



The state of HR bandwidth

Where hidden HR work starts—and how to reduce it





An approval is still waiting for a manager. An employee needs information that isn't easy to find. The same employee information needs to be updated in more than one place. A report has to be pulled together manually before a meeting.

Hidden HR work is easy to overlook because it happens in small increments throughout the day. But together, those extra steps can take up a significant part of the week and reduce HR's capacity to support the wider organization.

Often unnoticed, hidden HR tasks accumulate in small increments throughout the day. But together these extra steps can take up a significant part of the week and limit HR's ability to support the wider organization.

This is the work behind the work: follow-up, repeated questions, duplicate updates and manual steps around everyday HR processes.

Reducing hidden work means removing unnecessary friction from everyday HR processes. Targeted automation, connected information and self-service can reduce routine manual effort and give your team more capacity for broader workforce priorities.

Six places hidden HR work begins

Hidden work isn't limited to one responsibility or one stage of the employee lifecycle. It can appear anywhere information needs to move, approvals need to happen or HR involvement is required to keep a process moving. These are six common places where hidden work begins.

1

Approval chasing



Today

Requests move between employees, managers and HR, with approvals sometimes sitting until someone follows up.



Hidden work

Checking status, sending reminders and figuring out who needs to act next.



Better

Guided workflows, automated notifications and clear ownership keep requests moving and make the next step visible.



HR gets back

More time for work beyond tracking requests and approvals.

2

Routine information requests



Today

Employees turn to HR for answers about policies, benefits, time off and other routine topics.



Hidden work

Answering the same questions repeatedly and directing employees to information they cannot easily find.



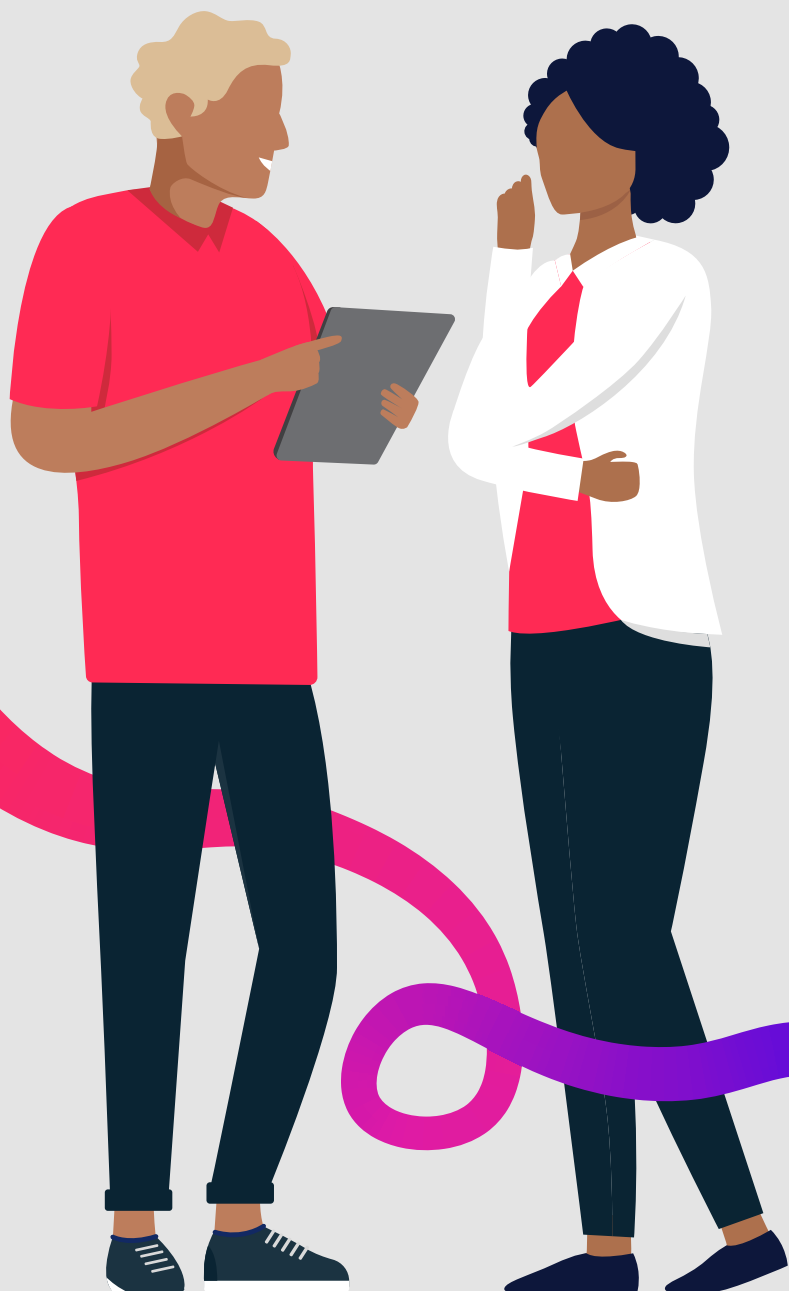
Better

Employee self-service gives people one place to find information, update details and complete routine HR tasks quickly and easily.



