

EBOOK

7 DEADLY SINS OF HR



In order to solve your business problems, you need to solve your people problems. But too often, HR loses sight of the people and focuses on things that don't move the needle in terms of achieving business goals. Any HR department worth its salt will focus on strategic initiatives—like using data to hire, develop, and engage talent.

We asked our PI People Operations team to compile a list of seven sins they see their HR counterparts making on a regular basis. Our hope is that you'll identify those you're guilty of and atone for them by making it your mission to do better.

SIN #1:

Sticking to the “transactional stuff” and not considering culture

“

Often, employees view HR as a transactional part of the business only. It’s our job to help people understand that HR/People Ops not only handles the transactional tasks ‘behind the curtain,’ but we also strategize to help build a high-performing culture and engaged workforce. We have our PI Grow wellness initiative, our employee workshops, our company outings ... We’re more than benefits and tough conversations!

KEVIN STEVENS

Talent Operations Specialist at PI



SIN #2:

Prioritizing process over common sense

“

A smart, savvy talent function will create systems and processes so that their work is scalable with checks and balances. But everything—even process—is best in moderation. Process for the sake of process will quickly signal to the rest of the business that HR isn't a business partner, but another obstacle. An organization that beats its employees over the head with bureaucracy and makes doing the right thing complicated or arduous shouldn't be surprised when people start to see HR as working against their interests.

WILL OTTO
Recruiter at PI



SIN #3:

Not taking advantage of technology

“

There are so many technology tools that will help automate workflows and processes. This is the easiest way to free up time so you can focus on the people strategy. Here at PI we use Greenhouse, Zenefits, and—of course—the PI software!

JACKIE DUBE

VP of People Operations at PI



SIN #4:

Failing to be action-oriented

“

Most talent functions want to be in the know, and the earlier the better. And for good reason: There's legal risk if HR is kept in the dark. A great human capital professional will ask lots of questions and tell you that the door to his or her office is always open. But with access to all that information comes responsibility. If you ask managers to come to you about performance issues, you need to be ready to follow up with the right people. If you ask employees to take an engagement survey, you need to be accountable for agreed-upon outcomes for using that data. By staying action-oriented, the talent function can destigmatize the idea that HR is where important information goes, just to sit unused until it's too late.

WILL OTTO
Recruiter at PI



SIN #5:

Prioritizing hiring speed over hiring quality

“

We all know that when there's a vacant seat, it means that someone else is picking up the load, or the job just isn't getting done. It's easy to get someone in the seat, but hiring the wrong person can be costly—not only to your bottom line, but also in that you're likely to disenfranchise the high performers in your company. Take the time to ensure you're hiring the right person for the role.

JACKIE DUBE

VP of People Operations at PI



SIN #6:

Acting like company hall monitors

“

HR/People Ops teams don't need to be watching every move that people make (when they come in, when they leave, how long their lunch break is, how much PTO they've taken, etc.). When we allow employees to work on the honor system, it creates a culture of trust. WE LOVE TRUST! Of course, rules are important, but let's not go overboard and forget about what makes us great—our culture and our people.

KEVIN STEVENS

Talent Operations Specialist at PI



SIN #7:

Not using data/metrics

“

A wise person once said, ‘You cannot run your company on anecdotes.’ Data tells the story and measures rates of success. Because HR is in the people business, it tends to be left out of the data discussion. But people and data are not mutually exclusive. If we aren’t using metrics as the basis for our decisions and strategy, we’re just using our gut.

JACKIE DUBE

VP of People Operations at PI



HR is often seen as a bureaucratic obstacle governed by red tape and regulations. Systems and processes are, of course, necessary—but they're best in moderation.

Leverage technology to automate workflows and processes. This allows you to spend less time on transactional tasks and more time digging into your people data and applying those insights to hire the right people and build an engaged workforce.

If you're not strategic in how you build your team and get them to perform—and if you're not intentional about the culture you create, it will be difficult to get the business results you desire.