



DESIGNING WORK THAT WORKS

The playbook for HR, IT and the employee experience



Always Designing
for People®

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Executive summary

The modern workplace has been navigating a wave of disruption in recent years. Hybrid work is now a permanent reality for many companies. Artificial intelligence (AI) and automation are redefining job roles. Security and compliance demands are rising.

And in an uncertain economy, organizations face pressure to increase employee productivity without adding to head count. Those shifts are forcing companies to rethink how work gets done — and which departments are responsible for enabling it.

Amid such forces, HR and information technology (IT) teams are navigating more demanding roles. HR must support a workforce that expects seamless digital experiences, flexible work options and greater transparency. At the same time, IT is under pressure to modernize infrastructure, enable secure hybrid operations and support a rising volume of technology-driven workforce needs with limited resources.

Against this backdrop, a new reality is gaining momentum. HR and IT are increasingly converging. This shift reflects a broader transformation in how organizations enable their workforce: Systems must be integrated, data must be secure and support structures must be built around the employee career journey.

For companies navigating these changes, the focus for both functions must extend beyond operational efficiency. HR and IT must be ready to more closely collaborate, redesign processes and adopt workplace technologies at scale, creating a strategic foundation for how people and systems work together. That is what we call WorkTech.



As technology reshapes work, HR and IT are working more closely to meet rising expectations for seamless, secure and personalized employee experiences across the entire career journey.



What is WorkTech?

WorkTech is the infrastructure for how modern work gets done. It unites the systems, workflows, access and support that employees rely on — from the moment they're hired to the day they offboard.

WorkTech is people-centric by design. It spans both the HR and IT domains to deliver one connected, experience-driven environment, where employees can find the information they need, do their jobs securely and stay productive with minimal internal friction.

1 The tipping point in WorkTech

The workplace is at a turning point when it comes to how organizations think about workforce enablement. Technology is no longer considered a support function; it's the very foundation of how work happens, how people engage and how businesses grow. In such an environment, midmarket organizations face the issue of larger-enterprise complexity but with leaner teams, tighter operational bandwidth and rising employee expectations.

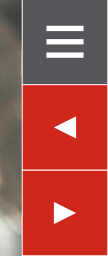
As job roles evolve and automation takes over, repeatable tasks and digital workflows must get rebuilt around new talent models. Such redesign isn't just about efficiency; it's also about ensuring people get connected to the right tools, have access to the right data and make the right decisions throughout their day-to-day work — and their career progression.

The shifts in the environment and the workforce are creating pressure points and, at the same time, new opportunities for HR and IT to collaborate. For HR, expectations for seamless, consumer-centric experiences across the employee career journey are no longer aspirational; they're central to attracting and retaining talent. At the same time, compliance, data governance and AI-related risks are demanding stronger IT management and faster response times.



IT systems and HR experiences are converging into integrated workflows — bringing both teams into tighter operational and strategic alignment to better support employees.

As HR and IT deepen their partnership, they're codeveloping the connective tissue of the modern organization. When both functions are aligned around shared priorities like user experience, speed and security, companies can deploy tools that truly work for people. That's the promise of WorkTech.



Tips: HR and IT enabling WorkTech together



- Involve IT early in workforce experience design, not just technology selection.
- Build technology fluency across HR teams to drive smarter adoption.



- Map technical workflows to employee life-cycle moments — onboarding, mobility, exit.
- Create feedback loops with HR to improve support and reduce friction.



- Develop a holistic journey map that connects all of HR's challenges, key initiatives and goals into a unified vision that can help lay the foundation for successful IT and HR collaboration.
- Define shared key performance indicators (KPIs) for productivity, satisfaction and support responsiveness.



2 Rethinking the role of HR in the age of WorkTech

HR is undergoing a structural transformation. As the workforce becomes more dynamic — driven by hybrid models, automation and rising employee expectations — and as data and automation become mainstays of the modern workplace, traditional approaches to people management are no longer enough.

Static processes, disjointed systems and long-cycle planning cannot keep pace with the fluid needs of modern organizations. Systems of record are transforming into — or being replaced by — systems of intelligent action. By default, HR owns one of the fundamental business data sets: employee records. Practitioners and their technology providers must lean into their role in optimizing employee productivity and experience through automation.

That shift requires a fundamentally new operating model, one that is more personal, more technology-enabled and more embedded in the flow of work. People leaders now need the skills, expertise, language and strategic understanding to cocreate digital workflows with IT, to embrace the power of data with confidence and to deploy digital platforms. In essence, HR must become more technically fluent so it can lead effectively in a data-driven, digital-first work environment.

