

A Practical Guide to Simplifying HR Service Delivery

How Service Management Can Unlock the
Potential of Your HR Organization



Imagine if you could break free from time-consuming manual activities – such as answering benefit inquiries or even coordinating employee onboarding tasks. What could you achieve?

Introduction

Great companies are built by great people. And as human resource professionals, our passion is to find outstanding people and help them accomplish extraordinary things. We know that employees are a company's greatest asset, and that high-impact HR teams focus on high-value activities—talent management, training, organizational design, and fostering a winning business culture.

But, too often, our time is spent on simply “keeping the lights on.” In fact, HR decision-makers spend nearly 12 hours a week* handling routine employee calls and emails. This deluge of mundane administrative tasks leaves us struggling to deliver strategic value.

Imagine what it would be like to break free from time-stealing manual activities such as answering benefit inquiries or even coordinating employee onboarding tasks. What could you achieve if someone gave you back 30% of your time? What innovative ideas could you move forward and what impact could you make on your business?

There's a way to reclaim your days. It's called service management, and it complements your existing human capital management (HCM) systems. Service management lets you automate both repetitive and complex manual work, strengthen your business processes, and deliver a vastly better employee experience.

I'm thrilled to share this practical guide for using service management to simplify your HR delivery—the challenges it addresses, how it addresses them, how it can benefit your organization, and some easy ways to get started. And hopefully this will inspire you to get back to doing what you love most—helping great employees build an even greater business.

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* “Transversal, “HR Professionals Waste a Third of Their Day Answering Trivial Questions,” 2013.



Jen Stroud is ServiceNow's HR evangelist, helping customers simplify and improve their HR services. Previously, she was the executive director of Human Capital Services at TeleTech. In that role, Jen led an enterprise HR transformation initiative for its more than 45,000 employees, transitioning the company from a decentralized HR support model to a Shared Services operating model.

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Why is HR Service Delivery so Difficult?

For HR, streamlining business processes is critical. In fact, Towers Watson identified this as the number one HR initiative for the second year in a row.²

Here's why HR service delivery processes are such an issue.

Unstructured Manual Work

HR teams take pride in providing high-touch, high-value services. High touch means they typically rely on personal communications to respond to employee questions, handle cases, and manage other complex HR activities.

However, it's important not to confuse high-touch employee engagement with helping employees find information or complete transactions. For routine administrative services such as these, a manual approach isn't effective or efficient. Employees just want a fast, successful outcome, but instead they're bogged down in complicated, time-consuming processes. This is borne out by a 2015 survey of nearly 1,000 corporate managers.³ For example, nearly 70% said that employee onboarding was frustrating, while almost half said that it took 10 or more interactions across an average of five departments to get ready for an employee's first day on the job.

This manual approach also creates huge pains for HR. Employee requests pour in, with a single inquiry often arriving through multiple channels – such as emails, calls and employee walk-ins. Reconciling and managing these requests is a major headache, even when they are tracked using spreadsheets. Inquiries are lost or buried, generating even more work when employees start to follow up.

As a result, HR ends up being stuck in the “backroom.” They waste time sorting out issues manually, rather than focusing on strategic work such as talent management and training. This defeats the purpose of a high-touch approach. Rather than engaging personally in high-value activities – where high-touch delivers the most benefits – HR is consumed in a constant back-and-forth with employees on mundane tasks.

Lack of Visibility and Accountability

Because HR teams handle routine requests manually, HR leaders struggle to get an accurate view of what everyone is doing. This makes it next to impossible to prioritize and distribute work effectively. There's no system to monitor and analyze requests, so there's no easy way to know what is important for employees. This reduces HR's ability to respond to employees, and prevents HR leaders from maximizing the productivity of their team members.

Employees also lack visibility. They can't see the status of their inquiries, making them feel that their requests have disappeared into a black hole. This generates even more frustration, leading to additional rounds of interaction with HR.

