

TOP 5 TIPS

TO OPTIMISE YOUR WORKFORCE
MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Introduction

Workforce applications enable organisations of all sizes to gain better visibility into their labour costs and ensure they are getting the most out of their workforce. From scheduling employees, tracking time and labour used, to managing the absence, leave and accruals processes, workforce solutions enables organisations to better achieve business results. This field guide will explore five critical steps to ensure that you get the most out of your investment in workforce solutions.

For most organisations, labour costs represent the single largest controllable expense. For businesses, managing labour costs and resources effectively can be the difference between the business succeeding or failing. Workforce management software enables organisations of all sizes to gain better visibility into their labour costs and ensure they are getting the most out of their workforce. From scheduling employees, tracking time and labour used, to managing the absence, leave and accruals processes, workforce management software enables organisations to better achieve business results.

Businesses that have invested in workforce management solutions have seen many benefits, including:

- ▶ Improved compliance with government and safety regulations across all aspects of the workforce
- ▶ Visibility enabled by a single, unified employee record across the organisation
- ▶ Better employee experience with self-service access to schedules and absence and time information
- ▶ Ensuring employees are properly paid with automated time and attendance based on legislative, company and union policies
- ▶ Reduced administrative overhead and total cost of ownership across all parts of the workforce management cycle
- ▶ Improved business results and employee productivity by ensuring the right talent is deployed for the right job
- ▶ Allowing HR and line-of-business managers to be more efficient and effective by managing exceptions to established workforce policies and processes
- ▶ Better ability to track, manage, and analyse absenteeism according to your organisational policies

TIP #1: AUTOMATE THE LOW HANGING FRUIT

According to a 2009 American Payroll Association study, companies can save up to 2 percent of their gross payroll by using an automated time and attendance system. There are very few other projects that can have such a strong, bottomline impact on the organisation in such a short amount of time.

Automating the time and attendance process eliminates many manual spreadsheets and manual time cards and centralises all the data, work rules and reporting in one place. It has benefits across the entire organisation, reducing the administrative overhead on HR staff, increasing the accuracy of time and labour information, reducing the number of payroll errors that result in overpayments, and improving documentation of labour data - thereby reducing risks of litigation.

Businesses struggling to handle all of the human resource needs can free up valuable time to focus on high-value projects. In addition, with the arrival of cloud computing, companies of any size can limit the costly expansion of their IT staffs needed to support human resource projects

The impact of automating time and attendance can be significant. Some of the largest benefit areas are::

- ↗ Reducing gross payroll expense
- ↗ Reduce / eliminate payroll errors
- ↗ Reducing HR time and headcount required to process time and attendance
- ↗ Reducing risk of labour litigation due to FLSA violations

Key questions to ask and understand when automating time and attendance include:

1. How do you do data collection today, is it manual or automated? As tip two below points out, looking at automated data collection is another valuable part of automating time and attendance. It can increase data accuracy and reduce the workload on the HR team.
2. What "adjacent" needs does your organisation have and would they be good to evaluate automating at the same time (e.g. workforce scheduling or absence and leave management)?

TIP #2: LEVERAGE CLOUD COMPUTING

The single greatest evolution in enterprise software has been the cloud. It has levelled the playing field between businesses who could not previously enter the space because cost, staff and time are no longer limitations.

And cloud computing is here for workforce applications. From the “low hanging fruit” described above in Tip 1, to more advanced applications – such as workforce scheduling. In fact, market-leading vendors offer these applications as one integrated solution – meaning you can ‘turn on’ each component of workforce application in the cloud as you need it, without needing to do integrations or complex setup.

The benefits and impact of leveraging cloud computing can be significant. Some of the key benefits include:

- ✔ Improved business efficiency from automation of workforce processes
- ✔ All the benefits of automation with little to no impact on limited internal IT resources
- ✔ Guaranteed availability and reliability of all applications with a service level agreement
- ✔ Ability to scale applications dynamically, as needed, because they are in the cloud

TIP #3: USE AUTOMATED DATA COLLECTION DEVICES

Today, the price and availability of automated data collection devices is extremely reasonable. Businesses can choose from affordable networked badge readers, biometric, IVR, or other data collection devices. As the “other half” of an automated time and attendance solution, data collection devices provide several additional benefits for companies. **These benefits include:**

- ✔ Improve data collection accuracy for time and labour information. Automated data collection devices ensure accurate and precise time and labour information are entered into the workforce application. They can reduce clock rounding errors, buddy punching and other key areas where organisations commonly make mistakes with manual data collection.
- ✔ Improve access to employee self-service information and tasks. With automated data collection devices – employees can quickly and easily view and print schedule information, accrual information as well as other key employee-level information.

