

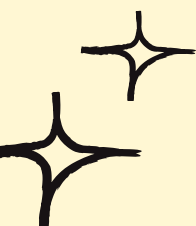
How to make an impact in your first 90 days as a new HR manager

November 2022



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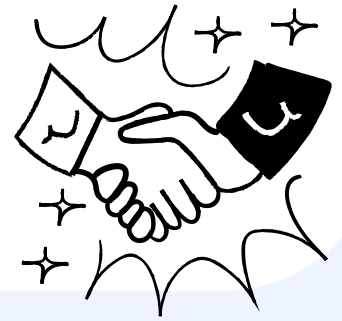
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Introduction



Starting any new role comes with a sense of high anticipation.



Not only do you want to make a good impression, you also probably want to make a splash. Making a positive impact in a new role can solidify a good reputation, open up new opportunities and set you up for success within a business.

But for best results, it has to happen within the first 90 days.

“Research suggests that an employee’s first 90 days will in large part determine his or her performance, longevity, and contribution to the company,” [says](#) Harvard Business School Career Coach Matt Spielman. It’s a period of time that really sets the tone for your journey with a business; three crucial months that are, in many ways, make or break.

That’s why we’ve created a new framework specifically designed for new HR managers who are looking to make an impact in their first 90 days.

The framework is built around three core elements;

- **Learning and absorbing.** To make the best possible impact, you’ll need knowledge, relationships and insights to guide you. Meaningful impact is never made straight away, first you need to learn and absorb from those around you.
- **Seeking solutions.** True impact comes with a roadmap, and this stage will give you the opportunity to draw up the best one possible. You’ll be evaluating powerful tools to implement and setting some firm goals for yourself and your business.
- **Managing change.** Making changes can be tricky for some teams, which is why you need to be a master of change management for your internal and external stakeholders.

These three stages can help you seamlessly integrate yourself into a business, before beginning some great work that will have a wonderful long-term effect.

As human resources management is all about being people-first, we’ve taken a team-centred approach to this entire process. This isn’t just your average management guide, this is tailored to the unique needs of the modern HR professional.

We hope that it sees you kick incredible goals in your first three months.

Wishing you every success,
The Team at Employment Hero

Stage One: learning and absorbing



A big mistake that a lot of new recruits, in any role, make is by jumping into action too fast, too soon.

It's great to want to make a positive change from day one, but taking the time to properly understand the environment you're working in will be invaluable when it comes to making changes. The last thing you want to do is start moving things around before you know the lay of the land - that's an easy way to make mistakes and worse, frustrate stakeholders.

Take your time to do your research over your first few weeks, so you can properly understand the needs of your new environment and team. It's well worth the investment.

Understand as much as possible about your business' product/ service and its clients

Let's start at the very beginning.

What does your company do? How does its product or service work? Who are its clients or customers?

Although you won't be directly involved in selling, marketing or producing the product or service; your team is. Having a deep understanding of what your team is working towards will help you make better decisions when it comes to managing and supporting them. This can also help you when you're talking to external stakeholders.

Being an expert in what your company does will only ever be an asset.

Some basic information will likely be provided to you during the induction process, but go one step further. Seek out company handbooks, do a demo of your product or service, review your company's website and ask questions. In short, be a sponge.

Understand your company's values and growth journey

For most companies, growing to the place they are now hasn't been smooth sailing. Having knowledge across a business' success and failures can help give you foresight into future changes, and help you avoid taking actions that haven't worked for the business before.

The best way to learn about a business' growth journey is to ask your closest team members about it. Consider covering questions like;

- When and why was the business established?
- Have there been any big moments of change or transformation in the business' history?
- How have sales of [the product or service] tracked over time?
- What are our current growth goals and timelines?

It's also important to have a deep understanding of your company's values. Values are a company's guiding principles, they have the power to set the tone and direction for an entire team.

As a HR professional, it's important to have thorough knowledge of what each value is and how they can be brought to life. A big part of your role will be sharing and advocating for these values, so being an expert in them is an absolute must!

