

*Analytical Report*

**Strategic HRM Analysis and Assessment of Employee Engagement  
Challenges to Support MTI's Transformation into a High-  
Performance Work Organisation**

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## **Executive summary**

Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) has gained prominent importance in the current environment of business where human personnel are vital to prompt the success of the organisation for a long period of time. This report seeks to be providing a strategic assessment of the Manchester Tech Innovations (MTI), as the company struggles with issues tied to employee engagement. With the deployment of frameworks like PEST and SWOT, the external pressures like the talent scarcity, regulatory alterations, and technological turbulences will be identified by the analysis, being rendered as the core prompters of molding the HR dynamics and internal performance of MTI. In addition, the High-Performance Work Organisation (HPWO) theory will be used for examining the preparedness of the company in terms of the transformation as a high-performing company. The report also gauges the connection amongst the HR practices of the MTI and its organisational strategy, using a SHRM perspective. The Best Fit approach is applied for analysing the MTI's alignment or misalignment of the HR system with internal culture, external demands, and the ambitions linked with growth. Rigorous technical capability is indicated by the uncovered findings, accompanied by major weaknesses with regards to the leadership communication, career advancement, personnel recognition, internal pipelines of talent, and performance management. Therefore, a set of recommendations are proposed at the end of the report with an intention of assisting the MTI company in combatting its obstacles and becoming a High-Performance Work Organisation.

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## 1. Introduction

Manchester Tech Innovations (MTI), a mid-sized United Kingdom (U.K) based technology consulting firm which came into being in the year 2015 is currently confronting a notable amount of the challenges related to the engagement of the employees. This company operates inside a strongly dynamic and competitive climate of the technology consultancy. Owing a number of 850 personnel throughout the U.K and ambitions for the European expansion, the reliance of the company must be upon highly talented, high-performing, and engaged base of staff members, as suggested by Molulon (2023). However, a wide range of issues, such as the rising turnover, diminishing personnel engagement, inadequate amount of internal promotions, incrementing sickness absence, and heightening difficulties related to recruitment are troubling the company. As identified by Mizen et al. (2022), all of these issues classify as the patterns that are broadly consistent with the retention hurdles encountered by the firms operating inside U.K's tech sector after the pandemic of COVID'19.

The aim of this report is to critically examine the present situation of MTI, looking at the firm's internal and external environment, by using PEST and SWOT analysis. The analysis will be applying the HPO theory for evaluating the present organisational practices at MTI. Secondly, a strategic model of HRM will be used with an aim to analyse the extent to which MTI's current HRM practices support or contrast with its strategic objectives and prevailing HRM Practices. For this purpose, the SHRM model known as the Best Fit model will be deployed. Afterwards, the report will be proceeding to investigate the ways in which the SHRM can be used for catering to the prevalent obstacles at MTI, and support the growth motives for the future so that the company can become a high performing work organisation. So, valuable recommendations will be set out to support MTI's transition to a HPWO.

## 2. Critical Examination of MTI's Current Situation Using a SWOT And PEST Analysis

This section of the report seeks to critically examine the present situation of MTI's internal and external environment with the use of two valuable tools known as PEST analysis and SWOT analysis.

### 2.1. PEST Analysis of MTI

PEST analysis, as explained by Kenton (2025) refers to a strategic management tool which is deployed for assessing a firm's macro environment via looking at its four key factors, which are the Political, Economic, Social, and Technological factors. Through PEST, spotting the positive prospects and negative risks become feasible for the business, and resultantly, the strategic decision-making is informed (Yusop, 2018).

#### 2.1.1. Political factors:

The political factors are one of the most influential factors impacting MTI. As revealed by Hoxhaj and Halilaj's (2024) evidence, the capability of the UK tech firms in terms of recruiting the specialist talent is continuously affected by the restrictions on the visas of the skilled worker post-Brexit. Resultantly, the tendency of MTI for swift scaling is hampered, particularly with regards to the cybersecurity and cloud engineering. Secondly, strong strains are put upon the consultancy firms like MTI because of the compliance requirement with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the evolving regulations related to cybersecurity (GDPR, 2018). These

strains are with regards to maintaining the powerful internal systems and guarantee that the personnel stay compliant at all cost (Coglianese and Nash, 2020). As a consequence of this, the requirement of continuous workforce upskilling is escalated at MTI. Moreover, the demand for consultancy services are heightened by the investment of the U.K government into digital transformation, embodied by UK Digital Strategy (Government of UK, 2022). A positive avenue for MTI is emerged due to this, but, competition for skilled personnel is also surged simultaneously.

