

**How Are Electronic Technology and Social Media Affecting:
the Employment Relationship (From Hiring To Engagement
To Retention) Between Employers and Employees; and the
Roles, Responsibilities and Contributions of Human
Resources Organizations?**

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ABSTRACT

Social Technology, as defined by electronic technology and social media trends in the past 15 years, has acted as a catalyst in changing the modes of communication and professional practices in different aspects of businesses today particularly in the area of human resources. It has brought in benefits to the employer ranging from zero cost recruitment, extending employer branding channels, telecommuting, innovative rewards and recognition programs, and new platforms for employee retention. Not only has it affected employees from this techno-savvy age, but it has transcended generations and professional relationships. On the grey side of business, it has consequently blurred lines of personal and professional time and space, affecting not only behaviour but also corresponding rewards and penalties for such. It has, therefore, become the very means of multi-platform employer-employee engagement.

This paper attempts to detail the transformational change in the business and strategies in human resources, fundamentally caused by social technology. It begins by showcasing the rise and advent of social technology, and how inevitably it has rewired the lines between employer and employee. Further on, it focuses on the positive and more difficult effects of this Social Technology on the various fundamental processes of Human Resources.

The Advent and Inevitable Rise of Electronic Technology and Social Media

“Social media is the catalyst; the change agent, like that giant asteroid that slammed into earth and killed all the dinosaurs. A few years ago, the world went social: the asteroid struck. The dinosaurs, the Old Schoolers, they’re dropping like flies as we speak, because they can’t – or maybe they won’t – change with the times” (Coine, 2013)

Social media has literally taken over the world. Social media sites like Google+ had more than 500 million registered users in December 2012 (Watkins, 2013). Facebook in its financial report in the first quarter of 2013 had passed 1.11 billion monthly active users. Out of which, the number of monthly active mobile users hit 751 million (Protalinski, 2013). Twitter, on the other hand, had 500 million registered accounts in 2013 (Smith, 2013) while LinkedIn followed up with 225 million users (LinkedIn Facts) and blogging systems like WordPress powered over 60 million website worldwide (WordPress Facts).

“Facebook in 2012 hit one billion users and if it were to be a country, it would be the third most populated in the world currently ahead of the United States.” (Popkin, 2012)

These facts, however, only beg the question: Why has social technology exploded? And how is it changing the way we do business, the way employees relate to their employers and vice versa?

Christakis and Fowler (2009) in their book *“Connected: the surprising power of our social networks and how they shape our lives”* talk about the vitality of already-existing key social ties – such as family, friends and professional relationships, as the key to success in social networking. They further go on to talk about how aspects of our personality, that we consider as individualistic are actually greatly affected by our social relationships. Having virtually everyone you know, their friends and their friend’s friend who may be your

acquaintance all at one place is the reason why social media eventually became popular. Social networking sites were important as a way to share, influence and communicate with friends and family who were already key social ties; and professional life was still separate from personal.

Stanley Milgram, an American social psychologist coined the phrase “*Six Degrees of Separation*” to first describe the world-shrinking effects of social networks. However, Christakis and Fowler in their book “*Connected: the surprising power of our social networks and how they shape our lives*”, further add to this concept that not because we are connected to people under “*six degrees of separation*” means that we are able to influence them all. Their research shows that the spread in social network obeys what they coined as the “*three degrees of influence*” i.e. everything we say or do tends to ripple through our network, having an impact on our friends (first degree), our friends’ friends (second degree), and even the friends of our friends’ friends (third degree). Translated into business, employers are connected to everyone by *six degrees of separation* while they can use power and influence those up to three degrees. People can therefore, connect halfway to anyone in the world and also influence them.

Christakis & Fowler (2009) assert this by saying “Everyone on earth is connected (pretty much) to everyone else, one way or another. So where as we think of our own network as having a more limited social and geographic reach, the networks that surround each of us are actually widely interconnected”(p.18). They further go on to say that “Our influence gradually dissipates and ceases to have a noticeable effect on people beyond the social frontier that lies at three degrees of separation" (p.28)

This is only emphasized by LinkedIn that has “labelled connections” of three levels i.e. level 1 (connections), level 2 (connections of connections), and level 3 (connections of connections of connections).

