

Transforming Talent Management in Higher Education

Using Cloud Technology for a More Strategic Approach

Overview

1. A Changing Industry Requiring a Complete Talent View

2. Engaging Both Sides of the Classroom

3. A More Efficient, Strategic HR Department

Overview

It's a turbulent new era for higher education. In the United States, overall state funding cuts for public colleges have reached \$9 billion in that many years, which has increased tuition for institutions of all types—and has caused enrollment to fall.¹

How are colleges faring? While Brown University can afford to offer grants instead of loans to counter dropping enrollment, the University of Wisconsin has had to shift some schools to satellites for the main campus.

In Europe, meanwhile, student applications are dropping, due in large part to newly increased tuition rates.² And the anticipated effects of Brexit are inspiring fewer students to explore studying abroad.³



And more students everywhere are forgoing traditional universities for coding boot camps and other specialized programs that promise an actual job upon completion. What this disruption means is a new level of competitiveness in higher education. Prospective students have more choices (and more expectations) from wherever they choose to matriculate.

To meet the increasing expectations of students and entities that provide additional funding, HR leaders in higher education must play a strategic role, attracting and retaining the talent that composes a strong, enduring educational brand.

This ebook explores how advanced cloud HR technology can serve as the backbone of this effort. You'll learn:



- Why a complete view of human resources is now essential



- How engagement is paramount to success on both sides of the classroom



- Ways that increased efficiency can build more-strategic HR



1 Michael Mitchell, Michael Leachman, and Kathleen Masterson, "A Lost Decade in Higher Education Funding: State Cuts Have Driven Up Tuition and Reduced Quality," Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, August 23, 2017, cbpp.org/research/state-budget-and-tax/a-lost-decade-in-higher-education-funding.
 2 Christopher F. Schuetze, "Brexit Rings a School Bell: A Drop in European Student Applications Underscores Growing Worries Among British Education Officials," US News and World Report, August 28, 2017, usnews.com/news/best-countries/articles/2017-08-28/impact-of-brexit-is-already-resonating-across-uk-universities.
 3 Camilla Turner, "Number of British Students Studying Abroad Plummet, Report Finds," The Telegraph, November 29, 2017, telegraph.co.uk/education/2017/11/29/number-british-students-studying-abroad-plummets-report-finds/.



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It's a shame that debt is the most common topic when it comes to higher education these days. But it's understandable, considering the burden felt by people of all ages.

“Student loan debt is now the second highest consumer debt category—behind only mortgage debt—and higher than both credit cards and auto loans.”⁴

Forbes

In this context, it's understandable why MOOCs (massively open online courses) offered by both companies such as Coursera, Udacity, and edX, and by recognized universities, are on the rise. Minerva—which promises an Ivy League education at a fraction of the cost—is just one new option that continues to gain ground.



A transforming student body.

This shift to a tailored, on-demand approach to education is indicative of a larger consumerization trend in higher ed. Students expect new levels of connectivity and accessibility from institutions. How would a prospective young student raised on 24/7 online support via a mobile device view classic university office hours for faculty and administrative staff?

And students are getting older, with nontraditional students (those over the age of 25) growing at a higher rate than traditional students.⁵ According to a survey of adult students from Ruffalo Noel Levitz and CAEL, their unique needs include:

- Courses offering flexibility
- More course offerings in their major
- Multiple options for financial aid and billing⁶



The latter item is a strong reminder for every HR team in higher education: Price sensitivity is more of a deciding factor than ever before. And 68 percent of business leaders of colleges and universities say it's driving down enrollment figures.⁷

While the Ivy League and other prestigious schools around the world may enjoy a higher perceived value, second- and third-tier universities are feeling the effects of ballooning tuition fees.

In California, for instance, why would an applicant choose a state school over a UC when they're more cost-comparable than ever? And in Europe, why would nonresident students choose to pay full price for any school rather than a more affordable one in their own country?



Differentiation through staff.