High Employee Expectations

Increasingly, employees expect access to HR information and services around the clock. The demand is already overwhelming. More than 75% of managers want to order corporate services online at work, just like they make a restaurant reservation on their mobile device. Employees want to find benefit information, access training, ask for a leave of absence, and get their tuition expenses reimbursed at the touch of a button. This demand will only increase as an influx of millennials brings digital natives with new values, ideas and expectations into the workplace.

²Towers Watson, “HR Service Delivery and Tech Survey,” 2014.

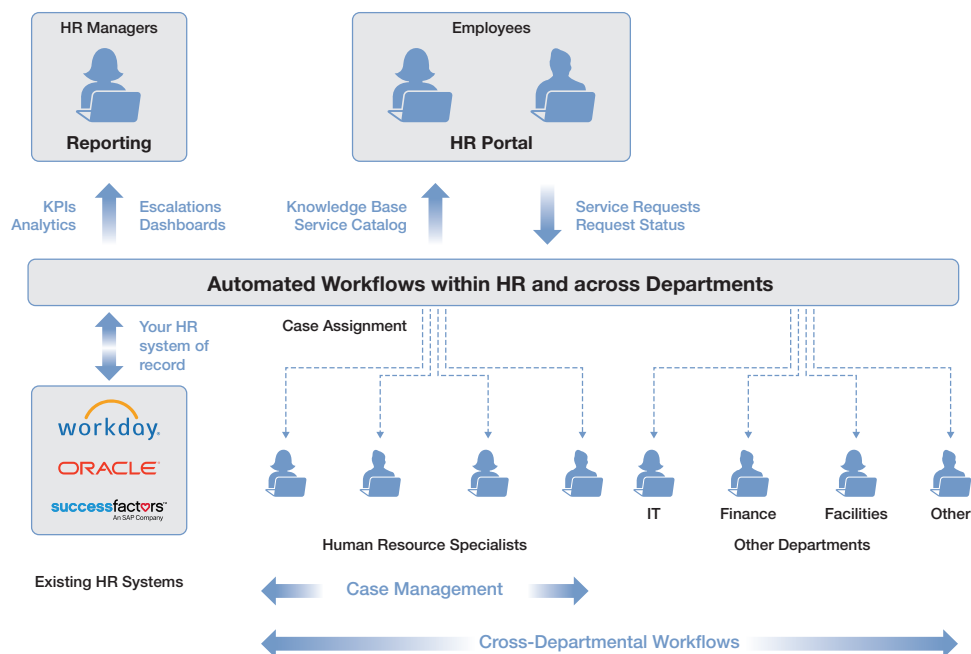
³ServiceNow, “Today's State of Work: The Productivity Drain,” 2015.

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What Exactly is Service Management?

Your HR organization most likely has systems for managing employee data and pay-related activities. However, you probably don't have an automated system to handle employee inquiries and to fulfill these requests. For example, do you still rely on physical paperwork or a string of emails to deal with an employee's jury duty request?

That's what service management does. It doesn't just replace email – it transforms the way you engage with employees. Think of it as the perfect combination of administrative assistant and project manager. It responds instantly to employee requests, progresses cases, automates repeatable manual processes, and even manages complex cross-departmental activities such as employee onboarding. Service management never forgets or makes mistakes, always follows up with people so things get done, and lets you know if there's a problem it can't solve. It also shows you where your people spend their time – so you can optimize resource deployment and maximize productivity. Service management doesn't replace your current HCM system – it integrates with it and complements it, giving you visibility and control of the work you probably do mostly via email today.



Service Management software works with your HR system of record to streamline your HR services across the company.

Now, let's take a look at the service management approach in a little more detail. Here are some of the key aspects of service management.

HR Portal

With service management, you empower your employees with a flexible and intuitive portal where they can find HR information and request HR services – so they can take control of their basic HR needs, such as benefit enrollment and status change updates. They simply select the HR services they need from a service catalog or search for information in the portal's integrated knowledge base. This self-service portal gives your employees access to HR services around the clock, either from their desktop or their mobile device. Employees can also see the status of each of their requests, which is constantly updated as the service management system shepherds the request through the fulfillment process.

