



## **T**rust is key to choosing an outsourcing partner

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*Companies generally seek an HR outsourcing partner offering HR and payroll expertise underpinned by a strong commitment to providing high value added services. Our analysis of the market and customer feedback leads us to conclude that they aim above all to achieve transparency in every binding agreement and in the quality of services delivered by the external provider. These companies seek to benefit from the expertise of HR specialists and wish to work with a partner committed long-term to building scalable, upgradeable HRIS and ensuring a high level of flexibility to adapt to organisations' emerging needs and changing structure.*

*Analysis of each area of commitment expected by companies addresses questions implicit to the decision to outsource.*

*Indeed, turning to outsourcing means entrusting part or even all of a company's HRIS and HR services operations to a third party.*

*This delegation of responsibility can occur only by adhering to a principle mentioned time and again in the opinions expressed by decision-makers—that of trust and a guaranteed level and quality of service.*

## **Service transparency and quality win trust**

Trust is established through transparent communication and sharing of all relevant information. Reassurance, as regards outsourcing, entails evaluation of the capacity to achieve performance. This ability to assess the commitments entered into by an outsourcing service provider is decisive for a company. It must be performed in transparency, in the aim of facilitating proactive communication between the company and its external provider. By publishing quality of service indicators regularly and systematically, this expectation of proof positive can be met. Project steering, assessment and the analysis of performance and quality of service indicators of must be performed based on statistics and models shared by the company and its external provider.

The concept of transparency also offers benefits of cost savings. The pledged objective of outsourcing is to ensure perfect cost predictability. All too often, companies sustain fluctuations in outsourcing services expenses due to non-itemised and insufficiently clarified pricing non-inclusive of specific services. Transparent itemisation of the service offer costs provides the company with a clear understanding of the agreement and pricing. It can therefore control both the budget and related services throughout the duration of the contract.

## Specialist expertise inspires confidence

The choice of outsourcing as an operations model is often considered in anticipation of a company's HR transformation. Consequently, companies share a common need to rely on an outsourcing partner that is a true specialist in the field. Clearly, their level of expectation extends well beyond the boundaries of this study. The need for expertise requires permanent proactive action on the part of the provider enabling the company to benefit from best practices in HR management. Extensive experience accrued through work with many customers and shared with all constitutes an asset for the outsourcing model. To meet the challenges facing the company, maximising this knowledge enables the specialist to make the most relevant recommendations. This advisory draws on best practices in the field as well as applications and technical best practices acquired through wide-ranging experience in different circumstances. Companies can draw on true added value to complement their internal resources.

## Lasting commitment fosters trust Establishing a trust-based relationship over time

When a company decides to approach HR transformation and the revamping of its HRIS, it is fitting to make these changes in a cycle of continuous improvement designed to achieve the strategic progress targeted. This continual adjustment occurs over the medium and long term and involves organisational, technical and functional dimensions. To be effective, the cycle of continuous improvement must be carried out together by the company and its partner. In order to succeed, the two stakeholders must first get to know one another over a period of acquaintance solidifying trust. This must occur early on in the relationship to make the most suitable decisions mutually throughout the duration of the contract.

This reciprocal acquaintance will have a positive impact for the two parties, both in the short and long term. In this way, the optimisation of tools, processes, automated management and the implementation of new process models can be performed with care and within the desired timeframe.

## Flexibility reinforces trust over time

When choosing an external provider, companies seek to establish a working relationship enabling them to continually adjust the level of service to changes in their in-house needs and management policies. Often, decision-makers associate the concept of flexibility with a provider's ability to adapt an offer to the company's situation. This is partly right but the concept of flexibility can be taken a step further if it incorporates the company's potential ability to adjust the operating mode. The company can envision a return to insourcing of its HRIS and related services. Indeed, the decision to outsource is a strategy that can be pursued over an undetermined period—whether long-, short- or medium-term. This gives the company the possibility of insourcing service offers, as well as ensuring flexibility and peace of mind. This flexibility is possible because the technical platform used to deliver the outsourcing services is built on an applications engine that could potentially be handed over to the company. The latter option protects all investments made for proper adoption of the outsourcing services both at the functional level and for users.

Flexibility also means adaptability as regards the levels of service selected by the company as its needs change. This is the ability to opt for different service levels and the possibility of adjusting these throughout the contract to maintain a permanent level of service suited to current circumstances and objectives.

To meet the objectives of HR transformation, companies seek to establish true trust-based partnerships with outsourcing service professionals for HR and payroll management. The latter must offer conclusive added value: high service quality, enhanced productivity through harmonisation of management practices and, of course, cost control for HR departments and HRIS.