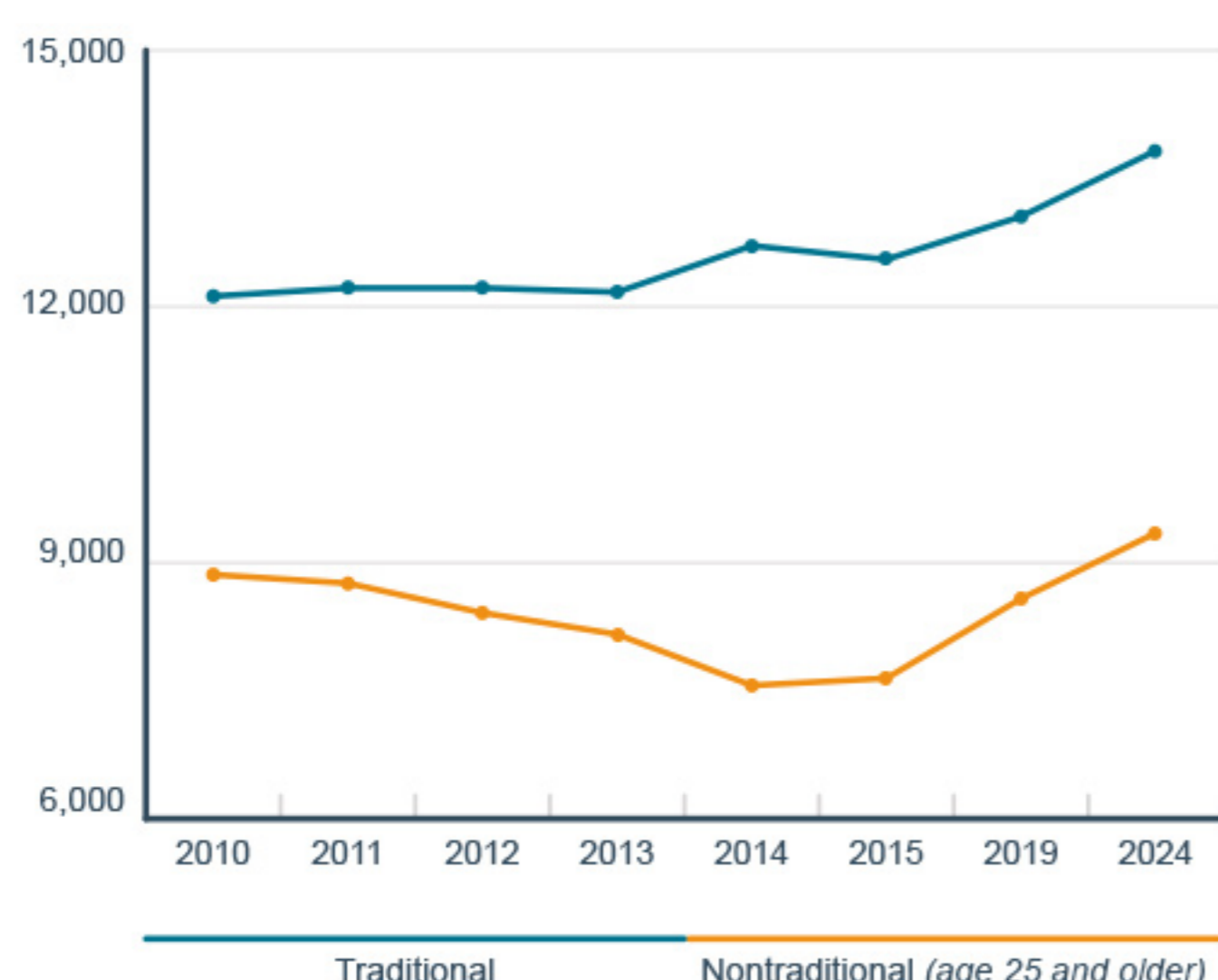
While tuition discounting has helped institutions like Marlboro College boost enrollment, the situation is dire.⁸ The total number of institutions declined by 9 percent between 2013 and 2017, according to the National Center for Education Statistics, while Harvard Business School's Clayton Christensen predicts that up to 50 percent of colleges and universities will be bankrupt within the next 10 to 15 years.^{9, 10}

He reminds us, though, that new educational models can't replace *everything*:

“[Regarding generous donors], their connection wasn't their discipline; it wasn't even the college. It was an individual member of the faculty who had changed their lives. It's not clear that that can be disrupted.”¹¹

Clayton Christensen,
Harvard Business School

Figure 1: Rise of Nontraditional Student Enrollment¹³



This underscores just how critical the right staff has become in higher education. The effectiveness of instruction from faculty directly affects student satisfaction.¹²

Accordingly, more institutions are deploying robust cloud HR solutions to maintain a staff that properly engages student-customers. A consolidated view of all human resources data is necessary for a school to:

- Assess skills needed to serve a student body expecting more accessibility, mobility, and responsiveness
- Identify gaps for newly desired skills in online learning, more immersive onsite teaching experiences, and ways to connect the two
- Find criteria to replace credential-based assessments with ones centered on proficiencies valued by students and donors
- Discover areas of employment attrition that may be affecting the experiences of both staff and students

