

How to Chuck out your Chintz

The Chintz Test

1. Can you simply explain the value of the HR activity, policy or process to the business and to a non HR professional?
2. Does anyone do anything with the output, or use it to make decisions or changes?
3. Does it help improve our culture or people's skills?
4. Is there a very good business reason for doing this?
5. Is there a legal requirement to do the process or does it significantly reduce legal risk to the organisation?
6. Does it fit your organisation?
7. Is there anything you are doing, just because you believe it is best practice?

Guiding principles for chucking out your chintz:

1. Be brave
2. If you decide something isn't Chintz make sure that you are making the most of it.

How to Chuck Out Your Chintz

Step One

Talk to the people on the receiving end of HR. Managers, employees, new starters, suppliers. Ask them some simple questions about what they think of HR where you are, such as:

- How easy are we to engage with?
- What one thing would you change about what we do or how we do it?
- What do we do well at the moment?
- What do we do now that you aren't interested in or don't use?
- Where can we do better?
- Rate us between 1-10 for our overall HR service

This way, you will know where you are starting from, what your key areas of focus should be, and have a way to benchmark your improvement.

Step Two – Look at your processes

Take one HR area or topic at a time. Get a flip chart, and write down everything you do in the process. For example:

1. We offer them the job
2. Then we send a contract
3. We send them policies to sign and forms to complete
4. They send stuff back
5. We file it
6. They tell us when they can start
7. We send another letter confirming the start date
8. We send off for references
9. We tell the line manager when they can start.....

Look hard. Ask yourself if you can stop doing anything, eliminate any steps.

Apply the Chintz Test.

And repeat for all your key HR processes and activities.

Lots of small things add up to big time savings, and will give you time to do more value added HR activity.

Step Three – policies and documents

Make a list of all the documents and policies that you have. Handbooks, standard forms, process guides, employment policies – include everything. Read them all again. Put yourself in the shoes of the recipient. How would you feel if you were the reader, the person filling in the form, the person completing the process?

Apply the Chintz Test.

Aim to reduce the size of your documents and unnecessary steps, signatures and sentences.

Step Four – bigger stuff

When you have finished all of the policies and procedures, make a list of your programmes, projects and bigger activities, even your team structure.

Apply the Chintz Test.

Step Five

Decide how you going to fill gap created with the time you have saved. Use your survey to guide you so you are working on the things that people will actually value.

And Finally.....

After six months, repeat your survey to see what impact your changes have made. And make sure the Chintz doesn't creep back!

Just to get you started, a couple of ideas of chintz you could chuck.....

- Employee Handbooks.
- Exit interviews
- Employment references
- Probation periods
- Sending out policies to be signed