

# HUMAN RESOURCE INFORMATION SYSTEMS (HRIS)

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## THE EVOLUTION OF HRM AND HRIS

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### CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

After completing this chapter, you should be able to

- 1.1 List examples of transformational, traditional, and transactional human resource management activities.
- 1.2 Describe the primary components of an HRIS.
- 1.3 Discuss the roles of different stakeholders who interact with a HRIS.
- 1.4 Summarize the role an HRIS plays in ongoing efforts to improve HRM processes.
- 1.5 Discuss the various technology architectures for deploying an HRIS.
- 1.6 Contrast the potential value and risk in using an HRIS.
- 1.7 Discuss the historical evolution of HRM and HRIS, including the changing role of the human resources (HR) professional.

### EDITORS' NOTE

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce readers to the field of human resource information systems (HRIS). HRIS lies at the intersection of human resource management (HRM) and information systems (IS). A central focus of this chapter is understanding how an HRIS is used to support the organization's processes and decisions related to its people. The chapter starts with brief descriptions of human resources management and HRIS. The authors then introduce the components of HRIS (e.g., people, processes, technology, data) and examine how changes in these components broaden our understanding of HRIS. Next, they offer a brief discussion of the value and risks of HRIS adoption. The chapter ends with a brief history of the evolution of the HRIS field and its effects on HR professionals, leading to today's contemporary HRIS. The chapter lays the groundwork for the remainder of this book, and, consequently, it is important to understand thoroughly the concepts and ideas presented.

The chapter closes with a brief overview of the major sections of the book discussing how each chapter contributes to the understanding of the field of HRIS. Finally, you should note that the key terms used in this and subsequent chapters, presented in the text in bold-face type, are defined in a glossary at the end of the book.

## HRIS IN ACTION

### Situation Description

To illustrate the importance and use of HRIS in contemporary HR departments, this vignette examines the typical email that may appear in the inbox of HR professionals and managers. Assume you are the HR director of a medium-sized organization that primarily maintains and uses manual HR records and systems. This morning, your inbox contains the following emails that require immediate action.

*Email 1:* A note from the legal department indicates that some female staff members have filed an employment discrimination complaint with the local government agency responsible for the enforcement of equal opportunity employment. The female staff members allege that, for the past 10 years, they have been passed over for promotion because they are women. To respond to this allegation, the legal department requires historical data on the promotions of both males and females for the past 10 years for all jobs in the company broken down by department. It also needs the training records for all managers involved in personnel actions, such as promotions, to ascertain whether they have received training in equal employment provisions, especially in terms of unfair gender discrimination.

*Email 2:* The second item is a complaint from employees working in a remote location of the company, about 150 miles away. The employees are complaining that changes in pay rates are not being updated correctly or in a timely fashion. Employees are also finding it difficult to get timely and accurate information on the most recent leave and benefits policies of the company.

*Email 3:* A letter from the marketing manager states that he has not received any updated information on the status of his request, made three months ago, to recruit a new salesperson. The failure to recruit and hire a new salesperson has had a negative effect on the overall sales of the company's products over the past quarter.

*Email 4:* A letter from the HR professional in charge of the southwest regional office says that she is swamped with HR administrative work, particularly personnel transactions on employees. As a result, she has not been able to meet employees in her region to describe and begin to implement the recent Employee Engagement Initiative as required by corporate headquarters.

*Email 5:* A note from one of the production managers indicates that he has received a resignation letter from a highly regarded production engineer. She is resigning because she has not received the training on new technology that she was promised when hired. She notes that most of the other production engineers have attended this training program and have had very positive reactions to it.

*Email 6:* A strongly worded note from the director of finance asks the HR department to justify the increasing costs associated with its operation. The note indicates that the HR director needs to develop a business plan for the overall operation of the HR department to include business plans for all the HR programs, such as recruiting and training. Further, the finance director indicates that unless the business cases can demonstrate a positive benefit-cost ratio, the budget for the HR department will be reduced, which will lead to reductions in the HR department's professional staff.

As the HR director your first thought may be to resign, since searching for the information required by these emails in the various manual and self-developed systems will require several days, if not weeks, to complete. However, you have just returned from a professional conference sponsored by the Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM) describing how everything you need is likely available in your human resource information system (HRIS). So, you decide on your next move. You realize that you need to develop a team to identify the opportunities for the HRIS to support the above concerns and to help determine how to best move forward.

As this chapter, and the ones that follow, will illustrate, an HRIS enables an HR department to streamline its activities and the demands placed on it by automating the HR data and processes necessary for the management of the human resources of the organization. This automation helps develop the capabilities to produce information and reports on the requests contained in the memos in the vignette, and these reports will facilitate efficient and effective managerial decision making. While an HRIS cannot make the judgment calls in terms of whom to recruit or promote, it can certainly facilitate better input, integration, and use of employee data, which will reduce the administrative burden of keeping detailed records and should aid and enhance decisions about strategic directions.

### Need for an HRIS in Decision Situations

If you read the emails again, you will recognize that each one has a request for human resource management information that will be used in a decision situation. The information requested in Email 1 will help the legal department determine the company's potential liability in a workplace gender discrimination situation. This information may help to determine whether the company should decide to rectify the situation in terms of an informal settlement with the female staff members or to defend the company's promotion procedures as valid—in court if necessary. The information required in Email 2 may help the HR department decide to change its payroll procedures as well as its distribution of benefits information to remote company locations. The information needed to respond to Email 3 will impact decisions by the HR department to change recruitment and selection programs. Email 4 clearly suggests the need for greater transaction efficiency and responsiveness which can be provided through the HRIS. HRIS data could also be used to validate progress on implementing the employee engagement initiative. The information required to answer Email 5 may help in decisions regarding the revision of recruiting and training procedures, especially for new engineers. The information that would be provided in response to Email 6 will help decide the future of the HR department. As you go through this book, look at information on the capabilities of various human resource information systems, trying to find an HRIS that would allow you (as the HR director) to respond to each of the six memos in one day.

## HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

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What do you think is keeping CEOs up at night? You might think it would be issues like increasing stock price and market share, navigating in a globally competitive environment, or complying with government regulation. But these are not the issues highest on CEO's radar. Instead, CEOs report being most concerned about labor shortages and how to attract and retain talent (Mitchell et al., 2022). In other words, they see as critical the importance of hiring the right individuals and properly developing, promoting, and retaining their top talent.

To create and maintain a competitive advantage, organizations must acquire and use the resources available to them to deliver value to their customers. Doing so will allow them to achieve profits and survive as an organization. These resources are of different types, including physical capital (e.g., buildings and equipment), technology capital (e.g., organizational systems, processes, patents) and human capital (e.g., the knowledge, capabilities, and social networks of its people). Of these, human capital is often considered to be the most critical. Leading management thinkers (Porter, 1990; Drucker et al., 1997) argue acquiring, developing, and retaining human capital will be the most critical and most challenging for organizations this century. The best managed and well-respected companies have innovative and highly effective people practices. These organizations have aligned their human resource management processes with the strategic and operational goals of the organization (Ulrich et al., 2008).

