HUMAN 2.0

Reimagining HR in the Age of Transhumanism



JASPREET KAUR

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Human 2.0: Reimagining HR in the Age of Transhumanism

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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Foreword



In an era where the boundaries between biology and technology are rapidly dissolving, the domain of human resource management is undergoing a seismic transformation. The convergence of artificial intelligence, biotechnology, machine learning, and neuro-enhancement technologies is ushering in a new epoch – one where the very definition of what it means to be "human" at work is evolving. Against this backdrop, *Human 2.0: Reimagining HR in the Age of Transhumanism* emerges as a timely and thought-provoking exploration of how HR professionals and organizational leaders must reimagine the future of work and workforce management.

This book does not merely chronicle the advent of advanced technologies – it interrogates their implications, challenges prevailing paradigms, and opens new dialogues on human potential in an augmented future. It presents a compelling case for why the HR function must shift from a reactive administrative role to a proactive strategic partner capable of navigating the complexities of a transhumanist world.

Human 2.0 breaks new ground by addressing the intersection of human enhancement and organizational systems. The authors provide a nuanced examination of how AI can augment decision-making in recruitment, how biotechnology can enhance employee wellness and performance, and how neuro-enhancements may unlock new dimensions of cognitive ability. These themes are not only presented theoretically but also grounded in real-world data and pragmatic insights that bridge the gap between scholarship and practice.

The strength of this book lies in its ability to offer a forward-looking perspective without losing sight of ethical considerations and organizational realities. It offers HR professionals a roadmap to adapt, evolve, and thrive amid disruptive change, encouraging them to leverage emerging technologies to foster human well-being, engagement, and sustained productivity.

Whether you are an academic seeking a deeper theoretical understanding of transhumanist influences on HRM, or a practitioner aiming to future-proof your

talent strategies, *Human 2.0* offers essential insights for the journey ahead. This volume is not just a contribution to literature – it is a call to action for a bold and thoughtful reinvention of the people function in the age of human enhancement.

As we stand on the cusp of profound transformation, this book serves as both a beacon and a blueprint. I commend the authors for their vision, their depth of inquiry, and their dedication to charting this uncharted territory with clarity, relevance, and purpose.

Dr Bhupinder Pal Singh Chahal
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Preface

We are at the brink of a revolution, one that challenges the fundamental nature of human existence and redefines the boundaries of what is possible. Transhumanism – an ideology that advocates for the enhancement of human capacities through technological and scientific advancements – promises to reshape our understanding of life, work, and society. The fusion of biology and technology is no longer a distant concept, but a rapidly approaching reality, forcing us to rethink everything, from our daily lives to the very structure of organizations.

Human 2.0: Reimagining HR in the Age of Transhumanism is an exploration of how the future of work will evolve in response to these groundbreaking changes. As humans gain access to tools that extend, enhance, and even transcend their natural abilities, the role of human resources (HR) must adapt. The workforce of tomorrow will not only consist of human beings in the traditional sense but will also include augmented individuals whose capabilities surpass those of their biological counterparts. How can HR continue to evolve in such an environment, managing talent, fostering innovation, and ensuring fairness in a world where the definition of "human" is in flux?

This book addresses the key questions and challenges facing HR in an age where human enhancement is becoming increasingly possible: How do we recruit, manage, and develop augmented employees? What are the ethical considerations when integrating advanced technologies into the workplace? How can HR help create a balanced, inclusive environment that leverages both human ingenuity and technological innovation? And how do we ensure that human dignity remains at the core of organization strategies, even as technology advances?

The integration of advanced technologies into human life will have profound implications on every aspect of HR, from recruitment and performance management to leadership development and organization culture. This book provides a comprehensive guide to navigating this new terrain, offering insights into the practical and ethical challenges HR professionals will face as they manage an increasingly augmented workforce. Drawing on emerging trends in AI, robotics, neuroscience, Human 2.0 equips HR leaders with the tools they need to adapt to a rapidly changing world.

As you turn these pages, I encourage you to envision a future where human potential is amplified, where the boundaries between technology and humanity are no longer distinct, and where HR plays a central role in shaping a workforce that is both innovative and humane. This is the future of HR, a future that is not just about managing people, but about enhancing and reimagining the very nature of work itself.

Welcome to Human 2.0. Welcome to the future of human resources.

