Don’t know where to start with your HR mobile project? Building a well thought-out business case to get executive and stakeholder buy-in is the most important step to your success. This how-to-guide will help you make the business case for mobilizing HR with a single employee app.

In the world of HR, it seems like every function from talent management to time management, expense reporting, and employee data, has a separate system to handle it. But you can reduce the clutter and remove inefficient processes by mobilizing core HR functions into a single employee app.

Having one place to go, employees will know what is important and can access common HR services and critical communications at any given time, from any location. Especially important is having the ability to reach distributed employees—your deskless workers based in-the-field, such as at hospitals, warehouses, or retail sites. An app would enable them to complete HR tasks and read communications with ease.

While you recognize the value that a mobile app would bring, you might not know how to start. With any new company-wide technology introduction, building a well thought-out business case and getting stakeholder buy-in will be your most important step to success.

This practical how-to guide walks you through the steps for building a business case. It’ll help you:

1. Focus your efforts in the right direction
2. Gather the right information for a business case
3. Gain crucial support from leadership and stakeholders
1 Identify the measurable benefits

Begin building your business case by identifying the many benefits a mobile app can bring to the employee HR experience. A few of the most important are:

- **One HR hub.** A mobile app brings both HR tasks and communications into a single centralized hub for employees to easily access, read, and take action. This helps them know what is important and will be widely adopted.
- **Reach a distributed workforce.** Mobile is particularly useful for companies with distributed workforces by reaching them on their mobile devices no matter where they are. It gives all workers instant access to employee-related HR workflows and critical communications. All employees in your organization will be engaged and connected.
- **Better engagement with employees.** A mobile app ensures a two-way dialogue with employees, allowing them to interact and respond to your HR communications, such as asking questions, responding to surveys, or give comments and feedback.
- **Increased productivity.** Mobile apps can increase productivity within the workplace as much as 40%. This means that you can potentially save 40% of employees’ time and invest it in generating additional work and revenue.

~It’s vital to step back and take the time to perform objective research on your audience—know your employees’ challenges and needs.~

2 Know your audience

The most critical component in building a business case for a mobile solution is fully understanding the needs of your users and the inefficiencies they are experiencing. One of the easiest traps to fall into is underestimating how much you truly know your employees. It’s vital to step back and take the time to perform objective research. Otherwise, you’ll create an employee app that looks great, but in reality, has a lukewarm reception because you missed the mark on addressing your users’ daily work challenges.

Next, let’s dive into the ways you can determine your employees’ needs - what to ask and who to involve.
Who to involve?

1 **Leverage your network, find influential leaders.** We recommend you leverage your existing networks within your organization as a starting point for gathering research. Find out who are the most influential and respected practitioners in your target audience, and take them out for a coffee or lunch. Ask them directly what they need to make their life easier and more engaging at the workplace.

2 **Find early adopters.** Once you find the influential leaders, offer them the ability to advance their career by placing them in the spotlight as an early adopter, a co-creator of your solution. By sharing your success with influential leaders, you gain a valuable ally.

3 **Hold focus groups and conduct surveys.** Now that you are armed with insights from well-respected insiders, you can:
   - Hold a focus group with a wider audience of employee advocates or advisory boards.
   - If time is limited, employ traditional feedback methods such as broader employee surveys. A survey can’t replace insightful dialogue, but it can validate that your assumptions are valid and will scale.

What to ask?

To ensure that you’ll have widespread adoption and an employee-centric app, first determine your project objectives and then ask questions to pinpoint employee needs and pain points. Get answers to these questions definitively for presenting them in your business case, and you’re on your way to a successful project.

Here are some questions to help you form your employee app objectives:

- What needs will this app help address?
- What challenges will this app help solve?
- What does success look like?
- Will I be targeting a particular group of employees?
- What is my plan for maximizing adoption?
- How will I encourage leaders to actively use it?

Here are sample questions to ask your employees about the current channels and workflows:

- Which HR systems work best and why?
- Are there too many places to find HR information, to complete HR tasks?
- What channels can you not access?
- Are there ways for you to quickly ask questions?
- Are you kept well informed about company initiatives and employee programs?
- Are you kept well informed by senior leaders on company plans and progress?

Sample questions to ask employees about mobile:

- Will getting information via a mobile app be easier for you and why?
- Will a mobile app help you finish HR tasks faster?
- What available tools, features, or tasks would make you want to use an employee mobile app?
- What would make the workplace more engaging?
3 Demonstrate the real ROI

If you have a clear calculation for the expected ROI, you are on the right track for getting approval for your project. Unfortunately, many don’t know how to clearly articulate the value a mobile solution would bring. Here are three main factors to include when compiling ROI:

1. Include broad industry benefits. Research HR websites, forums, and peer groups to find reports with statistics and survey results that speak to the benefits of HR services and engagement via mobile technology.

