

The internet is revolutionising HR efficiencies in line with the Gershon report

Richard Thomas, Strategy Director at MidlandHR investigates...

Public sector targets set by the Gershon report demand annual efficiency gains of 2.5% per annum. With HR resources in government typically accounting for 1-2% of the total workforce and with clear case study evidence of the potential to save 35-40% of operational expenditure on HR, the streamlining and refinement of HR operations in local government is now high on the agenda.

To achieve the operating efficiencies set out by the report, significant savings are required from 'back office' operations through; simplification and standardisation of process, adoption of best practice, devolvement of information and data capture through employee and manager self-service, and sharing transactional support through shared services. The internet is playing a major role in the realisation of HR's operating efficiencies, placing the HR function firmly at the forefront of organisational change.

Web-based HR and payroll software solutions such as MidlandHR's iTrent, are zero footprint, greatly reducing hardware and deployment costs as well as the total cost of ownership. The web page format provides a familiar, rich interface allowing ready adoption by the wide range of user types which access the system via self service. Whether at work or at home (or anywhere in between on the end of a mobile phone) people are able to access their systems and this has revolutionised ways of working.

The internet has revolutionised all the key HR processes central to any successful organisation including; talent management through e-recruitment, on-line performance management, and e-learning, absence management and flexible benefits.

Furthermore, the internet's development has also enabled the creation of associated intranet and extranet technologies. The Government Secure Extranet (GSE) for example, opens up the advantages of economies of scale between public and private sector buyers, while the Government Secure Intranet (GSI) is a key part of the government's networking strategy, which already links public sector organisations.

It is important to note however, that whilst web technology is a tool to manage; there is no replacement for good management. Web-based HR systems help organisations understand which people strategies create value and which don't, where to cut costs and where to invest more for greater return through improved performance.