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Chapter 1

The Intersection of Transhumanism and Human Resource Management in the Contemporary Digital Era

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Abstract

Over the years, technology has advanced at an unprecedented rate, to the extent that these advances are paving the way for a human species consisting of biologically and cognitively enhanced post-humans. Human resource management (HRM) and business ethics are significant areas also influenced by very rapid technological innovations and digitalization. Today, the next steps are closely associated with transhumanist perspectives. The broader calling for this trend is transhumanism, whose very ethos, based on values of self-reflection, self-improvement, and self-transcendence, appears to be influencing many aspects of human society. Human organizations are also grappling with the changes in HRM, which is incorporating or is poised to incorporate, more technological and human enhancement applications into the organizational context with the intersection of transhumanism and HRM for future workforce implications. The study is concluded with a brief theoretical discussion of the shift from traditional human resource (HR) practices to current HR practices and the possible turn to future HR practices, which stems from a transhumanist ethic and considers human employees as "commodities" that need to be improved upon to enhance organizational performance. HR practices have changed to some extent due to the increasing influence and advanced technologies that can augment humans' physical and cognitive capabilities. Employers and employees are facing possible scenarios wherein human enhancement technologies might replace and change various aspects of the current human workforce. Understanding the core of transhumanist

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ideology and its underlying tenets is useful for identifying the reasons to include human enhancement applications in the organizational context.

Keywords: Transhumanism; HRM; digital era (information era); technology integration; workplace innovation; augmented workforce; ethical considerations; future of workspace

1. Introduction

Transhumanism refers to a movement aimed at enhancing the full range of human capabilities, including physical, cognitive, and psychological, through the use of technology. As such, it may be used to help maximize an organization's resource base or its human capital. Although HRM behavior must match an organization's ethical and philosophical values, it is nonetheless important to understand transhumanism as a potential influence in tomorrow's organizations. Our perspectives on HRM must also recognize the emergent impacts of future capabilities (Gómez Redondo et al., 2024). HRM has undergone several shifts, often influenced by economic, social, or legal change. Examples include the growth of personnel, scientific, and strategic management, the linking of HRM with quality programs, and the shift toward more humanistic and organic building principles based on flexibility. As organizational structures, technologies, and business models are themselves reshaped by the application of new sciences, however, HRM itself will transform (SARI et al., 2024).

Future work is increasingly likely to involve these shifts. As such, scholars now face at least two important questions in response to transhumanist claims about extensibility and enhancement. First, to what extent are these claims plausible? Are they merely self-serving speculation hoping to legitimize dubious practices in the present? Or are they an anticipation of things to come based on emerging technologies and system dynamics? As with HRM and other social sciences, we do not comprehend our futures solely through the extrapolation of present trends (Fedotova et al., 2022). Nevertheless, we must take potential futures seriously, even if we wager that they will not come to pass. Second, how should HRM and the workforce itself position itself vis-à-vis these potential futures? Those who wish to enhance will need people to experiment on, researchers and producers to create the hardware and the software, an elite to define enhancement directions and uses, and so forth. If emails and big data are any indication, we are all already being experimented on in various ways (Lorrimar, 2023).

HRM and business ethics are significant areas also influenced by very rapid technological innovations and digitalization. Today, the next steps are closely associated with transhumanist perspectives. Transhumanism is a philosophical and ethical movement that focuses on practical and technological enhancements to areas of human life, the quality of life, extending human life, the development of cognitive and physical improvements, and the application of these kinds of technologies (Godde, 2023). The experience of technology, its application, and its

implications are considered from new contexts and interdisciplinary perspectives in HRM and business ethics. This specifies the relationship between technology and our understanding of what it means to be human and, therefore, how we find ourselves in the world and the implications for business and society (Manso, 2024).

The philosophy and idea of transhumanism are explained. The opportunities of transhumanism, the possible implications for our society, and the objectives of the philosophy of "the human transspecies" are highlighted. Transhumanism is a philosophy that advocates for the enhancement of the human condition by using technology to eliminate aging and enhance human capacities and motivations in six key areas. It promotes that we can enhance human capabilities, extend human capabilities, and empower us to make radical choices (Kirsch, 2024a). Transhumanist thinking is not a novel mode of philosophy or age but can trace its foundations from the collective insight of the great Chinese philosophers, Greek philosophers, and Renaissance communities. The earliest coining of the term "transhumanist" is arguably Plato. He incorporates transhumanist contemplation into his doctrine of forms, his account of learning, and his teleological vision of the nature of reality. The Greek word "ὁ ἄνθρωπος" – "the human" etymologically, and at the same time semantically, means the "upward-gazer" – a person who looks from the ground up into the universe that hovers above their head. This contrasts with many animals whose gaze is directed toward the ground (Gómez Redondo et al., 2024; SARI et al., 2024).

