

In the twelve months since we last commented on the impact of social media on human resources, social media has continued to permeate all aspects of HR; from recruitment and engagement to employer branding and service delivery. HR leaders in companies of all sizes and across all sectors now have to consider how best to use social media, to benefit the organisation. They must also ensure that employees, while given the necessary freedoms to use it constructively at work, are aware of and buy into the compulsory restrictions put in place, to protect the corporate image and company privacy.

Common themes which continue to dominate HR debates on this subject focus on, what constitutes social media misconduct? What is social media's true value beyond marketing? How sustainable is social media as a recruitment tool? These are important questions for HR professionals to ask, as HR should always seek to take a lead on areas concerning people and organisational effectiveness. The overwhelming conclusion for many employers is that HR should be responsible for creating appropriate standards of social media practise, within the context of the business.

Social media best practise is where HR is showcasing innovative thinking. Utilising blogs, wikis, and other collaborative technology to deliver company communications and HR policies; attracting and retaining talent through establishing an employee brand and culture that is visible through social media platforms; creating interactive online support channels, reducing enquiries and empowering managers to manage teams more effectively. These are just some examples of how HR is being innovative in using social media to improve the efficiency of HR service delivery, while providing consistency across the business.

There is no doubt that social media has the power to bring together the collective talent of employees, fuel innovation and deliver organisational transformation. For it to succeed however, HR must essentially lead a cultural revolution in the organisation by winning the hearts and minds of people at all levels of the business. The HR teams that are most successful at this are the ones that are able to offer insight into how human resources can provide a return on investment. By being at the forefront of social media driven organisational change, HR leaders essentially define their true role - a role with the primary objective of facilitating collaboration, innovation and learning.

Organisations that successfully transform into truly democratic entities are the ones that recognise the potential of social media to attract talent, improve the delivery of HR services and knowledge and help managers to manage teams more effectively. Those organisations value innovative HR thinking at the core of overall business strategy.