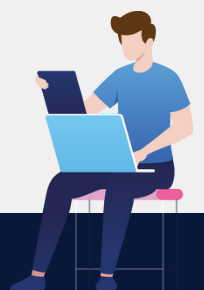




Why external HR consultants are here to help



As HR professionals, we know that one of the founding principles of resource management is having the right people, in the right roles, at the right time.

Working with an external HR consultant may be the crutch you need when you simply need someone to hit the ground running (and hit it now).

You know the scenario - you've hit a workload peak and you need more hands on deck, you need a specialist skillset, someone with specific experience, or you simply need another pair of eyes on a situation.

These are all scenarios where external, independent HR consultants are going to add value to your business and ensure that your team can flex, adapt and deliver, whatever the situation.

One of our skills in HR is understanding limits, whether that is from the perspective of wellbeing and avoiding burn-out, to ensuring relevant expertise to support your management team.

So, consider some of the scenarios where calling upon an HR consultant should be the first place to turn, rather than a last resort.



1. Transactional HR

You know where your value is, and it's not in administration.

If you are stand-alone, or your team are at capacity and workloads peak, you'll benefit from being able to turn up the dial-on support.

We've all been there; preparing our own salary increase letter or, worse still, preparing our own redundancy notifications.

In these difficult and often time-sensitive scenarios, you can use skilled HR administrators to sensitively and accurately carry some of your load.

Transactional HR can also be called upon for time-sensitive employee relations matters that almost always land when your team already have a full caseload.

Your managers need support, and they need it now.

These are structured processes which demand accuracy and sensitivity, and your chosen HR consultancy will have the resources to provide you with experienced administrators who understand what needs to be done, how to do it and why it's important.

If you've traditionally defaulted to the alternative of fixed term contracts to get you through a peak, no doubt you've also experienced the delays in recruiting, a lack of high-quality candidates or simply the risk that they leave mid-way through your project, exactly when you don't have the time to restart or reinvest.

2. Strategic HR

Your seat at the boardroom table comes with expectations of solid strategic skills...

...and, if we didn't feel like imposters already, there will always be a new initiative that comes along and we simply don't know that we have all the answers.

And don't feel that you have to handover ownership or have your consultant lead on your strategic HR projects, they'll be happy to coach you or design from a distance.

And this is where strategic HR consultancy will also benefit YOUR development.

Strategic HR consultants have the benefit of having worked across a variety of sectors, in different sizes of business, and have the credibility that they have already proved they can deliver to a high standard. And at the end of the project, you simply shake hands and they move on to their next project, whilst you bask in the credit of a project well delivered, with the knowledge and insights to deliver it yourself next time.

If you are going through a vital cultural transformation, organisational design, or are driving high performance across your business, your HR consultant will have delivered a number of similar successful projects, and you can call upon them to either lead or advise.

Not only can you ensure that you retain your credibility and the credibility of your team, you can also develop your strategic skillset and learn from an expert.

61%

of senior HR roles are held by women...

...and, as women, we are less inclined to 'wing it' than our male boardroom counterparts. This is where peer-to-peer guidance can prove invaluable.

You'll know that the marketing team aren't shy when it comes to outsourcing design work, so why are we so reluctant in HR?

If it feels like admitting defeat when it comes to calling upon strategic HR, then it's time to reframe your perspective and put the needs of your business first. Rather than learning on the job, with all the potential pitfalls of failure, you can call upon a tried and tested expert to guide your thinking.

3. Specialist HR

This is probably the most common area where we utilise the skills of HR consultants.

More often than not, the HR path takes two routes: you are either a generalist or a specialist.

Regardless of your career path, you'll find yourself out of your depth and looking for support when specialist projects need to be delivered. If you have had to undertake a reward project and found yourself baffled by compa ratios and job scoring, then you'll understand where a specialist's advanced knowledge can really add value.

It's no longer enough to be scouring job boards for comparatives or putting your finger in the air to guess appropriate pay bands.

Specialist HR consultants not only have a wealth of knowledge, they also have access to the correct tools to ensure that you can deliver a scientific and repeatable methodology to assure your employees that their reward is properly assessed.

Complex employee relations matters are another area where you may choose to call upon an expert.

Receiving a tribunal notification can send a chill down the spine of even the most experienced HR practitioner, and this is not a scenario where you want to miss something vital. You'll have deadlines to hit and a case to build, you may even prefer to have your organisation represented if you go all the way to a hearing. You won't want to rack up huge legal fees unnecessarily, so this is a perfect time to think about bringing in expert services.

Another area for HR specialist support is in your recruitment process. Perhaps you are recruiting into a field where you don't have a depth of knowledge? Or you're using personality profiling tools to assess your candidates? In which case, you'll know that you need someone suitably qualified to undertake such assessments. You may also use the skillset (and network) of a talent acquisition specialist who is working for your business in attracting and selecting for key recruitment needs or a campaign.

If learning and development sits within your HR function, you may well use an HR consultant to deliver specific training for your organisation. If Health & Safety is under your umbrella, you'll want to ensure that a suitably qualified and responsible person is creating your documentation and processes, and if payroll is an HR function, you may find a greater level of understanding and accuracy from outsourcing this to the experts.

4. Unbiased HR

There are many occasions where we simply need a truly objective view that cannot reasonably be expected from inside our business.

We know, better than most, the risks and potential for bias and we've all been in a situation in HR where there is a conflict of interest.

Perhaps your HR team have received a complaint against them and you need an impartial view of the world to ensure that an investigation is carried out fairly, or perhaps you are running a reward process and you simply need an external party to grade your own role (or the role of your boss).

Whilst it is always tempting to mark your own homework, have you ever considered having your HR service audited for compliance?

To ensure that you are delivering a first-class service, it is helpful to have another pair of eyes checking your work and an HR consultant can advise on strengths and improvement areas. Wouldn't you rather know your gaps before they are exposed?

So, why wouldn't you call upon external HR consultancy support?

The primary reasons are likely to be either financial constraints or worry that your peers think you should be doing it all.

If financial constraints are holding you back from engaging with an experienced HR consultancy service, then it may be prudent to consider the value in avoiding costly mistakes. We know the costs of a failed project or an employment law issue that can result in financial risk and brand damage.

However, if worry is getting in the way, then consider how you will benefit from developing yourself with peer support from an expert, as well as your enhanced personal credibility from delivering a successful project.

Once you have experienced the benefits that a strong HR consultancy support can provide to you and your business, you'll have confidence that no matter the size or skillset of your team, you can flex to deliver in all situations.

And let's not forget about providing HR for HR people; your HR consultant can also provide you with support and advice when you need it too.

We're here to help

We're incredibly experienced at supporting senior HR teams lead change in their organisation.

Get in touch to book a confidential chat about our approach and how we can help.

Get in touch

 www.surebettshr.com

 07585 335 059

 doug.betts@surebettshr.com