

EVOLVE AND THRIVE

Rethinking HR Service Delivery



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Rethinking HR service delivery.

The gap between where employees work and where they call home is closing. According to recent research from Gartner,¹ up to 81% of employees who can work remotely or in a hybrid situation will choose to do so. To support this fundamental workplace shift, businesses must also adapt how they deliver HR services.

Improving the employee experience is a major priority for business leaders, and central to that is how employees receive their HR services. As the global workplace continues to evolve, HR service delivery must evolve alongside it—which means meeting your employees where they work, and enabling self-service and mobile access.

Simultaneously, employees are expecting more from their HR solutions and no longer accepting the divide between consumer-grade technology and workplace systems. If personal smart devices are intuitive and easy to use, why are so many HR information systems difficult to navigate?

When it comes to meeting those expectations, HR service delivery still lags behind. Leapgen's 2022 Digital Experience Delivery Practices Survey² shows that only about 15% of enterprise and midsize organizations consistently deliver personalized digital experiences. Worse, only 25% of survey respondents indicated they were able to provide positive experiences through their company portal.

When HR service delivery is at its best, it's seamless. Employees can easily manage everyday tasks such as scheduling paid time off and connecting with mentors, as well as more significant moments such as performance reviews and job changes. Without a personalized service delivery model, employees can't easily navigate their work life and their experience suffers.

In this eBook, we define HR service delivery, explore different service models, and explain how analytics and personalization improve the employee service experience. By the end, you'll have a strong working overview of the changes in HR service delivery, and understand where your business can optimize its own services strategy, reduce case management load, and modernize outdated HR technology.



What is HR service delivery?

HR service delivery refers to the solutions, processes, and models used to deliver HR services to employees, including everything from payroll to career advice. These services support the entire employee lifecycle from onboarding to exit, as well as contractors, freelancers, and prospective candidates.

Every employee from senior management to new hires will be affected by your company's service delivery model—likely every day. Regardless of the processes and technology that your business has implemented, it's essential to evaluate how their outcomes align with your requirements. To effectively assess the services you provide, you must understand the four most common service delivery models and their core strategies.

The four types of HR service delivery models.

Initially, HR services were solely delivered through an in-person, open-door policy. If an employee had a request, they'd speak directly to their HR team. Similarly, HR teams manually distributed paperwork around the building straight into the hands or onto the desks of employees. But in the modern workplace, these integral in-person roles have been supplemented by new ways of working.

Today, there are four major HR service delivery models:

- 1 Traditional service delivery. Historically, it has been the responsibility of HR to deliver services directly. In the traditional model, a team of generalized HR operationalists manage the day-to-day HR needs of the company at a micro and macro level, while also overseeing services such as payroll, employee benefits, and sick leave. Likewise, HR services are generally regionalized, meaning a local HR generalist will support their regional worker population. This is still common at smaller companies.
- 2 Shared service delivery. Centering on an HR-shared service center—a diversified team of HR generalists and HR specialists—the shared service model splits HR tasks by branch. By separating operational, strategic, and administrative responsibilities, each team member is able to develop more nuanced expertise and optimize their processes. In this model, HR team members are usually centralized in a single location.
- 3 Self-service delivery. The self-service delivery model cuts out the intermediary. Employees and managers have the freedom to access resources when needed, either through the company portal, a dedicated chatbot, or digital journeys that adapt to meet each employee's needs. In doing so, simple requests no longer require employees to wait for a response, and there will always be a mechanism for additional support if needed.
- 4 Tiered service delivery. Essentially fusing HR shared service with self-service, tiered service delivery creates multiple levels of service options. As requests pass through each tier, the experience becomes increasingly personalized, ensuring that HR specialists are only required for requests that can't be handled automatically. This model is expected by most employees working at enterprise companies.

Which model makes the most sense for your company will depend on the scale of your organization, your digital strategy, and what case management system you currently have in place. However, more organizations are adopting a tiered service delivery model to best meet the rapidly evolving needs of business leaders and employees.

Tiered service delivery: levels of personalization.

With the prevalence of machine learning (ML) in search engines and the efficiency of digital personal assistants, employees are used to getting the information they need quickly and easily. However, according to a 2021 survey from Sapient Insights Group,³ the average business now deploys more than 16 separate HR solutions to manage employee needs. All of those silos make it difficult to deliver a seamless employee experience.