4 Zack Friedman, "Student Loan Debt in 2017: A \$1.3 Trillion Crisis," Forbes, February 21, 2017, [forbes.com/sites/zackfriedman/2017/02/21/student-loan-debt-statistics-2017/#4682073c5dab](https://www.forbes.com/sites/zackfriedman/2017/02/21/student-loan-debt-statistics-2017/#4682073c5dab).
 5 Lexi Anderson, "27 Is the New 18: Adult Students On the Rise," Education Commission of the States, August 3, 2016, ecs.org/27-is-the-new-18-adult-students-on-the-rise/.
 6 Ibid.
 7 "Price Sensitivity Is Costing Us Students, Say Business Officers," EAB, May 23, 2017, [eab.com/daily-briefing/2017/05/23/price-sensitivity-is-costing-us-students](https://www.eab.com/daily-briefing/2017/05/23/price-sensitivity-is-costing-us-students).
 8 Ibid.
 9 Doug Lederman, "The Culling of Higher Ed Begins," Inside Higher Ed, July 19, 2017, [insidehighered.com/news/2017/07/19/number-colleges-and-universities-drops-sharply-amid-economic-turmoil](https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/07/19/number-colleges-and-universities-drops-sharply-amid-economic-turmoil).
 10 Abigail Hess, "Harvard Business School Professor: Half of American Colleges Will Be Bankrupt in 10 to 15 Years," CNBC, November 15, 2017, [cnbc.com/2017/11/15/hbs-professor-half-of-us-colleges-will-be-bankrupt-in-10-to-15-years.html](https://www.cnbc.com/2017/11/15/hbs-professor-half-of-us-colleges-will-be-bankrupt-in-10-to-15-years.html).
 11 Ibid.
 12 Emily Tate, "Report on Professors' Role in Student Success," Inside Higher Ed, January 25, 2017, [insidehighered.com/quicktakes/2017/01/25/report-professors-role-student-success](https://www.insidehighered.com/quicktakes/2017/01/25/report-professors-role-student-success).
 13 Lexi Anderson, "27 Is the New 18: Adult Students On the Rise," Education Commission of the States, August 3, 2016, ecs.org/27-is-the-new-18-adult-students-on-the-rise/.

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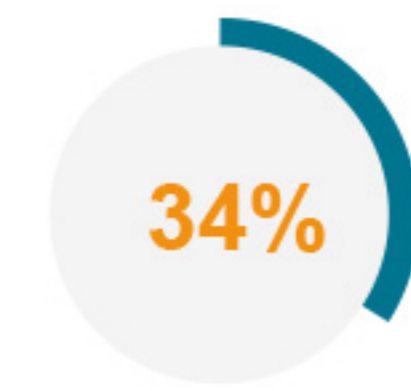
2. Engaging Both Sides of the Classroom

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2. Engaging Both Sides of the Classroom

In a recent ranking of universities, Wall Street Journal and Times Higher Education defined student engagement based on student experiences with professors, whether they were pushed to think critically, and whether they would recommend their school to others. According to the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment, the five best practices are:¹⁴

- 1 **Transparency:** Students need to know what to expect from their courses, what their professors expect of them, and how they will be assessed.
- 2 **Pedagogical approaches:** Personalized instruction and active learning are just two pedagogical approaches that have been linked to better student understanding and overall experience.
- 3 **Assessment:** Students can build upon their knowledge base and check their progress through regular assessments, as opposed to testing their new knowledge and skills once or twice throughout the term.
- 4 **Self-regulation:** Colleges that require active participation and reflection from their students tend to be more successful and have higher graduation rates.
- 5 **Alignment:** It's important for students to see how separate assignments, courses, and experiences can complement each other and contribute to their overall success.



34% of university faculty and staff are engaged in their jobs

Sadly, though, these best practices are not widely practiced in higher education, according to the institute's director, Natasha A. Jankowski.¹⁵ And Gallup reports that only 34 percent of university faculty and staff are engaged in their jobs.¹⁶

A harmful side effect.

With funding challenges abounding over the past decade—and baby boomer faculty retiring *later* than expected—it's understandable that contingent workers have grown to over 50 percent of appointments.^{17, 18}

Unfortunately, several studies confirm that a growing reliance on part-time faculty negatively affects graduation rates, effective instruction, teacher–student interaction, and transfers from two-year to four-year colleges.¹⁹

A bigger shame is that these factors are a growing consideration for donors and other funders.

