

A photograph of four business professionals in a modern office setting. Two men and two women are gathered around a large white conference table. One man is standing and leaning over the table, pointing at documents. The other man is seated on the left, smiling and looking towards the standing man. Two women are also seated at the table, looking at the documents. The office has large windows in the background, letting in natural light.

HRIZONS
CASE STUDY

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STRATEGY

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HRIZONS HELPS ENERGY REGULATOR ACHIEVE TRANSFORMATIONAL HR TO BETTER COMPETE FOR TALENT

*Case Study: HRIZONS Implements Employee Central
and Full SuccessFactors Talent Suite to Transform
HCM Processes and Systems*



CLIENT OVERVIEW

The Alberta Electric System Operator is Canada's first customer-focused exchange for electricity. As an independent system operator, the AESO leads the safe, reliable and economic operation and planning of Alberta's interconnected power system. The AESO also facilitates Alberta's hourly wholesale electricity market, which in 2013 had about 176 participants and approximately \$8 billion in annual energy transactions, and is accountable for the administration and regulation of load settlement function.

EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

The AESO is continually competing with energy companies for talent. To remain successful, they would need to develop an unfair competitive advantage. They needed a transformational HR program that would enable them to attract, develop, engage and retain key talent - better than any other. They began by developing an integrated HR blueprint - complete with functional requirements, process details and upstream and downstream integration mappings. This led to the selection of SAP's HCM Cloud solution (SuccessFactors HCM Suite) as their unified and fully-integrated HCM platform. HRIZONS was selected to lead the planning, design, configuration and deployment of this two year program. At this stage in the roll-out the AESO has successfully deployed Employee Central and the majority of the talent modules. The final work stream featuring Workforce Analytics and Planning has kicked off successfully and is expected to wrap up in late fall of 2015. This is their story...

BUSINESS DRIVERS

The competition for talent. The AESO is competing for engineering talent and other skilled professionals in a very competitive energy market. They realized that to compete for talent they required a transformational HR program to become leaders at attracting, developing, engaging and retaining top talent.

An underperforming technology mix. AESO was employing a number of manual and technology channels for the provision of HR/talent management services, including use of ADP, PDS HR Vista and spreadsheet based processes. They were faced with a number of additional HR service delivery challenges, including:

- Significant administrative overhead to manage the HR processes
- Duplicated data entry efforts and redundancy of data captured often resulting in inaccurate/ outdated data
- Lack of reporting capability within and across the HR processes resulting in reduced ability to measure key workforce analytics or program effectiveness without significant manual administrative involvement
- Lack of integration of HR information to support HR and business strategy

PROGRAM INITIATION

AESO engaged with a third party consulting firm to develop an integrated HR blueprint of their target future state processes. This included strategy alignment to the HR processes, functional requirements and data mapping of upstream and downstream processes/systems. The blueprint was then used to drive the selection process of a new integrated HCM platform. That platform became SAP's HCM Cloud solution (SuccessFactors HCM Suite).

As The AESO had grown in size and maturity, the need for more sophisticated Human Capital Management (HCM) programming emerged as a top business priority. By the time they were ready to kick off the project they had decided they would use the opportunity to overhaul their core HR processes and systems at the same time. Their program scope was now the entire HCM suite. Their goal was aggressive - to implement the entire suite within a two year window.

HRIZONS was selected as the strategic HCM consulting and implementation partner to deploy this integrated solution to ensure AESO had the right talent and mind-set to achieve their corporate goals. HRIZONS consultants initiated the project with a change communications workshop that set the framework for ongoing change management and communications in support of the multi-module implementation. They provided templates for change communications, synchronized with the phases of the various module implementations and with the current AESO communications processes and channels. Consideration of potential challenges and project risks were also explored, ensuring that potential problems could be anticipated and contingency plans implemented as needed.

The overall program strategy was to implement the Employee Central (EC) solution early in the process to give AESO a sound footing for deploying the rest of the talent suite. However, given the start anywhere, go everywhere flexibility of the platform, The AESO was able to implement Goals and Performance Management alongside EC in order to support the current performance cycle.

EMPLOYEE CENTRAL IMPLEMENTATION

The EC solution was the foundation for the entire integrated HCM solution. It became apparent early in the EC implementation that the HRIZONS team needed a stronger implementation team to successfully manage this phase of the project. After an unanticipated delay in the initial EC implementation, HRIZONS brought in an executive sponsor/consultant and implementation consultant who are arguably

the best in the business, having literally written the book on integrated EC/Talent Management Solutions –the co-authors of the first edition of SuccessFactors with SAP ERP HCM. They educated the AESO core project team on the capabilities of EC, including new functionality that was being added during the AESO project. As the client team learned more about the full capabilities of the EC product, they saw more efficient ways to manage their core HR data and processes and prioritized new requirements.

The HRIZONS consulting team took charge of the data migration process. The team leveraged the Rules engine to meet business requirements and increase efficiencies. Downstream integrations with EC data were also considered throughout the process. The HRIZONS consultants helped the AESO team clarify key processes, including workflows for approvals of HR data changes.

TALENT MANAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION

The talent management suite was implemented concurrently with EC. This was important for The AESO as they were able to reap the benefits of their HCM platform investment almost immediately without having to wait for EC to be implemented first. The start anywhere go everywhere promise held true. Each module was implemented according to the integration blueprint and followed the performance cycle (goal setting, performance management and review, compensation planning and succession and career planning). The program is well into its final work stream - the implementation Workforce Analytics and Planning and two metrics packs (Performance and Compensation).