HR gets back

More uninterrupted focus during the day.



3 Duplicate data entry



Today

Employee information has to be entered or updated across multiple systems, spreadsheets or records.



Hidden work

Repeating updates, checking that records match and correcting inconsistencies.



Better

Connected employee records keep information consistent across HR processes, reducing repeat updates and retyping.



HR gets back

More confidence in the accuracy of employee records.

4 Compliance follow-up



Today

HR tracks deadlines, required actions and missing documentation across employees and managers.



Hidden work

Checking completion, sending reminders and chasing records as deadlines approach.



Better

Built-in tracking, reminders and reporting make outstanding requirements easier to spot and address earlier.



HR gets back

More breathing room ahead of deadlines.

5 Manual reporting



Today

HR pulls information from different sources and assembles it before leaders can use it.



Hidden work

Finding data, combining files and checking figures before each report is ready.



Better

Centralized workforce data and dashboards make information easier to access, review and report without manually combining multiple sources.



HR gets back

Faster access to workforce information.

6 Manager process support



Today

Managers often need to turn to HR for information, process guidance or visibility into next steps.



Hidden work

Answering routine questions, providing status updates and helping managers navigate processes that could be more straightforward.



Better

Manager self-service, role-based access and guided workflows put the right information and actions within easy reach.



HR gets back

More time for higher-value support, while managers can keep everyday people processes moving.

Each of these examples creates a little more work for HR. Across weeks and months, they shape how the department spends its time. Addressing several of these challenges can make a noticeable difference across the organization.



What the organization gets back

When routine HR processes move with less friction, the benefits extend beyond the HR department.

What better HR processes look like

- Less chasing
- Fewer handoffs
- Clearer ownership
- Better access to information
- More self-service

Together, these improvements create more capacity for strategic HR priorities, greater independence for managers and employees, clearer workforce information for leaders, and stronger compliance.

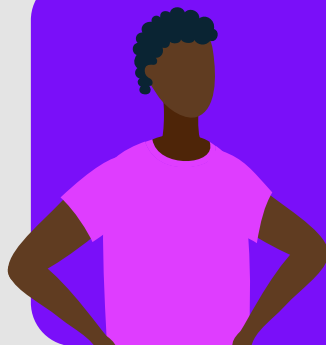
Four HR benefits



More capacity
for strategic HR



Greater manager
and employee
autonomy



Clearer
workforce
visibility



Stronger
compliance
readiness

Purchase criteria

What to look for in HCM technology

The right HCM platform should do more than digitize HR tasks. It should simplify how work gets done —reducing manual steps, connecting information and giving employees and managers direct access to the information and tools they need to keep routine processes moving.

Approval chasing

Look for

Guided workflows

Automated notifications

Visible ownership

Why it matters

Requests are less likely to stall when everyone can see who owns the next step.

Routine information requests

Look for

Employee self-service

Mobile access

Centralized policies and resources

Why it matters

Employees get quicker access to the information and routine support they need, with less waiting and fewer handoffs.

Duplicate data entry

Look for

Connected employee records

Shared information across HR functions

Consistent data

Why it matters

A consistent employee record reduces reconciliation work and gives HR greater confidence in the data.

Compliance follow-up

Look for

Compliance tracking

Automated reminders

Progress visibility

Why it matters

Small gaps are easier to resolve before they create last-minute compliance issues or additional risk.



Manual reporting

Look for

Workforce dashboards

Flexible reporting tools

Centralized workforce data

Why it matters

Planning conversations can begin with readily available workforce information instead of waiting for manually assembled reports.

Manager process support

Look for

Manager self-service

Guided processes

Role-based access

Why it matters

Managers have clearer access to the information and actions they need, allowing HR to focus where its expertise has the greatest impact.

HCM technology works best when information, workflows and self-service are connected. A unified approach helps reduce hidden work across multiple HR processes instead of solving each problem in isolation.



Bringing it together with People First

People First, powered by MHR, brings core HR processes together in one HCM platform, helping reduce manual effort while giving managers and employees the tools and information they need to complete routine tasks with greater independence.

That means less routine administration for HR, easier access and greater autonomy for managers and employees, and more capacity for the work that moves the organization forward.

**Explore how People First can
help reduce hidden HR work.**

people first
powered by MHR





About MHR

MHR has been driving innovation across the HR technology space for over 40 years. We don't just meet the industry standard; we exceed it. Engineered with the latest SaaS technology, our product, People First, enables increased employee productivity and organizational growth with a demonstrable return on investment.

People First is guided by what our customers and the market demand in a rapidly changing world.

info@mhrglobal.com | mhrglobal.com | +1 (470) 890 6170 (US) | +44 (0) 115 945 6000 (UK) | +353 (01) 541 3778 (IRE)



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