Chapter 8

Utilization of Social Networks for Human Resources Purposes

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ABSTRACT

Social media is revolutionizing the way people connect and share information. LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and other social media are changing the way we interact, and many organizations are struggling to respond. Given the potential risks and benefits of social media in the workplace, it is critical for managers to develop policies and procedures governing its appropriate use. This chapter identifies key issues and poses strategic questions to help guide managers in making more informed decisions when navigating social media issues in their organizations. After a brief introduction, current most popular social websites and tools are described concisely. Relationships between social media and human resources are then discussed. Utilizing social media in organizations are not without risks, which are thoroughly talked about further along with the benefits of such websites for recruitment. Finally, recommendations are made for companies that are considering utilizing social media and for companies that have already benefitted from such networks to improve their strategies.

INTRODUCTION

There has always been a high demand on human resources decision makers and managers. The change in demographic and expert scarcity has dramatically increased competition for expert employees. Companies must constantly move forward in order to keep in line with advancements in the employee market whilst being up to date with latest market trends. The most prominent key trend that has emerged among young people is the internet which has transformed from being a one-way information platform to becoming Web 2.0 that features interactive user base information exchange. With the transformation of the mobile phone to smart phones, social networks are accessible at anytime from anywhere and have become a major part of everyday life. Social media applications are being launched every day. Social media platforms are being utilized by companies to showcase themselves and as a means of communication with their customers and employees.

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Companies must fundamentally change their culture to reap the benefits of social networks. A lot of companies portray a young trend-oriented image of themselves on social network platforms. Also, social media enables companies’ communication reach to expand considerably by taking advantage of users’ networks. The only downside of the introduction of social media is the lack of strategy, internal knowledge and access.

Platform choice is vital to social media success. A company will decide on utilizing a social network based on how widely their platform is used. However, other factors are also decisive in the choice of social networks. The intended use is another distinguished factor for platform choice. A company’s success depends on the implementation of the utilized social network platform.

The utilization of social networks for human resources purposes is still a new concept for both companies and employees. However, applicants are mostly familiar with the human resources applications presented to them by companies. Such applications are normally based on early employee cycle stages notably employer branding and recruiting as it is easier to assess and attribute success directly. Companies should get involved in social media in an active and timely manner and increase efforts in mobile recruitment systems and integrate new technology into current human resources processes.

Once social media are correctly utilized, they add considerable value in the field of human resources. However, a properly thought through decision making and implementation process is required to guarantee success. The way in which company efforts to attract expert employees that harnesses the potential of the digital world is crucial in today’s competitive workforce market.

Social Media Websites and Tools

Facebook

A social networking service where users create personal profiles, add other users as friends and exchange messages, including automatic notifications when they update their own profile. Additionally, users may join common-interest user groups, organized by common characteristics (e.g. workplace). Users can instant message each other through the website.

Blog

A discussion or informational site published on the internet that consists of entries (‘posts’) typically displayed in reverse chronological order, i.e. the most recent post appears first. Until 2009 blogs were usually the work of a single individual, occasionally of a small group, and often covered a single subject. More recently multi-author blogs” have developed, with posts written by large numbers of authors and professionally edited. Blogs consist of regular entries of commentary and descriptions of events (blogging). The content of a micro blog is simply smaller in size.

Google

An American multinational corporation specializing in Internet-related services; most famously its core search engine, but also a large chain of products including Google+, the second largest social networking site in the world (as of January 2013).