

Q4 2019

SuccessFactors Review

Platform and People Analytics

- Stephen Hammond

The Q4 2019 release continues the evolution of People Analytics, with other areas such as Web Experience, Technology and Admin also seeing some useful enhancements.

Let's take a detailed look at what has changed.

Experience

Usability, performance and consistency are the focus of the enhancements here.

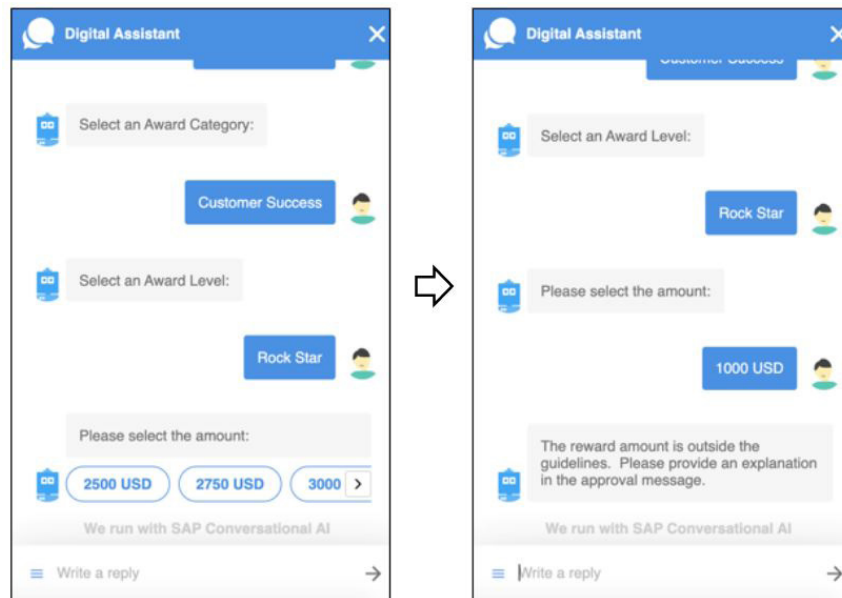
The Header section of BizX pages has various width, height, font and padding changes, and relabelling of 'Options' under the user utility menu to 'Settings'- this is in order to provide a consistent header across all pages. Notifications in the header now show as a red icon whenever they appear. You must enable the Fiori 3 theme for UI5 libraries and the Fiori 3 header for these settings to take effect.

Admins can now assign supplemental to-do items to dynamic permission groups, rather than to all users. They can also use Data Retention Management (DRM) to purge completed to-do items from the database. This will boost page performance because completed items are always retrieved when rendering the page, even though they do not appear in users' lists.

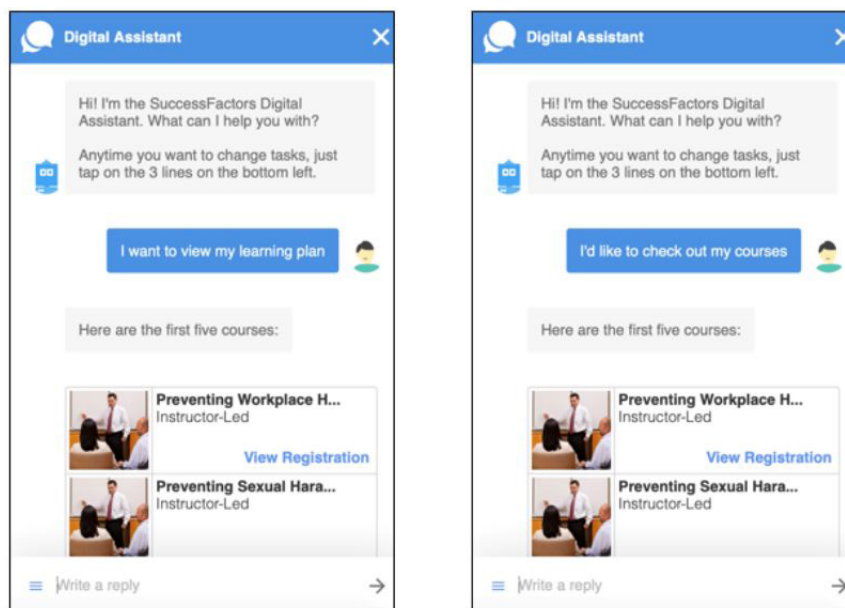
Contrast has been improved on the login page to help accessibility.

Changes have been made to people searching, so that the search works in the same way across different pages. Furthermore, role-based permission restrictions on employee data are now supported more fully within search, so that for example, fields that you do not have permission to view are now excluded from search results, rather than showing with 'No Data' indicated.

An interesting new feature, in beta until May 2020, is Digital Assistant Skills. These are chatbot style conversation blocks that can guide the user through various functions such as awarding a bonus to an employee or viewing their open items.



(Figure 1: Digital Assistant Skills are chatbot-style blocks of interactive content that can guide the user through various business activities)



(Figure 2: The Digital Assistant Skills have been designed to recognise variations in user input, to handle the different ways in which the user may ask for assistance)



Technology

Extensions

Picklist Center will now be available to all customers, including those who have not migrated their picklists to MDF. Creation of all picklists, both small and large, is now done using the new UI. This replaces the Picklists option from the Admin Centre/ Configure Object Definitions page.

Admin users can now create up to 250 custom MDF objects by default. This limit can be raised to 400 if needed via a request to SAP support. There are also various minor changes made to the default security and visibility settings in MDF objects (refer to the release notes for details).

MDF API

Failed MDF API upsert requests will now return meaningful key information in the error message, instead of the “null” value returned currently. This will help in tracking down the records which are causing errors in integrations. When using MDF APIs in query mode, additional controls have been added to restrict the return of very large amounts of data. To avoid memory issues, an error message will now be displayed if the limit is reached, allowing the user to adjust their query accordingly.

