

Workday and TalkTalk

Discovering the power of one

TalkTalk, as you might expect, is all about communication. As one of the UK's leading telecom companies, it has evolved through a combination of organic growth and acquisitions since divesting from Carphone Warehouse in 2010. As the company grew, TalkTalk wanted better, faster, and more-efficient ways to communicate with its employees and to create a better workplace experience. But prior to deploying Workday, the company's outdated HR technology stood in the way.

"We had an old system with limited functionality and little manager or colleague self-serve capability," says Kathryn Heywood, director of HR operations and resourcing at TalkTalk. The company was suffering with an outdated recruitment tracking system – a critical component of its business. Employees had to complete multiple manual processes to accomplish even the most routine HR tasks, and managers had poor visibility into the business.

"Our driving force was to create a consumer-grade experience for our managers and our employees. We wanted to enable our shared services further by giving them state-of-the-art technology to transform the way they thought about HR."

TalkTalk turned to Workday for its common system and single view of the business. "Workday has all the functionality HR needs in one system. You can implement it all at once and don't have to take a phased approach, if that's your preference," Heywood says.

"It is very much end-user focused. That was what we were trying to create for our colleagues and managers – a great user experience – and Workday has allowed us to do that," she comments. "It also helped us manage recruitment through the HR system, which previously had been separate, so it provided us with one system to do everything."

TalkTalk chose to do a "big bang" deployment, rolling out Workday Human Capital Management, Workday Recruiting, Workday Benefits, Workday Compensation, Workday Absence Management, Workday Time Tracking, and Workday Talent Management simultaneously across 2,500 workers within 6 months, and creating 13 integrations to external systems, including 1 integration into ADP – the company's payroll system.

TalkTalk For Everyone

Case at a glance

- Headquartered in London, England
- More than 2,500 employees
- 4 million customers under the TalkTalk and TalkTalk Business brands
- Revenues of £1,975 million (2015)

Workday applications

- Human Capital Management
- Learning
- Recruiting
- Time Tracking

Summary of benefits

- Migrated 7 historical systems into Workday, with 13 integrations in 6 months
- Realised more than 90 per cent user adoption within the first month
- Reduced average time to hire by 10 per cent – now just 33 days
- Increased internal referrals from 5 per cent to 13 per cent, taking direct hiring to 44 per cent
- Reduced recruitment agency spend from 13 per cent to 8 per cent
- Presented a single source of HR data and real-time insights
- Provided a flexible, adaptable system that supports company growth

Adoption in record time

It didn't take long to see the first positive results with Workday. Within a month, 90 per cent of people had logged in to the system. This was unprecedented. Within three months, requests to the shared services centre dropped. Managers could access the information they needed directly and people found what they needed through the easy-to-use Workday interface.

As a result, TalkTalk's HR function has become more strategic and agile. Prior to Workday, HR was transactional, filled with manual processes, and reacting to and firefighting for the business. Now, HR spends 65 per cent to 70 per cent of its time developing strategy. It implements and strengthens Centres of Excellence, leading the way on talent, resourcing, reward, and change management. "Workday's technology has helped free us to be proactive and future-focused, and to tackle exciting things like culture, behaviours, and creating a great place to work," says Heywood.

The senior management team quickly adopted Workday. "Our CEO and the executive team embraced it," she says. "At the time we went live, there were moves at the executive level, and our CEO managed all of those moves in Workday and then blogged about it. This level of engagement helped to engage other senior management very early on."

The integration to ADP was also a success, she recalls. "Workday is the single source of truth for ADP payroll. We consistently achieve 99.9% accuracy, and have also achieved 100% accuracy."

With its Workday deployment, TalkTalk went from seven disparate HR systems to just two: Workday and ADP payroll. The tools for managing time, employee leave, compensation, benefits, and payroll are now in one place, creating a single, trusted source for all data and eliminating dozens of forms and spreadsheets.

"I can be sure we have accurate data now," Heywood emphasises. "If we see that our turnover is 20% in one area of the business, we trust the data. Workday is the single source of truth for anything to do with our people."

Changing as the business changes

Heywood sees the benefit in the regular Workday updates and how they enable TalkTalk to configure Workday to its business needs. "We're always developing the system in line with the updates Workday is making to the product, but also to make it fit our business," she says. "Workday is a system that is continually evolving and enhancing our business."

Regarding the worker experience, Heywood says, "We've had people come to us and say how easy it is to move somebody from one team to another. They also say that it's great to see everything about a team in one place. They can see payment history, compensation, performance reviews, LinkedIn profiles, skills and capabilities, attendance history, bonus history, and so on. It's easy to see and do everything in one place."

An HR system for everyone

As a manager, Heywood relies on Workday every day. "I use it for everything, really," she says. "I go on it every day to check holidays, to recruit new people into the teams, to move people, to look people up, or if I want to make additional payments to people. I also use the dashboards to understand where things are and look at trends. I use Workday to understand our data and prepare metrics for the business."

She continues, "Workday is a state-of-the-art system. If you use it to its full potential, it transforms the experiences of colleagues and managers. It gives them the consumer-grade experience that they get outside of work, within work, for everything to do with their people."

Looking back, it was clear that getting buy-in from across the organisation on Workday was critically important. It should not just be seen as another HR project or solution, but as a system that will support the business. "That's a key differential," states Heywood. "We put Workday in as a system for the business to do its people things, not an HR system for HR."

Nigel Sullivan, group HR director at TalkTalk, sums up the impact Workday has delivered. "Workday has had a transformational effect on how we manage our people at TalkTalk. I sometimes describe what we have done as 'empowering our employees to take control of their own careers.' HR doesn't have a divine right to be the gatekeeper for all people data, as often happens in a traditional HR management setting," he says. "With Workday, our people have direct, 24/7 access to their information, which is accessible from any device and at any location. They and their managers are now liberated to perform in what we describe as a 'consumer-grade' technology environment. It has also helped free up resources so the HR team can make a more strategic contribution to the rest of the business."



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