Organizations assure success by implementing systems, activities, and outcomes that support achievement of the organization's strategic and operational objectives. Strategic objectives focus on the corporate strategy and target what products and services should be delivered to what customers to create value for both the customer and organization. Operational objectives identify what activities and outcomes must be achieved in the organization's operating units to achieve the organization's strategic objectives. These objectives are likely to address production rates, the quality of the products and services delivered, and efforts to reduce costs.

An organization's HR strategy must align with organizational and operational strategies. HR strategy focuses on the activities and outcomes the organization must accomplish to assure that they have the correct number of employees, at the right locations, at the right time, with the right knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to assure the organization can achieve its operational and strategic goals. The human resource management system, as implemented through an HRIS is a critical organization system; it supports the acquisition, development, and retention of the organization's most critical form of capital—its employees.

**Human resource management (HRM)** is the function that focuses on the organizations' talent strategies, policies, and practices. Typically, human resource management responsibilities involve things such as recruiting, selection, training, performance management, employee relations, compensation, employee recordkeeping, and organizational compliance. The human resource management function is responsible for determining how to best align

employee expertise with the organization's strategic objectives. Designing and introducing new and more effective processes to enhance the capabilities of the organization's human capital are described as **transformational HR activities** of human resources. They fundamentally enhance the capabilities of the organization enabling higher levels of individual, group, and organizational performance. Underlying these transformational activities is an array of processes supporting the essential human resources activities and functions (e.g., recruitment, training, etc.). Organizations require a strong layer of these **traditional HR activities** to support the organization's needs. A great number of these processes and their implementation through HRIS are described in this book. Finally, the organization needs effective execution of these processes to keep the human capital in the organization functioning effectively. These day-to-day activities such as onboarding an employee or conducting a performance appraisal are called **transactional HR activities**. These activities can be performed by HR staff, employees, or managers.

It is important to note that the deployment of HR staff can differ across and within organizations. This explains why no two HR departments are organized the same way. The size of the HR staff, relative to all employees, is often determined by the intensiveness of human resource management efforts within each firm. The more transformational, traditional, and transactional HRM activities, the bigger the staff.

## HUMAN RESOURCE INFORMATION SYSTEMS (HRIS)

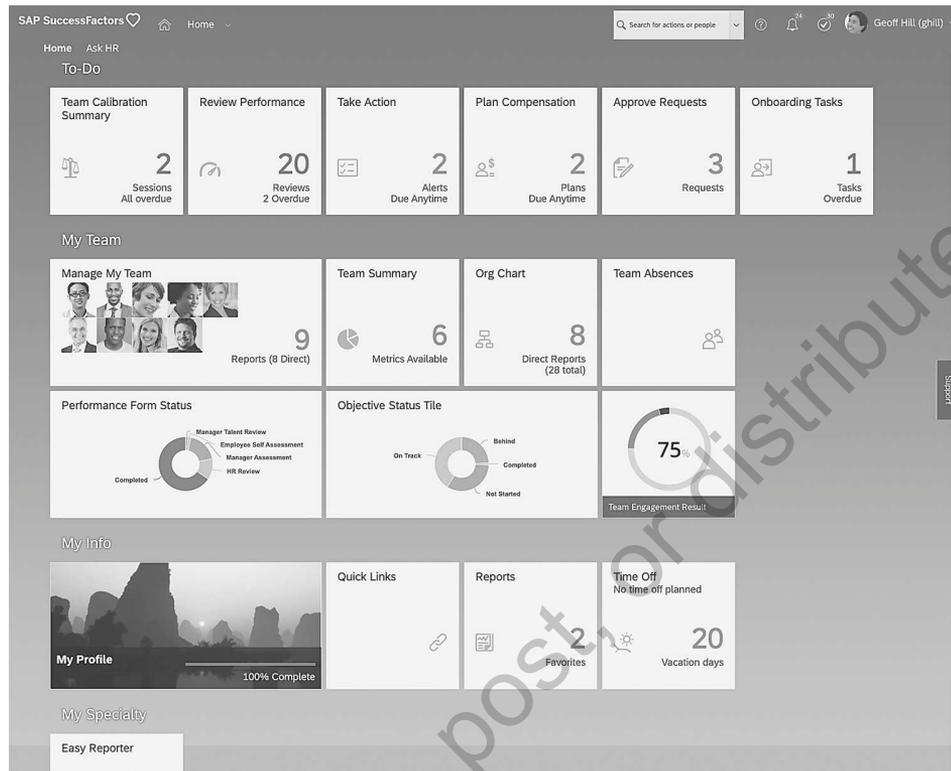
A **Human Resource Information System (HRIS)** is an information system focused on supporting an organization's HRM functions and activities—its “people” processes. A more formalized definition of a HRIS is an information system used to acquire, store, manipulate, analyze, retrieve, and distribute information regarding an organization's human resources to support human resources and managerial decisions.

An HRIS contains data about people in the organization and can become both the face of HR and the initial system with which new employees will interact. An HRIS can affect who applies for or will accept job offers from the firm. It can influence who can access development opportunities, how employees are evaluated and compensated, who is promoted and who chooses to remain with the organization. Inaccurate data within an HRIS can stigmatize employees, and employee privacy concerns regarding how and where applicant and employee data are used can affect an organization's reputation.

As part of the organization's overall information system architecture, the HRIS communicates and shares data with broader organizational systems such as accounting, operations, sales, and marketing to best support the organization's human resource management strategy. A sample employee home screen for an HRIS is shown in Figure 1.1.

### Components of an HRIS

Like all information systems, an HRIS is not simply digital hardware (e.g., scanner, laptop, kiosk, smartphone, etc.) or software, but it also includes people, processes, and data

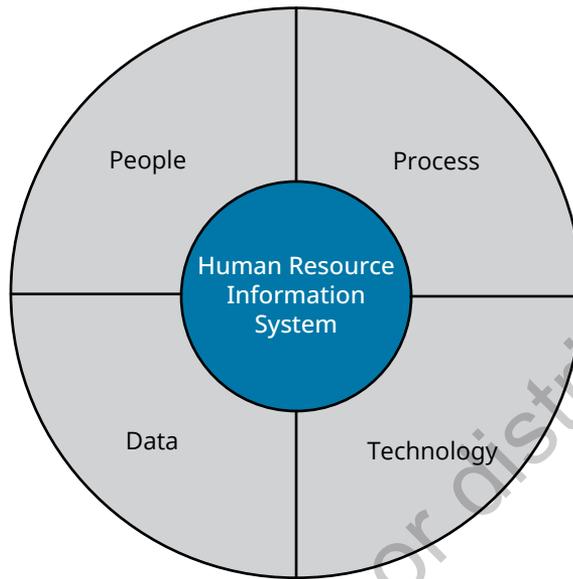
**FIGURE 1.1** ■ SuccessFactors Employee Home Screen

Source: © SAP SE. All rights reserved.

