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According to the newly released Paychex Pulse of HR Survey, HR leaders across the country have a renewed focus on talent management in 2018. The second annual report from [Paychex, Inc.](#), a provider of integrated human capital management solutions for payroll, HR, retirement, and insurance services, both reaffirmed HR's critical role in shaping company strategy and revealed a sharpened focus on talent management activities that have a meaningful impact on employee engagement and company culture.

Advances in technology and evolving employee needs present HR with new challenges every day, but there is good news: today's HR leaders continue to have strategic influence with their organization's C-suite. Between 2017 and 2018, the same number (80%) of HR leaders said they feel they are a strategic partner within their organization – and nearly half (44%) report meeting with their CEO, CFO, or both on a weekly basis in 2018.

The Paychex report also showed a commitment to talent management, as 85% of respondents said they're focusing on company culture to drive results, and 77% feel their current HR technology solution is improving overall employee experience.

“Between the U.S. reaching full employment, significant shifts in societal trends and priorities, and a new generation entering the workforce, HR is uniquely positioned to manage talent in a way that drives higher engagement and better business results,” said [Leah Machado](#), Paychex senior director of HR services. “For that reason, attracting, engaging, and retaining high-quality talent is more important today than perhaps ever before.”

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developed a culture of inclusion and diversity, as well as one that offers ample opportunities for career advancement. Supplementing the human touch that is inherent to the HR function with tools and technologies that help to connect the employees to their work in a way they've become accustomed to in their personal lives can help HR professionals create an employee experience that rivals top competitors and ultimately improves overall employee engagement.”

Societal Shifts

Societal trends and priorities are driving changes to employee protection policies. In fact, 83% of HR leaders surveyed say they now have a discrimination and harassment policy in place, and 65% have updated those policies within the last 12 months. Additionally, 67% have re-evaluated their pay practices this year with an eye on gender equality.

“There is no doubt that the #MeToo movement has had an impact on the workplace by opening positive dialogues on pay practices, the work environment, and anti-retaliation policies,” said Edwina Maxwell, Paychex human resources coach.

“Business leaders today are increasingly attentive to their HR policies and practices and are laser-focused on creating and maintaining workplaces that are free from even the perception of harassment, discrimination, or pay inequality.”

Multi-generational Workforce

In 2017, HR leaders were far less likely to be comfortable supporting the HR needs of Millennials when compared to Gen Xers and Baby Boomers. One year later, though, managing the multi-generational workforce seems to have evened out, as perceived support for all generations hovered at around 51%. In 2017, 64% of HR leaders felt managing the needs of Gen X was a significant challenge, followed by Baby Boomers (57%) and Millennials (48%).

“Millennial employees now make up the [largest segment](#) of the workforce, and our

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immense opportunity to create joyful, long-term employees.

The role HR plays in driving engagement and culture is powerful, but those are far from the only topics impacting the industry today. The Paychex Pulse of HR Survey also revealed insights on HR technology's role in driving efficiency, along with the proliferation of non-traditional benefits as a means for attracting and retaining top talent. [Click here](#) to view the complete report.

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