“In their daily work, nontenure-track faculty members, particularly part-time faculty, often encounter a number of challenges stemming from institutional and departmental policies and practices that constrain their efforts. For example: Last-minute hiring and renewals limit the time faculty members have to prepare for teaching.”²⁰

The Delphi Project

With a cloud-based HR system with predictive analytics, a school can create an engagement strategy in which even part-time adjunct professors receive guidance, feedback, and support.²¹ Beneficial modules include:

- **Performance Management:** Replace periodic reviews with continuous tracking of progress toward specific missions aligned to your school's 10-year plan.
- **Career Guidance:** Use career pathing modules to perpetuate a long-term mindset even for part-time workers with an eye on the door. Use in conjunction with annual faculty reports.
- **Learning and Development:** Provide on-demand access to professional development courses tied to later opportunities within the institution. Prove value to adjunct faculty, who may be working multiple part-time gigs.
- **Rewards and Compensation:** Offer incentives for work that increases student access, while ensuring proactive pay raises to keep staff from leaving for competitors or other sectors.
- **Succession Planning:** Prepare for the transition of key faculty, but proactively manage changing tenure eligibility. Despite longer terms, nearly a third of college and university presidents are likely to retire in the next five years.²²

Figure 2: Five Essential Principles for Improving Student Outcomes

In a recent report, Deloitte outlined the most vital student success factors: HR teams should use the following to drive all talent-management strategies:²³

<h1>1</h1> <p>Student success should be central to your mission</p> <p>“Student success should be a core element of institutional strategy at the president and provost level.”</p>	<h1>2</h1> <p>Action taken is as important as analysis</p> <p>“Staff members expected to enable the action phase should be included in the overall architecture planning of any student success initiative.”</p>	<h1>3</h1> <p>Know the value and limits of technology</p> <p>“From the outset, there should be a clear understanding of what the technology can and will do and what will be expected of an institutional staff.”</p>	<h1>4</h1> <p>People investments are as important as technology</p> <p>“A coordinated ecosystem of human touchpoints—academic advising, career counselors, tutors—all play an important role in student success.”</p>	<h1>5</h1> <p>Improving student success can coexist with high quality</p> <p>“Quality and student success are not mutually exclusive, but rather mutually reinforcing, provided there are high standards in place from both an admissions and an academic rigor perspective.”</p>
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Budget cuts continue to affect the hiring of high-cost faculty, but also the HR staff that facilitates the hiring. There are fewer resources available to attract, develop, and motivate top faculty and staff. And don't forget: HR budgets in higher education are already 50 to 75 percent lower than in other industries, according to a study by AON.²⁴

“Facing unique financial pressures, colleges and universities must have HR departments that operate efficiently and at a high level. They must move past basic administrative roles and become a major organizational influence.”²⁵

LinkedIn



Much like it does for IT staff, the cloud enables HR teams to shift from an administrative experience to one that's more proactive and strategic. In addition to the engagement-related abilities mentioned above, advanced HR cloud solutions can provide:

- **Self-service functionality:** Allow faculty and staff to answer their own queries regarding payroll and benefits.
- **Reporting dashboards:** Use predictive analytics to enable faculty and admin staff to make better decisions in their day-to-day performances.
- **Omnichannel sourcing:** Reach a wider pool of applicants that includes *passive* jobseekers, who are often top performers, according to the SHRM's "Recruiting Checklist for Quality Hires."²⁶
- **Automation and artificial intelligence (AI):** Deploy a system that automates key processes in core HR, recruiting, and industry-specific areas such as position control. Enable text message chatbots to answer common yet time-consuming inquiries.

Automation is sorely needed in both recruiting and onboarding. As seen in Figure 3, automation can enable a more seamless, transparent process for prospective faculty and administrative candidates—one that gets them up to speed and invested in student service more quickly.



“Few administrators, professors, or university trustees seem happy with the current faculty model in higher education.”²⁷