(see Figure 1.2). In the following sections, we provide a more detailed discussion of these four components of an HRIS—the people, processes, data, and technology—that come together to give an HRIS its capacity to enhance organizational effectiveness.

## PEOPLE

**People** are the individuals who interact with, or who are impacted by the HRIS. These individuals can also be called the stakeholders of the HRIS, and their level of understanding and capacity to make use of the HRIS is a critical element of HRIS success. The more experienced and capable that stakeholders are, the easier it is for the organization to implement HRIS-centered functionality. The list of an HRIS's stakeholders can be quite extensive including individuals inside the organization (e.g., employees and managers) and outside the organization (e.g., job seekers, retirees, vendors). Stakeholders play different roles in the life of the HRIS. Some are system users (e.g., employees, HR analysts), others support the system (e.g., HRIS technicians, IT technical support staff, vendors) and others assist in upgrading and improving HRIS

**FIGURE 1.2 ■ Elements of an HRIS**

functionality (HR managers, consultants). Key individuals that interact with an HRIS are discussed below. These individuals each interact with the system, providing or seeking information, completing transactions, making decisions, creating or adjusting process workflows, maintaining the HRIS, or influencing its current or future designed.

### HR Analysts (Power Users)

HR analysts or power users are perhaps the most demanding users of the HRIS. Their primary role is supporting HRM decision making. To do so, they require as much relevant data as possible to facilitate HR decision making. For example, a recruiting analyst for a large retailer might be asked to provide a short list of potential internal candidates for an internal marketing position. Or an HR analyst might be tasked with completing an analysis of corporate headquarters turnover. Analysts are referred to as power users because they access more areas of the HRIS than almost any other user. Analysts must be proficient with reporting and query tools; they must also understand the process used to collect the data, how new data are verified, and how the HRIS and the employee lifecycle interact. They also need to understand the data definitions in terms of what data exist, the structure of the data, and what data fields are up to date and complete.

### Technicians (HRIS Experts)

Technicians (HRIS experts) straddle the boundary of two functions. Their role is to ensure that appropriate HR staff members have all the access, information, and tools necessary to do their jobs. HRIS experts do this by understanding what is needed from an HR-process standpoint

and then translating that into technical language, so the technical employees, consultants, and software vendors know how to configure systems for their specific organization. For example, if an HR professional required that a new report be generated every other Tuesday, the HRIS expert would learn what data the report requires—perhaps mock the report up with the user—and then work with vendors and consultants to ensure that it is effectively implemented in the HRIS so that the report is automatically generated on the time schedule.

### HR Administrative Assistants

Like power users, HR administrative assistants may spend a significant portion of their day interacting with the HRIS. The difference is one of depth. The HR administrative assistant must understand the process required to enter information into the HRIS and may also need to start the process or generate periodic reports. Although HR administrative assistants do not generally provide input about hiring an individual, they are often responsible for managing the data associated with hiring and onboarding new employees, such as employment verification and ensuring that the new employee gets paid properly.

### Supervising Managers

Supervising managers are managers who are responsible for the direct supervision of employees. They need to have real-time access to accurate data that facilitate decision making regarding their people (Miller, 1998). The HRIS provides the manager with data for performance management, recruiting and retention, team management, project management, and employee development (Fein, 2001). The HRIS must also provide the information necessary to help managers make decisions that will contribute to the achievement of the unit's strategic goals and objectives (Hendrickson, 2003). Easy access to accurate employee data enables the manager for each employee to view and engage in employee life cycle changes such as salary decisions, job requisitions, hiring, disciplinary action, promotions, and training program enrollment (Walker, 2001; Adamson & Zampetti, 2001).

### Employees

An organization's employees are at the center of an HRIS. Much of the data contained in the HRIS describes employees, supports processes that affect an employee's relationship with the organization, and is a source of information about their relationship with the organization and the benefits that result from that relationship. That said, employees are not HR staff and are not likely to make decisions affecting anyone beyond themselves with HR data but can utilize the HRIS to manage their personal information. Full-time employees have similar, but not identical HR information needs. They need to be able to view and update their personal information, sign up for annual benefits, and view pay information. Hourly employees will need to clock-in and clock-out whereas salaried would not need to access time and attendance capabilities. People with other types of employment relationships may require different types of information support. This could include part-time employees, "gig" workers (e.g., employees who work with

the organization for short periods of time to complete a specific project component or task), and retirees whose health insurance or retirement savings might still be managed through the organization.

### Job Seekers

Job seekers are individuals who are engaging in a search for employment. They are not yet employees. Unlike internal users, job seekers typically provide information to the HRIS and only receive limited information from the HRIS. Because recruitment and talent management applications are nearly universally adapted by organizations (Sierra-Cedar, 2016), a corporate recruitment portal may be where job seekers will first gain information on the organization's available jobs, job requirements, what it is like to work for the information, and the organization's culture. Therefore, to enhance job seekers' experiences when interacting with the HRIS, the recruiting portal needs to provide ease of use and ease of access to current job information.

### Sourcing Partners

Most organizations will also work with sourcing partners such as Indeed.com, Adecco, and executive recruiting firms in support of the recruitment process. These organizations need information about vacant positions, including a position description, job specifications, desired candidate competencies, potential salary range, and contact information. Today's HRIS provides automated connections with these sourcing partners. For these reasons, it is important that your organization identifies the key information that will need to be transferred to and from the sourcing organization and the security and privacy measures that will protect job seeker data.

### HRIS Vendors

An HRIS vendor is an organization that sells a product or services to a client. In the area of HRIS, this includes software companies that sell HRIS software to organizations, provide services to maintain or upgrade HRIS software, and/or assist in the implementation of new or upgraded HRIS software. In many instances, consulting organizations are also engaged to help analyze HRIS functionality needs and/or to assist with implementation of new or upgraded HRIS system components.

Just as the technology landscape is evolving, so also is the vendor landscape. Mergers and acquisitions are regular occurrences as organizations seek to diversify and integrate offerings. HRIS vendors typically take two approaches to developing their product offerings. The first approach is a **"best of breed"** approach where a vendor develops a software offering that serves a specific segment of the market (e.g. recruitment, training, time and attendance, etc.) and develops a high-quality system that does one thing better than anyone else. The other approach is to develop an integrated solution. With an integrated solution, a vendor will develop a quality product that integrates data and processes across multiple HR functions, and which may integrate with other organizational software. This approach often means that the integrated solution may not provide the "best" or "optimal" solution in each functional area, but instead its value is derived from its ability to share data across functional areas, improving ease of use and the ability to draw on a broader set of data when making employee-related decisions.

