



Excerpts from an interview with **Awie Foong** | Global Lead, HR Analytics Siemens Healthineers

What is HR's role in Changing World of Work?

In recent years we have seen the HRDs evolving into advisory/consulting/analyst/business partnering roles while relinquishing its traditional administrative roles. The driver of change used to be business process outsourcing which is essentially driven by costs efficiency. Going forward, I believe HR technologies, including AI and RPA tools, will be the main driver. We now see HR technologies getting more mature in the area of talent acquisition where tools like CV screening, interview scheduling, chatbots, candidate assessment etc. are making recruiters job more efficient, and that in turns allow the recruiters to focus on critical roles/hiring and foster a stronger partnership with the business. Other key HR functions like learning and development, compensation & benefits have also undergone similar evolution.

With such technological drivers as the backdrop, HR needs to refocus its attention back on the people (incl. employees, contractors), and the value creation by its people. HR shall play a key role (together with business leaders) in defining what values the employees are creating for the business and thereby designing an organization that enables, nurtures, and supports such value creations. Job roles & responsibilities will be significantly redesigned; competency models as well as value-based compensations will also change. Taking as a whole, HR will find itself in a very different world in the changing world of work.

How HR Analytics / People Analytics is adding value to organization, Employees and HR Department?

This is a broad question. Data analytics in general is changing how operations can be run more efficiently, and how business decision-making can become more effective. Many business processes, HR included, can be automated and hence making the process more efficient. A lot of the HR technology tools in the market are indeed providing such solutions to make HR processes more efficient.

In terms of value-add, I will start with the premise that HRD in most, if not all, companies are trying very hard to support the business and

employees to achieve organizational and personal goals. So how can analytics be of help? First and foremost, the key difference between a data-driven and non-data driven approach is having the right information for decision making. The main wave in HR analytics begins more than ten years ago, but even today we still find many organizations are struggling with getting factual information right. Without good data, important decisions about people and people management would have to rely solely on experience and intuition and that is not ideal because decision-making may fail to take into consideration some important facts, or may fall victim to cognitive biases. If an organization can establish a single source of truth with regards to people-related data, then in my opinion that shall be a great leap forward.

Secondly, having the understanding and awareness of what is going on allows HR to probe into problem areas that will bring about changes in the ways of work. HRD needs to understand how HR practices are inter-related and how they are impacting business outcomes. These relationships can be better established with data analysis and statistical modelling. This is where actionable insights lie. For example, correlating employee engagement data to business performance data may help retailers to differentiate high-performing outlets and identify engagement drivers that require more attention from the branch managers. Perhaps data might uncover performance issues of a certain employee segment that HR can then step in to provide supports or interventions to help both the employees and the managers. If HRD and people managers have better understanding of how people management practices or policies are related to work performance and business outcomes, then they are equipped to make better decision for the company.

Thirdly, there is the so-called predictive analytics that hold some promises in helping HR to become a more strategic partner to the business. Making predictions on people-related issues (such as employee engagement, turnover, job performance) is significantly harder than operational issues because human nature is inherently hard to predict. However, HR analytics can still add value in future-oriented strategic topics such as workforce planning and greenfield investments etc. by way of assessing the level of uncertainties and conducting scenario planning.