

HRWS Trending

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HOT TOPICS

5 Ways AI Can Impact HR (Yes, for the Better)

You've heard it from futurists, physicists and your favorite LinkedIn corporate doomsayers. But, we are here to tell you that before AI (artificial intelligence) replaces every human job (how is that a bad thing, btw?) and eventually takes over the world, it can do wonders to improve the HR world, right now.

Employee Engagement - AI apps can help HR departments better communicate with employees about everything from projects to preferences. Since happy employees are better ones, keeping them that way is paramount. There are some slick new AI applications that detect workload logjams, redistribute tasks, and even provide insights and solutions.

Scheduling - Apologies to you career schedule-makers, but just imagine putting together a 16-person mega-meeting with a few mouse clicks? Enter AI system that can simultaneously access multiple calendars to identify shared availability? They can even arrange seating by roles to promote productivity. Collaboration anyone?

Harassment Reporting – Statistics show that workers are cautious about reporting harassment issues. Some are either embarrassed or reluctant to come forward for a variety of reasons – whether they believe that coming forward will just cause problems, or they're not completely sure that what happened constitutes as harassment. But ... new AI bots can make it easier, by asking the same questions as would an HR rep, without that stigma, bias, judgement ...

Job Postings- Look, if you love writing job postings, we won't stop you. But, if you have other tasks at hand, AI can help. New tools see AI drawing useful information to create spot-on job descriptions for available positions. Then, at last, a real person can review and make final tweaks.

Benefits Administration – Through analytics and AI, organizations are becoming infinitely better at matching people with their best health plan option. In other words, AI is great at closing the gap between HR folks and medical professionals. Simply add in an individual's needs, and you get the best-fit plan recommendation and even some local providers. What's more, this lowers costs for both company and employee with better healthcare results to boot.

Sure, AI is still in its developmental stages, but advancements seem well on their way to make vast improvements in the HR world and beyond. The future looks promising to say the least.

BYOD Policies (What They Are) And, What You Need to Know

Just a few years back, the idea that employees could/should provide their own devices in the workplace was preposterous. But these days, the devices are so portable, powerful and readily available that at least considering putting a BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) policy in place, is worthy of consideration. So whether you're thinking about adding corporate email to personal smartphones, connecting laptops or really leaving it all up to your employees' preferences, there's a lot to keep in mind. Let's take a look at some of the key issues, benefits and concerns.

Upside

Money - It's no secret that buying phones and other devices is a pricey undertaking. If employees just bring theirs, it means a pirate's booty in savings (well, it is).

Simplicity: Same device for everything. Same phone, same laptop. There. Done. We still see sales folks at the airport toggling between their work cell and personal. Ridiculous.

Preferences: Dave loves open source while Molly's an Apple fan. Maybe you've got Dave on a MacBook after years of "Microsofting" and its slowing him down? Learning curves be damned with a solid, pro-BYOD policy. Everybody comes trained!

Ownership: Lose the company laptop. Get a finger pointing. Get another device. That's usually how it goes down. Lose your own, you're in the store the next day. Right? This works to the Company's advantage on price as employees are particularly attached to all their personal items stored on their devices.

Downside

IT support: If everybody is on the same network with same-brand devices, it's no sweat for the IT fix-it crew. If they're all different, it can mean big problems. What about software compatibility?

Security: This is generally the biggest concern, and it is a valid one (though, not impossible to manage). What type of data does your shop handle? Keeping an employee's 8-year-old off of YouTube when the laptop comes home is sometimes easier imagined than executed, for both the company and the parent.

Post-termination/departure: In both instances, there will have to be pre-determined protocols during off-boarding, which, in many cases can be difficult to enforce. Imagine Molly is in sales and all your contacts dial her directly? At any rate, if you deal with a lot of confidential information, this can be truly unnavigable territory.

With this many pros and cons, such BYOD policies can be complicated. Think about what your employees want, what is sustainable for your organization and then, if you need further assistance, call your friends at HRWS. We're good at this stuff.