TABLE 1.1 ■ Vendor Landscape			
Integrated Solutions			
Large	Mid-Size	Small	HR Function
Workday Oracle SAP SAP SuccessFactors PeopleSoft	Workday UKG Pro Ceridian Dayforce ADP Workforce Now SAP SuccessFactors	ADP Workforce Now Isolved Ceridian Dayforce UKG Pro BambooHR	Integrated
Best of Breed Solutions			
ADP Run Paychex Flex Gusto Paylocity Rippling	Payroll	SmartRecruiters Greenhouse HireRight	Recruitment
Kronos Central ADP eTime TCP TimeClock+ WhenIWork	Time & Attendance	ADP Health and Welfare Alight bswift	Benefits Administration
Lattice Paycor Talent Development	Performance Management	Microsoft PowerBI WorkdayPrism Analytics SAP Business Objects ADP DataCloud IBM Cognos	Analytics

In addition to a best of breed or integrated solution approach, vendors have also developed product offerings to meet the needs of different market segments (e.g., small, medium, and large). Table 1.1 provides a list of some of the most popular vendor offerings as of 2022. It is important to note that this table should be viewed as illustrative of the software offerings available rather than a recommendation for specific software. In addition, it is important to note that many vendors will offer companies the option of adopting the same software using either a best of breed or an integrated solution. For these reasons, before selecting a product each organization should conduct an analysis of vendors to determine the product(s) which are most appropriate for their needs. More on how to conduct this analysis is found in Chapter 4.

## PROCESSES

**Processes** include the HRM activities required to support an organization's people and the organizational systems that guide this work. Processes reflect how things are accomplished. As organizations face changes in their environment and create innovative solutions, including adopting new information systems capabilities, these processes can and do change.

The implementation of a new or upgraded HRIS is an opportunity to update and improve their processes. Better processes effectively increase the rate of conversion of time and other resources into outcomes. Better processes effectively increase the multiplier for converting inputs into organizational important outcomes—to get more done with less, or to work smarter, not harder.

Through the decades, the capabilities of an HRIS have fundamentally altered how HR tasks are completed. For instance, rather than completing change of address forms and turning them into the HR department, employees typically will use a web-based self-service portal, phone app, or secure employee kiosk to update this information. Employee self-service (ESS) fundamentally alters how employees interact with HR and is an important process innovation improving HR efficiency (Walker, 2001). A large financial-services organization found that ESS reduced the time to complete benefits open enrollment by reducing the paper documents generated, mailings sent out, and the data that had to be manually entered into the HRIS. Data entry time alone was reduced from six to two weeks (Bedell, 2003).

The most effective organizations don't simply utilize technology in the support of human resources but instead see technology as enabling HRM processes to be done differently by modifying "information flows, social interaction patterns, and communication processes" (Stone & Lukaszewski, 2009, p. 136), to optimally connect "employees, applicants, managers, and the decisions they make" (Johnson et al., 2016, p. 536). A sample of HR processes transformed by technology are found in Table 1.2.

**TABLE 1.2 ■ Sample Technology Enabled HR Processes**

HR Function	Sample Technology Enabled HR Processes
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Online Applications</li> <li>● Chatbot supported application submission</li> <li>● AI-enabled online targeted advertising</li> </ul>
Selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Online Selection Tests</li> <li>● One-way video interviews</li> <li>● Artificial Intelligence supported interview assessment</li> </ul>
Training & Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● E-learning and online training</li> <li>● Virtual Tutors</li> <li>● Automatic assignment and tracking of employee learning</li> </ul>
Performance Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pre-filled performance appraisal forms</li> <li>● Digital Employee performance monitoring</li> </ul>
Compensation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Digital recommendations for distributing bonuses to ensure fairness.</li> <li>● Integration of internal and external salary information</li> <li>● Automation of compensation planning</li> </ul>

*(Continued)*

**TABLE 1.2** ■ Sample Technology Enabled HR Processes (Continued)

HR Function	Sample Technology Enabled HR Processes
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online benefits enrollment</li> <li>• Retirement planning analysis and planning</li> </ul>
Succession Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated systems can capture data from multiple systems, generate development plans and help managers identify key roles and employees in those roles</li> </ul>
HR Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AI enabled generation of job descriptions and job ads</li> </ul>
HR Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Automatic collection of data and submission of required governmental reporting</li> </ul>

**Data** refers to any attribute of people and organizations and the work they do that can be represented digitally and can be stored in an information system. These “facts” could include attributes such as employee ID, address, job title, hire date, dependents (e.g., children, significant other), skills, certifications, attendance (each time an employee clocks in and clocks out), daily performance rates, performance appraisal ratings, etc. In addition, an organization may store data about jobs, such as positions descriptions, job specifications, organizational structure, compensation bands, and other legally required data.

Although the data typically stored in an HRIS have historically been in the form of text and numbers, organizations are increasingly interested in other forms of data including pictures, audio recordings, and video. For example, organizations are utilizing one video interview and need to store the videos for managers or AI tools to analyze later. Organizations are also interested in processing unstructured data such as online interview transcripts, social media content, or employee chats with conversational agents (e.g., chatbots). Due to the volume of data and the nature of the interactions contained within them, these data often contain unique insights that may not easily be acquired through other methods.

Although relational databases were traditionally employed to support HR data, the growth in unstructured HR data brings with it a need to consider new forms of databases that support these new data.

The ultimate goal of collecting and storing HR data is to better manage the organization’s human capital, to improve employee related decision making, and help to achieve strategic organizational goals. More on the use of HR data to support decision making is found in Chapter 11.

## TECHNOLOGY—THE HRIS ARCHITECTURE

**Technology** is the hardware, software, and networking capabilities that create the architecture on which and through which the HRIS supports an organization’s people processes. Before delving more deeply into the technology in an HRIS, it is important to note that an information system does not have to include computers. Many small businesses (and sometimes even larger ones!!) *still* utilize paper-based systems (e.g., stored in files or folders), because historically, the

expense of implementing a HRIS was beyond their financial capabilities. Thus, if you work for a small organization, you may find that much of the information in HR is paper based or stored on spreadsheets. However, the expense and time associated with managing paper-based documentation has resulted in most organizations investing in HRIS technology to support HR. As organizations choose to implement a HRIS, the paper-based systems become the basis upon which the new HRIS is evaluated.

When an organization adopts an HRIS, there are multiple devices that can be used to access the HRIS. Depending on the job needs or location of the job, employees can access or send data to the HRIS through many different types of hardware such as computers, laptops, tablets, kiosks, smart badges, smartphones, and wearable devices. Several examples can illustrate this. An HR specialist would likely use a laptop or desktop computer to complete employee onboarding. An employee at a steel factory might use a kiosk to clock in at the beginning of her shift or a smart badge could automatically be scanned when she arrived. Finally, an applicant could apply on their smartphone.

In the early days of using technology to support human resources, organizations used large mainframe computers, primarily built by IBM, to manage HR data. These large systems typically only hosted payroll and employee recordkeeping. Users of these systems were mostly IT personnel and HRMS administrators who executed large batch processes while directly logged onto the mainframe. During the 1980s, it was discovered that many typical HR functions (such as employee benefits, recruiting, training) did not require such high-powered and expensive mainframe processing. This IT architecture is typically referred to as a **single-tier architecture**.