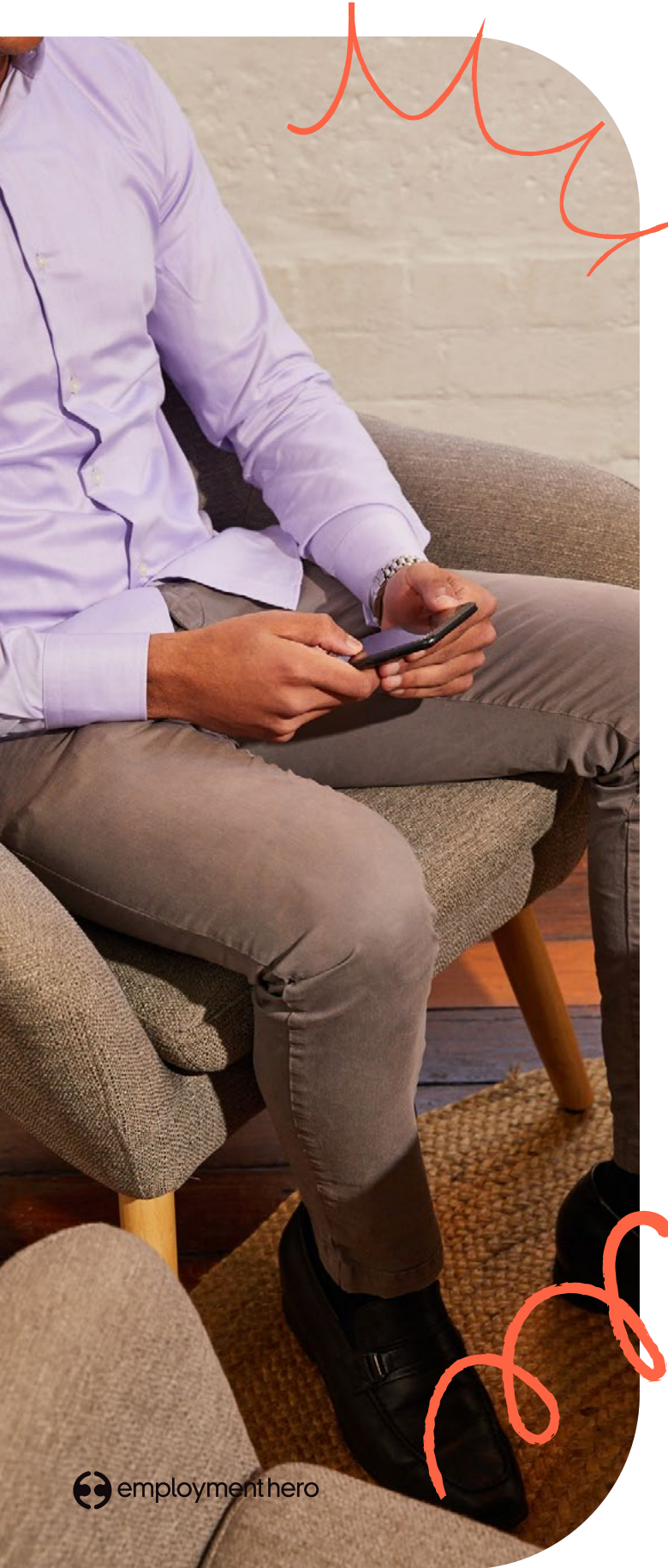
Looking to create or revamp company values during your tenure?

[Our exclusive guide can help.](#)



Understand the business' HR function

Perhaps most importantly, you'll need to learn all about your business' HR function; including current processes, current tools or technology, team structure and which initiatives have and haven't worked for them in the past.



Not sure how to kick off conversations?

Try asking these questions;

- How did we create our library of HR policies, and how are they issued?
- What is our general process for onboarding and offboarding team members?
- How is recruitment generally managed between teams? Where and how do we post our job ads? Do we find it difficult to attract staff?
- How do HR and payroll functions currently work together?
- How do we reward and recognise employees? Is there something they've reacted particularly well to in the past?
- How does the HR department generally communicate with the rest of the business?
- How do we store and reference employee details and documents?
- Are the majority of our employees on permanent contracts? How many staff work on a casual or part-time basis? Do we engage with freelancers or contractors often?
- How would you describe the company culture? What is our strategy for boosting and maintaining company culture?
- What is our strategy for employee learning and development? Do we often promote from within or allow employees to transfer departments?
- What do we offer in terms of employee perks and benefits?
- Do we have any technology we use to manage HR and payroll processes?

Identify key internal relationships

Understanding the needs of your team is always key to success in a new role. Without properly knowing team needs and issues, how can you properly solve them?

Beyond your immediate team, identify key people within the business to build relationships with. These may be senior decision-makers, managers of departments and administrators.

Take them out for a coffee (or virtual coffee) and understand what their priorities are in their role, what their challenges are and what their HR needs are.

Obtaining this information will not only communicate to the person that you care about their individual challenges, it will also give you valuable context when you begin to build business cases for new initiatives that you introduce.

When you connect your solutions to your colleague's challenges, you'll have their support and backing from the outset.