CONTACT US:

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Ludicrous Interview Questions Still Being Asked

By and large, recruiters are a savvy, well-intentioned bunch. Nevertheless, there are always a few over-rated questions that find their way through the cracks. Here are some delightful examples worthy of mention:

1. What are your greatest weaknesses?:

"I'm a workaholic." "I care too much." "I sleep at my desk and never leave." Those who continue to ask this, will continue to get what they asked for ... we promise.

2. Can you work under pressure?:

"No, I cave with any sort of pressure. I was hoping you wouldn't ask me that." "No. You should hire somebody else."

3. What was the last book you read?

They're either getting "The Return of the King" (So What) Or, "<Great Success Title>" (Snore)

4. How would you evaluate me as an interviewer?

"You're So Great" or, "Great question, wow ..." Why would a Level 2 Service Rep. even fathom how to answer this?

5. Where do you see yourself in five years?

Are they looking for a software engineer or fortune teller?

6. What three items would you bring to a desert island?

The only caveat here being if the interviewer is hiring for a desert island survivor.

All things being equal, interviews can be tough on both sides of the desk. Creative questions can be tempting as a means by which to try and gauge personality and/or quick thinking. However, we find more can be learned about a prospect by asking direct, position-relevant questions.

What topics would you like to see covered in the next issue of HRWS Trending?

Send us your suggestions at trending@hrworkplaceservices.com

Interesting Questions Recently Asked of HRWS Advisory Staff

Q: [Are there exceptions to the standard minimum salary level for the Fair Labor Standards Act \(FLSA\) overtime exemptions?](#)

A: **Indeed.** The most notable exceptions include the following:

- *Computer-related occupations:* Computer employees may be paid either a weekly minimum salary or a minimum hourly wage.
- *Outside & commissioned salespersons:* For these roles, there is no minimum salary level requirement. That said, commissioned salespersons must have a regular pay rate that is greater than 1.5X the minimum wage "for every hour worked in a workweek in which overtime hours are worked (and derive more than 50 percent of their total earnings from commissions)."
- *Teachers, lawyers and doctors:* Minimum salary level requirements **do not** apply to the exemptions for teachers, licensed attorneys (engaged in law practice) or currently practicing, licensed doctors.

Q: [May an employer round off its employees' work time?](#)

A: **Absolutely.** And more specifically, according to the FLSA, you can round employee time to a quarter hour of work. You can round time down from 1-7 minutes, but you must round time up from 8-14 minutes and count it as a quarter hour of work. Never round down hours to avoid paying overtime. So, if an employee continues on 14 minutes after work each day, you must pay the overtime.

Q: [May an employer discipline an employee for off-duty behavior?](#)

A: **It depends.** Whether an employer may discipline an employee for off-duty behavior, such as smoking marijuana or extreme political activities, depends on the law of the particular state in which the employer operates. For example, some state laws include protections for the "use of lawful products," which includes smoking marijuana products. In addition, various states protect an employee's political activities outside of work.

Q: [Do current or former employees have a right to access their personnel records in order to inspect, copy or dispute the information?](#)

A: **It depends.** Employees may have the right, under certain circumstances, to inspect, copy or dispute the information in their personnel records. Requirements regarding employee access to records, including possible restrictions on copying or disputing information, vary by state. While some states explicitly grant a right of access to former employees, most states' laws address current employees. For detailed information, employers should consult HRWS for a summary of legal requirements in the jurisdiction(s) in question.

Q: [How can an employer best manage and/or monitor wearable technology in the workplace?](#)

A: **It depends.** An employer can effectively monitor wearable technology by implementing a wearable technology policy and what is and is not, acceptable at work. The policy should state whether, when and how the employer will monitor such devices and how violations should be reported. Penalties and disciplinary actions should be clear, up front. We also recommend having an employee signed consent form, acknowledging the rules and respective disciplinary actions. The policy should be revisited and updated often, based upon changing needs and the evolution of technology itself.