If you have complex tasks that span multiple departments – such as employee onboarding – then service management can drive the entire end-to-end process.

Case Assignment and Management

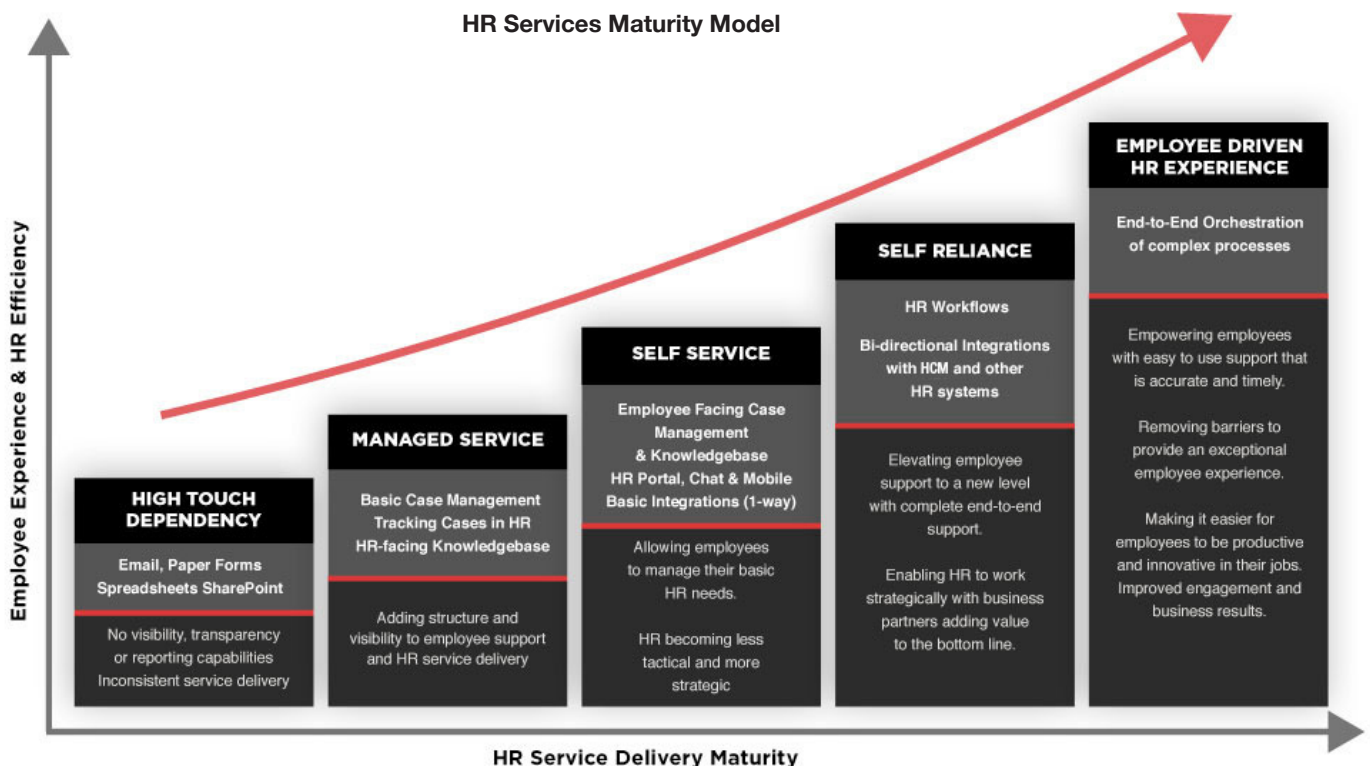
When one of your employees submits an HR request, the service management system automatically creates a case and routes it to the right HR expert using rules that you define. If the case requires multiple steps or approvals, service management automatically handles this as well – it routes cases from person to person as each step is completed. It can even make intelligent decisions on where to route cases next based on what happened in the previous step. As it does this, it tracks the full case history – including capturing notes and chat sessions. It also reminds people if they haven't completed their tasks, and escalates any problems – for example, if a service level agreement (SLA) is at risk.