### **2.1.2. Economic factors**

When it comes to the economic factors, it is uncovered by recent evidence that acute shortages of the skills is experienced by the tech sector of U.K, with difficulties reported by almost 57% of the companies with respect to the hiring of the seasoned professionals (Staffing Industry Analysts (SIA), 2023). Moreover, the costs of labour are incremented by the wage inflation, which also heightens the threat of employee turnover, as indicated by Westermarck, (2019). Furthermore, the spending of the clientele on the technological revolution is impacted by the economic instability emerged after the pandemic (OECD, 2021). These induce a strong amount of strain on the revenue generated by the profits.

### **2.1.3. Social factors**

Social factors also have a substantial impact on MTI. As per a study conducted by Anastasiia, (2021), the expectations of the employee are changing, with younger personnel base, who are of 32 years of age on an average placing a higher worth on work-life balance, prospects of professional advancement, and recognition from the employers. However, the unmet expectations in terms of career progression and managerial communication are hinted by the MTI's survey. While, Nilervall and Lindvert Elmefur, (2024) contend that strong capability of leadership is demanded by the hybrid work, followed by excellent communication and strong trust. But, inside MTI, there exists a clear misalignment with contemporary culture of the workforce by the leadership issues present within MTI, marked by lack of consultation and top-down communication practices.

### **2.1.4. Technological factors**

Thomas, (2025) suggests that the service offerings of the MTI yield additional amount of opportunities because of the quick developments in machine learning and Artificial Intelligence (AI). However, funds are persistently pre-requisite for continuous personnel upskilling, as indicated by Kweilin Ellingrud and Gardner, (2025). Apart from that, the opportunities are undeniably there for MTI in terms of modernising the company's prevailing HR systems through the performance analytics, AI-powered tools of recruitment, and the digital platforms of Learning and Development (L&D) as highlighted by Rehman et al. (2025).

## **2.2. SWOT Analysis of MTI**

A tool of strategic planning which examines the internal factors like the strengths, and the weaknesses, and the external factors, such as the opportunities, and the threats related to a business or a project is known as the SWOT analysis (Kenton, 2025).



*Figure 1: SWOT Analysis  
Source: (Kenton, 2025)*

The SWOT analysis of MTI uncovers the below laid out opportunities and threats, following the strengths and weaknesses.

### **2.2.1. Strengths:**

The following strengths are found in MTI's scenario:

- i. Competitive salary and benefits package.
- ii. Strong reputation in the market and high client satisfaction (4.7/5).
- iii. Surging demand for cloud, digital transformation and cybersecurity services.
- iv. Large graduate intake assuring a consistent pipeline of entry-level talent.

### **2.2.2. Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses emerged in the form of:

- i. Limited internal promotion of only 15% and unclear progression pathways.
- ii. Poor managerial communication and inconsistent performance management.
- iii. Elevated employee turnover of 28%.
- iv. Diversity gaps, specifically the ethnic diversity.
- v. Weak recognition and reward culture (Littlefield, 2022).

### **2.2.3. Opportunities:**

The below outlined opportunities were derived from PEST analysis:

- i. Expansion into Europe (Germany and France).
- ii. Growing government investment in digital transformation.
- iii. Demand for machine learning and AI consulting (McKinsey & Company, 2025).
- iv. Adoption of digital HR technologies for talent analytics and capability building.

#### **2.2.4. Threats:**

The below outlined threats were derived from PEST analysis:

- i. Regulatory changes escalating the compliance burden.
- ii. Economic uncertainty affecting the budgets of the clientele.
- iii. Scarcity of the skilled labour and wage inflation.
- iv. Rivalry from larger consulting firms.

### **3. High-Performance Organisation (HPO) Theory**

A framework through which a unique and lasting enhancement effect is yielded, is referred to as the High-performance organisation (HPO) framework (HPO Center, 2025). Evidence reveals that the evidently upgraded organisational results are achieved by almost all of the organisations around the globe who have applied the HPO framework with discipline (De Waal and Hanna, 2016). Being a conceptual structure which is scientifically valid, the HPO framework permits the managers to decide the major regions of focus, so that the performance of the organisation can be elevated and kept persistent for long durations (Babic et al., 2019). Opposing to a set of guidelines which are required to be adhered to in a strict manner, the HPO framework serves as a useful framework that necessitates the managers to translate it to their particular organisational scenario in the present time period via crafting a specific form of the framework which is appropriate for their respective enterprise (Abdeljawad, 2022). This means that the most ideal managers gain a prospect by HPO to add their personal expertise, experiences, and creative capabilities and induce a transformation to their enterprise, making it a High Performance Work Organisation (HPWO). Thus, the corporations that classify as high performance organisations are those corporations that are capable of consistently attaining superior business outcomes in the form of powerful monetary performance, accompanied by elevated satisfaction of the clientele through placing adequate attention on the most important areas of business.

