

making work human

HR Essentials for Small Business

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making work human



Getting the people stuff right is the difference between winning and losing.

If you've started a business, or you're about to then you want it to be something special.

There is a simple, effective way to lead your business that is absolutely human.

good for business.
good for people.

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04 Step 1: The Plan

Start the Business

You have started your business, identified the customer, chosen a name and a legal structure and set up your finances.

Your People Strategy

People will make or break your business. [Make a strategy.](#) Taking your business strategy as a baseline, a basic People Strategy will look at the work to be done, and give you a clear focus on required capabilities (skills), culture, structure, and leadership. You look at where you are now, where you'd like to be and how the gap is best filled.

Grow and Succeed

We want you to succeed and the growth of your business will depend on your constant assessment of the talent around you and essentially your ability to pivot on your set plans. If the business demands change be ready to make it.



Be decisive. Be brave. Follow through.

05 Step 2: The First Ten People

You've made the decision to risk it all, and build a business!
You've got the idea, or you bought someone else's.
You've backed it with everything you've got:
Now, you just need the right people to ride alongside you.

Nothing matters more than the First 10 People.
Nothing is more challenging. Nothing is more fun.

Here's what we know matters about the first ten people.

Ten things: 9 you need and 1 you don't - Always these 9:

1. Absolutely as 200% committed to every one your customers as you are. Every. Single. One.
2. Know what they're doing! And willing to do it well.
3. Know how to work hard. And are willing to do just that!
4. Values aligned to honesty, integrity, and generosity.
5. Trusted! Having your back – Like you've got theirs.
6. Able to go fast and hold that precious momentum you're working so hard to create.
7. Know how to do something you can't do, so you're all learning and growing together, and there's space for them to run and do their thing.
8. Open to opportunities – Asking 'what else could we do?' rather than 'Tell me what to do'.
9. Gets along with people – no clichés and splitters. You're in it together!

And never, ever this one:

10. They are looking for a place to hide. They make mistakes or fall short, but stay quiet.

You need those
that lean in,
not out.

06 Step 3: Getting Compliant - The Fundamentals

Mandatory: Every box on this list must be ticked:

- [A contract for each person on your team.](#)**
A contract should clearly lay out wages/salary, hours of work & expectations. If you elect to have no contract, things will be assumed. This may cause problems later on as details will be inferred by the relevant Award of Fair Work Act.
- [Correct minimum wages and conditions for your team.](#)**
Set by the National Employment Standards.
- [Hours of work and expectations are made very clear](#)**
Which award they are covered by. Leave & Flexibility covered.
- [Worker's Compensation Insurance.](#)**
- [Occupational Health and Safety Policy](#)**
- [Payroll Tax Compliance](#)**
As soon as your business pays more than \$750,000 in a year (including wages to yourself)
In NSW you must pay Payroll Tax of 5.45%
\$1.5 million NT of 5.5%
\$2 million ACT 6.8%
\$1.1 million Qld 4.5%
\$600,000 SA of 2.5 to 4.9%
\$1.25 Tassie 4% up (and increases at \$2million)
\$650,000 4.85% for Vic in Cities and 2.425% in regional
\$850,000 in WA of 5.5%

A sustainable
& successful
business
requires
fundamental
compliance

07 Step 3: Getting Compliant - Other things to consider

A Set of Key Policies

We recommend you have the following policies in place:

[Bullying and Harassment](#)

[Flexibility](#)

[Grievance](#)

[Redundancy](#)

[Leave](#)

[Maternity and Paternity Leave](#)

[Ethics](#)

[Resignation](#)

[Payroll](#)

[EEO](#)

[Read our Guide to Policies for further information](#)

[A PlayBook \(A manual of how your business runs\)](#)

A short ten page 'PlayBook' wraps up all your policies and expectations in one place & puts them in a format that speaks the same language as your brand. It means rather than updating every person's contract, you update the PlayBook. It also means that new people joining the team get on the same page quickly, and feel confident of the rules and expectations from Day 1

Employment Liability Insurance

Don't forget to speak to your lawyer or financial advisor. This insurance means if you make a mistake in employment, you can claim insurance to rectify any errors.

