

STRATEGIC HR MANAGEMENT
INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL

SHRMTM

SOCIETY FOR HUMAN
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

HR and Technology

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HR and Technology: Application of New Technology to HR Functions

OVERVIEW

This module discusses the new developments in Web 2.0 technology and their effect on the human resource (HR) management field. More specifically, it focuses on how HR professionals can use these technologies in their daily activities and in specialized areas such as recruitment and selection. Finally, the module provides hands-on activities to give students experience with the technologies and HR applications.

TARGET AUDIENCE

This module is designed to introduce undergraduate HR students to the HR applications of Web 2.0 technologies. The material covers three 50-minute class sessions.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this learning module, students will:

- Identify HR trends that encourage adoption of these new technologies.
- Describe features of new technologies associated with the term Web 2.0.
- Explain how the HR department can use these technologies to improve information monitoring, dissemination and collaboration.
- Explore how Web 2.0 technologies affect employee recruitment and selection.
- Describe some applications of Web 2.0 in recruiting.
- Discuss cautions when implementing these technologies.
- Discuss employee expectations about Web 2.0 technologies.
- Explore how Web 2.0 technologies can enhance employee connections.
- Develop guidelines and policies for Web 2.0 usage.
- Demonstrate collaboration by document sharing in a group project.

READINGS

No assigned readings are required to deliver this unit. Instructors who want background information can review the articles in the reference section. In addition, instructors may want to consult the SHRM web site technology section for the most recent information. The technology section can be accessed from the drop-down menu under the HR Disciplines button on the SHRM home page. Much of this information is SHRM member-protected, however.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENT

The module does not require technical knowledge beyond general familiarity with the Internet, but delivery of the material does require the instructor have Internet access. The homework activities for this module are structured to give students experience using the technology and can be completed with the use of Google and a Gmail account. A Gmail account is an e-mail account obtained through the Google web site. Instructors will want to obtain their own Gmail account and have students register for one as well before starting this module. The activities provided run more smoothly if everyone is using the same type of e-mail account.

Topic Overview

Technology is changing at a rapid pace, and HR professionals are affected by these changes. This module is not designed to teach all the possible technologies but to generate discussion about how these technologies can help HR professionals work more efficiently and effectively. Students should be encouraged to develop a comfort level with technology and to consider how they might incorporate it in their future roles as HR professionals.

This module focuses on a group of technologies commonly referred to as Web 2.0. A brief description of the technology is provided in the accompanying PowerPoint presentation.

Tim O'Reilly is attributed with coining the term Web 2.0 in 2004. He discusses what the term means for web designers on the O'Reilly web site. Please refer to this site for additional information: www.oreillynet.com/pub/a/oreilly/tim/news/2005/09/30/what-is-web-20.html.

For the average user, Web 2.0 technologies can be defined as web platforms functioning as services that encourage wide participation, capture intelligence from users and provide access to the web through multiple devices. The most striking difference between Web 2.0 and earlier web applications is the interactivity. Encyclopedias and personal web sites are a couple of examples that might help explain this concept. As *Encyclopedia Britannica* surfaced online, the software and web platform improved access to the information, but the type or style of information did not change. Today, through the use of Web 2.0 technologies like wikis, we see a new facet added to the encyclopedia. Wikipedia, an online encyclopedia, permits increased levels of interaction, actually capturing information from users in a continually evolving manner. The technology is not just about access to data but includes data transformation as well. The technology provides a service that enhances the ability to supply and gather intelligence. In the same way, personal web sites existed before Facebook and blogging, but these were one-directional—they provided information without collecting or modifying information based on new changes or developments. Today, we see these personal web sites connecting with others as they provide links for collaboration and communication.

Web 2.0 technologies are part of a wide array of applications. The most commonly agreed-on Web 2.0 technologies include social networks, blogs, wikis, video sharing and microblogging. These technologies are covered in this module, and descriptions are provided as each is introduced.

Structure of Teaching Module

The teaching module is divided into three lessons, and each can be completed in a 50-minute class period.

