

5 TIPS TO Unify your HR Solutions



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Introduction

Thanks to the increasing digitization of jobs, there is now an application or a software solution for just about anything: from applications to **manage annual leave, expenses, online training, planning, CRM and more**, the choice is huge and the list is endless.

Faced with this multitude of choices, companies are looking for the best possible tools and therefore often tend to use different software for each function. However, implementing new software is not easy and is a considerable task, not only because it requires a large budget, but also because it involves training staff on individual components. The task is thus increased tenfold and requires time and important resources.

The other major problem is that **navigating and connecting the different software** which is difficult (or impossible) and does not permit the flow of data between software packages. The performance of the software is thus reduced and the ROI impacted.

How do you fix this problem? How do you make the most of your software? What are the solutions to unify your software?

Here are 5 tips to unify HR and make digitization of your HR processes an asset

1) Define the issues and the reasons for the project

The project to unify your software is the response to different needs that need to be identified in order to ensure the development of your company.

- You are fully equipped with software to automate and streamline various tasks, but you are now faced with a problem: you are **unable to consolidate data and make it flow** between the different software, sometimes even within services, you need to connect to multiple platforms several times per day, and decision-making and the recovery of data is not efficient. It is therefore essential that you unify your software to optimize processes and the investment you have made.
- Unifying your software also replies to the **challenges of the constantly evolving job market**. Unemployment, the war for talent, and research into the well-being of employees are all phenomena that companies must adapt to, in order to **attract the most qualified profiles and retain employees**. Candidates are attentive to managerial and digital culture, to the working environment and to the employer brand. In this context of permanent digitization, we must be able to offer the same level of service and responsiveness that employees have in their personal lives (instant access to information, speedy connection, fast loading pages etc.). Unifying all your software will enable you to **improve the employee experience and the retention of your talent**.
- While HR processes need to be efficient, administrative tasks - that represent a significant part of HR functions – take a relatively **long amount of time and often have a low yield**. HR processes are often only partially automated since different software and/ or functions do not usually communicate with each other. For example, payroll and performance management can be completely independent even though connecting them would facilitate decision-making. The unification of HR solutions can free up time for your HR teams so they can focus on higher value-added tasks centered on the human aspect. Providing training, the increase in the skillset of employees, searching for school partnerships, structuring a compensation policy... are all ways to **increase the retention of your talent and decrease turnover**.

- Finally, unifying your different software also helps to relieve the **IT department** as it is often overwhelmed by technical problems relating to each of the software, which are often difficult to solve quickly given their variation. A way to **improve the performance of your IT department** is to unify different systems.

It all depends on your activity and your specificities so talk to your service managers to identify potential needs and identify issues that are unique to you. It is also important to take into account your employees' complaints as these can represent a real challenge.

2) Set the budget and choose your project manager

Once the need is clearly defined and the benefits of a unified HR solution are identified, it is now necessary to **budget the project and choose the person(s) responsible for ensuring its success.**

As with all your other projects, it is advisable to draw up a **provisional monthly budget**. It takes a little time but allows you to have a clearer and more accurate vision of your available cash flow per month and **gives you flexibility** in case of problems. Indeed, unforeseen events can make you lose a lot of time and money and it is therefore necessary to ensure you have a cash reserve to deal with them. Since the project to unify your software concerns all of your services, it is also important to **involve your employees** who are responsible for them in order to make the most accurate forecast budget. As an HR professional, you are the keystone between your different services and you should draw upon your team's knowledge of software to research market trends and potential savings. The collaboration of your team is therefore your best asset: you will be able to collect all the information necessary to establish a benchmark and choose the best possible solution. When making your choice, favor a provider that is specialized in your field of activity, or who has

reference companies with similar complexities to your company so as to guarantee the success of this project. You will then be able to **propose a solid and concrete project** to your Head of Purchasing and / or your Administrative and Financial Director.

The project manager(s) is/are included in the estimated budget. But is it better to recruit this job internally or externally? The best strategy is to do both. That is to say, to **assign an internal project manager who know the needs of the company and has already worked with your HR department** as well as an external project manager from a partner company. The chosen project manager will be the one who is the most suitable person to manage the project with your internal project manager since they know the product well.

Ensure that the person proposed by the provider has both functional and technical skills to understand the complexity of your structure and help you implement the best practices for using the unified tool. The internal project manager will be there to guide them, **to ensure that the specifications are respected** and to ensure that the project is executed correctly. Conversely, calling upon a third party to help with the chosen solution is rarely a good idea. Indeed, the external project manager will have a limited knowledge of the product and its capabilities and will not be able to exactly meet your specificities.

The project will slow down and the needs that require a particular treatment or the development of a component will not be met. So favor direct access to the partner solution through the project manager to limit unexpected obstacles and speed up the project.