A tiered service delivery model supports employees by instantly directing them to the right resources and information for every request. Each tier provides the right level of support depending on the nature and complexity of the request, ensuring the minimum amount of friction for employees and improving the case management experience for HR, which are both critical for employee satisfaction.



Every organization can customize its service delivery model, but usually models include the following four tiers:

- **Tier 0:** self-service. This represents the first port of call for employees, where they consult the company knowledgebase and virtual agents to get the information they need to manage their task or answer their question. That's because AI and ML technologies can now provide more contextual and insightful self-service responses to increasingly complex requests.
- **Tier 1:** contact HR service center. When an employee cannot get the information they need from self-service options, the next step is to make it easy for them to communicate with someone from the HR service center, usually an HR generalist. Although most cases are resolved upon first contact, the HR team member can connect the employee with an HR specialist if needed.
- **Tier 2:** escalate to HR specialist. When an employee's request requires specific expertise or compliance checks, an HR specialist must get involved. Usually these requests arise from extenuating circumstances or the need for specific actions that only an HR specialist has the authorization or business skills to complete.
- **Tier 3:** meet with HR management. If a request could impact HR strategy or involves a sensitive issue or a time-critical emergency best managed through a face-to-face interaction, it can be necessary for the HR specialist to connect the employee with an HR business partner. Few cases will reach this final tier.

The benefits of personalized HR service delivery.

Five years ago, automation was scarcely a business consideration for service delivery. Now it's top of mind. In the Harvey Nash/KPMG CIO Survey 2020,⁴ 71% of 4,219 global respondents believed that their business would increase its focus on automation for service delivery in the future. Only 1% thought it would decrease.

By focusing on people-centric HR service delivery platforms, companies not only provide positive digital experiences for their employees, but they also improve adoption rates and create a more adaptable infrastructure. But what are the tangible business benefits of automation, personalization, and analytics with HR service delivery?

The 2022 Digital Experience Delivery Practices Survey⁵ from Leapgen found that organizations realize broader business benefits when they deliver HR services using digital experience platforms. Compared to their peers, survey respondents who answered “yes” to having deployed a digital experience platform were:



3x more likely

to have broadly deployed employee and manager direct access, also known as self-service



2x as likely

to report high adoption of direct access



8x more likely

to have a comprehensive HR knowledgebase

Even though the business benefits of implementing an automated HR platform that delivers personalized services to a global workforce speak for themselves, some companies remain wary of modernizing systems and automating processes. However, when companies continue to manage the administrative weight of redundant systems and technology, they risk increased service delivery costs among other challenges. To understand those risks and what employees want in terms of services, any HR service delivery program requires real-time analytics as its cornerstone.



Three strategies to improve HR service delivery.

Seamless employee experiences are the aim of every HR service delivery model. To achieve this, you must consider how services are delivered across your business, provide consumer-grade mobile interfaces, and tackle redundant technology head-on. It's also important to move past simplistic personalization that treats employees as a group, and toward hyper-personalization that supports employees as individuals.

Hyper-personalized services support each employee as a customer by taking into account their unique needs. By leveraging intelligent technology such as ML and natural language processing, businesses can simultaneously improve employee experience, employee engagement,⁶ and HR efficiency by:

Meeting employees in their workflows



Creating self-service options



Providing adaptive support



Strategy one: meet your employees in their workflow.

Ensuring your employees have what they need to complete their work should be the starting point of any HR service delivery initiative. If your people have to navigate antiquated systems and confusing processes to access simple information about their job role and benefits, their employee experience is going to suffer. That's why self-service options and mobile access are critical.

By providing employees with the information they need as they work, not only do you reduce the number of HR requests, but you also add value to each employee's interaction with your systems. You have numerous options for making this happen, such as a dedicated employee portal or an integration between your HR systems and an instant messaging app such as Slack.⁷ Regardless of how you choose to meet your employees in their workflows, providing a robust mobile interface is critical so that they can always access the information they need, regardless of where they're working.

The step beyond self-service is proactively meeting employee needs. By using ML and automation, you can enable HR teams to guide employees through key moments so that they have what they need before they know they need it.

Strategy two: create self-service options.

Regardless of how proactive your HR team is, employees will inevitably have questions. However, for any number of reasons, employees may hesitate to reach out to HR or take the time to submit a help request. Enabling employees to easily source accurate answers to frequently asked questions, and even less common ones, is a great way to reduce employee stress and HR workload.

Mobile access is a key requirement for modern self-service options. If your employees can't get answers or find the data they're looking for when they have their question, they'll likely give up.