Thus, the Greeks called the human "τὸ πρός ἄνω" – what is "turned upward." Aristotle adapts this vision when he says that the human being – or at least a human being living in freedom – does not belong to the earth. The Western idea of the human is a being that can free himself and become divine – in etymological terms, "transhuman" – not bounded by ignorance and sin, and so returns home to the heavens (Fedotova et al., 2022). Arguably, such a transhumanist theoretical framework became presupposed in Western thought. This transhumanist philosophical spirit has found new and explicit transhumanist articulations across the globe in China, India, Japan, and elsewhere. The oldest historical science fiction tale would be transhumanist if Dante Alighieri's "Divine Comedy" is viewed as a tale of transhumanism. Jules Verne and Leonardo da Vinci, because they imagine bodies and functions beyond the human norm, could also be considered transhumanist (Lorrimar, 2023).

1.1. Definition and Origins

Transhumanism constitutes an international educational and philosophical movement supporting the use of science and technology in the metamorphosis of the human species. Responding to criticism, its essence is human enhancement. This chapter represents an analysis of the intersection between the movement of transhumanism and the HRM area. As an introduction, we will present the fundamental perspective assumed in this chapter, and from this starting point, we will go on to offer a complete definition of transhumanism, thus recapitulating and systematizing several key aspects pertaining to the origin of contemporary expectations regarding the potential future of technology in relation to human

beings (Godde, 2023). From a strategic and chronological perspective, does any idea for the development of complex individual processes require a previous supporting ideological basis to emerge, spread, and consolidate? Is it possible, in light of the above, to find in the world of ideas fruitful roots for the widespread talk of the enhancement of the individual (Manso, 2024).

A cursory look at how humans have talked about their being and its relationships will here be suggested. Philosophical speculation has, since its beginnings, also been occupied with considering nature and the human being and has alluded to the connection existing among these two entities. The concept of verum is decisive. In confirmation of this, a selection of some fundamental stages in the universe of ideas is pinpointed in the following exploration, with particular reference to the classics, the Renaissance, and the Enlightenment ages (Kirsch, 2024a). For each of these, we outline some of the early paradigms of human physiology and essence, and we debate the successor states of the art. This historical analysis serves a dual purpose: first of all, it can reflect the cultural, psychological, and, in general, societal textures of the time examined, offering future-oriented reflective raw material. Second, it can, from both these perspectives, confirm or refute the statement that the idea of improvement per se needs to be grounded prior to its mere discussion and implementation (Carluccio, 2024). The fact that there exist several counterpoints between theory and theory is not an element peculiar to modern Western thought in itself but must also be attributed to the many oppositional optima that theory has to face (Shafik, 2024f, 2025).

1.2. Key Concepts and Principles

Transhumanism is a traditional speculative movement commonly associated with the research domain of philosophers as well as bioethicists. Some of the key questions and statements in the transhumanist literature are about the possibilities of enhancing human physical and cognitive abilities. It is very important to focus on what the term "transhumanism" actually means. Transhumanist literature discusses the rational possibilities of people acting according to principles related to the transcendence of various biological limitations that we might have (Genc et al., 2024). This is why, from the transhumanist point of view, one should act in order to negate a possible evolutionary process. One person should provide choices for oneself to be a part of the replacement of the human race in the future by living in another unspecified natural world. According to the principles of transhumanism, people are the protagonists of the enhancement process and should enjoy all available human rights whenever they perform the enhancement. The human race should continue even if such rational actions appear (Bialecki, 2024).

A person should have free will and, assisted by technological empowerment and scientific knowledge, make informed decisions regarding when to start or suspend a necessary enhancement. Otherwise, the decision to stop may be taken without a possible rational investigation of the consequences. Philosophers and bioethicists see a possible polarization of their society and world based on the adoption of this strategy. Socio-economic disparities are used as the paradigm example of what will happen if the above transhumanist principles are not

observed (Kirsch, 2024b). It is very important to underscore this simple fact: a person is morally accountable as long as they are treated as being autonomous and rational. Philosophers and bioethical transhumanists, however, do not try to ignore or quench it. What I am trying to stress is this related aspect of all these discussions about possible future enhancements. Moral practices will need to be developed in parallel to the investigation being made of possible future enhancements (Shafik, 2024e). The principles of transhumanism are thought to be a possible motivational force for change, and possible future HRM activities will have to be developed in accordance with the new capabilities (Torrent-Sellens, 2024). This is why ongoing interdisciplinary dialogs have to be developed to explain and discuss the moral implications and limitations of these and related discourses.