Not only have fundamental human relationships been truncated from geographical and social spaces to mere pixels and bandwidth, but also the rise of modern electronic technology has also pushed for greater ease-of-access and mobility for such social media.

New electronic technology inventions like cloud computing have resulted in advanced distributed computing resulting in better accessibility, telecommuting and work from home, thereby mobilizing the workforce. Supported with newer versions of Windows & Mac OS, the rise of Android technology, and reinforced by hardware such as more compact Laptops, Netbooks, iPads (Tablets) and smart phones (Phablets), social technology has grown not only in popularity but also in its importance in human relationships including employer-employee relationships. This increasing use of social technology promises to bring more candidates for placement, with a greater chance for hired employees and top management into daily interaction at a lower cost. When used strategically, this technology will facilitate participation in projects and idea sharing by employees of various age groups within the company as well as across the industry, thus providing a wider and in-depth view.

Social Technology: Change revolution across generations: Social technology is a change revolution. It has successfully changed the way we communicate, work and feel.

Anderson (1971) emphasizes that change can only occur when the forces of change are greater than the forces maintaining the status quo. This can happen in two ways: if forces promoting change are increased or forces maintaining the status quo are decreased, or both.

The effects of electronic technology and use of social media has transcended across generations of baby boomers, generation X and Y. The impact of the increasing use of social technology – the forces of change, can be noticed from the fact that 57.3% of US tablet owners were aged over 35 in the 3-month period ending in June 2012, including almost 1 in 5 aged older than 55. (MC Marketing Charts, 2012). As far as Internet and Social Media usage demographics in the U.S is concerned, nearly eight in 10, or 59.9 million baby boomers, were

regular internet users in 2012 (eMarketer, 2013). Baby boomers accounted for more than one in five social network users while in Generation X, 88.8% were monthly internet users as of December 2012. Generation Y/Millennials have the highest social networking penetration of any generation, and the highest facebook and twitter user rates to match. They also account for about four in 10 digital video viewers (eMarketer, 2013).

This clearly indicates that people across most generations have realized that they cannot take the stance of being tech-dinosaurs. They have realised that change that gear towards this technology will be beneficial for them thereby reducing the forces maintaining the status quo. They have realized that if they do not use this technology they will remain isolated from the world and the essential news occurring around them. The increasing power of forces of change and the reduction in the forces of status quo have made social technology ever popular.

Kurt Lewin's study offered a three-phase model of Organizational change in which he described change as a process of (1) "unfreezing", (2) "moving" and (3) "refreezing". (Cited by Anderson, 1971). We can already see these stages of changes across generations. For example the baby boomers, who are not technologically savvy already "Unfreezing" and trying to learn this social technology. While some, like those in generation X, are already in the "moving stage", generation Y are pretty much in the "refreezing stage" as they are now so comfortable with this regular practice of this new technology.

Personalized social technology and mobility: Gradually more and more people are mixing their personal and work content on social media sites which has resulted in it's over growing popularity. Social media by its very essence demands change and an open culture. Most organizations have gradually begin to realize that they can no longer control the access point that employees have to all forms of outbound communication channels.

These factors have given rise to corporate abbreviation like BYOD (Bring your own device), the reason resulting in the blurring of work and personal time, on work and personal equipment as well as accounts. As per Forbes, based on the Enterasys survey of February 2012, at least 74 % of companies allow some sort of BOYD usage (Fidelman, 2012). Add to this, *cloud technology* which offers the most cost-effective and least resource intensive way to secure data in the era of BYOD and work-anywhere computing. This interconnectedness enables companies to involve stakeholders in the creation of products, services, employer branding and goodwill at a level which is unparalleled. Social Technology has become part of the DNA of most companies. It is this papers' objective to translate this change in DNA to the functional and strategic aspects of the employer-employee relationship and the different process of human resources.

Social media and electronic technology and its effect on employment relation

The impact of social technology in businesses today is like a double-edged sword – presenting both challenges and advances in its processes, systems and strategies. On one hand, employers would want to utilize this social technology for broader corporate branding, expanded recruitment channels, and more direct management of various aspects of the employee life cycle within the organization. Embracing such changes in management can give the corporation a cutting edge over competitors which refuse to, or are not able to, embrace social technology. On the contrary, employers are faced with the challenge of establishing glass ceilings on the level and nature of access to these social technologies both from the employees and for corporate utilization. Failure to do so may lead to serious detrimental impacts to the organization's business interests.