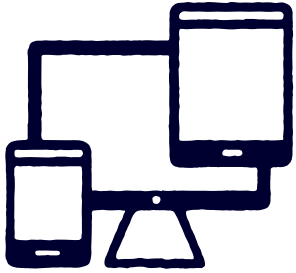
Workforce expectations are fueling this urgency. Employees want experiences that mirror the immediacy and intuitiveness of consumer technology. But delivering those experiences consistently requires tightly integrated systems, accessible data and seamless support, all of which fall outside traditional HR capabilities unless they get redefined through a WorkTech lens.

The transition is making HR a more-adaptive, more-data-literate partner to IT that is capable of shaping the digital infrastructure that underpins everything from productivity to retention. As the lines between people operations and technology blur, HR's ability to lead will depend on how well it can operate across domains: human and technical, strategic and operational.



HR is evolving fast. As systems get smarter and AI becomes standard, technical fluency and automation skills are now critical for today's HR professionals.





Tips: Evolving into a digital leader

- Focus on data literacy and systems thinking to strengthen collaboration with IT.
- Partner with IT to map the full employee journey — onboarding, mobility, learning and exit — through a shared digital lens.
- Shift from static, annual planning cycles to continuous, data-informed adjustments based on workforce trends and performance signals.
- Use automation and AI to deliver consistent, personalized experiences without increasing head count or manual load.
- Ensure every technology investment supports HR's strategic goals, from closing skills gaps to enabling internal mobility.



3 Compliance convergence

Compliance, cybersecurity and data governance have become defining challenges for today's digital workplace — and they now sit at the intersection of HR and IT. As regulatory expectations expand and the workforce becomes more mobile and distributed, organizations must safeguard employee data, manage secure access and ensure policies get applied consistently across every phase of the employee career journey.

Aside from ethical obligations to treat personal information with respect and confidentiality, businesses are also required to comply with regulations governing data collection and storage. Consider what is at risk when security and data practices have gaps: The results are fragmented systems, incomplete offboarding and unclear accountabilities, which expose organizations to serious vulnerabilities.

Against that backdrop, HR teams are becoming increasingly accountable for tasks once managed solely by IT, from ensuring that offboarding includes device recovery and credential deactivation to administering security training and maintaining accurate user permissions. And the responsibilities don't end there.

Although accountability is shifting, many HR professionals are still building the technical fluency needed to effectively apply data and technology in their roles, a gap that can contribute to process disconnects and security risk.

At the same time, IT is under pressure to centralize control without creating bottlenecks. As role-based access becomes a security baseline, systems must align with HR-led processes such as promotions, job changes and exits. At midmarket organizations especially, those changes happen frequently. And without shared ownership between HR and IT, misalignment becomes a risk factor.



The modern workplace must secure compliance tasks more efficiently. Without truly orchestrated automation, process disconnects may lead to tasks slipping through the cracks.

Tips: Securing compliance, together

HR



- Build structured offboarding workflows that include IT coordination from the start.
- Communicate role changes and terminations in real time to avoid access gaps.

IT



- Automate device deprovisioning and credential deactivation at exit.
- Standardize permission updates to reflect role changes and access levels.

Jointly



- Align on a shared checklist for onboarding and offboarding to reduce risks.
- Conduct quarterly audits of user access and policy compliance across systems.



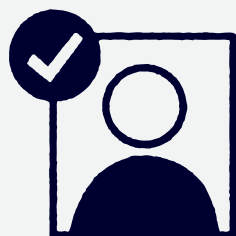
4 The employee experience mandate

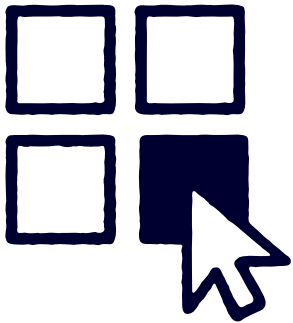
Today's workforce reflects a complex mix of generations, work styles and expectations. Millennials and Generation Z now represent more than half of the U.S. workforce, and they bring with them digital fluency and high standards for seamless technology access, transparent communication, collaboration and flexibility when it comes to how, when and where work happens.

In fact, most don't separate WorkTech from the rest of their digital lives. They expect seamless, intuitive and consumer-grade experiences from the moment they engage with an employer, yet most midmarket organizations still rely on fragmented processes and legacy systems that fail to meet those rising expectations.

The disconnect is felt most acutely in the tools and systems employees use every day. From benefits to performance reviews, workplace technology is often impersonal and hard to navigate. Employees now expect one entry point for everything, a frictionless experience that delivers personalized, relevant and timely support. For example, onboarding should feel personal and immediate, starting from the moment a candidate accepts an offer — not starting just from their first day of employment. Inconsistent device provisioning, disjointed access to systems and lack of clear communication during early touchpoints can erode trust and drive early attrition.