2. Human Resource Management

HRM has been defined in a number of ways. HRM is concerned with everything related to the employment, development, and well-being of the people working in an organization. The enterprise is not only an economic institution but a social organization that deeply affects the lives of individuals (Shafik, 2024d). The emphasis in HRM is on managing people within the employer–employee relationship. In recent decades, the discipline has come to be seen as part of the necessary skills of a manager rather than an additional specialist component (Demuro & Gurney, 2024). The new focus on this essential skill has caused a greater focus on the development of management knowledge to realize industry standards better.

HRM was earlier known as "Personnel Management," which includes functional activities such as determining and analyzing workforce requirements, job descriptions, and effective placements. Over the past years, HRM has undergone a substantial change: society has become more egalitarian, and individual needs are better met. More than ever, HRM influences organizational strategy. HRM is moving from a support function to a strategic function. People are seen as a key factor for the competitive uniqueness of the firm (Bogdanov, 2024). The employment of the right people can create shareholder value. Recruitment, development, and retention of people are seen as extra important parts of HRM. Replication of products and services is getting easier. Only by making optimal use of HRs in an organization can one show the difference. Basic HRM activities include Personnel Administration and Transactional Work, Strategic HRM, and the changing nature of the HR function (Zapata Muriel et al., 2024).

Total Quality Management stands firmly on the belief that any organizational progress must be underpinned by a committed effort to enhance the workforce's skills and attitudes. HRM has various meanings:

Segregation subdivision: People would be given key responsibilities for the recruitment and management of staff (Любарский, 2024).

Ancillary responsibility: Sales Managers would be responsible for the affairs of the workforce and can make decisions such as hiring and training. Managers can be held responsible if health and safety regulations are not met (Harzheim, 2024).

Strategic integration of HRM: The managerial approach to the exercise of control options available in the market (Любарский, 2024).

"Today's business has to have an eye on tomorrow. Success comes to those who anticipate change. They assess their corporate goals, anticipate and exploit new ventures in products, services, or markets, and anticipate changes in customer needs and wishes" (Любарский, 2024).

2.1. Definition and Importance

In modern management terms, HRM is the strategic and coherent approach to the management of an organization's most valued assets – the people – who individually and collectively contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the business. It focuses on the decision problem of the central management in employing or deploying the right employees with the right capabilities and skills in the right jobs at the right time. More than that, HRM is slowly but significantly becoming a strategic partner with an aim to align the workforce capability with the business objective (Pańkowska, 2024). The emphasis is on the rhetorical strategy of managing employees as critical assets, differentiating simultaneously from their competitors, and gaining a competitive edge by adding financial value to the business. The importance of HRM is that it increases employee engagement, productivity, and job satisfaction, all of which are crucial elements of achieving sustainable competitive advantage (Siedlecka, 2024). It is these mechanisms that assist effective organizational development, achieve workforce potential optimally, enhance the motivation of employees, and, therefore, play a valuable role in increasing performance levels and effectiveness of organizational performance (Shafik, 2024b). In a number of modern organizations, HRM is the key contributing factor to the success of an organization. As a result, employing effective and measured HRM directly impacts the delivery of shareholder value because its values can be quantified (Levin, 2024). In the context of effectively and subsequently being able to predict personnel activity in the future, a move is underway to measure individual and organizational behaviors and performance and link them to recognized HRM practices, using existing technologies.

2.2. Key Functions and Practices

HRM has four basic functions: talent acquisition, employee development (training, performance appraisal, and the establishment of compensation and benefits practices), and employee retention. Each of these functions is performed in the context of the organizational and HR strategy that specifically outlines the goals and ways in which each of these key areas should be managed and the methods by which performance will be measured (Fedotova et al., 2022). If these functions are performed in a facility, their outcomes can be measured in terms of HR turnover and job performance levels. By performing well in these four areas, an organization can expect to have the personnel with the skills, knowledge, and abilities necessary to reach its organizational goals (Guevara-Pezoa, 2024). Committed, high-performance employees rather than a reliance on certain asset configurations are the key to organizational performance.

High-powered employees are those who are willing to work hard and show initiative, and in practices where employees are paid according to performance, they are more likely to demonstrate these behaviors than when they are paid

a salary only (Shafik, 2024c). At the same time, there are also practices and employee capabilities that help to determine the conditions under which a performance-based pay system will produce high levels of both employee need satisfaction and ownership performance. Given the need for certain employee skills and capabilities within the organization, compensation, and benefits, struggles greatly amplify the potential value gains realized through technical restructuring (Guevara-Pezoa, 2024; Lantian & Rose, 2024). The expanding use of high-tech across the workforce and the growing emphasis on human and intellectual capital as an enabler of organizational success suggest real value in improved aptitude acquisition, job retraining, and enhanced employee retention. Areas such as talent acquisition, employee development, performance appraisal, job satisfaction, and retention are most in line with transhumanist ideology. It is suggested that these areas address the establishment of systems of "right employees" that can function as comprehensive human capital anchor points (Bielova & Byelov, 2024). By performing well in these different areas, an organization implies that its employees are adaptable and, therefore, can be valuable aids in the attainment of strategic goals.

