

Is your sports club's HR tech world-class?

Five ways to test its fitness



Within sport, it's possible to develop a culture of excellence that runs through a club so it improves the performance of everyone, from ticket-takers and volunteers through to business leaders and star players.

This isn't simply about redefining your mission statement; it's about creating an environment where everyone in your organisation can fulfil their potential — by giving them the tools to make it happen. As a result, they will feel connected and know how their own talent ultimately contributes to success on the pitch. In a sense, each person can be a 'club legend' in their own right.

The result? You can expect greater commitment, increased productivity, and reduced costs as a business. You can help to bring about a winning culture and mindset that's remarkable, sustainable, and unmistakable. You can sense it, wherever you talk to, everywhere you go.

Checking performance on the pitch is simple — because you can see the results. But how can you assess whether your HR systems contribute to your club's success or hold it back?

This checklist will help. Here are five ways to test your tech.

Question 1) Are you engaged with every employee?

People must feel engaged, focused on your goals, and able to act as a team. This impacts what happens on the pitch and the training ground, in the office, and the stands, at events, and in the community.

Which best describes your club in this area?	Tick box
A) We use email wherever possible and we post printed letters to make sure everyone is included — hoping they'll read and act on what we send them. Performance rating: Poor <i>Engaging with a disparate workforce can be a challenge and labour-intensive. Interaction can feel like it's a top-down process. The club might seem remote and impersonal to some people if they don't have an interactive way to engage with HR.</i>	
B) Engaging with all employees is very hit-and-miss. Email is fine for office staff. But it's difficult to provide support and run HR programs effectively across the club in ways that connect with everyone. Performance rating: Mediocre <i>Making everyone feel valued and supported all of the time can feel impossible if your HR tools don't keep them engaged. Interactions should be two-way, and each person needs to feel treated as an individual and empowered. HR teams need the time to do these valuable tasks.</i>	
C) Our club has its own mobile app, so everyone gets a personalised experience. Everything is in one place and easily accessible. We enable self-service too. Performance rating: Outstanding <i>With the right HR tech in their hands, people feel connected. You can give them the personal support they need to be their best and help to shape your club's culture through two-way engagement. People can also self-serve, book holidays, manage their careers, and complete other tasks in moments, helping them to feel seen and heard, while taking the admin burden off the HR team.</i>	

Question 2) Are you worried about data security, especially around your stars and high-profile people?

The need for extra care with confidential data is another area that sets sports clubs apart. Sensitive information must be managed discreetly and efficiently — with access strictly controlled. HR teams know that data breaches can put people at risk or cause reputational damage due to media interest in celebrities.

Which best describes your club in this area?	Tick box
A) We keep sensitive data around pay, addresses, phone numbers, and family details in paper records and across various systems. Everything is locked away. Performance rating: Poor <i>This approach puts clubs and their people at risk. A club can be vulnerable to security slip-ups or security breaches that could put sensitive details in the wrong hands.</i>	
B) Most of our records are digital, but they don't exist in the same place — and there's always a nagging concern about security and access. Performance rating: Mediocre <i>The right people need access to the right data — for the right reasons. And then, data needs to be securely deleted at the right moment. This is extremely hard to manage manually across disparate systems, and it can be prone to errors. Multiple versions of files can co-exist and it can be difficult to ensure that each is up to date and has been stored and managed correctly.</i>	
C) We have a single digital record in the cloud. Data is secured, stored, and managed automatically. Performance rating: Outstanding <i>This is the gold standard and it lifts a stressful burden off the HR team. As well as safeguarding sensitive data, this automated approach can help to keep you compliant with data protection rules.</i>	

Question 3) How well can you manage discipline issues, employee grievances, or problems with social media that could harm your club?

As with other businesses, HR teams at sports organisations have to deal with issues. But clubs can be especially vulnerable if issues are poorly handled or become public, making headlines on news channels and kicking up a storm on social media.