Set up regular meetings

Now that you have a relationship with your key stakeholders, make efforts to sustain them.

Consider setting up an informal catch-up monthly or quarterly. This way you can keep ahead of their wants and needs, plus share anything that you're working on with them - without overcommunicating or taking up too much time (which is a risk of running meetings too often, such as on a weekly or fortnightly basis).

Get involved in company culture

A great way to build other relationships in the business, and establish yourself as a go-to when it comes to HR, is to get involved in the company culture.

If there's a regular Friday afternoon social, be there! If there's a book or movie club, join it! Speak up and introduce yourself in team meetings, and offer to host team events. At Employment Hero we have a fortnightly All Hands which always needs a moderator to keep the meeting agenda moving - putting your hand up for something like this is a great way to gain familiarity with the team.

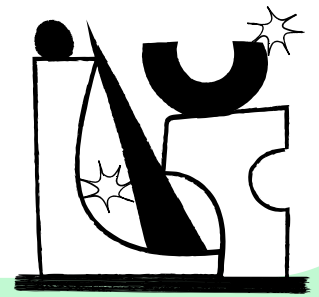
In the future, you want to be known as approachable, easy-to-communicate with and helpful. To do that you have to get your face out there and around the business - literally!



Checklist for Stage One

- Understand as much as possible about the product/service and its clients
- Understand the company's values and growth journey
- Understand the business' HR function
- Identify key internal stakeholders
- Set up regular meetings
- Get involved in company culture and always ask question

Stage Two: Seeking Solutions



By now, you're an expert in all things related to your business. You have the knowledge, relationships and standing to start making changes that you know will benefit the team.

Now is the time to start doing your own research about initiatives that could make a positive impact and solve problems. As always, we have a process that can guide you as you start thinking about business cases and possible solutions, all of which will require either time or financial investment.

Make a list of pain points shared by team members

'Pain points' are the things that make your team members' lives hard.

When it comes to HR, some of the most common issues that we see include;

- Too much employment admin and paperwork;
- Difficulties in engaging and communicating with employees;
- Unclear options around learning and development;
- Time-consuming onboarding and offboarding tasks;
- Confusing recruitment processes, issues with attracting the right talent to the business;
- High employee turnover;
- A lack of diversity in teams;
- Unclear or difficult-to-source policies.

Use the relationships that you've built to compile a list of these issues that you can help solve. It's likely that many of these will cover the same ground.

We recommend using the tool of 'active listening' to get the most out of your conversations to identify pain points. This communication strategy can help you better understand what the person is saying, and give a response to make the person feel understood and acknowledged (often leading them to share more helpful information).

According to the [Harvard Business Review](#), active listening has three aspects;

- 1. Cognitive:** Paying attention to all the information, both explicit and implicit, that you are receiving from the other person, comprehending, and integrating that information
- 2. Emotional:** Staying calm and compassionate during the conversation, including managing any emotional reactions (annoyance, boredom) you might experience
- 3. Behavioral:** Conveying interest and comprehension verbally and nonverbally

Easy tips for better active listening include asking more questions than you think you need to and minimising distractions as much as possible. It's also a great idea to take notes throughout the conversation and share these with the person at the end of your chat to make sure you have everything covered.

Identify outdated processes or technology needs

Now you have compiled your list of pain points, it's time to look a little deeper at why they are occurring.

Look for the patterns. Are there any outdated processes that are causing multiple problems in your business (think spreadsheets and manual data entry, no centralised systems, or reliance on email and filing cabinets to exchange and store documents)?

By getting to the core of these issues, you can easily identify which processes and tools need to be overhauled.

Investigate HR software solutions

If your team's pain points are anything like the ones we mentioned earlier, chances are several of them could be solved by implementing a new or better HR software solution.

Has your team used a Human Resources Information System (HRIS) before? Or are they using an outdated one that's no longer serving their needs?

A HRIS is a system that streamlines all of traditional HR's clunky and paper-based processes. Cloud-based and secure, a HRIS is a paperless way to manage every aspect of HR and people management, from recruitment and onboarding right through to offboarding.

HRIS' are designed to manage workforces online, rather than relying on paper documents, email communications and the much-hated filing cabinet.





The best HRIS systems provide an all-in-one solution to HR's most common problems that are felt right across a business. They are usually cost effective and can transform the way businesses manage their teams.

Implementing HR software is one of the most powerful things you can do to make a positive impact on the day-to-day lives of employees right across the business. However, it's important to find one that fits your business' needs.

