

THE NEW FIRST DAY

5 HR-IT shifts reshaping
the modern work experience



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New dynamics reshape the workplace

The modern workplace is being redefined by a new set of dynamics shaped by hybrid workforces, complex security demands, fast adoption of automation and artificial intelligence (AI) and a shift in the ways work gets done. Those trends require a deeper partnership between human resources (HR) and information technology (IT) to ensure new employees have the tools they need to be productive from day one.

In fact, research shows that employees' fragmented technology access, delayed provisioning and inconsistent IT support are among the biggest drivers of lost productivity and negative views of an employer in the first weeks of employment. Early attrition constitutes roughly 40% of all turnover¹ and underscores the needs for effective onboarding, tailored support and early-stage engagement to maximize new-hire potential.

But supporting that early experience is no easy task given that both the HR and IT functions are already operating under significant pressures: IT handles many technologies and regulatory requirements, while HR focuses on onboarding, retention, culture and compliance. To improve the employee experience, HR and IT must collaborate to make tasks easier, automate processes and create a more productive workplace.



52%

boost in employee retention through effective onboarding, and employee productivity increased 60%.²



40%

of overall employee turnover occurs within the first year of employment.³



42%

of HR professionals report having less time for recruiting and retention because IT-related limitations bog down onboarding.⁴



1 Onboarding moves from checklist to workforce readiness

The first day of employment is moving from a routine onboarding step defined by a mountain of paperwork and disconnected processes to the first indicator of whether an organization is prepared for its people. IT setup delays, lack of access and limited support can hinder productivity and shape the way a new hire views the company.

Today's employees expect to contribute right away rather than waiting days — or sometimes weeks — for the necessary tools and permissions. Their early impressions are formed before they log in, making the technology they encounter on day one a defining moment of their overall experience — and their decision to either stay or leave.



IMPLICATIONS FOR

HR



HR must focus on effective onboarding by clearly defining roles and responsibilities. This includes coordinating with IT and anticipating potential obstacles to ensure new hires complete their first-day setup and have the tools and support they need.

IT



IT must deliver rapid and reliable provisioning and account access and must streamline its support processes so that tools and systems are fully functional on or even before a new hire's start date, eliminating delays that hamper early productivity.



of organizations with strong onboarding experience a boost in employee productivity.⁵



of new hires say they find that information is too scattered across different platforms.⁶



of HR leaders say their onboarding activities consist of completing paperwork, filling out benefits and going over compliance documents.⁷

2 HR is becoming the architect of the digital workplace

As work becomes more digital, distributed and data driven, HR finds itself stepping into a broader role: one that shapes the systems and infrastructure that support automation-powered work across the enterprise.

From AI adoption and skills mobility to data governance and employee experience, HR has become directly involved in redesigning the workflows, platforms and frameworks that determine how work gets done effectively. That shift moves HR beyond being the process owner of hiring and employee workflows to being the strategic architect of the digital environment by codirecting digital decisions — with IT — to ensure systems align with real workforce needs, regulatory demands and organizational outcomes.



IMPLICATIONS FOR

HR



HR must take a more active role in defining the digital environment that supports employees throughout their journeys.

HR will have to blend people expertise with next-level digital and data savviness that will allow them to orchestrate the workforce.

IT



IT must provide the technical foundation — in the form of governance, architectures, integrations and secure access — that enables HR-designed workflows to scale and operate consistently across the organization.



of mid-sized companies view AI as a game changer for their businesses, expecting it will streamline processes.⁸



of workers' core skills will change by 2030.⁹



of companies face obstacles and challenges in providing skills development opportunities for employees.¹⁰

3 The workplace moves from IT complexity to integrated, secure operations

As organizations adopt more tools, automate more processes and expand hybrid operations, cybersecurity is no longer just a technical issue; it's a workforce one. The volume of access points, permissions and sensitive employee data has surged, and the responsibility for protecting that information now spans both HR and IT.

Security touchpoints — like password management, access controls and offboarding workflows — are now directly tied to employee experience and a company's compliance posture. Fragmented provisioning and manual deactivation processes expose companies to operational risks, compliance gaps and data losses.

Research finds only 8% of data breaches are attributed primarily to external cyberattacks, while the majority stem from human-related incidents such as the loss of laptops or mobile data-bearing devices and the mishandling of data.¹¹ In response, centralized platforms and joint governance between HR and IT are becoming essential. Together, the two functions must manage access, automate policy adherence and support secure yet seamless work experiences across the career journey — from employees' day one to offboarding.



IMPLICATIONS FOR

HR



HR must play an active role in compliance and access management to ensure that security policies are consistently reinforced throughout the employee journey — from onboarding and role transitions to exit.