With the advent of the personal computer (PC), many of these functions could be reallocated to the PC. Thus, the HR architecture and its management started to become more complex, with some processing occurring on the mainframe and some on the PC. This **client-server (two-tier) architecture** spreads out the low-powered processing capability of the PC and the high-powered mainframe processing capability so that the high-performance applications such as payroll would still be run in a batch process on the mainframe (or large Unix server), but more simple recordkeeping (such as time and attendance) could be accomplished on the PC. By the early 1990s, vendors such as PeopleSoft and Kronos began using the power of PCs to create applications that HR departments could use on the PC while maintaining the power of the mainframe for their high-volume processing needs.

## Cloud Computing

In the last decade, a new architectural model has become prevalent: cloud computing. **Cloud computing** can be defined as a computing architecture that uses the Internet and central remote servers to maintain data and applications. Three general service categories commonly recognized in cloud computing. These include:

- **Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS)**—This type of service provides on demand access to computing power, storage, networking, operating system, or a cluster of connected systems that are managed by external vendors. Companies such as Alibaba, Amazon, Google, and Microsoft offer IaaS tools. Amazon Web Services (AWS) is a well-known example.

- **Platform as a Service (PaaS)**—This type of service provides the tools to help organizations develop, run, and manage custom applications. As with IaaS, companies such as Microsoft, Amazon, Google, and IBM offer these tools. Microsoft Azure is an example of PaaS.
- **Software as a Service (SaaS)**—With SaaS, vendors provide a complete business software application over the Internet. This can be as simple as an e-mail service (think Google Mail) or as complex as the entire HRIS application (e.g., Workday or SAP-Cloud). Rather than owning the software, companies will rent access to the software.

The underlying goal with cloud computing is to reduce the resources an organization needs to maintain and run software. To achieve this, a server “cloud” (e.g., group of computers) is operated off site and accessed through the Internet. In this way, a company can utilize the processing and storage powers of these “clouds” of computers without actually having to own and maintain them. This can reduce software and equipment capital outlays because the company does not need to keep purchasing new software or hardware to keep pace with technology changes. That investment becomes the responsibility of the vendor offering the cloud computing services.

Cloud computing can be sold on demand, by the minute or the hour, and is elastic—meaning that an enterprise can consume as much or as little of a service as it wants at any given time. From an accounting perspective, an enterprise leases a preset amount of computing power over an annual period. This can be budgeted in a similar manner as telephony or electrical expenses. Computing charges then become part of operational budget expense as opposed to large capital investments.

In a sense, cloud computing is a return to the single-tier model of the 1980s. Instead of a single, large mainframe running all the applications, the Internet is acting as the “supercomputer,” providing the application runtime environment. And instead of a “dumb” terminal accessing the mainframe payroll system, the browser now provides the interface to the entire set of human resources applications. In the ancient history of mainframe applications, HR departments had to rely upon corporate data centers to provide high-performing and up-to-date applications. With cloud computing, the burden lies with software vendors such as Oracle, SAP, or Workday to provide the updating. And of course, leveraging the cloud requires solid, high-performance consistent Internet access.

### On-Premise Computing Versus Cloud Computing

Although cloud computing has many benefits, some key differences exist with respect to cloud computing compared to traditional software architectures discussed above. Traditionally, organizations used an on-premise approach to deliver software. With an **on-premise** approach, the purchasing organization (not the vendor) owns the hardware supporting the HRIS and purchases specific licenses for the software. Data for their organization are the only data stored on that instance of the software. That is, the software is **single tenant**, and the servers are likely located in-house. Typically, on-premise solutions have a large capital outlay up front when the

hardware and software are purchased, as well as ongoing maintenance costs during the life of the system. Given that most software will almost never meet all the organization's needs and given that the firms own the license for the software, many organizations choose to customize their on-premise solutions. **Customization** refers to enhancing the HRIS with updated software code that is tailored to meet the organization's specific business processes. This code could be separate from the HRIS application or built on top of the platform. Customization is possible because the company owns the software and because only its data are stored in their instance of the software.

Conversely, as noted above, with cloud-based HRIS, the organization will pay an ongoing fee annually to access and use the software. In addition, because the hardware and software are owned by the vendor, multiple organizations share the same instance of the software. That is, cloud computing is **multi-tenant**, with data from multiple organizations shared on the same instance of the software. Therefore, with cloud computing, organizations cannot customize the software to fully meet their needs. However, they can configure the software to more fully represent their unique environment. **Configuration** can be defined as modifying the HRIS application by turning off or on certain features prebuilt into the software or changing the look and feel of the interface to represent the organization. A simple analogy would be selecting predefined themes or styles in a word-processing document.

## Security

Security ranks as a top priority for any human resource information system. HRIS are an attractive target for hackers because a lot of the data stored in these systems (such as name, birthdate, social security number, address, and phone number) are data that hackers need to commit fraud. For this reason, HRIS providers, especially cloud service providers focus heavily on security. Despite this focus, hackers are attacking and disabling HRIS. For example, in 2021, a ransomware attack on UKG affected over 2000 organizations (Maurer, 2021), and in 2023, hackers stole employee data from the BBC and British Airways (Faragher, 2023). Thus, when choosing an HRIS, security needs to be addressed to handle (at minimum) the following situations:

- Exposure of sensitive payroll and benefits data between employees
- Loss of sensitive personnel data outside the enterprise (such as Social Security numbers)
- Unauthorized updates of key data such as salary amounts, stock options (both quantity and dates), etc.
- Sharing of personnel or applicant review comments with unauthorized employees
- Sharing data with external organizations and service providers

Security for the HRIS is so important that there is an entire chapter that covers this topic in detail (Chapter 12).

## THE VALUE AND RISKS OF HRIS

There are many ways in which an HRIS can add value to HR. First, at the transactional level, these systems can automate HR processes to conduct transactional activities more efficiently. Second, by providing accurate and timely information to the HR personnel and managers, an HRIS can help them make better decisions. Finally, by providing new forms of information, HRIS can help HR more fully support the strategic mission of the firm. For example, HR can provide better information used to support planning for needed employees in a merger, to identify potential discrimination problems in hiring, or to evaluate the effectiveness of programs, policies, or practices (Dulebohn & Johnson, 2013). However, there are several risks that can arise with the use of an HRIS. The potential benefits and risks associated with an HRIS are summarized in Table 1.3.