Before you get down into the nitty gritty of features, evaluate software with these first questions;

- Was this system built for a small to medium sized business (SMB), or does it have features that are better suited for a large enterprise?
- Will this system keep employment data secure?
- How easy or difficult will it be to implement and roll out this system?
- Does this system use automation across its features to streamline our processes?
- Does this system integrate with your existing payroll system, or pair with an effective payroll system?

Want more information about finding the right software fit for your business? Our detailed guide to [Choosing the Right HR Software for Your Business](#) has a comprehensive comparison table and checklist for you to check out.



Quinn's Hero Tip

If you've started a new role at a small to medium-sized business, Employment Hero can help you make a big impact! We're purpose-built for SMBs, making our powerful yet easy-to-use software a perfect fit. Our all-in-one HR software easily integrates with your existing payroll system, or you can pair with Employment Hero Payroll for your most powerful employment management system yet.

Put together a business case for HR software

In order to get the budget for a new HR system, you'll need to put together a business case. This will help you to map out the costs, benefits, and ROI of the project.

Having a solid business case will also help you to get management and decision-makers to buy in by helping them to understand the value that a new HR system can bring to the business.

You've already covered the first step of your business case - you've identified your team's pain points and matched them with a software solution. Tick!

Based on the questions in the previous step, you probably also now have a shortlist of providers that could fit your business. Double tick!

These are the next steps in building an effective business case.

Highlight the benefits

Focus on the tangible benefits of the platform rather than the features. In isolation, the features may sound great but do not add value to your business case for HR software if it doesn't provide measurable performance differences.

Try talking about how the features can directly affect your current HR processes, such as the ability to recruit and retain through a seamless onboarding experience and the reduced risks to the business using compliant contracts, HR documents and policies.

Showcase how your HR team can utilise the time savings through the HR system. This demonstrates how HR technology can help pivot your business to be people and customer first, and ultimately, how HR could truly become a strategic function inside the business.

Share a timeline

Create a timeline on when the company could see these benefits. Helping your business' decision makers understand exactly when they should expect to see the benefits further will help further your business case.

Identify risks

Demonstrate that you've done your due diligence and assessed the risks of both the process of implementation and uptake, as well as what would happen if you didn't implement the solution. Share examples of these and help the leadership team understand the pros and cons of each pathway.



Examine company culture

Software can transform HR and people management. Many platforms even have tools to help boost company culture; they can help you communicate with your team and set up peer-to-peer recognition. They can also help you issue surveys to find out what your employees want when it comes to company culture.



At this point in your tenure, it's worth exploring;

- What is our team-building activity calendar for the next year?
- How do we celebrate professional wins as a team (e.g. hitting team targets)?
- How do we celebrate personal milestones as a team (birthdays, engagements, sporting or academic achievements)?
- Could we set up and support social clubs or societies?
- What programs do we have to support physical, mental and financial health?
- What programs do we have to support development, learning and peer-to-peer knowledge sharing?

Looking for more guidance? Explore these questions and more with our free [Leader's Guide to Company Culture](#).

Set goals

Throughout Stage Two, you should be setting goals for yourself in relation to your new initiatives and solutions.

Goals are not only crucial in motivating us to move forward, but they ensure that we are getting the results that justify our decisions.

There are so many frameworks for goal setting, but our favourite is definitely the [Objectives and Key Results \(OKR\) model](#).



The objective is qualitative, and the key results are quantitative. They are used to focus an entire business around one big, bold goal. OKRs are usually set during a defined time frame, most likely quarterly or annually. If you were to start planning out or writing OKRs you would need to keep these two questions in mind;

1. What do you want to accomplish? The answer to this will be your objective.
2. How are you going to achieve this? The answers will give you your key results.

An example of a new HR Manager OKR could be;

Objective: Create an effective Reward and Recognition program

Key Results:

- Run 2 biannual company-wide education sessions on how to recognise others, in-line with company values
- Have 20% of the team sharing peer-to-peer recognition using their HR software app
- Organise an end-of-year celebration with attendance of at least 80%



Checklist for Stage Two

- Make a list of pain points shared by team members
- Identify outdated processes or initiatives
- Investigate HR software solutions
- Put together a business case for HR software
- Examine company culture
- Set goals



Stage Three: Managing Change

At this stage you've implemented solutions to tackle challenges and pain points; already making some high-impact moves in your new role.

However, we can't forget the crucial third stage - managing change to ensure long term success.

Many professionals make the mistake of implementing new initiatives and systems, but not putting enough time and attention into the rollout and adoption process. This is a big mistake!

Change management is a crucial skill for all leaders, but especially those in HR. If you want the actions you make to have an ongoing positive impact, you need to have a strategy.



