

Case study:

Delivering HR Operational Readiness for a Complex Workforce Transition

Overview

Hunter Adams supported a client through a large-scale, high-pressure organisational change programme, providing HR leadership to prepare for a significant TUPE transfer. Through agile delivery, expert project management, and strong stakeholder collaboration, the organisation achieved full operational readiness to successfully absorb a substantial incoming workforce.

The Challenge

The client was embarking on a major acquisition that would significantly increase the size of its workforce. A large number of employees were due to transfer under TUPE, creating a complex set of legal, operational, and people-related requirements.

This was a time-critical initiative, with all workstreams aligned to a fixed completion date. The organisation needed to ensure that its HR function was fully prepared to integrate the incoming employees, while continuing to deliver business-as-usual HR services.

Failure to achieve readiness would have created risks around operational disruption, compliance, and the overall success of the transition.

The Underlying Complexity

While the immediate focus was the TUPE transfer, the scope of the challenge was much broader.

The incoming workforce would drive rapid organisational growth, requiring the business to scale its HR infrastructure and capability at pace. Key priorities included:

- **Delivering a large-scale recruitment campaign to support future operations**
- **Ensuring HR and payroll systems were fit for purpose and scalable**
- **Establishing processes for benefits, occupational health, and safety-critical training**
- **Aligning all activity with the legal framework of the transaction**

The project also required close coordination with the seller's HR and Employee Relations teams, alongside engagement and consultation with the transferring workforce.

The combination of scale, pace, and interdependency made this a highly complex and commercially important programme.

The Approach

Hunter Adams deployed an experienced HR Project Lead to take ownership of the HR workstream, while also overseeing day-to-day HR operations.

The approach was dynamic and delivery-focused:

- **Rapid mobilisation:** Immediate identification and mapping of all HR workstreams and priorities
- **Agile delivery:** A flexible plan that evolved in line with project developments
- **Proactive stakeholder engagement:** Establishing strong working relationships with both internal and external HR teams
- **Flexible resourcing model:** Bringing in specialist expertise at key stages of the programme

This ensured the organisation could respond quickly to change while maintaining progress towards the end goal.

Overcoming Challenges

The programme was fast-paced and continuously evolving, with new challenges emerging throughout.

Key challenges included:

- Managing multiple interdependent workstreams
- Navigating uncertainty across stakeholders
- Balancing strategic programme delivery with operational HR demands

These were addressed through:

- Regular, transparent communication with all stakeholders
- Close collaboration with the seller's HR and Employee Relations teams
- Proactive risk management, ensuring issues were identified and resolved early

This approach created clarity and alignment across all parties involved.

The Outcome

By the target completion milestone, the HR workstream was formally declared operationally ready to support the transfer.

This included:

- Fully established and tested HR and payroll systems
- Successful delivery of recruitment and workforce planning
- Compliance with all TUPE-related requirements
- Effective engagement and consultation with employees

The organisation was fully prepared to integrate the incoming workforce and support continued operations without disruption.

The Impact

The project delivered lasting value beyond immediate readiness:

- Strengthened HR infrastructure, improving scalability for future growth
- Enhanced organisational capability to manage complex change programmes
- Improved cross-organisation collaboration, building strong working relationships
- Increased confidence across leadership and workforce through clear, consistent delivery

Key Lessons

This engagement highlights several critical success factors:

- **Start early and plan thoroughly: Clear roles and resourcing are essential**
- **Remain adaptable:** Large-scale transitions require flexible delivery models
- **Prioritise stakeholder engagement:** Strong relationships reduce risk and drive alignment
- **Leverage specialist expertise:** Access to the right skills at the right time is critical

Why Hunter Adams

This project demonstrates Hunter Adams' ability to deliver calm, expert leadership in complex and high-pressure environments.

By combining practical delivery, flexible resourcing, and a collaborative approach, Hunter Adams ensured the client was fully prepared for a major organisational transition - ready to move forward with confidence.

Ready to navigate complex change with confidence?

Get in touch to see how Hunter Adams can support your organisation with expert HR leadership, flexible resourcing, and delivery you can rely on.

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