**TABLE 1.3 ■ Benefits and Risks of eHRM**

Benefit	Risk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased Efficiency               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reduction in salary planning cycle by over 50% (Gherson &amp; Jackson, 2001)</li> <li>○ Reduction in HR headcount (Gueutal &amp; Falbe, 2005)</li> <li>○ Reduction in recruiting cycle time (up to 25%) (Cober et al., 2000);</li> <li>○ Reduction of recruitment costs (up to 95% (Cober et al., 2000)</li> <li>○ Training cost reductions (40% - 60%) (Gill, 2000).</li> <li>○ Reduced Compensation Planning costs and time (Brink &amp; McDonnell, 2003).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Management by computer and substitution of technology for human judgment               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Managers may begin to base performance evaluations exclusively on the data captured by the HRIS.</li> <li>○ Soft-skill behaviors such as teamwork and customer service may not be fully considered by managers.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Privacy concerns               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Employees and applicants may feel that their data are being accessed and used by those internal and external to the organization.</li> <li>○ Inaccurate negative data may stigmatize employees</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Can provide a comprehensive information picture across all of HRM (Lengnick-Hall &amp; Lengnick-Hall, 2006)</li> <li>● Improved HR operations and management processes</li> <li>● Improved timeliness and quality of decision making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● System rigidity and lack of flexibility               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Standardization of HR processes can benefit the organization, but some systems may not allow for the inevitable exceptions that arise and as the HR legal environment changes.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Streamlined HR administration</li> <li>● Improved employee satisfaction by delivering HR services more quickly and accurately</li> <li>● More objective decisions and reduced bias</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Employee stress and resistance to the use of electronic performance monitoring.</li> <li>● Performance reduction in complex tasks when performance monitoring systems are used.</li> <li>● Reinforcing existing human biases</li> </ul>

As shown in Table 1.3, HRIS can bring dramatic cost and time savings to firms. It also has the potential to improve decision-making and employee satisfaction with HR and HR processes. However, these benefits are not universal. The vast amount of data collected on employees brings with it privacy and security concerns. In addition, the more that systems embed intelligence capabilities, the more rigid they can become and the more that managers may rely on them for performance assessments rather than taking a more holistic approach to performance evaluations (Zuboff, 1989).

However, it is important to understand that technology alone will not improve HR outcomes. The ability of firms to harness the potential of HRIS depends on a variety of factors, such as

- the size of the organization, with large firms generally reaping greater benefits;
- the amount of top management support and commitment;
- the availability of resources (time, money, and personnel);
- the HR philosophy of the company as well as its vision, organizational culture, structure, and systems;
- managerial competence in cross-functional decision making, employee involvement, and coaching;
- the ability and motivation of employees in adopting change, such as increased automation across and between functions (Ngai & Wat, 2004).

It is important to note that the listed benefits and risks are representative of currently available HRIS. However, with new innovations such as AI emerging, opportunities to enhance the structure and functionality of HRIS will occur, and organizations will need to address new potential benefits and risks. In this next section, we trace the history of contemporary HRIS through the field's key evolutionary moments.

## EVOLUTION OF HRM AND HRIS

To fully understand the current state of HR technology and its role in organizations, it is important to understand both the evolution of HR and the evolution of technologies supporting HR. Without understanding the developments in IT and its influence on HRM, it is impossible to fully understand the evolution of HRM. This historical analysis will show how the role of HRM in the firm has changed over time from primarily being concerned with routine transactional activities and the utilization of simple, inflexible systems to a function that supports more strategic activities through the use of flexible, mobile, and web-deployed systems. This evolution is illustrated in Figure 1.3 which summarized the historical evolution of HRM and HRIS across seven broad phases.

**FIGURE 1.3** ■ Historical Evolution of HRM and HRIS

Early Systems Mid-20th Century	Emerging Systems 21st Century
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>HR Role</i></p> <p>Employee Advocate Maintain Accurate Employee Records Legal Compliance React to Organizational Change Internal Focus: Serve Employees</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>HR Role</i></p> <p>Strategic Management Partner Evidence-Based HR HR Data Supports Strategic Decision Making External Focus: Serve “Customers” Legal Compliance</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>System Characteristics</i></p> <p>Inflexible “Islands of Technology” Batch Processing Focused on Employee Record Keeping</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>System Characteristics</i></p> <p>Flexible Mobile Web-Deployed Integrated With Organizational System Real-Time Processing Focused on Information Sharing</p>

### Pre-World War II

Prior to World War II, the personnel function (the precursor of human resources management) was primarily involved in clerical record keeping of employee information. During this period, the prevailing management philosophy was called **scientific management**. The central thrust of scientific management was to maximize employee productivity. It was thought that there was *one best way* to do any work, and this best way was determined through time-and-motion studies that investigated the most efficient use of human capabilities in the production process. Work was divided into pieces, and the number of tasks to be completed by a worker during an average workday could be computed. These findings formed the basis of piece-rate pay systems, which were viewed as the most efficient way to motivate employees at that time.

At this point in history, there was limited government influence in employment relations; consequently, employment terms, practices, and conditions were left to the owners of the firm. As a result, abuses such as child labor and unsafe working conditions were common. Some employers set up labor welfare and administration departments to look after the interests of workers by maintaining records on health and safety as well as recording hours worked and payroll. Of course, at this time, paper records were kept, and we can still see paper-based HR systems in smaller firms today.

## Post–World War II (1945–1960)

The mobilization and utilization of labor during the war had a great impact on the development of the personnel function. Managers realized that employee productivity and motivation had a significant impact on the profitability of the firm. The human relations movement after the war emphasized that employees were motivated not just by money but also by social and psychological factors, such as receiving recognition for work accomplished or for the achievement of work goals.

Due to the need for the classification of large numbers of individuals in military service during the war, systematic efforts began to classify workers around occupational categories to improve recruitment and selection procedures. Significant numbers of employment laws enacted in the United States allowed the establishment of labor unions and defined their scope in relationship with management. Thus, personnel departments had to assume considerably more recordkeeping capabilities to meet reporting requirements of governmental agencies, as well as establishing specialized divisions, such as recruitment, labor relations, training and benefits, and government relations.

During this era, the typical personnel department also started keeping increasing numbers and types of employee records, and computer technology began to emerge as a possible way to store and retrieve employee information. For example, the U.S. Air Force conducted a thorough and systematic **job analysis** to better understand, plan, and use employee skills.

Recordkeeping was often still done manually in all but the largest organizations, despite the growing use of computerized data processing in other departments, such as accounts and materials management. However, in the 1960s, more firms began investing in technology to automate payroll processing, and payroll outsourcers such as ADP were founded and used mainframe computers to support payroll processing.

## Social Issues Era (1963 to 1980)

During this period, personnel departments were beginning to be called human resources and the field of human resource management was born. This period also witnessed an unprecedented increase in the amount of labor legislation in the United States. This legislation governed various parts of the employment relationship, such as the prohibition of discriminatory practices, the promotion of occupational health and safety, the provision of retirement benefits, and tax regulation. As a result, HR was burdened with the additional responsibility of legislative compliance that required collection, analysis, and reporting of voluminous data to statutory authorities. For example, to demonstrate that there was no unfair discrimination in employment practices, a personnel department had to diligently collect, analyze, and store data pertaining to *all* employment functions and ensure these data were comprehensive, accurate, and up to date. HRM practices were starting to affect the “bottom line” of firms, so there was a significant growth of HR departments as well as a need for those departments to automate data collection, analysis, and report-generation processes.

