirely different way to work from the way we were used to. The new generations of workers coming through have different expectations both in terms of how they want to work and the tools they want to use to achieve that. It would have been very short-sighted for us to not source a mobile-first cloud solution."

As the company recruits and onboards talent to deliver services to its clients, it is an absolute priority and imperative that this global workforce feels like it's part of a single family even if it is in different jurisdictions. Oracle Human Capital Management Cloud provides a huge advantage in delivering this as it provides a single, mobile-first platform, with a shared language across all jurisdictions and without the need to purchase, install, and maintain a networking structure.

"No one in any location feels like they're less important," says Summerfield. "It's not like the head office has all the latest tech and the other jurisdictions just have to make do. Everybody has the same quality of experience when it comes to engaging with HR and internal communications, which is my vision and personal goal."

Based on nearly 20 years in corporate HR leadership roles, and his recent experiences in adopting Oracle Modern Best Practice for HR, Summerfield shares these five rules for future-fit global HR.

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1

Don't Assume
Cloud HCM = Modern Global HCM

The cloud is a technology delivery and accessibility model, not a business solution.

Just because something is in the cloud doesn't mean that it's necessarily good or appropriate for your needs. Make sure that the functionality roadmap for the solution of your choice is the best fit for your organizational needs. With the cloud, you're not going to add customized functionality on your own. You'll be accepting multiple updates each year that reflect the strategic vision and development roadmap of the solution provider.

Demand to see the product in action. Carefully examine the main strands—recruitment, core HR, performance management—to see how each provider defines terms and maps out processes. Determine how far that product is from the way you run HR now and the best practices you want the new solution to enable in the future. How much of a step would it be for your organization to embrace the long-term product strategy of the provider?

If you're moving to a new global HR platform, chances are you also want to adopt modern best practice. Accordingly, you don't want the new system to simply accommodate your existing processes. You need it to put you on a sustainable, future-proof track, designed to attract and retain the best talent and support the way employees live and work today.

Case in Point

Prior to deploying Oracle HCM Cloud, JT employees were required to book time off in the legacy system even if they only needed an hour or two for things such as a doctor's appointment or family related errands. Oracle Modern Best Practice in Oracle HCM Cloud accommodates a minimum time-off increment of a half day. At first glance, some managers at JT thought that might be a problem. The topic stimulated conversations between line managers and employees. The managers learned that their increasingly mobile, dispersed, and self-motivated workforce thought it was outdated to have to book an hour here or there, and that it made more sense to just put in extra time to make it up.

2

Invest as much effort in selecting your deployment partner as you do in choosing the solution

Urban myth: cloud solutions deploy themselves.

Most likely, you will hire a partner to deploy your chosen cloud HCM solution and that's who you'll interact with most frequently on an ongoing basis. Choose a partner who best understands your priorities and fits in well with your organization's culture. After all, you'll be spending a lot of time together—much more so than with the product's developers.

Your partner should technically manage the deployment project and, in many cases, hold your hand through the first few upgrades. They may even provide ongoing first-line support for the solution. That relationship needs to be not just functional—it needs to be based on a genuine partnership.

With so much riding on your partner, it's easy to see how two different organizations could deploy the same cloud HCM solution, yet have wildly varying experiences and levels of satisfaction.

JT Global and their Oracle Partner, Certus Solutions

"I am delighted that Certus has delivered on its promise and enabled us to go live with Oracle Cloud across the Channel Islands, UK, United States, and Australia just inside five months from start to finish. Certus has been excellent at every stage, and given us a great deal of comfort in moving to a new world of HR data and online processes."

—Richard Summerfield, Global Human Resources Director, JT Group

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A Pound of Independent Solution Evaluation Is Worth Every Penny

You don't have to be part of the 67 percent.

It's a popular trend for organizations to perform most of the solution selection process (as much as 67 percent) via self-directed online research before contacting providers directly. Motivations can include the desire to save money and the false assumption that deploying cloud HCM is simple and easy. Yes, the attractions to a cloud deployment model are that it's less complex and less expensive, and delivers faster time to value than on premises. That's true. But no one who has ever deployed cloud HCM will tell you that it was simple and easy.

Before we contacted any provider, we hired an independent consultant, Orion—at a modest but not insignificant fee—to scour the market for us and cowrite the business case. We gave our consultants at Orion our requirements and they talked to about a dozen providers on our behalf. They did all the hard work and systematically narrowed down the field without emotion. Some providers fell away based on missing product functionality, a product roadmap headed in a different direction, or simply a lack of cultural fit. It was money well spent. And you don't have to hire an expensive top-tier firm—there are many good niche firms with industry and product expertise, so do shop around.

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Make Sure Internal Stakeholders Buy Into Your Cloud Solution

Don't assume everyone will be delighted.

Much has been documented about how cloud solution decisions are often made without the involvement of IT. That's a bad idea, both in terms of building internal relationships and in aligning all solution decisions within an overall technology strategy.

