

Workforce transformation for retail HRDs

A time of huge opportunity in retail

Increasingly price-sensitive customers. Rising overheads. Evolving shopping behaviours. It's a challenging time to be an established retailer – but it's also a time of huge opportunity for you, as an HR leader.

That's because HR directors are uniquely placed to take the lead on workforce transformation, minimising the costs and pains of industry change, and giving their companies a real edge over less prescient, prepared and proactive competitors.



Three ways to turn industry change to your advantage

If you're a well-known retailer with a 'bricks and mortar' presence, your workforce probably isn't in the shape – or locations – you'll need it to be in a few years' time. There are three key areas of consideration:

1 Restructure

From closing stores to opening distribution centres – workforce restructuring is always a major undertaking, and one that involves finding strategic answers to some massive questions:

Who do we relocate? How do we decide on, and manage, a redundancy programme? How do we manage the workload with the limited resources of our team?

2 Standardise

Many retailers handle HR inconsistently across locations, with different contracts for the same roles, and different ways of applying policies. It pays – in terms of time, cost, and minimised headaches – to address this before attempting restructure and relocation, or any other overarching workforce transformation.

That means asking questions like: What should our contracts look like in future? Is there an opportunity for harmonisation and how will we implement that?

3 Digitalise

The way we shop isn't the only thing that's being shaped by technology. The way we work is changing too. If your team is to effectively engage a more flexible workforce, with shifting priorities and expectations – and simultaneously become a strategic partner to your business – it needs to be connected like never before.

So, how will you adapt to new employee expectations? How would you enable, for example, more flexible working for non-customer facing roles? And how can you serve up invaluable MI?

What it takes to transform



Empowered line managers

Managing redundancies or new recruitment drives at scale is tough, especially when your HR resources are limited. You can chart your course, but you need your line managers to take responsibility for getting your company there – and making those tough calls about who to retrain, who to let go, and who to hire.

This means ensuring they've easy access to expert HR advice, ideally from an external provider. That way, you can give them confidence in their decisions and ease the burden on your team – all while promoting transparent, fair and compliant processes.



Centralised HR policies

With modern mobile and cloud technology, it's possible to create a centralised HR resource that can be accessed by your team, line managers and employees alike – anytime, anywhere.

By bringing together your HR policies, documentation and case data, such online resources can help you not only simplify workforce transformation, but improve process consistency and transparency, and more effectively track trends in absence, disciplinary action and performance.



Greater workforce insight

Your HR team doesn't just need to build, understand and support a changing workforce – it needs to be able to measure its success.

That means capturing workforce data, and performing smart, strategic analysis. One quick way to test your transformation and progress is to benchmark your company against other, similar retailers.

How we can help

As a leading provider of HR technology, consulting and outsourced advisory services, we can help you embrace the disruption in the retail industry, and create the workforce you need to thrive.

And, with the biggest pool of HR advisers out there, we can get tailored solutions up and running within days.

Our services include:

HR consultancy – from policy design, review, simplification and compliance, through to contract harmonisation or variation, wider organisational design and peer-benchmarking

HR technology – including HR knowledge portals, providing managers with central access to policies and procedures, case management to log and review HR cases, and people analytics

HR advice line – we'll become an extension of your HR department, acting as the main point of contact for any managers with HR issues



Let's get started

Ready to take the lead on workforce transformation? Talk to our experts today to find out how we can help. Call us on 0844 327 2293.