Cross-Departmental Workflows

Of course, service management can reach beyond your HR organization. If you have complex tasks that span multiple departments – such as employee onboarding – then service management can drive the entire end-to-end process. When you're ready, it can even update systems such as payroll automatically. In fact, IT pioneered service management to automate repetitive tasks such as creating email accounts and resetting passwords, and it's now the de facto standard there. Many organizations are rapidly extending service management to other departments, such as finance, facilities and field service – so there's a great opportunity to work with IT and these departments on service management.

Reports and Dashboards

Service management gives you the visibility you need to measure and improve your HR service delivery performance – such as how well your team responds to inquiries. As IT manages cases, service management collects a wide range of process metrics, so you can spot process bottlenecks, as well as opportunities to drive further operational efficiencies. You'll get dashboards and reports with key KPIs, as well as analytics tools that you can use to dive deep into the data.



While your HCM system may handle some aspects of onboarding, service management can handle this entire process for you.

Service Management

Service management doesn't have to be complicated, and you don't need to take a big bang approach. Pick one or two key areas, and you'll start to see benefits very quickly – in as little as a couple of months. You can probably already see lots of different ways that you could use service management – the possibilities are endless. However, if you're wondering where to start, here are three ideas to get you going.

Employee Onboarding

When a new employee starts, there's a long list of activities that need to get done. These involve multiple departments – such as HR, IT, facilities and finance – but HR usually takes the lead and needs to ensure success. The activities are so varied – ranging from verifying employee data through to installing computers and arranging for credit cards – that coordinating them manually is a huge effort.

While your HCM system may handle some aspects of onboarding, service management can handle this entire process for you. Starting with a simple request, it breaks the process down into individual activities – such as getting a workspace, credit card, security access and phone – and then distributes these to different departments for approval and action. It tracks the status of each activity, and reminds people automatically if they're behind schedule. If an activity is stalled, it escalates this automatically so that you can sort out the problem. It can even eliminate some manual processes entirely – for example, it can create email accounts, and even update HR and finance systems automatically.

Employee Self-Service

Think about how easy it is to buy products on Amazon. You can give the same simplicity and level of service to employees using service management – including 24x7 access from their computers and mobile devices. Choose a few services that you know employees use a lot – requesting time off, for example. Then, use your



Companies such as Envision Healthcare use an HR portal so employees can find and request HR services.

You'll also be able to analyze the questions that employees submit, so you can prioritize and optimize your workload.

service management system to build a storefront for these requests. This isn't just a portal – you'll be able to automate the fulfillment processes behind these requests at the same time. This sounds complicated, but with service management technology it's very easy.

Once you have rolled out a few services, you can start to add more to your service catalog – the sky's the limit. Josh Bersin, founder and principal at Bersin by Deloitte, sums it up nicely, "By weaving many HR processes into employees' daily workflow, solution providers are making it easier and simpler for people to update their status, find their benefits, locate other skilled people, find and take courses, assess job candidates, complete onboarding for a new job, and set or monitor goals."

Handling Employee Questions

Employees are always asking questions about benefits, policies, payroll and other HR topics. Rather than having them send emails or call you, give them a robust knowledge base where they can get the answers they need. Service management can also take more complicated questions and automatically send them to the right experts. For example, it can route questions about qualifying life events to your experts on that topic. It can even track how long it takes for employees to get a response, so you can spot and resolve delays.

You'll be able to track and analyze these knowledge base searches – so you fill in any documentation gaps, and make it easy for employees to find the most searched topics. You'll also be able to analyze the questions that employees submit, so you can prioritize and optimize your workload. For instance, if 20% of inquiries are about vacation policy, you can display this information prominently on your HR portal and promote it to employees. You can even link directly to the right knowledge base article, so that employees learn how easy it is to find information on their own – reducing your number of cases.