Others on your executive team—especially finance, procurement, and IT—will have opinions and preferences regarding the cloud versus on premises and best of breed versus single provider so make sure you engage them early on. Data protection and solution integration are also important topics to consider and gain consensus on. Expect cybersecurity to be an increasingly hot challenge to a cloud-based single-sign-on solution.

Each stakeholder needs to understand your reasons for choosing a cloud deployment model and to have their concerns addressed early in the process to avoid unnecessary delays and roadblocks down the line.
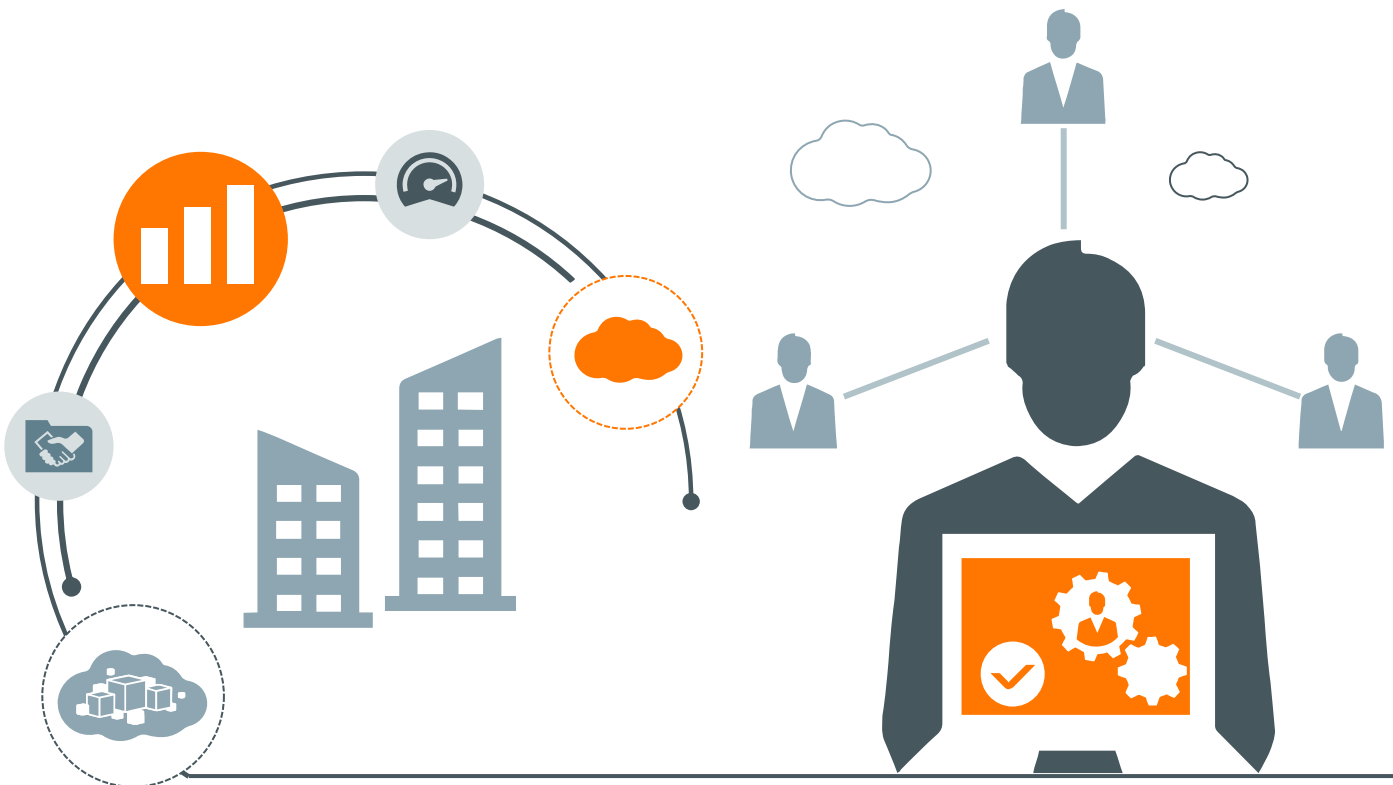
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5

Line Up Plenty of (Motivated) Superusers

They may come to your rescue.

When you deploy a cloud HCM solution, it will not be business as usual for some period of time. There will be peaks of activity as you run parallel systems and eventually change over to the new solution. It's not nearly as frightening as it was with "old-world" system change-outs; however, you still need to make sure you've got plenty of "superusers" in place to deal with spikes in activity that can put stress on your entire organization.

Superusers will also fill the void left as partner consultants phase out their commitments. Their knowledge and comfort with the solution will have a calming influence and ensure that functionality is widely shared and adopted.

To find out more about JT Group, visit jtglobal.com.

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Modern Best Practice for HR and Talent Management

Integrated Cloud Applications & Platform Services

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