Professional Indemnity Insurance

This insurance is for businesses that provide services and protects your business from any employee, or from you, giving bad advice to clients or customers.

08 Step 4: Your Leadership

The Essentials

A leader takes on the responsibility of ensuring key policies are in place and the team are **safe** in their workplace. After the policies and compliance are ticked off, success comes down to whether you can lead people well.

Leadership is not just about you

Its not about your ambitions, achievements, presentation skills or confidence. Leadership is about your impact on others. It is about your **mindset** of impacting others and forming relationships whilst achieving a goal or a vision that is worthwhile.

Can your leadership deliver human values?

- CARE - Connected, Authentic, Respectful and Empathetic
- Individuality welcomed into the community
- Generous honest communication
- Clarity powering through the complexity
- Bravely doing what matters

If you do nothing else as a people leader except form great relationships, impact people on your watch positively, and live the five human values, you'll be off to a good start leading people.



Visible
leadership,
accessible...

Why context matters to People Leadership

Leadership doesn't exist in a vacuum. It exists in a context. Leaders who know their context can ensure that their leadership is most relevant – to employees, customers, goals & ultimately to success. They can ensure that their leadership focuses on the best opportunities & greatest threats.

Examine the following elements of context so you:

- Know your industry & competitors.** Is your market share growing or decreasing, do the trends show if the industry is changing?
- Know your Business.** Your business purpose, customers, business strategy, business plan, current goals & budgets, and your cash flow. Are you in touch & aligned to your business. If there's an overall strategy, are you helping achieve it?
- Know your values.** Values are deeply personal. Lead in a way that is aligned to your values. Be very clear on your own values & what's important to you.
- Know your customers.** How does knowing your customers impact leadership? Businesses are only relevant if they're relevant to their customers. Good leadership requires a genuine understanding of every aspect of the customer.
- Know what work matters most.** If your team is calmly focused on the most important work, then they're neatly aligned to purpose and business success.
- Know the culture you need.** Culture is how everyone experiences your organisation & team. It is organic and dependent on every person but the leader's role is so critical in thinking about culture, designing it & moving it forwards.
- Know your team.** Relationships are everything when it comes to leadership, and relationships are based on really genuinely knowing and caring about each other.

10 Step 5: Culture and Wellness

Culture Defined

Culture can be defined in many ways, but fundamentally it's about 'the way we work together—with each other, with our customers, and with the community. It's the way it really feels to work here every day'.

How does it affect your Business?

Culture shines through everything that happens in your business. How you interact with others in your team, your customers, your community. How you tell your stories and plan your future, what you prioritise above all else and what you most appreciate.

You need to do three things to build a great Culture:

1. Be very clear on the great culture you want to build. Discuss and debate every aspect. Every aspect you might choose will have a pro and a con. A pro when done exactly right, and a con when it's approached too literally or when it is just taken too far. For example, you decide that you want to prioritise innovation, but also that you don't want to be reinventing your core quality processes every day without really strict guidelines around changes.

2. Think of a way to bring culture to life. Make sure it works for everyone. Decide on rituals, rhythm and language. Think of a couple of unique processes or ideas that will become your stories. When your team describes the culture, they'll instantly think of the stories and examples that bring it to life.

3. Proactively support it. Through everything you say, do, measure, applaud, punish, tell stories about, make plans about, celebrate in your daily and weekly rituals, prioritise, and bring to life.

- For more information on these topics subscribe & read more on [Creating your Culture](#)
- Create a [Culture Map](#) to help you consider the future company plans, how the leader's role will model behaviour and what you hope will be the employee's experience.

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Step 5: Culture and Wellness cont.

What does Wellness mean?