Business Rules

Collection filters in Business Rules can now use variables, in addition to constants and literals. This improves flexibility and usability.

Integration

A single minor enhancement here - customers integrating SFSF Learning with ERP Financials can now choose between manual and primary cost allocation when transferring data. Previously, only manual cost allocation was supported.

User Management

Accounts and Users have been decoupled universally, so that a person can have multiple users under one login account. This provides a universal ‘main user’ selection option for scenarios involving global assignments, contingent workforce and concurrent employments. It’s administered using the ‘Manage Login Accounts’ admin tool.

There is a new option ‘Enable Control of Basic User Import in Role-based Permissions’ within Manage Employee Central Settings, with which you can restrict the ability of users to perform a Basic User import.

When creating a Super Admin via Provisioning, you can specify password (PWD) as their login method. This is useful in systems where you have Partial SSO enabled, to ensure your new admin user can login without having to go via the 3rd party authentication.

When importing Employee data, the fields Hire Date and Exit Date now support additional date formats other than MM/DD/YYYY and DD/MON/YYYY- most notably, now supporting DD/MM/YYYY as well.

It is now possible to back up multiple versions of the Succession Data Model and restore a specific version if required. This gives better visibility of changes and can speed up instance recovery.

People Analytics

Just to recap on the terminology in this area: **SAP SuccessFactors People Analytics** is the new umbrella term that encompasses the following:

- SAP SuccessFactors People Analytics, **embedded** edition (formerly *Reporting*)
- SAP SuccessFactors People Analytics, **advanced** edition (formerly *Workforce Analytics*)



- SAP SuccessFactors People Analytics, **planning** edition (formerly *Workforce Planning*)

All the above tools will share the same front-end, via the **Report Center**.

In the Q4 2019 release, Report Center becomes universal for all production instances. You should consider upgrading to Report Center before it is pushed out universally towards the end of November 2019. Please note that there are role-based permission changes required. Please refer [report center universal community](#) for details.

Embedded edition will become available (gradually by data center) in this release. This edition provides reporting of live data across multiple SFSF modules, with role-based permission and GDPR protection built in. A new Query Designer UI tool guides you through report creation, and new features such as Calculated Columns (using mathematical/string/logical functions) and Story Designer (providing charts and other data visualisation tools) let you expand the report scope and present the data in a meaningful context.

The pre-requisites for using embedded edition are:

- SAP Identity Authentication Service (IAS)
- Report Center must be enabled
- Note that Global Assignment and Concurrent Employment are not currently supported
- The schedule of release by data centre will be released shortly

Users of the existing ad-hoc reporting tools should note that a Fair Use policy is now in place. Reports that retrieve up to 1 million cells can be run online or offline. Reports retrieving from 1 million to 2.5 million cells can be run offline only. Reports retrieving more than 2.5 million cells will result in a message informing

the user that the limit has been exceeded, and that the report options should be altered to reduce the count. This will prevent timeouts and blank reports being generated.

As a final note, customers who opted in and enabled the beta release of **Analytics in Employee Central** should be aware, as previously advised back in Q1 2019, that this functionality will cease to operate as of the Q4 2019 release.

Admin

Instance Management

When syncing instances, it is now possible to request the sync of configuration and data separately. This has the advantage of potentially speeding up a sync considerably when only configuration needs to be copied, since data is typically the much greater part of the sync process compared to configuration.

The Instance Refresh Center now has a self-service capability that triggers back-end workflows for requesting refreshes. This is now enabled on all data centers. The Instance Refresh Center now also has a Data anonymization tool (in beta release only) that can be enabled on request to SAP support. This allows sensitive data to be obfuscated in the target instance when copying from a production instance.

Check Tool

There are now further enhancements to the check tools in Payroll Information and Reporting. This means that certain issues raised by the check tool can now be fixed at the press of a button. Some of the quick fixes for check tools introduced in this release are:

- AddressValidationCheck
- BankDetailsValidationCheck
- NationalIDValidationCheck



Platform: Role-based permissions

Changes to role-based permissions that affect dynamic permission groups can now be handled dynamically, without manual intervention, through an enhance refresh framework. This feature becomes generally available with this release, having been trialled in the previous release with selected customers.

Document Management permissions can now be more specific. For example, you can now grant permission to manage documents based on the document category. This makes it practical to grant document management permissions to non-admin users.

Read-access logging of sensitive information has been enabled on all DC2 data center instances. This provides logging of all read access to the following fields:

- National ID/SSN
- Ethnicity
- Minority

Customers can opt out of this logging functionality via the Admin Center. Note that technical users (such as API users) can be excluded from the logging to avoid performance issues.

A final note on administration, if you are still using the Success Factory-XML tool to work with form templates, then be aware that this will no longer be available as of this release. You should from now use the Manage Templates tool instead.

Conclusion

The major development in this release is the introduction of the Report Center as the front end for all analytics, and the roll out of the Embedded edition of People Analytics to replace the Reporting function. You should make the necessary role-based permission settings changes if you are not already using Report Center. If you haven't already familiarised yourself with Report Center, now is the time to do it.



How Can We Help?

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- **Scoping Services** - for if you are thinking of moving to the HCM Cloud but are unsure of where to start.
- **Support Services** - for if you are already using SAP SuccessFactors and want a flexible support partner.
- **Release Management Services** - for if you are struggling to take advantage of the quarterly innovations in SAP SuccessFactors.
- **Business Process Services** - for if you are looking for operational support with your HCM processes.
- **Training Services** - for if you are not getting the most out your SuccessFactors system.

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