By closing the gap between what employees expect and what they receive, HR and IT can create the kind of environment that attracts, enables and retains top talent.





Tips: Meeting the moment

- Automate what slows you down. Manual provisioning and ticket backlogs erode trust early. Automate device setup, app access and onboarding workflows to get people working faster.
- Disjointed tools create confusion. Give employees one way to access their apps, tools and support without chasing logins or approvals.
- Support shouldn't start on day one — it should be ready by day zero. Coordinate ahead of start dates so employees log in once and hit the ground running.
- Without shared systems, HR and IT miss handoffs. Use connected systems to track access, devices and transitions across the employee journey.



5 The operational engine behind HR-IT convergence

Beneath every productive employee, seamless onboarding experience and secure digital environment is a complex web of workflows, systems and responsibilities, many of which have traditionally lived in IT. But at today's midmarket organizations, those boundaries are fading fast. As workforce complexity increases and digital expectations rise, operational alignment between HR and IT isn't a nice-to-have; it's a business necessity.

Consider what's now required to support even a single employee moment like a promotion, a location change or a leave of absence. Such life-cycle events can cascade across both HR and IT by requiring updating of permissions, reconfiguration of access, reassignment of devices and adjustments in role-based tools, yet many organizations still manage those workflows via manual processes, fragmented systems and limited visibility between departments.

The results? Delays, security risks and employee frustrations that erode engagement and productivity. To meet the moment, HR and IT need shared systems and processes because shared systems and processes would not only reduce complexity and eliminate redundancies but could also unlock faster time to productivity and ensure tighter controls across the employee career journey.

Now imagine: What if every workforce moment — onboarding, promotion, offboarding — triggered the right IT actions automatically? Permissions granted. Devices shipped. Security policies applied. Support channels activated. No tickets, no handoffs, no guesswork. Instead of reactive scrambling, teams would operate from a shared system of truth in which access, status and activity are always in sync.

The results? Less complexity, fewer errors, faster response times and a dramatically better employee experience. Security improves because workflows are consistent and access is tied to real-time status. And compliance becomes easier to maintain.



With better visibility into workforce changes, HR can plan onboardings, transitions and exits with confidence — and measure how long it actually takes to get an employee productive.

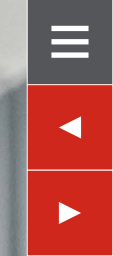




Tips: Evaluating an HR-IT system

To support today's workforce and compliance demands, modern HR-IT platforms must enable more than process automation — they must power experience, security and scalability. Look for a system that can:

- Trigger IT tasks directly from HR milestones.
- Provision devices when a hire is made, not after. Identity, access and device management must be initiated by real-time HR data.
- Treat onboarding as a security event. Onboarding isn't complete until access is secure, devices are tracked and credentials are properly configured.
- Embed automation across the entire employee life cycle. From onboarding to offboarding, life-cycle events should automatically route tasks, forecast inventory needs and reduce manual effort through AI.
- Connect provisioning to compliance. Device and app access must align with data protection policies, audit readiness and role-based compliance standards.



Conclusion

The future of workforce enablement won't be built through one department — or one system. It will be shaped by how well HR and IT collaborate: by designing connected employee experiences, reducing complexity and responding in real time to the moments that matter.

For midmarket organizations in particular, the stakes are high. With leaner teams and growing expectations, they need systems that do more; they need systems that anticipate, coordinate and scale. That's the promise of WorkTech: not a tool or a feature, but a new model for how people and technology intersect to drive performance. It's not about replacing the human element — it's about giving teams the operational engine to support it.

Companies that succeed in 2026 and beyond will be those that can embed IT into every phase of the employee career journey and build a digital infrastructure that's as seamless as it is secure.

About ADP Workforce Now® IT Management

ADP Workforce Now IT Management embeds technology capabilities into HR management, uniting workforce management and IT into a seamless, people-first work experience.

IT Management works by synchronizing Electric's best-in-class IT workflows directly with the core HR events already managed in ADP Workforce Now. For example, when a new hire is added to a system, IT Management automatically triggers device provisioning, application access and security setup through Electric's AI-driven automation. When an employee changes roles, data syncs immediately, updating their system access and software licenses with no manual intervention.

By anchoring their IT actions to the authoritative ADP Workforce Now HR system of record, organizations minimize duplications, reduce errors and ensure that their employees have the right tools and access at every stage of their career journeys.

Ready to turn today's HR-IT pressures into tomorrow's productivity gains? [Learn more](#)