Additionally, computer technology had advanced to the point that it could deliver better productivity at lower costs, and more and more organizations were adopting HRIS. As a result,

there was an increasing demand for HR to adopt computer technology to process employee information more effectively and efficiently. In addition, early forms of integrated systems (the precursor to the modern **enterprise resource planning (ERP) software**) were being developed by SAP. Interestingly though, HR was still slow in adopting computer technology.

### Cost-Effectiveness Era (1980 to the Early 1990s)

With increasing competition from emerging European and Asian economies, organizations increased their focus on cost reduction through automation. In HR, automation was pursued to improve effectiveness and efficiency in service delivery.

In addition, there was a growing realization within management that people costs were a very significant part of a company's budget. Some companies estimated that personnel costs were as much as 80% of their operating costs. As a result, there was a growing demand on the HRM function to cost justify their employee programs and services. But the challenge facing HR was that most HR leaders were not thinking like business managers (Fitz-enz, 1980).

During this era, IT was becoming more cost effective, and an increasing number of organizations were adopting the personal computer. This tool provided managers with the ability to have HR data available on their desktop. An early leader in this space was PeopleSoft, which developed one of the first and most popular HRISs during this time. However, organizations were still not leveraging HRIS to help managers make more strategic decisions. Instead, they often viewed the implementation of an HRIS as an opportunity to reduce headcount.

### ERPs and Strategic HRM (1990 to 2010)

The economic landscape underwent radical changes throughout the 1990s with increasing globalization, technological breakthroughs (particularly Internet-enabled Web services), and hyper competition. **Business process reengineering** became more common and frequent, resulting in redesigned business processes, tighter integration of organizational data, downsizing, reducing layers of management and bureaucracy, and outsourcing. Firms began to realize that HR and the intellectual capital of employees held the key to sustained competitive advantage and improved organizational performance, because, unlike other resources, intellectual capital is difficult for competitors to imitate (Becker & Huselid, 2006).

Accordingly, the HR function became strategic and was geared to attract, retain, and engage talent. These developments led to the creation of the **HR balanced scorecard** (Becker et al., 2001; Huselid et al., 2005), as well as to added emphasis on the **return on investment (ROI)** of the HR function and its programs (Cascio, 2000; Fitz-enz, 2000, 2002). With the growing importance and recognition of people and people management in contemporary organizations, **strategic human resource management (strategic HRM)** became critically important in management thinking and practice. Organizations became more aware that there was not one best way to strategically deploy HR resources, but instead, success depended upon “the fit between the HR architecture and the strategic capabilities and business processes that implement strategy” (Becker & Huselid, 2006, p. 899). To support the strategic deployment of HR resources, organizations began to focus on measuring the effectiveness and contribution of HR programs

using **HR metrics** (Cascio, 2000; Lawler & Mohrman, 2003). These metrics have only grown in importance as organizations seek to better understand how their people practices help them compete globally.

During this time frame, the technology supporting HR also underwent a dramatic transformation. In the late 1990s, software vendors began developing ERP systems. Industry leaders in this area were PeopleSoft, SAP, and Oracle. Other vendors focused on one specific HR function (such as time and attendance, online recruiting, or payroll). This approach, where the organization would purchase the best system for each functional area, became known as best of breed. Some industry leaders who chose this approach were Kronos for time and attendance, ADP for payroll, and Taleo for online recruiting.

### **“The Cloud” and Mobile Technologies (2010 to 2020)**

Within the last few years, we have seen an additional shift in HR, and much of this has been technology and regulation dependent. In 2010, the **Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act** was passed, and with it, a host of new healthcare regulations were placed on organizations. In addition, several new data requirements were needed by organizations to ensure compliance with this act. Thus, the data needs for organizations continue to grow.

In addition, the technology supporting HR continues to evolve. Rather than the traditional ERP, organizations are increasingly moving to cloud-based HR systems that are accessible over mobile devices and leverage the capabilities of machine learning, social networking, and Web 2.0 tools. This creates new hurdles for HR professionals as they learn to navigate new technologies and the distribution of data across devices and architectures, some of which are internally controlled by HR and others outside of organizational control (e.g., X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, etc.).

### **Artificial Intelligence and Big Data (2020 to the present)**

The current decade started with the COVID-19 pandemic which fundamentally altered how business was conducted. From stay-at-home orders to dramatic shifts in work and education to shifting workforce staffing levels, HR had to manage swift and adaptive responses to ensure the well-being of employees and the continuity of business operations. They established and implemented remote work policies, facilitated the overnight transition to virtual collaboration tools, and had to help employees manage a myriad of concerns that the pandemic created. After the worst of the pandemic passed, HR had to facilitate safe return to work policies and help organizations manage the “great resignation,” where organizations faced an inordinate amount of turnover.

Although organizations were already using these tools, recently, big data, analytics, and artificial intelligence have come together with the potential to both fundamentally alter HR processes and to provide more insights about employees. However, organizations have yet to fully embrace these tools, with adoption rates in 2022 of approximately 25% (SHRM, 2022). However, in the next 5 years, both traditional AI tools and newer generative AI tools such as ChatGPT, Claude, and PaLM promise to transform how HR content and communication are created and managed. Thus, most organizations are looking carefully at how to deploy and

manage AI-enabled HR tools. In addition, software vendors are offering products to organizations which provide intelligent capabilities that stand on top of core organizational HRIS.

Ultimately, as we will see in the ensuing chapters, although technology is a key enabler of Strategic HRM, it is not simply the “best” technology and “best” strategy that leads to competitive advantage but rather the fit between the environmental realities, technology, and strategic practices that lead to competitive advantage.

## THEMES OF THE BOOK

The *overall theme* of this book is that HR and IT operate jointly with HR processes and people to provide accurate and timely information in support of transactional, traditional, and transformational HR activities. The book itself is broken into four major themes, each with a different focus.

- Part I—Human Resource Information Systems: In this section, you will learn about the key characteristics of the HRIS, including the components of an HRIS, its architecture, the history of its coevolution with HRM, issues in its strategic deployment, and issues associated with deploying HRIS technologies internationally.
- Part II—Managing HRIS Implementations. In this section, you will learn about how to prepare an organization for the introduction of a new or upgraded HRIS and how to walk them through its implementation. Topics of focus in this section include change management, needs analysis, systems modeling, assessing the feasibility of a HRIS, and how to implement one.
- Part III—HRIS Applications. In this section, you will learn about how technology has transformed the administration of HR and the various functions of HR such as talent management, recruitment, selection, training, performance management, compensation, and benefits.
- Part IV—Advanced HRIS Applications and Future Trends. In this section, you will learn about advanced topics such as workforce analytics, privacy and security, social media, and artificial intelligence. It concludes with a look to the future of HRIS and the cutting-edge technologies that will influence it.

