

Case study:

Delivering a High-Risk TUPE Transfer Under Significant Time Pressure

Overview

Hunter Adams supported a client in delivering a critical TUPE transfer that had been delayed multiple times and was at risk of further disruption. By rapidly resetting the plan, introducing structure and governance, and stabilising the process, the transfer was successfully delivered with minimal issues and no further employee attrition.

The Challenge

The client was preparing for an incoming TUPE transfer that had already experienced several delays. A new target transfer date had been set just three weeks away - however, the organisation lacked the internal capacity to deliver within that timeframe.

This transfer was a key component of the organisation's growth strategy and had significant commercial importance. Ongoing delays had already begun to impact the incoming workforce, with rising attrition levels creating a real risk to service delivery and contractual commitments.

Immediate intervention was required to stabilise the situation and ensure a successful outcome.

The Underlying Complexity

While the immediate issue was timing, the underlying challenge was a lack of realistic planning, capacity, and delivery structure.

Key risks included:

- Insufficient time to ensure continuity of employee benefits and terms
- Limited internal resource to manage the transfer effectively
- Absence of formal programme governance or reporting mechanisms
- Growing uncertainty among transferring employees, leading to attrition

Without a reset, the organisation faced both operational and reputational risks.

The Approach

Hunter Adams took a pragmatic and transparent approach, quickly assessing feasibility and resetting expectations.

Key elements included:

- Rapid risk assessment: Clearly identifying constraints, risks, and delivery gaps
- Replanning the transfer: Proposing a revised timeline and structured delivery plan
- Stakeholder alignment: Securing agreement on the revised approach through clear, evidence-based recommendations
- Introducing governance: Establishing a weekly reporting framework to track progress, risks, and issues
- Structured delivery: Managing consultation requirements, including ETO measures, in line with legal obligations

This approach ensured the project moved from uncertainty to controlled execution.

Overcoming Challenges

The engagement required careful management of both operational and people-related challenges:

- Tight timelines and previous delays impacting confidence
- Ongoing employee attrition within the transferring population
- Lack of existing programme structure

These were addressed through:

- **Clear and honest communication**, resetting expectations early
- **Consistent tracking and reporting**, enabling proactive risk management
- **Focused stakeholder engagement**, ensuring alignment and accountability
- **Stabilising the employee experience**, reducing uncertainty during the process

This created momentum and rebuilt confidence across stakeholders.

The Outcome

The TUPE transfer was successfully delivered against the revised plan, including:

- Completion of required consultation processes
- Smooth transition of transferring employees
- Minimal post-transfer issues
- Stabilisation of the incoming workforce, with no further attrition

The organisation was able to proceed with confidence, maintaining its commercial commitments.

The Impact

Beyond the immediate delivery, the project created long-term value:

- **Improved approach to TUPE planning and delivery**
- **Introduction of structured governance and reporting mechanisms**
- **Development of a reusable TUPE playbook** to support future transfers
- **Enhanced onboarding experience**, including new welcome packs for incoming employees

The organisation is now better equipped to manage future growth and workforce transitions.

Key Lessons

This engagement highlights several critical success factors:

- **Be realistic about timelines:** Early assessment and honest communication prevent failure
- **Structure drives success:** Clear governance and reporting enable control in complex projects
- **Employee experience matters:** Managing uncertainty is key to retaining talent during transitions
- **Capture learning:** Creating repeatable frameworks builds capability for future activity

Why Hunter Adams

This project demonstrates Hunter Adams' ability to step into high-risk, time-critical situations and deliver successful outcomes.

Through clear thinking, structured delivery, and practical expertise, Hunter Adams transformed a fragile project into a controlled and successful transfer - while leaving a lasting legacy for future activity.

Facing a complex TUPE transfer or workforce transition?

Partner with Hunter Adams to deliver with confidence, minimise risk, and get it right first time.

team.admin@hunteradams.co.uk