



# ROI of Human Applications

IMPROVE PERFORMANCE, RETENTION,  
D&I, AND ENGAGEMENT

workhuman\*

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Human resources software and management tools have revolutionized how we manage people in organizations. They give us the power to quantify, track, and identify patterns – offering real insight into what is happening with our teams.

Until now, HR apps have only offered us half the story, skewing our insights toward the “resources” and away from the “human.” Numbers, ratings, process, and compliance have dominated as our system of record, because that’s really all we’ve been able to gather and scale.

All of that is now changing.

Our thinking about talent and culture has evolved, as we put our focus more on the individual human experience of work. Instead of simply diagnosing and gathering information, we now have a new, human-driven world of HR that can proactively encourage and support employees. Today’s applications that focus on people and relationships first – human applications – are now the first choice of top organizations who understand the business benefits of well-being and engagement. The terms that now loom largest in HR are ones like:

- Social experience
- Teams
- Crowd
- Continuous feedback
- Cloud
- AI
- Humanity
- Positivity

## WHAT IS A HUMAN APP?

So what is a human app, exactly? Rather than looking backward and aggregating what has already happened, human apps look forward. They are proactive and empowering. They give employees, leaders, and managers the ability to express their thoughts and ideas, to support one another, and to bring people together as they pursue goals and get results. They also reduce risk by identifying problem areas earlier.

By definition, every human app has the following components:

- It is employee-driven, collaborative, and social in nature
- It is deeply relationship- and connection-focused
- It is equally inclusive, open, and accessible to all
- It includes crowd-sourced content and employee voice
- It actively supports diversity and individuality

Additionally – because they are tech applications – each must include:

- An engaging, accessible UX that makes people want to use it
- Technology that is complementary and aligns to your unified vision
- The ability to share data, analytics, and reporting with other apps



## 7 WAYS HUMAN APPS DRIVE VALUE FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION

### ONE

#### Improve employee engagement

Employee engagement used to be centered around surveys, measurement, monitoring, and hand-wringing. It is the holy grail for HR ROI because so much research has proven its value in business results. We spend all our resources trying to figure out what will magically engage our employees – but the answer is staring us in the face. Simply ask them<sup>1</sup> to engage. Human apps bring employee voices into this conversation, which not only puts employees in control of their own engagement – it actually engages them.

### TWO

#### Increase alignment and belonging

Because human apps are based primarily on building and supporting relationships, they always increase feelings of alignment and belonging, which have been proven to drive success<sup>2</sup>. One of the key strengths of human apps is their ability to bring people together – through feedback and support, through recognizing effort, and through acknowledging colleagues as people – seeing and celebrating their whole selves.

### THREE

#### Grow diversity and inclusion

We shouldn't need to have a business reason to build more diverse and inclusive organizations, but it certainly doesn't hurt to share how much better diverse businesses perform. According to Deloitte<sup>3</sup>, diverse-thinking teams are 20% more innovative and carry 30% less risk, and inclusive teams see 8x better business results. Human apps will support D&I passively by elevating all voices. Strong human apps will actively support D&I by flagging patterns and highlighting best practices to encourage equity and involvement for all.

### FOUR

#### Improve retention and employer brand

According to Randstad<sup>4</sup>, 45% of employees reported having either changed jobs in the past 12 months or plan to do so in the next year. If that doesn't scare you enough, consider that 18% of employees said they planned to switch jobs in 2017, but 27% did. When you use human apps, you create an emotional bond – between colleagues, from employee to manager, and from employee to organization – that makes it difficult for employees to leave. Employees who feel an organization really cares about them are less likely to leave. According to a Paychex<sup>5</sup> report, 54% of departing employees say their employers didn't care about them as an individual contributor. That's the power of a human app.

## FIVE

### Grow productivity and performance

One of the best ways to directly connect ROI and human apps is to show the links between those apps and productivity and financial performance. A 2017 poll by Tjinsite/TimeJobs.com<sup>6</sup> found that more than 35% of the employees consider lack of recognition of their work as the biggest hindrance to their productivity, and according to Gallup<sup>7</sup>, 27% of workers strongly agree that the feedback they currently receive helps them do their work better. Also according to Gallup's research, "67% of employees are happier and more productive when managers focus on the positive aspects of their performance" – which is only made possible by employing human feedback, coaching, and recognition technology.

## SIX

### Align employees to vision, goals, and values

Alignment is one of the most under-appreciated qualities of employee development, and one that human apps can significantly influence. Too often, development and alignment efforts end at onboarding, and company values and vision are words in a handbook. According to a recent study<sup>8</sup>, perceived organizational support, supportive leader behavior, and employee alignment together explain 56%

of the variance in work engagement, and of the three, the biggest contributor was alignment. Human apps like recognition and feedback bring employees into daily proximity to company values and goals, and help to align employees regularly with company vision.

## SEVEN

### Build trust in leadership

According to Deloitte<sup>9</sup>, 27% of employees who intend to leave trust their leadership, compared to 62% of those who plan to stay. Human apps increase trust by increasing transparency across the organization and bringing leadership into more consistent and direct contact with employees on a regular basis.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0363811116304805>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.forbes.com/sites/johnbaldoni/2017/01/22/fostering-the-sense-of-belonging-promotes-success/#692a2c5a10f2>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www2.deloitte.com/insights/us/en/deloitte-review/issue-22/diversity-and-inclusion-at-work-eight-powerful-truths.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ir.randstad.com/news-and-events/newsroom/2018/2018-05-14>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.icims.com/hiring-insights/article-employee-turnover-statistics-and-what-it-costs-companies>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.forbes.com/sites/karenhigginbottom/2017/03/03/employee-appreciation-pays-off/#70c81e4b6ddc>

<sup>7</sup> <https://news.gallup.com/businessjournal/189875/amid-rapid-fire-workplace-change-pulse-surveys-emerge.aspx>

<sup>8</sup> [http://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=8101&context=etd\\_theses](http://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=8101&context=etd_theses)

<sup>9</sup> [https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/mx/Documents/about-deloitte/Talent2020\\_Employee-Perspective.pdf](https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/mx/Documents/about-deloitte/Talent2020_Employee-Perspective.pdf)

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