Launch and communications

Even if you have the best solutions and initiatives in the world - your team isn't going to adopt them unless they want to.

That means that with every new initiative, you're going to have to launch and communicate it in a way that gets them excited to participate.

Use all the communication tools at your disposal; employee newsletters, HR apps, messaging channels like Slack and All Hands (full team) meetings to spread the word.

You might even want to throw an internal event to celebrate the new initiative. You could incentivise attendance by offering a free coffee cart for the morning, giving out company merchandise and organising team building activities alongside sharing information and benefits around the launch of your initiative.

Speaking of incentives, why not use them to drive adoption or participation? For example - in the case of team adoption of HR software - you could offer a voucher or gift card for the first person to upload all of their employee documents to the employee app. Or you could organise prizes for the first three people who use the on-app learning platform.



Ongoing training

As well as launching the initiative and getting your team excited, you'll also want to provide training so that they can get the most out of the new program or tool.

Do a team-wide training at launch, and provide notes and resources for attendees to take away. Repeat this training on at least a biannual basis for new staff members coming into your team, so they can make the most of HR initiatives in their new roles.



Team advocates

Remember the saying 'many hands make light work'?

When you find advocates for your initiative, you don't have to take on all the work of communicating information and encouraging participation by yourself. Again, those relationships that you made in Stage One are absolutely key.

If you have key members of your business believing in and regularly engaging with your initiative, those around them are more likely to do so too. Identify people who would fit the role of a great advocate and ask them to support you. As they'll know it's an effective new initiative that is likely to benefit themselves and those around them - they'll likely happily oblige!



Feedback

How can you make sure that your initiatives are always improving, and fitting the evolving needs of your team and business? The answer is **feedback!**

Seek feedback at regular intervals, we recommend at least annually, on your HR initiatives. Surveys are a great way to do this, and don't forget - anonymity will see you get more honest responses!



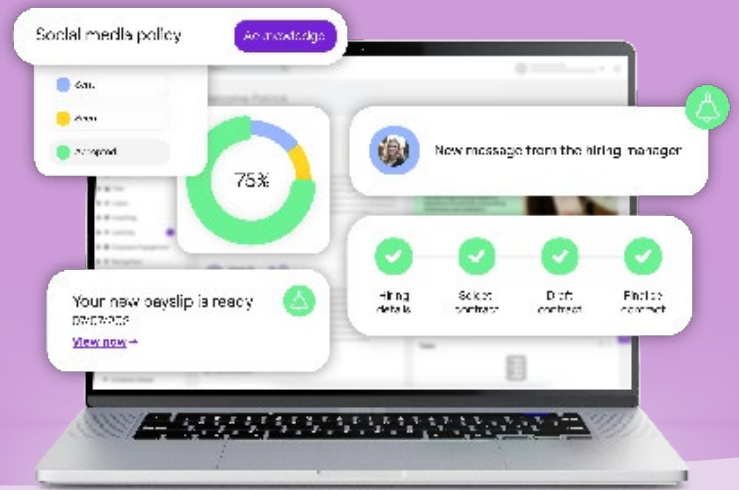
Quinn's Hero Tip

If you have adopted a HR platform like Employment Hero, you can seek feedback using a tool like our Custom Surveys, which allow you to easily conduct team-wide surveys with questions of your own choosing.

Ask your team what they like about your initiatives, which parts they find the most helpful, what they don't like, and which parts they would change. For ease of completion, make responses multiple choice, leaving questions for open-ended responses.

Take into account this feedback regularly and continue refining your initiatives - or seeking new ones. It's an ongoing process, but these efforts will see you continue to make a positive impact far beyond your first 90 days.

About Employment Hero



Employment Hero is the smarter way to manage people, payroll and productivity for SMEs with big ambitions.

Employment Hero empowers SMEs by providing automated solutions to help launch them on the path to success by powering more productivity every day.

Employment Hero services over 80,000+ SMEs supported globally, with 750,000+ employees on our platforms. The core platform reduces admin time by up to 80 per cent.

Employment Hero is launching employers toward their goals, powering more productive teams and taking employment to rewarding new heights.

Our features include:

Applicant tracking system

Feedback

Performance reviews

Recognition

Employee happiness scores

1:1s

Shout Outs (Peer to peer recognition)

Learning management system (LMS)

Custom surveys

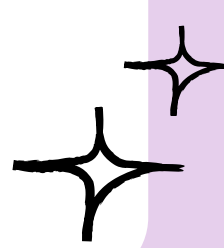
Policy templates

OKRs (Objectives and Key Results)

Letter templates

and so much more...

For more information on how we can help transform your business [book a demo](#) today.



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