This paper asserts that organizations and their respective human resources departments need to embrace this paradox and try to figure out the kind of culture they would like to implement to suit their needs best. Rather than just blindly accepting collective culture

imposed by these social technologies, it is up to the employers and the human resources department to determine degrees of freedom towards access and usage of social technology. Such limits would adversely or favourably impact the employment relationships, and will determine how connected your employees are to the organization. These moves will also determine employee's affiliation and engagement from the company's culture, strategies and objectives.

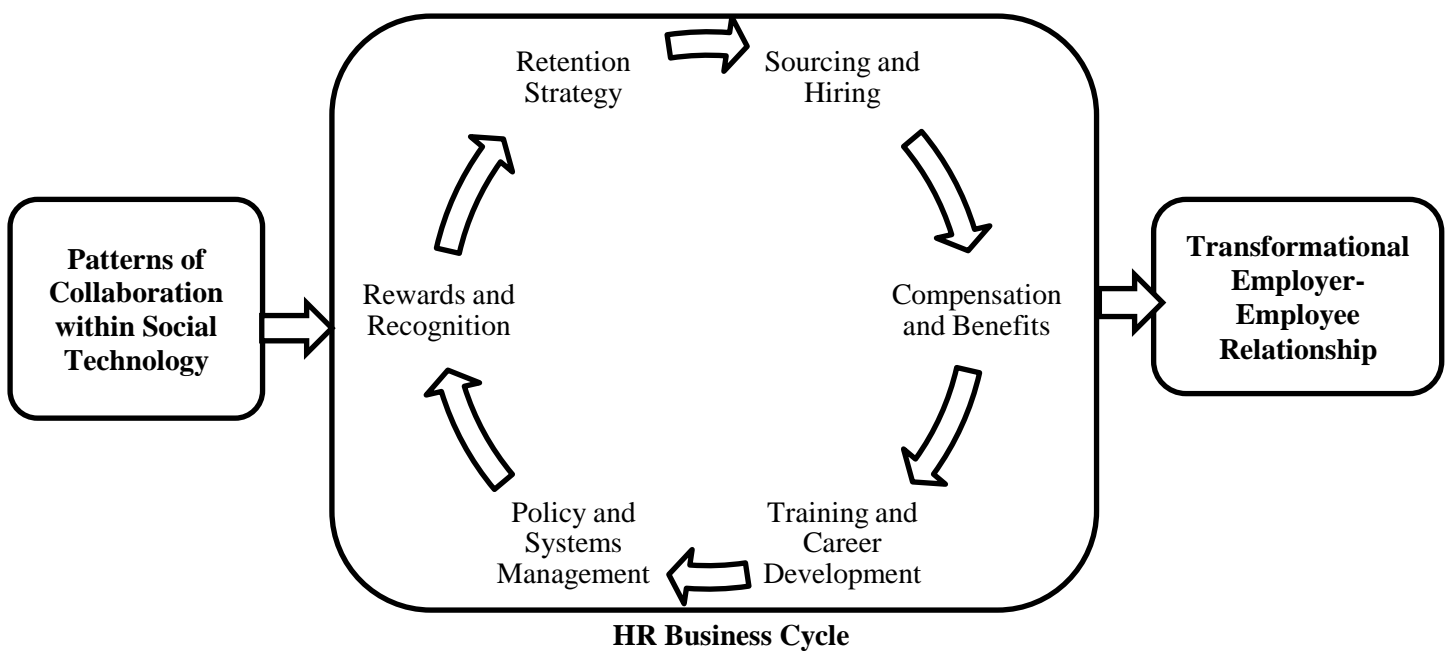
A study conducted by Bradley & McDonald, M. (2011) as cited in CIPD Research Report (March 2013, page 9) determines six broad emerging patterns of collaboration under which organizations use social media. These are cited below:

1. **Expertise location** allows people to identify the right expert or solution from an organisational community, making it faster to tackle various business issues.
2. **Collective intelligence** is where people in online communities can discuss and contribute to different subjects through channels such as blogs, 'wikis' and discussion forums.
3. **Emergent structures** are organisational networks of hidden virtual teams who are communicating with one another via an internal channel that leads to the emergence of a new unplanned online structure. Studying these groups gives an insight into how colleagues interact informally and how they look to get their job done more effectively and/or efficiently.
4. **Interest cultivation** uses blogs, online forums and social feedback platforms to bring like-minded people together, creating a community of people with similar interests and increasing engagement with a particular topic.
5. **Mass co-ordination** is when a community is created quickly with the aim of spreading messages virally. A well-known version of mass co-ordination is 'flash mobbing', where people assemble in a public place for an ad hoc performance.