3) Do an audit of ongoing processes of all your software

Unifying your software requires that all your processes are both well-structured and well-integrated in the software you use daily within the different services. The purpose of this audit is therefore to **check the suitability and use of your processes** so as to make them more efficient and work out how they will be connected after unification.

To do this, your two designated project leaders must audit every department to understand its processes and the software used, by following 4 steps:

- **Audit the organization of processes:** project managers should contact the HR manager or leader to check their ability to plan processes. It is necessary to examine the mapping of the processes, analyze their inputs and outputs, objectives and aims as well as their different interactions, especially with external customers. Once these elements are understood, the project managers can identify the resources needed to achieve the processes and then define the different responsibilities and authorities.
- **Audit the implementation of processes:** in order to empower employees, it is preferable that this step not be carried out in the presence of the person in charge of the processes. At this stage, the capacity of the employees involved should be verified to understand and respect the processes: examine the procedures and methods known to them, the hardware and software available to apply the processes... This step lets you know if the processes are understandable and consistent with the quality standards of the company.
- **Auditing the standard and evaluation of processes:** the analysis of the performance of the processes is essential and its audit must be conducted first with the employees involved in the processes and then with the manager. Start by reviewing the malfunctions and the tools and procedures for monitoring performance. Then finish by checking the results of the processes

and identifying improvements to make processes more efficient. You can then evaluate employee engagement.

- **Audit the improvement of the processes and how unifying software can optimize the department:** the objective of this stage is to ensure that processes can be improved. This last part involves analyzing results and indicators, putting in place improvement actions ("best practices") and measuring their performance with the person responsible for the processes. The aim is for processes to be in perfect harmony with the structure of the software in question. This step also allows project managers to take stock of each department's needs, mainly in terms of connection with other software. Since a service cannot survive on its own, issues with efficiency are often linked to a lack of communication between different software and it is the responsibility of project managers to map these needs.

4) Mapping the possibilities

Following the audit of your processes - which will have shown in more detail the need to unify software and visualize the project as a whole - it is time for the two project managers to map out the possibilities. The aim is to **map all possible and sought-after connections to maximize all software**.

Obviously, these possibilities must be examined from a technical point of view before being executed in order to guarantee not only the feasibility of the proposal but also the security and confidentiality of the data involved. This mapping will then be submitted to the solution partner to carry out all the developments necessary to make these connections possible.

Here is a concrete example of a possible connection to map:

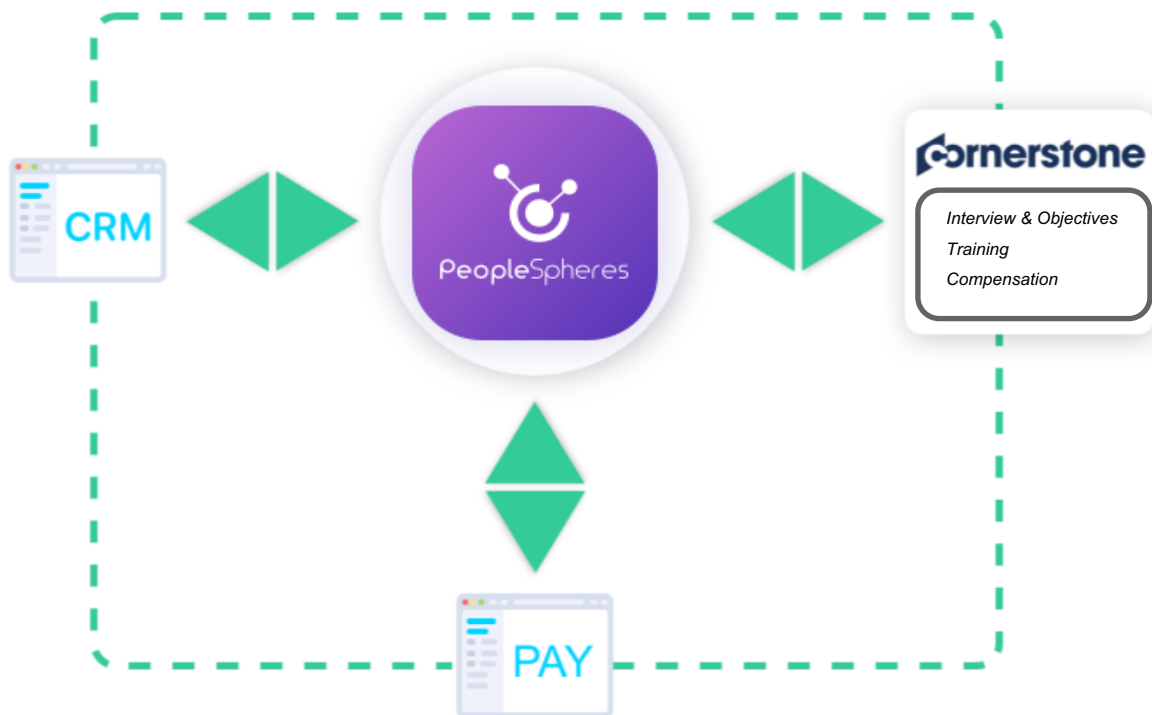
The two project managers audited the payroll department, the sales department and the department responsible for training within company X and have identified delays in processes that could be reduced. Below are the problems encountered by both:

- The payroll service is governed by strict deadlines that are sometimes difficult to respect because the information is not given to them until the last moment, thus slowing the performance of the service.
- The training department is struggling to make its training visible to all employees and, as a result, is unable to improve the skills of its talent. The reason for this problem is the lack of visibility regarding employee performance and the difficulty of communicating effectively with the different departments.
- Sales employees complain about obtaining their payroll variables with a delay and monthly performance reporting represents an additional task for the manager. In fact, the manager must extract the data on the right date to send it to the HR department every month, which can be constraining, especially if he or she is on vacation.

In response to these needs, project managers can examine the capacities of different software and map out a possible response to them. Project managers have therefore proposed to connect the CRM of the sales department to the performance management software to automatically gather together information on whether objectives have been achieved or not in a simple click.

This connection will automatically trigger interviews and enrolment for training in the event of the failure to reach objectives, so as to enable the employee concerned to progress. Conversely, in the case of good performance, the information is automatically transmitted from the CRM to the compensation software, then to the payroll software that will record the variable for the month on time.

Diagram of the connection between the three programs:



5) Test and deployment of the solution

The bulk of the project is now complete but the implementation and deployment of the solution to your employees is undoubtedly the most delicate step of the unification of your software. We must again employ a rigorous and methodical approach to prevent the project from failing.

Before deploying the software, **make sure that all the connections established are functional and meet your expectations.** To do this, you need to put in place a test by mobilizing about 20% of your workforce from all services to test each process. This test must have a limited duration depending on the scale of the project. One or two months are often enough to perform a complete test of the solution. Your mobilized teams will have to inform the project managers of any anomalies observed during the test period so they can communicate them to the provider. Following these tests, it is necessary to write a report, gathering together the provider and the team in charge of the project to validate the procedures and make the necessary changes.

Once all the malfunctions have been corrected, the solution can finally be implemented. **Provide training** one week before the effective date of deployment. The software is the same but users need to be trained on its new features. This step is, however, essential for the success of the project to prevent employees feeling lost and not using these new features that are supposed to accelerate processes.

It is important to remind them of the benefits of unifying software in order to convince the most reluctant of employees. It is advisable to deploy the new solution to all the entities concerned by unifying their software so that all the processes are executable. Collect feedback from your employees in the first month and **plan a meeting with the provider to correct any malfunctions and to measure the benefits.**

To conclude...

Unifying your software is a big project but important for your business. In fact, unifying your solutions will allow you to respond to many problems such as the **loyalty of your employees and the optimization of your software by offering a quality employee experience.**

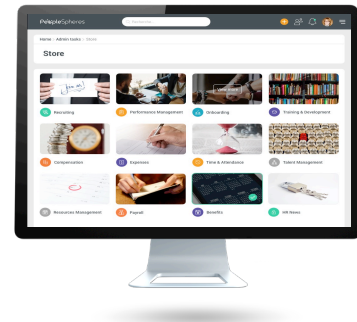
To ensure the success of this project, remember the following:

- ✓ Analyze your needs and understand the issues related to the unification of your software;
- ✓ Entrust the project to competent people who know your needs and the features of the chosen solution;
- ✓ Establish the most accurate budget possible to complete the project and ensure room for maneuver;
- ✓ Audit your company's processes, check their efficiency, identify potential connections and perform mapping possibilities;
- ✓ Perform a full-scale test phase to detect potential anomalies, train your staff and then deploy the solution. Feedback from your employees should be taken into account and given to the provider so the problems are corrected as quickly as possible.

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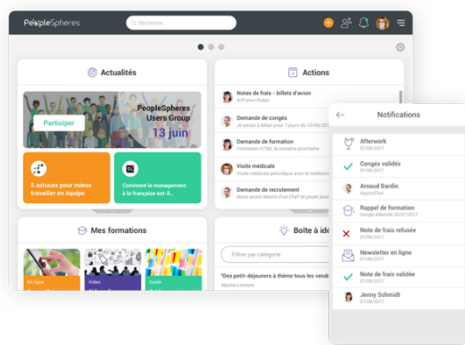
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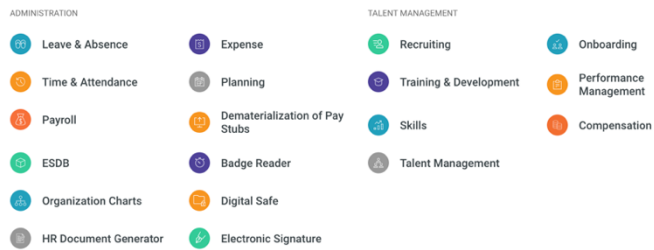
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