2. Second, determine the precise benefits by answering the following questions for a number of real-world scenarios:
   - **What processes are you trying to improve?** For example, improve the ability to reach all employees with benefit enrollment information.
   - **What is the desired impact of using this mobile app?** For example, with current channels, we can only reach 70% of our employees. It takes more than one week and three managers to communicate with employees in our retail stores with important enrollment updates.
   - **What is the positive business outcome linked to this app?** With an employee app, we can distribute messages directly and instantly to personal devices, reducing the time from one week to instantaneous. The number of people involved is reduced to one person.

3. Third, beyond improving existing processes, consider the value of new technology, such as:
   - Bringing together multiple workflows into one stream;
   - Getting instant participation and feedback from employee surveys and polls;
   - Giving managers the ability to approve time off anywhere they are and without having to login to multiple systems.

By partnering with other functional areas and building in workflows that help your employees be more efficient, that’s a sure fire way to get viral adoption.

4. Collaborate with other groups

Partner with other business owners like Corporate Communications to understand their needs and build a business case as a united front.

There is no imaginary boundary between HR and other groups.

You might be thinking “Well, that’s great, but I work in HR, not Corporate Communications, Marketing or Finance. I’m not building more into my HR app.” This is a genuine risk to your project’s success not to think from the employee’s perspective. To your staff, there is no imaginary boundary between HR, Communications, and Finance, they only see “the company.”

Reach out, join forces, and combine budgets.

We strongly encourage you to reach out to your colleagues in other business units and departments. It’s very likely you will find another like-minded partner who has performed similar research and is interested in teaming up. Further, in the best of scenarios, you’ll be able to combine budgets for a project that would have not been feasible if it was funded independently.

By partnering with other functional areas and building in workflows to help your employees be more efficient is a sure fire way to get viral adoption and drive engagement in the same mobile app.
5 Determine the primary use cases

Now that you understand your employees’ needs, you can start thinking about the primary use cases that the app will address. At this stage in your project, you’ll only need to communicate the use cases at a high-level. After you gain approval to move forward, you’ll work with your mobile app vendor to dive deeper to identify all the use cases in your employee app.

Combine mobile use cases that benefit all

When you ask employees about what they need, they’ll tell you that they want everything in one place, precisely when they need it to get their job done faster and more efficiently. If you go the route of having HR tasks and communications separately, you are taking the risk of not gaining adoption or improving efficiency.

6 Make the right pitch

The next step for sharing your vision to others is to create an effective presentation to help you pitch your business case. Just like an enterprising founder of a Silicon Valley startup, you need to pitch your idea and gain favor at all levels within the organization that are going to invest in your success.

Create a compelling, simple presentation

Start by documenting the challenges your HR organization and employees are facing, and second, how you aim to solve them with your new solution. Start small, progressively build from there. With each briefing, you will refine your strategy, talking points, and pitch.

Bring your secret weapon, a prototype

Because employee mobile experiences are still relatively new, you’ll be more successful if you create a prototype of the app to show to your stakeholders. Seeing is believing. Nothing drives enthusiasm like having them download a mobile prototype right on their personal device, login, and see their corporate branding and example use cases in real-time.

This is meant to be a “low or no cost” approach because you don’t yet have project funding. In most cases, the mobile vendor you choose can provide you with a high-fidelity prototype mobile app — your “secret weapon” when you need to engage your executives. Avoid vendors who can’t or won’t provide this service as it’s unlikely they have a mature, scalable product to offer.

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**HR tasks use cases**

- Leave requests & manager approvals
- Personal data updates
- Expense reports & manager approvals
- PO management
- Policy & procedure confirmations
- Training & instructional materials
- Paystub lookup
- Benefits enrollment
- Expertise searches

**HR communication use cases**

- Company news & alerts
- Employee communications
- Benefits enrollment information
- New policies
- New hire announcements
- Job postings
- Community programs
- Q&A’s, surveys & polls
- Recognition announcements
**Next steps**

Once you've had success getting stakeholder buy-in, it's time to move forward with your mobile project. Our experts at Sitrion can help you with those next steps, from formulating your mobile strategy and scoping your use cases, to setting up a pilot with a small group of employees, then rolling out your employee app for maximum adoption.

Contact a Sitrion Sales Representative to discuss your mobile project:

[www.sitrion.com/ContactUs](http://www.sitrion.com/ContactUs)

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- Time management
- Personal data updates
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- Policy & procedures
- Q&A, surveys & polls
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