Success Stories

Many leading HR organizations have already seen impressive results with service management – results that you can achieve as well. Here are some of their stories.



ING Group, the Dutch banking and financial services company, is using service management to deliver HR services to more than 25,000 employees in the Netherlands. In just three months, they built a self-service HR portal with more than 1,200 knowledge base articles, automated their case management, and integrated service management with their existing HR tools. Employees now have instant access to information on topics such as health, compensation and learning, and are automatically connected to the right HR expert when they need further support. Compared to their previous manual call center approach, ING has now significantly raised employee satisfaction, while dramatically reducing the cost and effort of HR service delivery. According to Mark Van den Berg, ING's Netherlands HR Manager, "The automation opportunities have meant that employees have much of the information they need right at their fingertips, significantly increasing employee satisfaction, and dramatically reducing the number of steps taken for information to be accessed."

By offering your employees a self-service model and automating the fulfillment of your HR services, you become more responsive – and you have more time to spend on strategic activities that move your business forward.



Envision Healthcare, a leading US provider of physician-led outsourced medical services, uses service management to give employees “consumerized” HR services, providing standardized and consistent support for its employees through an HR self-service portal. This portal provides access to HR services anytime and anywhere, including on employees’ mobile devices. Envision now automatically handles many HR service requests, including complex activities such as employee onboarding. They have also created a centralized knowledge base with more than 2,200 articles that employees can access through the self-service portal. The result is that Envision has seen major improvements in employee satisfaction and significant gains in efficiency. Explaining Envision’s decision to move forward with service management, Carlie Bush, Envision’s Director of HR Shared Services, says that, “In speaking to other users who automated HR processes, we were impressed with the deep service operations and automation capabilities.”



Vitamix, a world leader in high-performance home and commercial blending equipment, has adopted service management to scale and automate many of its enterprise services, including HR service delivery, IT services, operations maintenance, and facilities management. The HR team at Vitamix worked closely with their IT team to integrate HR services into an enterprise-wide employee self-service portal, to automate the underlying fulfillment processes, and to create an online knowledge base where employees could find answers to common HR questions. These automated HR services span the entire employee lifecycle – from onboarding to separation. Aside from giving employees easier access to services, service management has also freed up time to focus on high-impact activities. According to Heather Brizzi, Vitamix’s service desk manager, “Many of Vitamix’s repetitive tasks are now automated and streamlined, allowing our business users to deliver more strategic impact.”

Let’s Recap

As a committed HR leader, you want to spend your time where it does the most good – engaged in high-impact initiatives such as talent management and training. However, if you’re like most HR professionals, you and your team spend huge amounts of time handling mundane requests. And, despite the huge effort, it doesn’t win you any thanks – employees are increasingly frustrated with complex, time-consuming processes when they request routine services.

Service management is your opportunity to break free. With service management, you can deliver higher-quality services, increase employee satisfaction, and reduce your own workloads. By offering your employees a self-service model and automating the fulfillment of your HR services, you become more responsive – and you have more time to spend on strategic activities that move your business forward. Your team wins, your customers win, and your business wins – which is why service management deserves to be at the very top of your agenda.

To find out more about how service management can simplify and accelerate your HR service delivery processes, talk to your ServiceNow representative today or go to servicenow.com

About ServiceNow

ServiceNow is changing the way people work. With a service-orientation toward the activities, tasks and processes that make up day-to-day work life, we help the modern enterprise operate faster and be more scalable than ever before. Customers use our service model to define, structure and automate the flow of work, removing dependencies on email and spreadsheets to transform the delivery and management of services for the enterprise. ServiceNow enables service management for every department in the enterprise including IT, human resources, facilities, field service and more. We deliver a 'lights-out, light-speed' experience through our enterprise cloud – built to manage everything as a service. To find out how, visit www.servicenow.com.