Topic	Activity	Media	Time
Lesson 1	Web 2.0 Technologies and HR Responsibilities	14 PPT slides	50 min.
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Why should HR be concerned with new developments in technology? ▪ What are some of the new technologies associated with Web 2.0? ▪ How can HR professionals incorporate these technologies to improve performance? ▪ What should HR consider before adopting or allowing employees access to these technologies? <p>Learning objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify HR trends that encourage adoption of these new technologies. ▪ Describe features of new technologies associated with the term Web 2.0. ▪ Explain how the HR department can use these technologies to improve information monitoring, dissemination and collaboration. ▪ Present HR trends that have a bearing on technology use and adoption. ▪ Define new technologies referred to as Web 2.0 technologies. 	PPT slides 1–5.	10 min.
Monitoring information	<p>HR's role as an information monitor.</p> <p>Visit web sites that provide field-specific, governmental and informal sources.</p>	PPT slide 6.	5–10 min.
Disseminating information	<p>HR's role in disseminating information. Review traditional methods and introduce Web 2.0 applications.</p>	PPT slides 7–8.	5–10 min.
Discussion and application	<p>Instructor's note:</p> <p>Included throughout the lecture are discussion questions. Answers to the questions are provided on the PPT slides. The instructor can use these as either whole class discussion or have students break into small groups for discussion and then report back to the class.</p> <p>This section also includes an application slide where RSS feeds (Really Simple Syndication) are explained. The tool will help students develop good habits in monitoring HR developments.</p>	PPT slides 9–10.	5–10 min.

Collaboration	Document sharing as a method for collaborating. Examples are provided. Instructors should show the video <i>Google Docs in Plain English</i> on Googledocs at http://documents.google.com . This will familiarize students with Googledocs, an application that they will use for the homework activity.	PPT slide 11.	5–10 min.
Review and homework	Review questions and a wrap up of the unit. Homework activity. Students are required to work as teams and collaborate on a document with the help of Googledocs. Activity information is provided in Appendix A and student handout in Appendix B.	PPT slides 12–14.	5–10 min.
Lesson 2	Application of Web 2.0 Technology in Recruitment and Selection	15 PPT slides	50 min.
Introduction	Learning objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explore how Web 2.0 technologies affect the HR functions of recruitment and selection. ▪ Describe some applications of Web 2.0 in recruitment. ▪ Discuss cautions when implementing these technologies. 	PPT slides 16–19.	10 min.
Recruitment and technology	Applications of Web 2.0 technologies to recruitment and selection. Areas discussed include using technology to reach active and passive applicants by job search and microsites, video technologies and social networks.	PPT slides 20–26.	15–20 min.
Selection and technology	Role of technology in the screening process and special issues associated. Information on video resumes and social networking.	PPT slides 27–28.	15 min.
Review	Guidelines for recruitment and selection.	PPT slides 29–30.	10 min.
Homework	Students are assigned to interview people from different generations and ask about their use of technology. They will write reports and discuss their results in small groups at the beginning of the next lesson. Instructor notes on this activity are provided in Appendix A, and a student handout and instructions are provided in Appendix B.	PPT slide 31.	5 min.

Lesson 3	Balancing Employee Expectations for Technology Availability With Organizational Requirements	12 PPT slides	50 min.
Introduction	<p>Topics covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discuss employee expectations about Web 2.0 technology. ▪ Explore how Web 2.0 can enhance employee connections. ▪ Identify guidelines and policies for Web 2.0 technology use. 	PPT slide 33.	5 min.
Homework discussion	Students will break up into small groups and discuss the information gathered in their interviews. Each group will report their conclusions about the similarities and differences across the generations.	PPT slide 34.	15–20 min.
Networked workers	Information from the <i>Pew Internet and American Life</i> report.	PPT slides 35–36.	5 min.
Adoption of technologies	Rationale for adopting technology based on employee use. Applications presented.	PPT slides 37–40.	5–10 min.
Employee relations and technology	Benefits to employee relations from technology.	PPT slide 41.	5–10 min.
Ramifications of increased Web 2.0 use for employees	Increased connectivity raises problems for employees, and these slides discuss some of those ramifications.	PPT slides 42–43.	5 min.
Conclusion	Overall conclusions and implications are presented.	PPT slide 44.	5 min.
Homework	For this assignment, students will blog about the information they learned in this unit. Detailed instructions are provided in Appendix B.		

Appendix A: Activities

LESSON 1 ACTIVITY: TECHNOLOGY TOOLS FOR COLLABORATION

Working collectively, student teams of three to four people will produce a report using GoogleDocs. The *Activity 1 Student Handout* provides detailed instructions on the steps included in the assignment. Set up and grading instructions for instructors are described below.

Set Up

The instructor will need to complete the following:

- The instructor will need a Gmail account. Students will add the instructor as a collaborator so the instructor has access to the document and can review each student's contributions to the team's final document. Add this information to the student handout along with the due date.
- PPT slide 11 directs the instructor to play a short video at <http://documents.google.com> to provide some familiarity with GoogleDocs. Include this in the presentation if assigning this activity.
- Discussion questions on PPT slide 12 will give the instructor some indication of the students' comfort with these types of sites. Classes with little or no experience will benefit from class review of the GoogleDocs site. Instructors can follow the detailed instructions on the student handout for this activity to demonstrate the procedure.
- Provide 5-10 minutes of class time to allow groups to organize. The student handout for this activity encourages students to share information and set group dates and terms that should be clearly outlined in a collaborative work group.