Performance and Goal Management

At the start of the integrated HCM program The AESO had just enough time to implement Goal Management, Performance Management and Stack Ranker to keep to the company's performance cycle. The joint program team successfully roll-out the automated performance process on schedule while the Employee Central project was getting its start. Once EC was stood up, some minor integration work was done to reset the core HR data source, and the Performance and Goal Management modules were fully integrated with EC for the subsequent performance cycle. Calibration and 360 were implemented shortly thereafter.

Compensation

The Compensation module was implemented concurrently with EC such that when the performance cycle concluded, both EC and the Compensation module were live. Performance ratings from the Performance module were fed on time, directly into the Compensation module to drive compensation planning decisions for the current cycle (and cycles thereafter). Unlike the Performance and Goal modules, the Compensation module was designed from the start to take core HR data feeds direct from EC.

Learning Management, Succession and Career Development

These modules were implemented following the go live of EC and, as such, were designed to take direct feeds from EC. By taking a direct feed of core HR data from EC to the Learning module has been optimized allowing for intuitive searches and easy grouping of employees for targeted learning programs and compliance tracking. The pre-packaged LMS integrations to the LMS for learning cost allocation were not required for this project. The Succession module was well integrated with EC. A robust Employee Profile was configured to support succession planning, with employee history auto-populated from EC and specialized portlets tailored to The AESO's talent assessment needs.

Recruiting and Workforce Analytics and Planning (WFA/P)

At the time of this case study the final phase of the program was well-underway. Recruitment Management and Recruitment Marketing modules are expected to go live summer of 2015, and WFA/P will be live in late fall 2015. The AESO is very excited by the prospect of drawing workforce intelligence from a completely integrated HCM platform. Never before have they had access to such rich and reliable workforce data from which to make strategic decisions - with confidence.

RESULTS

AESO has achieved their objective of having a single cloud-based platform to manage all their core HR data and related processes, and are well on the path to future growth and success with an integrated HCM cloud platform. They have achieved their objective of having a single system of record for all their core HR data with accurate data transformed from existing system and integrated with all their downstream talent management functions. They have completed successful implementations of goal management, performance management, succession planning, compensation and learning modules within projected timeframes and budgets. They are on track to having the entire talent management suite implemented by the end of 2015, with employees being well informed, trained, and prepared prior to the various module rollouts. They are well on their way to having an unfair competitive advantage in the competition for talent.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

- AESO's progressive talent management mind-set and commitment to transforming their TM processes
- HRIZONS consulting expertise (once the EC experts were in place on the project); consultants that know best practice HCM design and how to optimize the SuccessFactors platform
- HRIZONS consultants' willingness to listen to what AESO needed and respond accordingly
- AESO core team's openness to learning about product capabilities and limitations and to adjust accordingly
- Flexibility on the part of both teams to manage multiple concurrent projects with complex requirements and interdependencies, with limited client resources
- High level of client engagement from the project sponsors to the core project team

LESSONS LEARNED

- Select an implementation partner that can clearly identify pain points and challenges, identify business needs, ensure that processes are robust, and can build a solution that addresses the client's business objectives
- Leverage the advantages of a small core project team working across the entire platform. It helps to ensure cross-platform continuity and integrity
- Provide sufficient client resources and the right talent to avoid problems of core team overwhelm. Bring in extended teams of subject matter experts to do the heavy lifting on the various module implementations.
- Have the right consulting expertise assigned to projects to ensure optimal implementation of best practices regarding HCM processes and technology configurations
- Recognize the complexities involved in concurrent multi-module implementations, with the need for sufficient staff and time for execution of all the required tasks associated with each module
- Recognize the inherent challenges related to data migration from legacy systems to EC and the need to provide adequate time to validate and test all data configurations
- Define clear talent management processes and related system requirements at the outset of the project, including interdependencies among the various TM modules

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Our SuccessFactors implementation program at the AESO is a huge undertaking, especially with a small Human Resources team. However, the importance of an integrated talent management system in integrating our functions and providing holistic information is recognized as the key to aligning and optimizing talent for business success. The HRIZONS team has partnered with us from the start and has provided a high level of consulting and implementation expertise. This has been particularly valuable considering the complexities involved in our concurrent multi-module implementation.”

– Lisa Finley
AESO - Director, Human Resources

ABOUT HRIZONS

HRIZONS is an integrated Human Capital Management (IHCM) solutions and consulting firm designed to make your organization more competitive and successful by optimizing processes for attracting, deploying, engaging, and developing your talent.

We're enabling companies to become best-in-class, talent-based organizations through an integrated Human Capital Management foundation that leverages optimal processes, best practices, and cutting-edge HR technology.

Our unique and comprehensive approach to solution architecture incorporates six core elements: Strategy, Process, People, Technology, Content and Analytics. Our consultants' deep domain expertise helps clients to align, integrate and design HCM solutions that bridge the strategy-execution chasm. We help guide clients on a journey to an integrated platform, by providing knowledge, guidance and expertise so they can have confidence and peace of mind the project is being done right. Whenever clients need support or are ready to optimize their HCM programs, HRIZONS consultants are a dependable extension of their HR team.

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