6. **Relationship leverage** is the act of maintaining and getting value from an extensive number of online relationships. This is driven by posting on blogs and social networking websites, a prime example of this being Twitter.

The abovementioned trends of collaboration between organizations and its employees through social technology can be correlated and exemplified at different points of the human resources life cycle. This paper attempts to further detail these changes in employment relationship from hiring to retention which can bring both affiliating/connecting and detaching/disconnecting effects between organization and their employees.

Diagram 1. Illustrates the transformational employer-employee relationship, as affected by the changes in the human resource business cycle through social technology.



Social Sourcing and Online Hiring

Sourcing Channels: With the advent of globalization, industries expand while there seems to be a scarcity of talent and rapid economic integration. Also, the liberalization of trade and investment have given rise to new myriad of employment relationships. More complex and specialized talent is now required. The range and variety of work arrangement has expanded.

Finding the right candidate at the right price and at the right time is becoming trickier. Gone are the days when people would send hard copies of their C.V's to offices only for it to be piled up in a corner. Companies across different industries are now using social media such as Facebook fan pages, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram to enhance organization reputation and brand attractiveness. Social network sites have evolved into social utility networks. In fact, recruiting software provider Bullhorn Reach reports that twenty-one percent of recruiters are connected to LinkedIn as well as Facebook and Twitter for hiring purposes (Waxer, 2013).

Employer branding through social media in order to source the right candidates is now a corporate-level strategic endeavour. The employment relation has changed. A few testimonials on your company website of what a great work place it is, is not solely going to attract candidates. The employer is no longer the head hunter and the potential employee the target. The employer is now a virtual human being seeking real relationships and connections. The company's identity becomes ready for scrutiny by these potential relationships; and valued as worthy of such long term relationship as engagement and loyalty. Your company fan following, employee satisfaction with pay and facilities, innovative freedom and work from home are things which have to be strategized and branded in a manner that candidates will consider your company amongst others. The information of vacancies, applications, attrition and development spreads fast through social media channels.

Sourcing Channels: Accessibility and Strategy Online: Human resource organizations around the world are trying to find new ways of attracting candidates. The latest is the realization that social technology is advancing at a rapid rate; and using desktops and laptops are becoming a thing of the past. Most social applications are now made for viewing on mobile devices. Job seekers may not have computers or carry it with them all the time but they do have mobiles.

Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) assert that, " Mobile Social Media applications are expected to be the main driver of this evolution, soon accounting for over 50% of the market. In one way, this surge toward Mobile Social Media can even be seen as another step toward Internet democratization and closing the digital divide between developed and emerging countries. In India, for example, mobile phones outnumber PCs by 10 to 1. In Thailand, only 13% of the population own a computer, versus 82% who have access to a mobile phone." (p.67)

Certain BPO organizations for example have their human resource department now tying up with convenience stores and fast food outlets that are located around competing BPO's facilities and providing them with free WIFI. This is done so that when accessing the free WIFI on their phones, employees from competing organizations who are shopping and eating at these places will automatically land up on the sponsor's page and hopefully will find an exciting job opportunity and switch over. Creativity is the name of the game and recruiting through job portals are no longer the only means of hiring.

Human resource departments due to this changing employment relation have taken up the role of a social media manager. A lot of time is spent strategizing, setting up timelines for sourcing, developing internal relationships, and just making sure that each of the channels are interactive, and are being regularly updated on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn etc. Activities like team outing, fun at work, recognition of achievers, community service are now instantly blogged, tweeted, put on Facebook or shown via Instagram by HR teams so that employees can share it with their friends and they with their friends.

This brings into play the "*Three degrees of influence*" which leverages existing network to build a candidate pool required for the future. Companies like Google (which has 14 million likes on Facebook), UPS, Sodexo are known because of the way their Human resources department package & present themselves as an innovative and fun place to work in with the best of perks.

