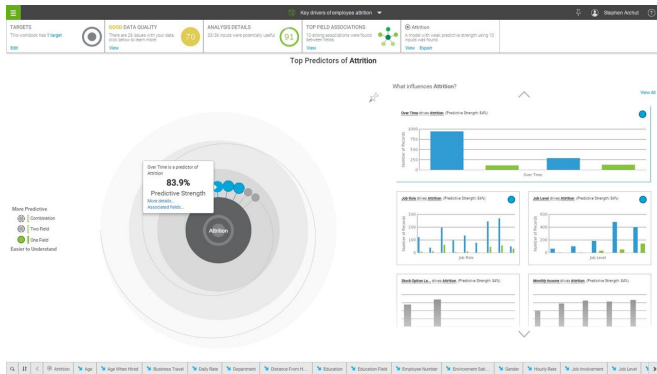


IBM sees the value of putting AI to work in human resources

10 April 2019, by Nancy Cohen



Credit: IBM

Who put the non-human into human resources? At first glance, it seems like an unpopular alliance—the use of artificial intelligence to support a company's strategic goals vis a vis human resources.

IBM, however, is the company going big and bold in championing the benefits of technology driving work efforts to retain the best, the brightest, the most apt to contribute something to the conference table.

IBM CEO Ginni Rometty touted IBM's successful use of AI for leading the workforce at CNBC's @ Work Talent + HR Summit. She sat down with Jon Fortt and delivered some impressive numbers on how the IBM's AI tool helped the company.

First, though, let's run a flashback to the old days of Watson in the limelight when Forsyth Alexander in 2016 in a blog said HR people could use Watson Analytics to know what factors can be changed to hold on to good finds. Alexander walked readers through what lightbulbs can turn on once the HR-curious logged in to Watson Analytics.

"I ask Watson Analytics what drives attrition, because it's the most interesting to me, and I want to see how the other fields statistically relate to that target. It looks like working a lot of overtime is strongly linked to attrition." She then had Watson show her predictive information "on how job role and performance evaluation relate to employees who have left."

Sure, some insights on triggers that a worker will leave that she saw may seem obvious— people who work a lot of extra hours without being rewarded and attrition in sales jobs being higher than other areas.

"What Watson Analytics does is quantify these insights reliably." That way, she said, a company can take focused actions based on factual insights.

Fast-forward to 2019 and IBM is still talking up AI's potential for human resources insights and, regarding accuracy, the numbers being touted are impressive. CNBC said IBM HR now has a patent for its "predictive attrition program" which was developed *with* Watson to predict employee flight risk and prescribe actions for managers to engage employees.

CEO Ginni Rometty in 2019 talked about this "predictive attrition program."

Eric Rosenbaum, Editor, CNBC.com, said the AI retention tool is part of a suite of IBM products that are designed to upend the traditional approach to human resources [management](#).

IBM artificial intelligence can predict which employees will leave a job with 95 percent accuracy.

The tool feeds into an overall strategic view at IBM of changing the human resources function from service to [growth](#) engine. She also said, you have got to put skills at the center of the culture.

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