## SUMMARY

The primary purpose of this chapter was to introduce the field of human resource information systems (HRIS) to readers. The field of HRIS has evolved from automating simple HR transactions, such as cutting payroll checks, to raising HR to become a strategic partner with the organization. HRISs have become large-scale, integrated, mobile systems that extend the reach and capabilities of managers of an organization’s human capital. This chapter provides a foundation from which you can understand, lead, and leverage HRIS functionality today and in the future. Additionally, the role of HRIS within the broader organization and environment and

its mutually influencing role were discussed. Finally, the chapter briefly discussed four major themes covered within the book. This chapter therefore serves as an introduction to the field of HRIS and serves as a foundation for the sections and chapters that follow.

## KEY TERMS

best of breed	Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act
business process reengineering	people
client-server (two-tier) architecture	platform as a service (PaaS)
cloud computing	processes
configuration	return on investment (ROI)
customization	scientific management
data	single tenant
enterprise resource planning (ERP) software	single-tier architecture
HR balanced scorecard	software as a service (SaaS)
HR metrics	strategic human resource management (strategic HRM)
human resource information system (HRIS)	technology
human resource management (HRM)	traditional HR activities
infrastructure as a service (IaaS)	transactional HR activities
job analysis	transformational HR activities
multi-tenant	
on-premise	

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Describe the differences between transactional, traditional, and transformational HR activities? When might an organization choose to focus on each of these activities?
2. Describe the four components of an HRIS and how they work together to create a functioning system.
3. Describe two HRM processes that have been enhanced through the strategic use of an HRIS?
4. Which internal and external stakeholders who interact with an HRIS are likely to be the most critical to its ongoing success?
5. In what ways have HRIS contributed to ongoing improvements in HRM processes?
6. Describe different technology architectures available for deploying an HRIS.
7. Contrast the potential sources of value and risk that result from using an HRIS.
8. Discuss the historical evolution of HRM and HRIS, including the changing role of the human resources (HR) professional.

## CASE STUDY: POSITION DESCRIPTION AND SPECIFICATION FOR AN HRIS ADMINISTRATOR

One way to assess the nature and importance of a specific function or position in an organization is to examine the job description and job specifications for this position, as they tell us what activities, duties, and tasks are involved in the job as well as what knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) are required to perform the job. The following is a summary of an actual advertisement for an HRIS administrator that a large medical services provider placed on Indeed.com in early 2024.

### **HRIS Administrator**

**Job Level:** Senior (3+ Years), Full time

**Reports to:** Compensation Manager

Location: Brockton, MA

### **Position Summary**

Vitality Wellness<sup>1</sup> is Southeastern Massachusetts' premier local provider of quality, personalized medical services. We are comprised of the award-winning not-for-profit Vitality Wellness Group, a multi-specialty physician group of more than 150 physicians practicing in 18 ambulatory locations. We believe our distinctive team approach is the way healthcare should be: medical professionals across many locations communicating and collaborating, taking advantage of technologies and resources to make a difference in the lives and health of our patients.

Under the general direction of the Compensation Manager, the HRIS Administrator will support and maintain the Human Resource Information System (HRIS) and other systems supported by the HRIS team. They will be primarily responsible for ensuring the integrity of the entry and maintenance of employee data while adhering to internal controls and identifying potential for process improvement opportunities. The administrator will also analyze and interpret data in order to support the objectives of the Total Rewards/Compensation team.

### **Primary Function**

#### **Responsibilities:**

- Demonstrates respect and regard for the dignity of all patients, families, visitors, and fellow employees to ensure a professional, responsible, and courteous environment
- Commits to recognize and respect cultural diversity for all customers (internal and external)
- The HRIS Administrator will be the functional expert for the organization's HRIS system and will ensure data integrity and accuracy for all HRIS system configurations, transactions, procedures, and report writing
- Responsible for assuring the accurate entry, maintenance, expansion, and ongoing audit of employee data
- Supports Human Resources by researching and resolving HRIS problems, unexpected results or process flaws and performing scheduled activities
- Creates ad hoc reports using a HRIS system, excel, and conducts report analysis
- Assists in the annual common review merit process. Assists in administering merit program communications for management, as well as assisting in educating managers on program details and use of merit database.

<sup>1</sup>The name of the actual company has been replaced with a pseudonym.

- Assists in the review, testing, and implementation of system upgrades
- Supports the development, implementation, and maintenance of HRIS related policies and procedures to obtain, record, and process employee information
- Continuously increases knowledge of basic HR fundamentals and HRIS application/ tools through classes, readings, or other mechanisms
- Ensures smooth process flow within HR by working closely with various departments including: the Compensation Manager, CHRO, Finance, Legal/Compliance, and IT
- Assists in planning and conducting end to end analysis including data gathering and validation
- Assists in the administration of fixed and variable pay programs
- Assists in the development of communication and/or training materials, including user guides
- Extracts relevant data from both internal and external information systems to support compensation analysis
- May assist with the auditing of salary activity for accuracy including input of organizational or hospital-wide rate changes, market range adjustments, annual review adjustments, promotions, and wage changes as per Union contracts

**Required Knowledge, Skills, Aptitude and Experience**

- Ability to solve practical problems and deal with a variety of variables in situations where only limited standardization may exist
- Accuracy and attention to detail
- Ability to interpret a variety of instructions furnished in written, oral, diagram, or schedule form
- Ability to perform difficult work on highly complex or involved projects requiring significant judgment, initiative, creativity and the ability to deal with complex factors and making of decisions based on conclusions for which there is little precedent
- Team-working skills
- Strong interest in HRIS with the ability to produce reports that are accurate, complete, and prepared on schedule
- Ability to support Total Rewards in a variety of functional areas, processes, and data
- Ability to understand, interpret, and summarize large amounts of data in order to identify patterns and create insight
- Proven working experience in Comp/HRIS analysis

**Education/Experience/Licenses/Technical/Other:**

- Education: Bachelor's degree in business, IT, HR, or related area
- Experience: A minimum of 3 years HRIS experience required
- Software/Hardware Skills: Advanced Microsoft Excel skills, HRIS systems (UKG and/or Meditech experience are a plus), and timekeeping system
- Other: Working knowledge of current applicable legislation and in-depth knowledge of FLSA and other applicable state and federal regulations. Prior experience working with an online human resources information system required. Familiarity with spreadsheets, word processing, and presentation software required.

### Case Study Questions

1. How might this position help the HR function become a strategic partner of the organization?
2. From the position description, identify the traditional, transactional, and transformational HR activities that fall within the responsibilities of this position.

3. Using the key responsibilities identified for this position, explain with which key stakeholders in the organization the HRIS administrator would work with and the different data needs that each may have.
4. Of the required knowledge, skills, aptitudes, and experiences, which do you think might be most critical for success in this position? Why?
5. Are there any additional attributes or experiences that you think might be important for success in this position that are not listed?

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