Sodexo has seen a 233% increase in visits to its mobile site and more than 1.5 million page views in 2012. To date, there have been 15,000 downloads for Sodexo's mobile job application and has resulted in 107 hires. Of those hires, 53% were internal candidates, demonstrating social and mobile strategies help with internal mobility. (Vorhauser-Smith, Forbes-2013). These employers have realised that they and their HR departments have to create a culture which has mass following thereby tapping this network and ensuring through employer branding that it is one of the most sought after place to work.

Once the pool of resources is available, all they need to do is to surgically penetrate that pool to source the talents that they have vacancies for. Thus human resource departments are using emerging patterns of collaboration such as interest cultivation, mass co-ordination, relationship leverage, expertise location from Bradley & McDonald, M. (2011) under which social media is being used for sourcing. Human resources department now need to look after masses which contain potential future employees than just their internal ones.

Hiring Processes: Minimizing hiring cost of the hiring process, or zeroing in to no cost at all, is now an essential part of corporate strategies across the world. This is achieved through a combination of social technology, job portals and in-house recruitment teams. Consultants and outsourced head-hunting agencies are gradually being reserved only for hiring top level executives. Consequently, online job sites have revolutionized the recruitment landscape and have changed the employment relation for both employers and job seekers.

It has increased the efficiency and turnaround time within which human resources hiring decisions can take place. For example, Monster.com uses technology that analyses CVs for both meaning and context so it delivers results that more closely match what you are looking for, scoring and ranking each candidate based on your search criteria. It also consolidates all the CVs in a cloud, allowing recruiters to search across a variety of sources, including their internal talent pool and external CV databases at the same time.

(Monster.com, 2013). Human resource departments across the world have realized that paying the recruitment consultant fees for a candidate which can be anything up to 20% of the yearly Cost to Company (CTC) of that employee is not an effective cost per hire. Neither is advertising in the newspaper, televisions etc. which can cost in hundreds of thousands without guarantee of an audience, much more of a hired employee. Cost savings are possible with online recruitment/Jobsites despite their high initial cost. The role of Human Resources are now focused more on cost savings by reducing Cost Per Hire (CPH) and finding a wide talent pool of candidates of diverse skills.

It is convenient for the candidates to post their C.Vs on job sites and apply to companies of their choice all across at the world just at the click of a mouse or a tap on the phone because of Social applications. Hence, the power and the means of choice have moved towards the potential employees and away from the employer who earlier had the power to hire due to abundance of talent and less competitors.

However, just as there are positives for job searchers there are positives for the employers too. Background checks of potential hire is no longer based on the references given by them. Employers log on to social networks for background check of new hires. Hence, on the job seekers part they need to ensure that they have social media accounts which aren't derogatory or offensive in nature and do not have facts which are misleading from the ones which they might have presented to a potential employer.

The consequence of having a negative content in a social media account, might result in his/her application getting rejected. Hence, social technology and hiring also has changed the employment relationship. Thus human resources department are now using emerging patterns of collaboration such as expertise location, interest cultivation, mass co-ordination, relationship leverage from Bradley & McDonald, M. (2011) under which social media is being used for hiring purposes.

E-Compensation and Technology-based Benefits

Total Compensation and Benefits: A traditional compensation package was something which was decided by the employer. The candidate was not in a power to bargain due to the fact that he did not have adequate information on the salary grid of that organization nor was he/she aware of job opportunities all across the globe. There is a deviation in the employment relation from employers calling the shots as to what a new hires salary would be to that of an employer trying to attract best available talent by offering higher salaries. This flip side is that it has resulted in the rise of the phenomenon of pay compression and inversion. Richardson & Thomas, 2013 defined these as:

Pay compression occurs when pay differentials between more senior, higher-level, or more highly skilled employees and newly hired, lower-level, or less skilled employees become small. The more severe case of pay inversion typically occurs when newly hired employees are brought into an organization at salary levels greater than more senior, skilled, or experienced employees at the same or higher job level. (p.21)

Human resources department have been, for a long time, trying to address pay compression and inversion as they try and dole out more compensation packages to attract talent. This is particularly true in the landscape of modern day organizations where there is an increasing demand of performance from all employees.