Key questions to understand when using data collection devices include:

1. Where do you need the devices placed and do you need/want more than one type of data collection device?
2. What kinds of employee self-service would you like to offer on the devices (e.g. view or print schedules)?

TIP #4: HAVE A SINGLE EMPLOYEE RECORD

In order to answer critical workforce and business questions, organisations need to have “a single source of the truth” against which reporting and analysis can be executed. This means having a single, centralised employee record that includes not just core employee data (e.g. name, address, SSN), but also includes all the relevant workforce and talent information.

Today this often resides in multiple places within organisations – from HRMS systems, to spreadsheets and other HR related systems. However, once it is centralised into one common record, there are very powerful benefits which companies can accrue. With fewer systems, offices and employees, the project is often simpler to execute. There are fewer integrations and data conversions to complete in order to create a single employee record.

The benefits and impact of having a single employee record can be significant.**Some of the key benefits include:**

- Better understanding of where your best talent lies within your business
- Better understanding of true labour costs for the business
- Better visibility to possible labour litigation issues with consolidated information

TIP #5: USE ANALYTICS FOR INSIGHT INTO KEY WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT METRICS

Ultimately, to make any human resources initiative a success, you need to identify, track and measure the results. This is also true with a workforce application. Doing this is the job of analytics and reporting. And with modern analytics and reporting products, this is a very achievable goal for both large enterprise and small and medium sized businesses.

Succeeding boils down to three steps:

- 1. Define your success metrics:** Understand what your objectives are in implementing a workforce solution - be it reduction in labour costs, reduced litigation, improved coverage, better employee morale or higher productivity. Next, define your near-term and longer-term success thresholds. These are the quantitative values/benchmarks you will use to measure your progress.
- 2. Measure your outcomes:** Look at your starting point and your progress and see if the measurements meet your expectations. This is where analytics is useful - where reporting gives you one number - answering the "what", analytics lets you drill-down to see contributing factors and problem areas to show you the "why". The ultimate goal of measuring outcomes is to get actionable information which you can use to drive improvement.
- 3. Close the loop:** Finally, once you have looked at the analysis and taken initial actions, measure the effects. Organisations are complex systems and determining which actions drive success is a process, which is why having a closed-loop approach is valuable.

Conclusion

To get the most out of your workforce management programs, you need to consider the entire set of workforce management technology available today. Used together these technologies can not only streamline the human resources processes in companies, freeing up valuable staff to do higher-value tasks, but can also reduce labour costs and improve profitability.

As the market leader in workforce solutions, SumTotal can help you address your workforce challenges and make the most of the latest industry innovations.

Why choose us?

1. We offer industry-leading talent, learning, workforce and payroll solutions.
2. We've taken a different approach to product and technology integration. While everyone else is still talking about product integration, it's a reality with us today. And no one in the industry can match our ability to integrate data with other HR systems; other enterprise systems, like CRM and POS; and even popular third party sites like, salesforce.com and LinkedIn.
3. Our workforce management solutions are completely integrated with best-in-class learning and talent solutions.
4. Our professional services teams are committed to your success – before, during and after implementation.
5. We put your people first. We'll help your people be their best.

CONTACT US TODAY

We're ready to partner with you for new workforce solutions. For additional information, send an email to: connect@sumtotalsystems.com

ABOUT SUMTOTAL

SumTotal Systems, LLC, the largest independent provider of integrated human resources (HR) solutions, is increasing the performance of some of the world's most successful organisations, including AstraZeneca (NYSE: AZN[ADR]; London: AZN), Amway (KUL: AMWAY), and Seagate (NYSE: STX). The only HR solution provider to deliver Talent Expansion™, a whole new approach to discovering, developing and unleashing hidden potential within our customers' workforce, SumTotal delivers employee enablement solutions that help organisations become great places to work. SumTotal's people-focused applications, available on premise and in the Cloud, enable contextual, just-in-time development designed to advance employees' skills and knowledge. Today, more than 3,500 organisations, including several of Fortune's "Best Places to Work," rely on SumTotal's on premise and cloud-based Talent Expansion applications to enable and empower their employees. Visit us at www.sumtotalsystems.com.

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