Possible Answers to Discussion Questions (Slide 12)

1. There are a variety of applications students can suggest. The employee newsletter will be the one that comes from the lecture; other suggestions will depend on topics the class has covered previously, e.g., information about staffing requirements or on-the-job design processes.
2. Problems commonly associated with these types of situations would relate to access and sharing of private information. HR professionals need to be especially careful about the types of information and the access to that information. Benefits from the technology include reducing time and distance conflicts.
3. Policies and procedures should tie back to the problems and benefits the team identified. For example:
 - Any information protected by our privacy standards should not be posted on outside document-sharing sites.
 - Only one person should be given the ability to invite collaborators.

Grading

At least 50% of the grade should be based on the student's contribution to the GoogleDocs site. The instructor can review the contributions of individual team members by the following these steps: open the document, go to the tool bar and click "Tools," from the drop down list select "Revision History." The instructor will be able to view the changes made by each team member.

Suggested grading for contribution:

A=Made major additions or changes to report that enhanced the outcome; visited the document multiple times; proofread the final document.

B=Made some additions or changes; visited the site more than once.

C=Made minor additions and changes to the report; visited the site once.

D=Made no additions and only minor changes; visited the site once.

LESSON 2 PRE-ACTIVITY FOR LESSON 3: TECHNOLOGY USE ACROSS GENERATIONS

This activity will gather information for the discussion in Lesson 3. Students will interview people from different generations and ask about their technology use.

At the beginning of Lesson 3, have students gather in small groups of three or four and discuss their findings with group members. This requires that students bring in a hard copy of their report to share with group members. Instructors could also require that the individual report be submitted through GoogleDocs. Have each group give a verbal report on a similarity or difference they found.

Lesson 3 follows this discussion by reporting information from the *Pew Internet and American Life Survey*. The students can compare the information they gathered with the study results.

LESSON 3 ACTIVITY: EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATIONS AND BLOGS

This activity will provide students with practice using blogs. The student handout for this activity provides detailed instructions for students to follow.



Appendix B: Student Handouts

The following pages include student handouts for the three class activities.

Activity 1: Student Handout

GROUP INSTRUCTIONS FOR COLLABORATIVE INTERNET TOOLS ASSIGNMENT

Due Date: _____

Your team will be generating a report using GoogleDocs.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR REPORT

The manager of your HR department attended a seminar about using collaborative Internet tools for document management. Many of the departments in your organization already use these techniques. Your manager asked your group to devise guidelines for appropriate use.

1. Discuss three ways the HR department could use these tools.
2. Identify two benefits and two potential problems that could arise from using these tools.
3. Design four policies and procedures to address the concerns your group identified.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR WRITING THE REPORT:

1. Elect a team leader. The team leader is responsible for starting the document and inviting teammates to collaborate. The team leader should not write the entire document.
2. The team leader should go to <http://documents.google.com> and sign in using his or her Gmail account. Start a new document and save it with the name identified below.

Write down your document name: _____

- Once the document has been saved, invite the rest of your teammates to be collaborators.
- Check the box by the document title and then click on the “SHARE” button in the tool bar.
- A box will pop up. Check “add as collaborators” and enter your teammates’ and instructor’s Gmail addresses.
- A message box will appear where you can add a message to your teammates indicating the site is ready for their contributions.

Gmail addresses for teammates:

Gmail address for instructor:

3. Each group member is responsible for entering information and modifying the document. The group should set a deadline before the due date for updates to be made. Someone should take on the responsibility for the final formatting.

The team leader will have the document set up and invitations issued by:

If you have not heard from the team leader by the above time, you need to contact him or her to work out any problems.

All updates will be completed by: _____

4. Send the instructor an e-mail indicating the team has completed the final revisions.



Fifty percent of the grade for this assignment is based on your contribution to the project on the Googledocs site. The instructor can review the changes made to the document.



Activity 2: Student Handout

Your task is to interview people from different generations about their technology usage at home and at work and their comfort with the technology. You should interview at least five people representing at least three different generations. Include the following types of technology: cell phone, Internet, PDA, e-mail, blogs, microblogging, social networks, video sites (like YouTube) and podcasting.

Write your interviews in a report detailing the similarities and differences between the generations. Bring a hard copy of the report to class. You will be sharing this information with classmates.

Activity 3: Student Handout

Using your Gmail account, register at www.blogger.com and create a blog. The web site walks you through the steps on how to create your own blog. Once you have created a blog, complete the following:

1. Write your lecture notes as a blog. Your audience is fellow classmates who might read your blog to gain information for the test.

Your blog must contain the following:

- At least one post of 200+ words.
 - Within that post you should have two hyperlinks to relevant web sites.
2. E-mail your instructor with your blog address by the due date.

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