Richardson and Thomas in their paper suggest measures such as the compensation equity /performance matrix (CEPM) as one of the measures to tackle compression/inversion”.

The CEPM is an approach to the determination of pay increases that bases an individual faculty member’s annual pay adjustment on a combination of performance and market equity. (Richardson & Thomas, 2013, p.23).

The CEPM base pay decisions on three variables and is a strategic compensation tool to address the issues of pay compression/Inversion. One of the variables on which the

Compensation Matrix bases pay decision is each member's salary relative to market pay by rank and specific discipline as determined by salary survey results. (Richardson & Thomas, 2013)

Thus with the advent of online job sites like Monster.com and Glassdoor.com, which analyse average salaries of employees within the same industry based on years of experience and education, it is now possible for one to know whether they are in the right salary range based on their credentials. Millions of community members share their salaries and experiences in the organization they work for in order to help others make better job decisions. Also the real company culture can easily be seen in sites like Facebook where employees post pictures from work or rant about work in their statuses.

Apart from Salary reports, Human Resources Organizations are now using Social Media like Glass door and Monster to get a better idea of salary offered by competitors for particular positions and experience giving a far more detailed benchmarking to tackle pay compression/inversion and maintaining better internal/external equity. As per Richardson and Thomas (2013), both the pay for performance and compensation related-equity systems depends on securing budgets that exceed the over-all growth rate in the market

Therefore, Benchmarking via social media aided with traditional salary report can help in deciding a salary budget which is more accurate to resolving compression/inversion issues for human resources department. This, apart from employers and human resources departments, are already using the social networking applications to benchmark perks, benefits and facilities being provided by competitor as employees write, review and rate their companies on these sites.

Thus human resources department are now using emerging patterns of collaboration such as *Expertise Location, Collective Intelligence, Emergent Structures, Interest cultivation,*

Mass co-ordination, Relationship leverage from Bradley & McDonald, M. (2011) under which social media is being used for Total Compensation & Benefits.

E-Learning, Online Platforms and Career Development

Training and Learning Platforms: Social media complements training & development and covers areas of knowledge that formal training can rarely address. Daniel H. Pink in his foreword (.p xiv) of the book “The New Social Learning: A Guide to Transforming Organizations through Social Media”, written by Bingham and Connor (2010) describes the use of social media for training & employee development. He mentions that social learning isn’t a replacement for training and employee development. But it can accomplish what traditional approaches often cannot. He talks about technology-enabled approach that can supplement instruction with collaboration and co-creation and, in so doing, blur the boundary between the instructor and the instructed and enhance the experience of all.

As per Pink, social learning can leave a “digital audit trail” that reveals the path of a learning journey and allows others to retrace it. It can re-energize conferences by providing a backchannel of feedback and queries. It can bring far-flung employees together into new communities in which they can not only learn from one another, but also fashion new offerings for customers. In short, social media as per him can change the way a company works.

The employment relationship has changed and employers have realised that social media engagement is a fun way of learning. It can connect diverse employees located all across the globe onto one page and employees can choose to self-learn for their career development rather than be taught things forcefully. Bingham and Connor (2010) mention that aside from existing social media platforms such as linkedin, facebook, twitter, and coursera, custom development for more social and interactive learning has been achieved for

learning and training such as IBM Websphere Portal Server, Microsoft Sharepoint, SAP Netweaver, and Oracle Beehive (p.7). This dynamic social technology has influenced Human resources to support it as a cost effective delivery of training programmes, resulting in learning, and creating a connected and engaged workforce which reinforces their talent management strategies. Thus Human Resources Department is now using emerging patterns of collaboration such as *Expertise Location, Collective Intelligence, Emergent Structures, Interest cultivation, Mass co-ordination, Relationship leverage from Bradley & McDonald, M. (2011)* under which social media is being used for Training and Learning Platforms.

Career Development: In their book Bingham & Conor (2010) describe the use of social technology by citing the beautiful example of the head of Intel's human resources learning and development group who posted his semi-annual assessment scores to the entire Intel learning and development community and invited discussion on a global level.