Chronicle of Higher Education

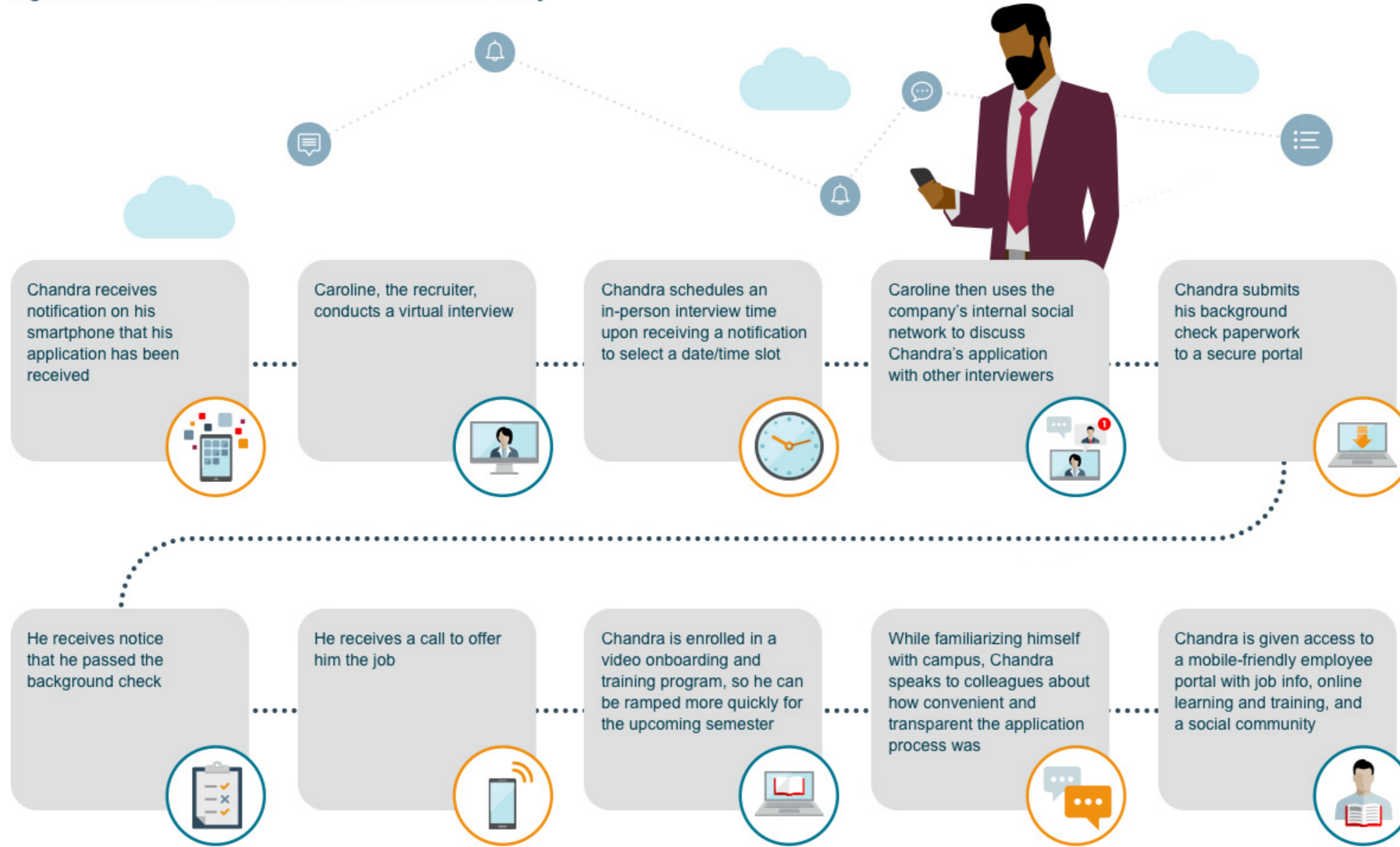
Reshuffling the faculty for better results.

With the time saved on mundane tasks, your HR team can utilize workforce-modeling software to investigate more-pressing talent-management issues, such as the merit of new faculty models.

In a recent report, the Chronicle of Higher Education compiled new ideas for structure, including a two-track model that separates teaching and research faculty, and a plan to pair members with instructional designers.²⁸

Whether or not such configurations are feasible for your institution, an agile HR system is vital to wield effective talent management going forward. It's also key to ensuring the best possible education for future leaders. In this sector, what could ever be more important?

Figure 3: Chandra's Omnichannel Candidate Journey



²⁴ Rayanne Thorn, "The Challenges Faced by Human Resources in Higher Education," LinkedIn, April 20, 2017, [linkedin.com/pulse/challenges-faced-human-resources-higher-education-rayanne-thorn/](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/challenges-faced-human-resources-higher-education-rayanne-thorn/).

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ How to Target Passive Job Seekers, Society for Human Resource Management, June 2016. [shrm.org/resourcesandtools/tools-and-samples/how-to-guides/pages/how-to-target-passive-job-seekers.aspx](https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/tools-and-samples/how-to-guides/pages/how-to-target-passive-job-seekers.aspx)

²⁷ Jeffrey J. Selingo, "2026: The Decade Ahead—The Seismic Shifts Transforming the Future of Higher Education," The Chronicle of Higher Education, 2016, [uky.edu/universitysenate/sites/www.uky.edu.universitysenate/files/The-Decade-Ahead-Chronicle-of-Higher-Education1.pdf](https://www.chronicle.com/article/2026-The-Decade-Ahead-The-Seismic-Shifts-Transforming-the-Future-of-Higher-Education/251117).

²⁸ Ibid.