



hr2go

C O N S U L T A N C Y January 2024



Five HR priorities for your business

Part of my role when I act as your in-house HR Director, Manager or Business Partner, is to advise on the key priorities and tasks for the year ahead. These are the areas making my list for 2024.

1. Employee wellbeing

Employee wellbeing is always a priority for HR professionals and business owners need to invest in their wellbeing strategy.

Wellbeing and stress-management issues fall under an employer's general duty of care in law. However, complying with legal requirements is not the only reason organisations should invest in wellbeing

Employers need to make sure staff know they are cared about and that their health and wellbeing is an organisational concern.

Wellbeing policies are shaped by employee feedback which highlights the need for more wellbeing benefits such as readily accessible employee assistance programmes and

having mental health first-aiders in the business.

Companies would do well to look at different wellbeing benefits which are suited to the different demographics of their workforce.

2. Employee performance and productivity

I advise organisations to pay increased attention to monitoring and evaluating employee productivity and performance.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic there has been a shift in ways of working and employers need to be mindful of how productive employees are in different areas of the business whether these roles are home or office based.

The emphasis on employee performance should not necessarily be a reflection of poor performance but companies working towards the implementation of a fit-for-purpose process for an evolving business to ensure staff can see their growth areas and remain focused and motivated.

As we usher in 2024, it's crucial for employers to stay informed by considering significant employment law and HR changes for the year ahead. In this January newsletter my aim is to share experiences along with best practice HR advice. I want to help businesses comply with legislation whilst supporting their workforce.



You can request an initial free consultation to see if I can help you. Please contact me using any of the methods listed below. I would love to hear from you!

hr2go Consultancy is here to support you with any of your HR issues or concerns

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3. Management skills

There are certain areas managers have influence over and organisations should be focusing on supporting managers to drive forward change.

Developing the skills of line managers and leaders is a priority in order to support change management and employee wellbeing.

I would advise employers to focus on manager and supervisor development so managers don't miss out on key people management and leadership skills.

Part of my role is to review manager training and develop training materials for additional upskilling support in line with current employment legislation and best practice.

4. Change management

Reviewing the employee lifecycle is crucial for employers and the management of staff levels is an important issue. Business owners need to manage recruitment, staff retention, succession planning and redundancies to remain sustainable.

Any recruitment undertaken needs to be essential and retention of staff remains a priority with employers needing to focus on being creative with employee benefits, brand awareness and that onboarding is effective.



It is important to plan and manage change and understand what kinds of change needs to be planned so that change can be managed successfully.

5. Technology and AI

The adoption of new technology such as HR information systems (HRIS) and the use of AI is on the horizon for many organisations. Companies are looking at smarter ways for employees to integrate with their systems whilst allowing the people team to measure performance of the organisation and staff.

I would advise employers to have a policy setting out the limits of use of AI if employees are using these tools for work-related activities. In the policy employers can set out the acceptable use of AI-powered chatbots and what types of tasks they may be used for and what is prohibited use.

The policy should have guidelines for using these tools at work so employees really understand the dangers such as sharing confidential information, as well as the opportunities such as content generation.

Employers should make employees aware that any breach of the AI policy, including any inadvertent disclosure of confidential information or personal data, will be treated as a disciplinary offence and that as these tools continue to advance and develop, the company will carry on assessing and navigating the risks associated with using them. Business owners need to ensure that their approach to AI remains current and effective.

If you are an employer and need help focusing on your HR tasks and priorities for the year ahead, please reach out.

Looking ahead to 2024: new employment laws

It's important that business owners keep on top of new legislation and should consider the implications and practicalities of these changes to reduce legal risk and ensure employees and workers can benefit from any new entitlements. Here is a summary of some of the key legislation set to be introduced in the next year...

Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay) Act - employees will receive a day-one right to 12 weeks of leave if their child is receiving neonatal care. However, the right to receive neonatal care pay will require a minimum of 26 weeks' service. Leave does not need to be taken in one block and can be taken in individual days or half days. Neonatal care must have started within 28 days of birth and last for at least seven days. The leave must be taken within 68 weeks of the child's birth.

Carer's Leave Act - comes into force on 6 April and allows carers to take one week's unpaid leave in any 12-month period to look after a dependant with a long-term care need, such as illness, injury, disability or old age. Leave can also be taken in individual days or half days.

Protection from Redundancy (Pregnancy and Family Leave) Act - currently, protection is given to employees on maternity, shared parental or adoption leave, in that they have a right to be offered a suitable alternative role, if one is available, before they are made redundant and must be preferred for the role. This new Act - due to be implemented on 6 April - will extend this protection to pregnant employees and employees recently returning from maternity, adoption or shared parental leave.

Workers (Predictable Terms and Conditions) Act - this Act which is expected to come into force in around September 2024 will introduce a new statutory right for workers (including agency and zero-hours workers) and employees to request a more predictable working pattern. Also covered are those on a fixed-term contract of 12 months or less, as long as they have worked at the employer for at least 26 weeks.

Employment Relations (Flexible Working) Act - set to come fully into force on 6 April will improve current flexible working rights, allowing employees to make two formal flexible working requests in a 12-month period. The right to make a flexible working application also becomes a day one right on 6 April 2024. Employers will need to consult with employees before rejecting any such applications and will have only two months to consider and decide the outcome. The eight statutory grounds for rejecting a flexible working request remain unchanged.

Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2020) Act - legislation on the duty to prevent sexual harassment is expected to be in place from October 2024. Under the new law, all employers will be under a statutory duty to take reasonable steps to stop sexual harassment happening in the workplace. If reasonable steps have not been taken to prevent sexual harassment and an employee is sexually harassed and successfully brings a claim, then the Equality and Human Rights Commission can take enforcement steps, plus any successful tribunal claim will be subject to a compensation uplift of up to 25 per cent.

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