In effect, he used a mashup to say, "Let's talk. How can I work on these things?" He used the technology Intel uses for collaboration (a companywide wiki) and feedback about him personally (his review) in a forum where people could add their perspectives on him and the organization to create something that hadn't existed before. He also asked people to be his employees and customers, coaches, and teachers. His role modelling and risk taking led to further conversations about being more strategic as a group and sped up how everyone learns. (Bingham & Conor, 2010, .p 18)

Human Resources Department is therefore now stressing on Business Performance and is trying to give individual 360 degree feedback via social Technology to ensure there is a positive overall impact on the business. Thus Human Resources Department is now using emerging patterns of collaboration such as *Expertise Location, Collective Intelligence, Emergent Structures, Interest cultivation, Mass co-ordination, Relationship leverage from*

Bradley & McDonald, M. (2011) under which social media is being used for Career Development.

Policies on Access and Confidentiality: Limits of the Personal and Professional Space

Policy Creation and Implementation: Employment relationships get complicated as employees are now able to build or ruin corporate image in their personal and professional social media accounts. Employers, in retaliation, seek to protect their strategies and employee communications by publishing social media policies which could result in the termination of an employee if the policy is violated. While at the same time they need to ensure that the policy is such that it does not violate the employees' basic right to speech and expression. For the employers such policies are delicate as unions need to be in agreement with it.

The employers are also in a paradox, on one hand they are keen to ensure that workers are productive without really limiting the access to social media and internet. In the case of call centers, some Management have internet kiosks for non-work-related purposes and employees can access the internet during their breaks. Some companies on the other hand, provide access to the internet to all staff and employees as they feel the benefits of social technology outweighs its cons as supported by "The *Harvard Business Review*" which projected that social media could increase worker productivity by as much as 20-25%. (HBR, 2012). Human Resources Department are now as a result shaping social media policies that determine usage, encourage consistency within an organization, reinforcing branding & best practices while protecting the right to speech of the employees.

Thus, the Human Resources Department is now using emerging patterns of collaboration such as *Collective Intelligence, Emergent Structures, Interest cultivation from Bradley & McDonald, M. (2011)* under which social media is being used for Policy Creation and implementation.

Rewards & Recognition

Recognition Platforms: Social Recognition is using software/Social pages to enable people to recognize one another. It has shifted the employment relation by making recognition of companies/employees global than just within the organization. An employee recognized or an award received by the company is incorporated via social technology and is shared on the company website/Facebook /LinkedIn page etc. Employers Human Resource Department and employees now share events, ceremonies, and success stories via social technology which highlight creativity, recognition of an employee or of the company to all stakeholder masses. Many companies use social technology to put up the nominees for employee of the month and use online polls to decide on the winner. This creates hype and excitement among employees and maintains transparency of decision. Social technology thereby transcends the one dimensional approach of existing reward and recognition programs.

Thus Human Resources Department are now using emerging patterns of collaboration such as *Expertise Location, Collective Intelligence, , Interest cultivation, Mass co-ordination, Relationship leverage from Bradley & McDonald, M. (2011)* under which social media is being used for Recognition of the employee as well as the employer.

Employee Engagement & Retention Strategies: Regular and repeated face to face engagement with employees has simply become unrealistic for the Human resources department with the growing number of employees and the restricted number of support positions to council them. Instead innovative ways such as wishing an employee a Happy Anniversary or recognizing their achievement as mentioned earlier on a social networking site/company website delivers the right touch. Social Technology is a great opportunity to feel the pulse of employees. Employment relation has shifted from Autocratic leadership towards Servant Leadership. The needs of the employees are put first to develop and make

them perform as highly as possible. Human resources department and employers are now using Social Technology to feel the pulse of the industry and the employee on a real time basis which is more effective than a formal town hall. An example being that Human Resources Department of BPO's often read BPO confession pages to understand the pulse of the employees across the industry. Anonymous online surveys within the company, Group pages or Individual employee pages on Facebook, Twitter, and blogs represent feelings of the employees thus enabling Human Resources teams to actively pinpoint employee problems and helps in engaging and retaining them.

Human Resource teams now use Job Sites not only to hunt external candidates for vacant positions but also use it as a tool to view C.V's put up by employees within their company. This can help put in place an early warning system to potential employee attrition and can be addressed by the Human Resources Department and the employee's immediate managers accordingly. Thus Human Resources Department are now using emerging patterns of collaboration such as *Expertise Location, Collective Intelligence, Interest cultivation, , Relationship leverage from Bradley & McDonald, M. (2011)* under which social media is being used for Engagement and Retention Strategy.