Wellness is the peace of mind that comes when life is balanced in a sustainable way. It is a state beyond the absence of illness. [Wellness at work](#) incorporates physical, mental and social wellness.

Ways to enhance physical wellness in your business

- Ensure workloads are manageable within reasonable hours
- Encourage breaks
- Provide healthy office food
- Have appropriately ergonomic furniture

Ways to enhance mental wellness in your business

- Ensure people take holidays
- Manage the workload and way of working to reduce stress
- Align work with individuals in a meaningful way
- Appreciate each team member's contribution
- Train and support individuals so they are fully capable of fulfilling their job responsibilities
- Have a zero-tolerance policy for bullying and harassment.

Ways to enhance social wellness in your business

- Address all aspects of diversity & inclusion to include everyone
- Encourage people to be themselves
- Provide buddies for new people so they feel supported
- Provide good training for leaders & staff on inclusion and belonging
- Design workplaces to create small connected teams that are aligned to the greater purpose of whole business
- Schedule team and organisation-wide activities and opportunities for everyone to socialise and connect.

12 Step 6: Five Core People Processes

When you're overwhelmed by the "people stuff" in your business or team, look at what we describe as [The mwah Way of Working](#). Three simple steps make the mwah. Way of Working.

Look after these and everything else will take care of itself.

- Do you have the right [Mindset](#)? The way that we turn up to face each other every day at work.
- Looking after [Culture](#) collectively, and [Wellness](#) individually.
- Nail the following **five simple core people processes**.

[1. Change](#)

To help you manage change well, efficiently and in the best interests of the business and team

To make change a sustainable part of your culture by giving it a language and a rhythm that your team, customers and leaders trust.

[2. Recruitment](#)

This refers to the entire process of bringing a new person onto a team, from identifying a vacancy right up to onboarding a new hire. Make the best match between the person, the job, the team, and the company so that every stakeholder is set up for a great future working together.



13 Step 6: Five Core People Processes cont.

3. Performance

As an employee, discussions around performance are key to understanding your personal contribution as well as your impact on the contributions of the team.

As a leader, a great conversation around performance gives you the opportunity to set expectations, give and receive feedback, and plan ahead for the growth of the individual, the team and the business.

4. Talent

Talent Management is where the talent needs of the business, today and tomorrow, meet the development planning for each individual.

Consider building a **Talent Profile** and using a Talent Grid to initiate discussions across your team and organisation every six months.

Growing your people will grow your business.

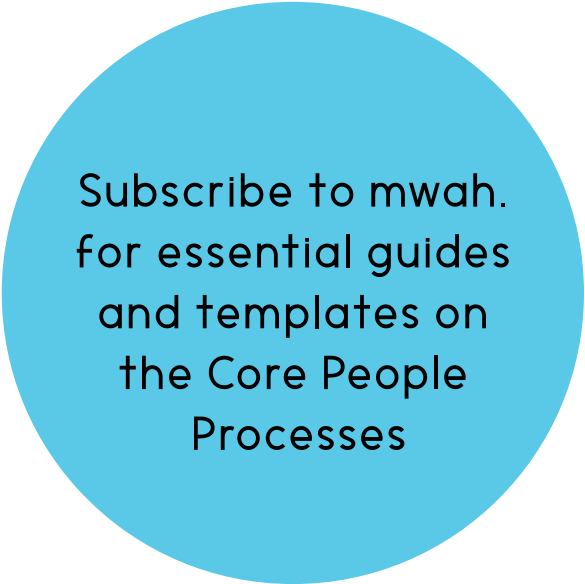
Don't just talk about it! It's critical that you follow your discussions up with concrete actions to help everyone in your team reach their potential.

5. Reward

Reward - particularly pay - is critical to attracting & retaining the best talent for your team, helping them perform at their best & develop their potential.

Think about reward as the sweet spot where internal & external considerations for your organisation meet in terms of legal obligations & market forces.