Waal, (2021) explains that five major dimensions are emphasised by the HPWO theory, which are High quality management, Open and transparent communication, Employee investment and empowerment, Continuous improvement and culture of learning, and Reward systems that support high performance.

Talking about MTI, the company's HPWO analysis reveals that its leadership style classify as top-down, marked by scarce consultation on decisions. The principle of participative leadership connected with the HPWO is opposed by this. Not only this, the unrealistic burdens of work and the inconsistent communication are also highlighted by the comments of the MTI's staff members. Secondly, the insufficient clear pathways of career advancement, accompanied by the zero chances of the internal promotion are seen within MTI. Weak management of talent is portrayed by such practices, as indicated by Prabhu and Swami, (2024). Internal professional growth has been regarded as a fundamental prompter of employee engagement and commitment by the HPWO models, as stated by Babic et al., (2019). Moreover, MTI has such kind of the system of performance reviews that is done on annual basis using a 5-point rating scale, coupled by quarterly check-ins with managers that is inconsistently applied. Esanoluwa, (2025) notes that the real-time coaching is hindered by annual reviews and poorly consistent quarterly check-ins. While, Littlefield (2022) and Jo and Shin (2025) discovered that the discretionary effort is significantly undermined by the poor recognition and lack of perceived fairness.

Moving further, the MTI's case shows that there are complaints of the staff that suggest the underutilisation of the L&D system, and distorted pathways of career, despite an annual training budget of £2,000 for each employee. Apart from that, it is observed that there is a rising pattern of sickness related absence (8.5 days), which points that the workload burden is immense, which is contradicting to the principles of high-performing organisations as it hampers the employee wellbeing (Guest, 2017; Sjöberg et al., 2020).



*Figure 2: High-Performance Work Organisation (HPWO) Analysis of Manchester Tech Innovations (MTI)*

#### **4. Application of SHRM Model(s) to analyse the Extent to Which MTI's Current HRM Practices Align/Misalign with Its Strategic Objectives and Current HRM Practices**

In the present environment of the business, there is evidently emerging a mandatory requirement for organisations to be persistent in adapting to the changing conditions of the market, the dynamics of the workforce, and the progressions in the domain of technology (Cakmak, 2023). According to CIPD (2024), the practices related to the human resources management (HRM) are one of the paramount stimulators of the corporations' capability in terms of tackling the stated

complexities. Taking an approach that is highly forward-looking, SHRM works to connect the human resource practices and the policies with the long-term objectives set by the corporation.

#### **4.1. Best-Fit (Contingency) Model**

The Best Fit model, also called as the Contingency model argues that HR strategies should be in line with the strategy of the organisation, its culture, as well as the whole external environment (Csaszar and Ostler, 2020; Amhalhal et al., 2022). Applying this model to MTI's scenario, the following revelations are made:

##### **4.1.1 Vertical Alignment (HR → Strategy)**

The below misalignments are highlighted:

- a) High-skill retention is demanded because of MTI's growth tactic (AI capabilities, European expansion), but the firm is experiencing a turnover rate of 28%.
- b) A conflict is noted between the strategic goal of becoming "employer of choice" unclear progression and poor internal promotion.
- c) Strong employee engagement is pre-requisite for customer-centric strategy, still, the communication and recognition remain poor inside MTI (Littlefield, 2022).

So, it is clear that, between the HR practices and strategic objectives, a low vertical fit is existent.

##### **4.1.2. Horizontal Alignment (HR → HR)**

HR practices must be mutually reinforcing.

The misalignments were spotted in the form of the following:

- a) MTI's practices tied to recruitment are strong at the entry level but are weak in the mid-senior talent retention.
- b) L&D investment is high, but a clear link to progression or promotion is not found.
- c) Inconsistent performance management is existent, followed by no connection with transparency of the rewards.
- d) A loop of the disengagement is being perpetuated since the MTI's recognition system is also very weak (Imran et al., 2024).

Hence, it can be stated that integration and coherence, both are lacking in the HR practices of MTI's.

Contingency Factor	Current Situation at MTI	Required HRM Response (Best-Fit)
<b>Business strategy</b>	Growth-focused: European expansion, AI/ML development, client excellence	Align HR with strategic goals: build advanced skills, strengthen leadership, develop internal career pipelines
<b>Organisational culture</b>	Top-down decision-making, inconsistent communication, weak recognition	Shift to participative, high-involvement culture; implement recognition systems; enhance communication
<b>Workforce characteristics</b>	Young workforce (avg. age 32), high turnover (28%), low internal promotions (15%)	Clear career pathways, succession planning, continuous learning culture
<b>External labour market</b>	UK tech skills shortages, wage inflation, high competition	Strengthen employer branding, create talent pipelines, invest in internal development
<b>Technology environment</b>	Fast-paced change: AI, cloud, cybersecurity demand	Upskilling aligned to future skills (AI, ML, cybersecurity), digital L&D tools
<b>HR system internal fit</b>	Fragmented HR practices: inconsistent performance management, weak L&D integration	Integrate HR systems: link PM → L&D → reward → career progression
<b>Employee expectations</b>	Desire for development, recognition, work-life balance	Transparent progression, regular feedback, wellbeing initiatives, flexible working optimisation
<b>Leadership capability</b>	Limited managerial consultation and coaching skills	Leadership development programmes, 360-degree feedback, coaching culture
<b>Performance requirements</b>	High client demands, heavy workloads	Continuous performance coaching, workload management, fair reward systems