Summary and Conclusion

The employer-employee relationship has been greatly affected by Human Resource Business Cycle through the change revolution by social technology, as demonstrated by the Patterns of Collaboration within social technologies. These changes range from the visibility of information to employees and potential hires, to the shift of policies in sole favour of the company to more customized ones based on employee needs. **Table 1** summarizes these affective relationships between social technology, HR business cycle, and the employer-employee relationship.

From the beginning of the cycle, at sourcing and hiring, strategies have been a more direct relationship between corporation and individuals with more innovative and accessible means of communication. Employers undertake branding activities with less budget, while employees leverage on the accessibility of statistics and information. There is certain leveraging of the relationship and network between the two parties, by maintaining a close and credible relationship. Turn-around times for hiring have also been more efficient through social media, while diversifying strategy even on a cost-per-hire basis.

Traditional relationship limitations between the employee and employer are being challenged by social technology because of its mobility, ease-of-access and the breadth of information available. Compensation and Benefits are now more negotiable and transparent, as benchmarks and salary reports are available online. The practice of providing higher compensation for engagement is being challenged by the value of corporate culture and brand image, while still maintaining internal & external equity.

Training and Career management platforms have drastically changed to cater to different generations, even providing leverage to those of the younger, less experienced yet highly technology-competent workforce. Acquiring of skills, apart from those being “fed” to the workforce by the employer is now possible through free, social, mobile and internet-based application. Information also has now been more collective, but learning more individualistic. A 360° evaluation is now possible, not only in performance assessment but also in prospective development assignments and programs.

Policies and systems have now been customized to cater to the demands of the employees who in turn, try to balance their private and professional spaces. Power of building and breaking of corporate strategy and identity has now been shared to individual employees,

evident in their personal pages. Virtual connections between corporations, including competitors, and individuals is now possible and influence may be strong as well.

Rewards and Recognition programs have also been customized to address the more diversified needs of the employees in terms of attention and credit. Human resource departments are now finding innovative ways of rewards – ones which create hype and strong motivation. These programs are also used to attract potential hires via social technology due to its unlimited reach and possibilities for collaboration.

Finally, employee engagement, loyalty and retention has continued to be a challenge in the field of human resources as the HR Departments devise new metrics to leverage on social media to feel the pulse of the industry and its stakeholders. Authoritarian leadership in the corporate world is now being shifted to servant-leadership by highlighting the importance of putting the employee welfare as priority.

In conclusion, not only has social technology changed the way we have done our jobs as HR practitioners, but it has more importantly revolutionized the rules by which we play, and the tools that we can utilize in the industry. We are faced with expanding challenges, but significantly also unlimited possibilities for innovation. As businesses grow, so should the business of support teams such as Human Resources.

APPENDIX

Table 1. Summary of the relationships between the patterns of collaboration within social technologies, HR Business Cycle and its transformational effect in the employer-employee relationship.

Patterns of Collaboration within Social Technologies	HR Business Cycle	Effects of Social technology within the HR Business Cycle	Transformational Employer-Employee relationship
Expertise Location Mass Coordination Relationship Leverage	Sourcing and Hiring	From HR to Social Media Manager Shift Toward Strategic Social Hiring	Hunter to the Hunted Relationships and Connections Informed Choice and Candidate Power
Expertise Location Collective Intelligence Emergent Structures Mass Coordination Relationship leverage	Compensation and Benefits	Addressing Compensation Issues	Employee Bargaining Power
Expertise Location Collective Intelligence Emergent Structures Mass Coordination Relationship leverage	Training and Career Development	Self-learning and Alternative channels of learning Stress on Business Performance and Socially developed performance assessment	Spoon-fed learning to Self-Learning and Interactive channels
Collective Intelligence Emergent Structures Interest Cultivation Relationship Leverage	Policy and Systems Management	Policies on personal and professional areas of privacy	Personal and Professional Life Balance
Expertise Location Collective Intelligence Interest Cultivation	Rewards and Recognition	Techniques for Radical Recognition	Unlimited Reach
Expertise location Collective Intelligence Interest Cultivation Relationship Leverage	Retention Strategy	Enforcer to Counsellor	Authoritarian leadership to Servant leadership

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