IT



IT must design access, provisioning and security protocols that integrate tightly with HR workflows in support of shared visibility, automation and accountability — without introducing unnecessary frictions.

\$4.44 million
the average cost of a global data breach.¹²



442%
increase in vishing* campaigns in which threat actors impersonate IT support staff.¹³



* Vishing consists of fraudulent phone calls that expose enterprises to data and financial exposure.

4 Technology evolves from infrastructure to experience

Employees evaluate their satisfaction with their work environments through the reliability, immediacy and consistency of every technology touchpoint. As the boundary between workplace systems and workforce experience blurs, technology is no longer behind the scenes; it is now an integral part of the employee experience. And IT is being redefined not just as a provider of tools but also as a cocreator of the work culture itself.

From day-one setup to day-to-day access and support, the speed, ease of use and responsiveness of IT signal whether a company is people-focused or not. In this evolving role, IT must design for the user experience as much as for functionality by shaping moments that influence trust, satisfaction and productivity across the employee career journey. That design reframes IT as central to culture, retention and employee engagement.

IMPLICATIONS FOR

HR



HR must now think of technology as a core component of the employee value proposition (EVP).

A seamless start directly and positively affects confidence, belonging and time to productivity, making technology readiness a lever for retention and engagement rather than a downstream administrative step.

IT



IT's role is expanding from maintaining infrastructure to shaping the lived experience of work.

Responsiveness, reliability and secure access become cultural drivers, meaning that IT must design workflows that are intuitive, fast and aligned with the moments that matter most in the employee journey.



of employees at small and medium-sized businesses say they do not have the right tools and software to do their jobs.¹⁴



of leaders acknowledge employees will consider looking for a new job if their employer does not provide access to the technology they need to do their jobs well.¹⁵



of new hires report that technology problems represent one of their biggest onboarding frustrations.¹⁶

5 HR and IT collaboration accelerates to deliver a connected employee journey

The employee experience can no longer be separate from an employee's technology experience. The traditional handoff model in which HR manages the people side of certain processes while IT manages the technical side of the employee journey no longer aligns with the ways work actually happens in the modern workplace. Today's employee journey is a continuous flow of moments that cross both functions in the areas of onboarding, access changes, role transitions, security updates, hybrid work adjustments and offboarding.

Employees experience those moments as one unified process, not as separate departmental responsibilities. Because of that experience, the process requires closer collaboration between HR and IT because the moments that shape an employee's early confidence in device readiness, access, security and support depend on workflows that cross both domains.



IMPLICATIONS FOR

HR



HR must design employee journeys that assume technology, security and access are parts of the experience and not just add-ons managed by another team.

This requires closer operational alignment with IT and deeper understanding of technical dependencies.

IT



IT must shift from being a service provider to being an active co-owner of the employee experience. That means planning provisioning, access and support around key workforce moments; adopting workflows that reduce delays; and recognizing that every interaction shapes how employees view the organization.

2x

the likelihood that employees who have negative onboarding experiences will seek new employment.¹⁷



103%

more likely to notice improvements in new hire retention and employee engagement among companies at higher levels of onboarding maturity.¹⁸



the number of survey respondents frustrated with IT-related onboarding tasks.¹⁹



SUPPORTING THE EMPLOYEE CAREER JOURNEY

Recruitment and offer acceptance

1.

HR: Candidate accepts offer
IT: Get employee laptop day 0

Onboarding

2.

HR: Creates employee record
IT: Provisions laptop

Role change

3.

HR: Update title, pay grade
IT: Adjust permissions

Location change

4.

HR: Update work location
IT: Shift network access

Leave of absence

5.

HR: Approve leave
IT: Temporarily update access

Offboarding

6.

HR: Close employee record
IT: Deactivate account

Conclusion

As the demands on HR and IT intensify, midmarket organizations can no longer afford to treat IT management as a siloed function or a downstream task. The employee experience now begins — and often succeeds or fails — with how well a company manages access, devices and support from an employee's day one.

ADP® IT Management embeds technology capabilities into HR management, which unites workforce management and IT into a seamless, people-first work experience.

ADP IT Management works by synchronizing Electric's best-in-class IT workflows directly with the core HR events already managed in ADP Workforce Now®. For example, entering a new hire into the system automatically triggers device provisioning, application access and security setup through Electric's AI-driven platform. When an employee changes roles, data syncs immediately updating their system access and software licenses with no manual intervention.

By anchoring IT actions to the authoritative HR system of record — ADP Workforce Now — organizations can eliminate duplication, reduce errors and ensure employees have the right tools and the appropriate access at every stage of their career journeys.

Are you ready to turn today's HR-IT pressures into tomorrow's productivity gains?

[Learn more](#) 



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