

Canadian biotechnology company works smarter, not harder, with Workday

The cloud-based solution integrates HR operations, boosting efficiency and creating a more engaging work environment





Call for change

Streamlining systems for more transparency

When a leading biotechnology company deployed Workday globally in 2018, its Canadian business sought to harmonize its own HR systems and leverage the cloud-based platform. The business needed to synchronize two different methods that were being used to manage its HR systems across four siloed workforces. Multiple HR processes, such as tracking absences and calculating leave time, were handled manually via spreadsheets, and approvals were sent through email chains.

These disparate systems meant it was impossible to have a holistic view that provided transparency into processes for leadership and workers alike. The aim was to enable a more integrated and efficient HR operation, and standardize and streamline its payroll benefits, applications, and processes.



When tech meets human ingenuity

Closely collaborating for success

Accenture and the client worked closely to plan the HR transformation, identify the impacts of the new solution, and communicate approaches. The successful deployment included five key elements:

1. Detailed plan. The first step was to outline the timing, resources and dependencies required for an HR transformation that would manage everything from benefits and payroll to absences. The team ran through rollout scenarios multiple times to ensure accurate timing, involved all people engaged in the testing process, and communicated all aspects of the plan with the core team that would manage the go-live.

2. Backup network. To mitigate issues that might arise, the team identified concrete backup resources, including internet connectivity, to eliminate possible delays or interruption of the deployment. If someone was going to be unexpectedly unavailable, or if one person was in charge of multiple tasks, there were standby resources in place to step in.

3. Practice. With the plan—and the backup plan—in place, the next step was to complete multiple, detailed test runs to ensure the go-live would run smoothly.

4. In it together. Accenture and the client worked as an integrated team to streamline communications for eased coordination and immediate problem-solving. A continuous and shared

stream of communication allowed the team to move at a rapid pace, eliminating surprises, solving problems, and making adjustments in real time throughout the process. By working collaboratively with every player invested in the success of the project, the team made all necessary adjustments and satisfied client needs within budget.

5. Meet frequently. The global COVID-19 pandemic struck near the end of the project and the team had to quickly pivot to a 100% remote work model. This did not hinder the communication cadence. The team spoke regularly, virtually to address areas of concern before they became problems. Together, the team rallied ensuring the effort was one of the early completely virtual go lives of the pandemic.

Applying deep Workday and industry knowledge, Accenture equipped the client team to perform the configuration migrations and setup, and both teams developed strong collaboration skills that successfully drove the project. Throughout the engagement, the client's team members understood the Canadian requirements, knew which key decision-makers could help expedite decisions, and aligned with the global Workday standards of the client.



A valuable difference

Automating analyses means teams work smarter not harder

The solution was integrated on time and under budget. HR resources in Canada now spend less time on day-to-day transactional steps and more time on strategic HR work, such as planning new HR initiatives, allowing the teams to work smarter not harder by minimizing the burden of manual processes. The client is now getting the most from the deployment of an “all-in-one” integrated solution to handle benefits, payroll, and absences. The Workday cloud-based platform has also allowed the company to establish consistent processes and reporting across its businesses.

Benefits include:



Reducing payroll processing time



Customizing processes to accommodate tax differences from one province to another



Automating compensation plans, benefits processes, continuation of benefits, and pensions calculations—which were previously performed manually



Pulling data into one system, allowing for accurate, real time reporting, for instance on who is on continuation, who is retired, etc.

There is also greater policy consistency between affiliates, more HR data and analytics, and a single system for all HR functions.



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