3. Emerging Trends in HRM

HRM has seen some marked shifts that coexist with changing labor markets, competition, and globalization. Remote working, flexible hours, online collaboration tools, and workers' rights all force HR to be quick and flexible. The four-day workweek has been proposed with some success, and gig and knowledge work continue to grow. Many suggest investment in HR technology to streamline operations. Artificial intelligence (AI) is just one example. Many clearly show an interest in the benefits of this technology although there are still many issues (Ivanchenko, 2024). As a parallel to this tech investment, big data and data analytics are quickly advancing since many HR software solutions can store nearly unlimited amounts of transactional data. This is a huge resource for HR professionals who seek to understand how to grow the organization around its workforce. Diversity and inclusion are other company issues, including full acceptance of LGBTQ workers (SARI et al., 2024).

Employee well-being is important at all levels; again, many show the positive effect that lifestyle flexibility, human-sized wage adjustments, and mental health supports have on workers and companies. After COVID-19 hit, it is a new consideration for digital health and wellness. The top skills needed for HR in 2019 are agility, business acumen, analytic thinking, and communication. It is explained that HR workers in this future need to understand employees in the "intersections of affiliations" such as parents, veterans, health patients, and hourly workers. This is a special road into transhumanist ideas, which introduce employee-related interaction-shaping devices (Gómez Redondo et al., 2024; SARI et al., 2024). Emergent technological trends create these possibilities.

3.1. Role of AI in HR Practices

AI has the potential to revolutionize HR practices. There are several applications of AI in the HR domain, including the use of chatbots, social media, and

various algorithms to recruit people. AI enables HR professionals to predict the future by understanding the past (Shafik, 2024a). AI and data science are being used to track employee performance to optimize scheduling and predict future HR needs, resulting in reduced employee turnover in organizations. The two core advantages of the wide use of AI in the HR arena are that it will have the capability to process huge volumes of data rapidly and increase the accuracy of staffing forecasts. Second, the use of data and AI-based algorithms can cut down hiring expenses (Kirsch, 2024b). It could potentially lower the risk associated with selecting an unqualified candidate, which, in turn, could lead to a loss of the group's productivity. While the introduction of AI into HR practices could potentially generate many benefits, it also poses many ethical challenges. The fairness of the algorithms that determine who to hire and who not can raise issues of equity and legality. Such algorithms can be influenced by widespread human bias or by institutionalizing it (Genc et al., 2024). In such a scenario, the HR professional's role decentralizes from decision-making to oversight and third-party legislation. Nonetheless, AI can elevate the employee experience. AI in HR may turn conventional, large-scale operations into a purely individualized one (Shafik, 2024g). While a personalized strategy appreciates an individual's unique preferences and treats everyone independently, AI deals with distinct expectations as part of a broad illusion that creates the initial situation. HR professionals should collaborate with the chatbot to ensure that the information is correct, legally safe, and helps with the aim of the client (Torrent-Sellens, 2024).

3.2. Employee Privacy and Data Protection in the Age of Transhumanism

Transhumanism is as much an ethical issue as it is a technological one. It illustrates the tension between the immense gains in well-being, health, and productivity that we stand to reap from biological or mechanical body enhancements and the potential risk of further buffering personal privacy. Conversely, transhumanism shines a stark light on the limits of our decisional autonomy and individual agency. Clearly, the capacities to transcend our human biological and cognitive condition present a potential threat to our privacy because they can be used to monitor us and to profile us in a way that has never before been possible (Carluccio, 2024). In view of such concerns, national and regional legal systems provide minimum qualitative standards for regulating HR technologies. The direction stipulated in the Data Protection Directive is that of establishing very high, but at the same time flexible default standards regardless of the specific collection method. With regard to HR and organizational uses, the directive prescribes that the proportionality principle is of central importance for establishing the fairness of data processing (Bialecki, 2024). In a nutshell, in order to assess whether employee personal data collection is ethically justifiable, four factors – nature, size, motivation, and modalities, need to be considered. As far as the first three factors are concerned, it is easy to see that no significant differences exist between transhuman-related data because a technology used to monitor individual performance or health can hardly be seen as less privacy-invasive than a