*Figure 3: The Best-Fit (Contingency) Model for Manchester Tech Innovations (MTI)*

## 5. Investigation of How SHRM Could Be Leveraged To Address Current Challenges, Support Future Growth Objectives to Enable MTI to Become a High Performing Work Organisation

To tackle the challenges confronted by MTI associated with the engagement of its personnel, SHRM serves as a useful way in not only effectively be combatting the obstacles MTI is grappling with, but also to support the future growth ambitions of this firm, making the company prepared of growing into a High Performing Work Organisation (Caylan, 2024). A number of ways are there via which SHRM can be utilised for resolving the current challenges faced by MTI. For example, talent management can be strengthened through SHRM if structured pathways of career are built for each division, transparent criteria of promotion is implemented, or if succession planning is brought forward for critical roles. In addition, SHRM can be used to transform the culture of leadership at MTI via introducing such leadership initiatives that are attentive upon coaching, communication, and people-centric behaviours, making sure that the performance

conversations are conducted quarterly by the managers, and also introducing a 360-degree feedback. Likewise, the performance management can be modernised if SHRM is used, such that, it can aid in moving from annual appraisal to persistent coaching of performance, and elevate fairness while allocating the bonuses (Goel, 2023; Opoku et al., 2024). A climate of a recognition is also fruitful, which can be made possible through executing a formal programme of recognition, for example, quarterly awards that are either led by the managers or are peer-to-peer (AlSaadoon, 2020). Additionally, a culture of regular praising, also known as ‘micro-praise’ can be encouraged.

Moving further, SHRM can also be notably helpful in enhancing the wellbeing of MTI’s personnel (Guest, 2017). This can be made possible via carrying out the reviews of workload throughout numerous divisions, expanding the endeavours surrounding staff well-being, and training the managers with regards to stress handling and early interventions. Moreover, the pathways of ethnic diversity recruitment can be augmented, followed by cutting down time of filling vacancies through already available talent rather than external hiring (Verduyn, 2024). Lastly, constant learning-oriented culture can additionally be sustained through the approach of SHRM, and this can be done through coming up with AI and ML training programmes, and also making personnel indulged in mandatory training related to mentorship programmes that connect junior and senior staff members of the MTI’s workforce (Verlinden, 2023).

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

This report comprehensively examined the prevailing situation of the technology consultancy firm MTI, looking at its internal and external environment, and deeply analysing the extent up to which the HRM practices currently adopted at the firm align or misalign with its strategic objectives and prevalent HRM actions. The model of Best Fit was used for informing the analysis. Additionally, the use of SHRM was explored for resolving the uncovered set of challenges that the firm is facing. The findings indicate that the company is presently standing at such a position that is undoubtedly a very critical turning point. A highly engaged, and high-performance workforce is necessitated by the MTI’s strategic ambitions. Yet, a noticeable misalignment is found between the present HR systems and the requirements of the firm. Moreover, systematic loopholes are revealed by the application of the HPO theory and the SHRM model of the Best Fit, with gaps found in terms of the leadership capability, communication, recognition, career development, and management of the workforce’s performance (Littlefield, 2022).

Therefore, a set of evidence-based strategic recommendations are provided below, each of which contains strong potential of assisting the MTI firm with respect to shifting towards a HPWO. These key recommendations are centred on the development of modernised systems of managing the performance, integrated management of the talent, improved capability of leadership, strengthened systems of reward, creation of transparent pathways of career, and incorporating the continuous practices of learning. The proposed recommendations are:

1. Redesign the programmes of the leadership development to inform the participative leadership.
2. Implement a 360-degree feedback for all managers.
3. Replace the annual reviews with continuous performance coaching.
4. Launch a company-wide platform of staff recognition.

5. Expand wellbeing support and proactive stress interventions (Guest, 2017).
6. Prioritise the internal mobility and eliminate the practice of external hiring.
7. Improve strategies of diversity recruitment.

If these proposed recommendations are implemented inside MTI, the ambition of transitioning into a lasting HPWO will be fulfilled by the company. Not only this, MTI will also be able to become an employer of choice if it prioritises to work upon these outlined recommendations.

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