

HR Tech Jargon Buster

Don't get bamboozled



Term	Translation	Description
SaaS	Software as a Service	The "Netflix" way of buying software – i.e. as a subscription service (rather than the "Blockbuster video" way – which is sometimes called on premise).
On Premise	Installing on your own servers	The "Blockbuster video" way of running your HR system – i.e. do it yourself. Old fashioned? Yes - but some businesses still want to have servers on their own premises.
Cloud	Cloud Computing	Think Netflix or Zipcar. Why buy when you can rent?! You can run your HR "in the cloud" and it doesn't mean less secure – you're still in control.
HCM	Human Capital Management	A previously trendy term when people were seen as capital. Brutal capitalism, or brilliant – you decide.
HRIS	Human Resource Information System	A slightly old-fashioned term to refer to the techie bit of HR – i.e. the HR system(s) and data rather than operational HR.
Agile	A trendy project management method	Often used for software development, where you divide tasks into short phases of work and frequently reassess and adapt plans.
API	Application Programming Interface	Set of tools for building software that allows for two or more applications to interact.
ATS	Applicant Tracking System	Is a software application that's designed to help a company recruit employees more efficiently. Sometimes it can be called a CMS or candidate management system (not to be confused with a Content Management System).
Beauty Parade	Demo from target vendors	Ask for a demo if the RFI submission looks good. It's like having a dance with someone you fancy to find out whether they can dance too.
Demo	Demonstration	Make the vendor show you what they've got and dance with you ("demo" also sometimes refers to the demonstration environment).
EAI	Enterprise Application Integration	Standards for passing data between systems – something your IT bods might throw into the mix, so be careful not to fund a white elephant.
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning	An old fashioned term for the older tier 1 vendors that would typically offer software across the enterprise, not just HR.

Term	Translation	Description
Func	Functional Consultant	The people from the vendor side who will be guiding you through how the product works and will be configured. Not a techie.
GDPR	General Data Protection Legislation	Important legal stuff about data protection that you need to make sure your system is compliant with.
NFR	Non Functional Requirement	Not specific behaviours of the system, but things that sound techie because they end in "...ity" like
NPV	Net Present Value	Difference between the present value of cash inflows vs present value of cash outflows. Used in budgeting to analyse the profitability of a project/investment.
POC	Proof of Concept	Asking the vendor to prove some aspect of their software or that it really works rather than documents and demo. Sometimes called a "desktop pilot".
PRD	Production environment	Tour live environment. Treat with care and respect, and make sure it's secure and GDPR-proof.
Prince 2	PRojects IN Controlled Environments	A structured project management method certification. Slightly old fashioned, so balance this with Agile .
RFI	Request For Information	Asking for a mini-proposal – it's an initial request you make to a target vendor list that you like the look of when you want to find out more.
RFP	Request For Proposal	When you've shortlisted your preferred vendors from your RFI and beauty parade & demos, request a formal proposal to the 3-5 "getting serious" vendors.
RPO	Recovery Point Objective	Maximum amount of data (as measured in time) that you would find acceptable to be lost after a disaster
RTO	Recovery Time Objective	Maximum time you will allow your chosen supplier to restore your system back to normal after a disaster. For HR systems you need to think carefully about payroll cutoff
ROI	Return on Investment	Add up the estimated benefits over an e.g. 5 year term and subtract the costs over the same term.
Sandbox	Play environment	Demo environment you are allowed to have a play in.
TCV	Total Contract Value	The amount you will pay to the vender over the term of the contract.
TST	Test Environment	Make sure you've got one of these during your project and for ongoing support – without it you can't check things work before you deploy.
UAT	User Acceptance Testing	Testing undertaken by the business at the end of the project to prove everything works OK from an end user perspective.