This allows you to tailor the right reward structure for your employees & business which can encompass a range of financial and non-financial rewards for your employees, including recognition.



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and templates on
the Core People
Processes

14 Step 7: Teamwork

Bring out the best in your team

As humans, we do most things in teams. Working in a team is not just about your own personal contribution. The single most important thing you can do on a team is to bring out the best in others. If every single person is truly focussed on helping the person next to them to shine, then it is logical that everyone on the team will be better, in every context.



Checklist to ensuring that teams work together and inclusively

- Address all aspects of [diversity & inclusion](#) so everyone feels included.
- Encourage people to be themselves.
- Provide buddies for new people so they fit in quickly and feel connected and supported.
- Provide good training for leaders and all staff on inclusion and [belonging](#).
- Ensure that teams work together and inclusively.
- Design workplaces to create small connected teams that are aligned to the greater purpose of whole business. Promote Effective Teamwork.
- Schedule team and organisation-wide activities and opportunities for everyone to socialise and connect.
- [Resolve conflict](#) before it becomes damaging to the business.
- [Recruit](#) for a good team fit.

15 Step 8: Tough Decisions

Tough decisions come in the form of addressing staff or making drastic business decisions regarding Business Strategy, Change and Difficult conversations.

Change Management

It can be a tough decision to pivot the company direction but this can often mean the make or break of a business. Change management is a way of transitioning a business from what it is today to something different. It can be reactive or proactive but despite the reason the key to success is to plan it well, communicate it well and deliver it carefully.

Having difficult conversations

Delivering difficult messages is never easy particularly around dismissal and redundancy. The more difficult the message is to hear, the more important it is that you prepare & are ready to work with your team to help them.

There are five critical elements to remember when you're having a difficult conversation:

Be clear. on the 'why' of the conversation. Why does it need to happen? Be clear to the person you're talking to, but be equally clear in your own mind.

Make time and space. Difficult conversations can be emotional and should have time and space around them. Creating space for the other person to react.

Be open. There may be reasons or context you need to appreciate.

Seek solutions. The best leaders don't blow bad situations up. Instead, they resolve them in everyone's best interests and that should always be your objective.

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Step 9: Growing

As you develop, build and grow your business, particularly from a people perspective, there are some aspects you need to be acutely aware of, and reflect into your plans.

Your Context

Are you in the right location with access to the right labour skills? Do you have competitors that are more attractive (i.e. higher pay, more successful). Does your business attract diversity and the next generation?

Your Business

Is your business a great place to work? Have you successfully attracted great candidates and kept them? Would you recommend your business as a great place to work.

Your Leadership

Are you experienced and can you confidently lead. Are you well trained and does your team support you? Are you a decent human and good for others?

Your Team

If you don't have one, develop a People Strategy to look at where you are now, where you'd like to be & how the gap is best filled. How can your people (team or partners) be a genuine competitive advantage?

Your Capability

Have you considered their capabilities and leadership potential as important components of a winning business strategy. Are you fully compliant. Are all your core people processes in place.

17 Step 10: Succession

Succession planning is the risk management component of talent management. It looks at critical roles in your business and ensures that if the person doing any one of those roles left your business, you would continue to operate successfully.

- Identify the critical roles in your business.**
- If someone left that role would it impact the business immediately, or in the near future?**
- Would it impact the team, or the customers.**
- Is it a hard role to replace?**
- Growing the team requires people underneath who are able to step up to a role or be trained to take over. However if your business is too small to facilitate this then:- Identify the talent outside your organization.**
- Build your network with a view to recruiting your next critical talent.**
- Coach, inspire and connect great talent to your business.**

[Use our Succession Table for Critical Roles to help you map this out](#)

What will happen to the business when you move on?

- Consider the succession planning in the event of your departure. Will it pass to a leader within your business, a family member or will it be sold?
- Consider your exit strategy from the business early on so that the model is in good shape to succeed without you.



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