Similarly, if employees must navigate different systems to get the information they're looking for, ensure your self-service options connect the dots for them. This means embedding links to related knowledge articles and giving employees seamless access to further HR help via an integrated case management solution. After all, your employees shouldn't require a separate FAQ to navigate HR services.

Strategy three: provide adaptive support.

The only thing more likely to cause frustration than extended wait times is misdirected requests. Providing self-service options with frequent dead ends is like taking one step forward and two steps back. Misdirected requests also increase the need for case management rather than streamlining it.

Well-organized, easily accessible resources are essential, but not every question can be fielded by knowledge articles or chatbots. Meeting your employees in their workflow means ensuring that the level of support they receive continually adapts to their needs. If an employee needs to ask something more personal or urgent—such as questions about a leave of absence—it's important that your HR service delivery solution is integrated with more traditional case management services. By doing so, you ensure that employees feel like they are being supported as a person, rather than another ticket in a queue.

The future of HR service delivery.

The bottom line for any business looking to optimize its services is simple: personalization. Without analytics to understand what your employees need as well as the when and the why, your services will likely miss the mark. In a world where people expect their personal technology to adapt to their needs, work should be no different. That's why the logical endpoint of personalization is individualization.

Individualizing HR services requires businesses to utilize data to create unique and meaningful experiences at the employee level. By making better use of your data, you can also answer questions and deliver insights for employees in a way that reflects broader company initiatives in learning, skills development, and other areas.

Automation makes personalization possible. It also simplifies and speeds up HR service requests and reduces the amount of time it takes to process them, freeing employees up to focus on more important tasks. By creating a holistic experience where moments that matter are automatically connected to learning, skills development, and mentorship, you ensure that employees receive what they need in the moment—and what they need moving forward.



Rethink the full HR service delivery experience with Workday.

As you rethink your HR service delivery model, know that Workday provides hyper-personalized, intuitive digital experiences that keep people engaged at every step of their career. Workday is the only vendor with AI- and ML-woven into the core of its platform. Not only does this enable HR to surface the right information at the right time for the right employees, but the built-in AI- and ML-capabilities also deliver personalized and value-driven experiences at scale. This is why organizations that use Workday are empowered to deliver intuitive self-service and seamless support experiences to their workforce.

Workday employee experience management solutions help organizations listen to employees, and analyze and act on data throughout the entire employee lifecycle. With the strong foundation of people data in Workday Human Capital Management (HCM), HR can take targeted action to improve experiences in ways that are personalized for each employee. In doing so, your company can streamline its case management system and HR team workloads.

Since all of that data is centralized in Workday, it's quick and easy to gain insights that correlate to specific initiatives. HR can use these insights to measure the impact of each initiative on the most important business goals and objectives, including retention, engagement, productivity, diversity and inclusion, well-being, and performance. And to help improve employee experience, HR can also see and measure the impact of actions such as launching a targeted employee journey or providing employees with recommended learning courses.

To further drive operational efficiency and improve employee engagement, you can adopt the Workday Help case management solution to enable quality self-service at scale. According to the Sapient Insights Group HR Systems Survey Whitepaper, 25th Edition,⁸ Workday Help has the highest adoption rate for HR service delivery solutions in both enterprise and mid-market categories.

Your employees and their voice should be the core focus of your experience strategy. Whether your company is preparing a full HR transformation or just taking the first step toward listening and engaging, Workday is here to help.

For more information on how Workday can transform your HR Service Delivery experience, visit our [Solutions Page](#).



Endnotes

¹Gartner, "[Gartner HR Research Identifies New Framework for Organizations to Succeed in Today's Fragmented Workplace](#)"; October 24, 2022.

²Leapgen LLC, "[Hyper-Personalizing the Employee Experience: What It Takes, What It Produces, and Where to Start](#)"; October 4, 2022.

³Sapient Insights Group, "[HR tech Number of the Week: HR systems overload](#)"; October 20, 2021.

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⁶Workday, [Understanding the Basics: What Is Employee Experience?](#); August 25, 2022.

⁷Workday, [Workday and Slack: Building Integrations for Our Shared Customers](#); March 21, 2018.

⁸Sapient Insights Group, "[2020–2021 HR Systems Survey](#)" Whitepaper; October 20, 2021.



+1-925-951-9000 +1-877-WORKDAY (+1-877-967-5329) Fax: +1-925-951-9001 [workday.com](https://www.workday.com)

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