Evolution of employee enablement

By Ryan Jamieson   2 Oct 2019

Employee enablement revolves around more than just training programmes or giving people the tools to become more efficient. It incorporates an integrated approach that stems from the C-suite and permeates every facet of the business, irrespective of its industry sector or size.

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However, decision-makers need to ensure that the solutions they adopt inside the organisation that enhance the enablement process adhere to rapidly evolving compliance requirements. From GDPR through to POPIA, systems must be compliant, especially as it pertains to the safeguarding of sensitive customer (and employee) data.

Part of this entails solutions that do not only feature advanced threat protection, but also have the right licensing elements that give employees access to the toolsets they need for a more efficient approach at the office. Unfortunately, many organisations are simply not aware of the licences they have, what it allows them to do, or even where the gaps are. This means that before any meaningful enablement processes can commence, an extensive audit to assess their existing licences must be conducted.

Key questions

Moreover, a fundamental question around data, enablement, and innovation must revolve around who has access to data. And while there are numerous examples of best practice to follow, the company must work within its own policies around risk. For example, a financial services provider would approach this differently from a company that focuses on supply chain management.

And while the technology exists to safeguard data almost completely, being too strict will only guarantee that people will not be able to do anything with the data at their disposal. Similarly, if a company is too open with its security and data management policies, it might leave a security gap.

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But the challenges around employee enablement do not only revolve around compliance. Consideration must also be paid how best to transition from an on-premise environment to the cloud. Fortunately, trusted partners can assist with a migration assessment that looks at everything from the types of licensing needed to how the migration is managed and how people are made aware of the tools available following its completion.

Throughout all of this, change management becomes vital. As with anything that an organisation does, some employees will love the new environment and the enablement it allows while others will be less than happy. It all comes down to whether the mandate comes from the highest level and whether management also actively embrace the solutions.

For example, if executive meetings are managed through an online environment, it becomes easier for the rest of the employees to accept the tools and integrate it into their own work processes. Training will remain fundamental as people need to understand the capabilities of the solutions and what it will enable them to do.

New ways

Some might think of the enablement journey as one that revolves around managing obstacles. And while this is true to a certain extent, it should also incorporate strategic development. This is necessary to ensure that the change management aspect around enablement tools and the way it will likely impact the users are planned for. By doing this, the company will be more mindful about how best to help people and not simply force something down on them.

Trusted partners are becoming increasingly important to help in this journey. Working with service providers who have done it before, and have the trust of multinational vendors, ensure the expertise are put in place to give employees the confidence they need to embrace enablement tools more fully.

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As such, a company must decide whether enablement is something it truly wants to embrace. An ecosystem must be established to promote enablement as it fits into the unique requirements of the business. This is where technology can play an important role.

From bots and artificial intelligence, to video and other training solutions, these can all be leveraged to enrich the enablement environment of the organisation. However, adoption is important if these solutions are to be used as a system of record. Contrary to popular belief, it is not HR that drives this but rather IT and operations as these departments are focused on ensuring a person's work is more efficient.

Employee enablement therefore requires more than just a solutions-centric approach. It is dependent on a complete overhaul of how companies use their data, embrace solutions, and manage the change process with employees.

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