Which best describes your club in this area?	Tick box
A) We have various guides and processes in PDF format that we give to people when they join us. Beyond that, we handle issues as they happen. Performance rating: Poor <i>It's easy for employees to overlook policies — or claim they've never seen them — if they are not easily accessible and there is no record of their acceptance of the policy. If issues arise, events can move quickly, so managers must have a clearly-defined path to follow immediately.</i>	
B) We're constantly updating our policies and letting people know by email. If issues occur, we rely on gathering notes, printouts and screen-grabs. Performance rating: Mediocre <i>It's vital to keep everything and everyone updated — and any issues tracked and recorded thoroughly. But this can be an exhausting task when handled manually. And it's easy to miss things that catch you out later.</i>	
C) People can access every policy in one place online, and their participation is recorded. In addition, any HR 'people issues' are tracked with a timeline to ensure our policies have been correctly managed. Performance rating: Outstanding <i>With this approach, you can make policies accessible to all staff in a few clicks and ensure a strong position, protecting your people, brand, and reputation.</i>	

Question 4) How easily can you measure people's wellbeing, engagement and performance?

HR programmes can help to develop a stronger, happier and more engaged workforce. But people need to have ways to express how they feel, providing you with actionable insights.

Which best describes your club in this area?	Tick box
A) We'll run occasional surveys with incentives to get people to take part. It tends to be the same people each time. Performance rating: Poor Occasional surveys involving a minority of people who feel motivated to take part won't tell you the big picture. With incentives, there's also the risk of people feeling the need to reciprocate with positive answers, so you don't get to the truth.	
B) We use a range of digital surveys and engagement exercises. The data needs collating and interpreting. Performance rating: Mediocre This approach may reach more employees, but it could become an admin headache. Data from multiple sources can be hard to compare and interpret. Employees may also get tired of surveys and cynical if they can't see any connection with action.	
C) Using our mobile app, we can monitor the heartbeat of our club. It's intuitive for people to tell us how they feel regularly and takes just a few moments. Our HR tech shows an accurate picture of performance. We can act on insights too. Performance rating: Outstanding With this approach, you can catch people's feelings in-the-moment on a range of issues. They have a voice and it's almost effortless to share how they feel. The data is all in one place and your HR tech can generate the results for you instantly.	



Question 5) Is your HR system easy to customise, so it fits your organisation precisely?

Some systems cover basic HR functionality. But do they reflect the fact you're a sports club — and face unique challenges, such as managing player salaries and bonuses, seasonal and variable workforces, and the need to scale up or down, in line with competition success?

Which best describes your club in this area?	Tick box
A) Our HR system has its limits. For extra functionality and dealing with change, we rely on manual processes and various workarounds. Performance rating: Poor Many HR teams do a phenomenal job trying to keep on top of change. But you could be wasting hours of manual effort on tasks that could be handled in a fraction of the time by using tools that make many of these tasks automatic.	
B) As we've grown, our system has stayed much the same as it was when we were smaller. It does the job on the basics, but isn't helping us to drive new initiatives that will take the club where we want it to go. Performance rating: Mediocre Even with occasional updates, some HR systems are a poor compromise. They can't keep up with your needs. They lack the subtlety and detail in areas that make a big difference to the day-to-day running of your club, and in ways that can help you to reach your future goals.	
C) Our system is flexible and easy to tailor ourselves. Our vendor works with us in a collaborative way. Performance rating: Outstanding Typically, the best HR solutions will give you around two-thirds of the functionality you need as standard — with the freedom to tailor the rest to the shape of your club. You can easily create bespoke workflows, generate relevant dashboards and get insights that reflect performance in real-time.	

So how was your overall performance?

Many HR teams at sports clubs are doing an exceptional job, managing organisations with complex requirements and shifting circumstances. But they need HR software that will help — from recruitment and attainment, to engagement and reporting, and everything in between.

Fortunately, all that's needed can be provided today by a single system.

Discover how sports clubs can up their game. Get your copy of our white paper 'Why your sports club's HR is critical to outstanding performance'.

**Click here to
download a copy now**

You'll explore how to achieve connectivity at the heart of your club, bringing people, data, and ways of working together. You can build culture, accelerate efficiency and drive performance.

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