



# HR Role Guide



## HR Administrator / Coordinator

You may find yourself in an HR Administrator / Coordinator role through one of a variety of pathways. A typical route would have been to study undergraduate papers related to people i.e. Management, HR, Employment Relations, Business or Psychology etc. and then have secured a graduate entry HR position. Others may have entered the profession through a widely scoped administration role that has included some HR and possibly payroll responsibilities to varying degrees. The breadth of an HR role at this level will largely depend on the nature and size of the organisation and the way tasks are allocated within the wider team.

Typically the area's that an HR administrator / coordinator will be involved in are:

- Recruitment
- Remuneration
- Onboarding and Exit processes
- Employment documentation
- Health and Safety
- Learning & Development and Events
- First line advice
- Data entry and system maintenance
- Employment relations (exposure)

In a larger HR team where there is a clear division of responsibilities between HR levels an HR Administrator / Coordinator will typically gain exposure to most of these areas, usually taking care of any documentation required and taking notes and observing in meetings. Where the role begins and ends should be quite clear from one role to another, and tasks are usually limited to being HR related.

In a smaller HR team, where responsibilities of the team may vary from organisation to organisation, the lines of responsibility for an HR coordinator / administrator can blur; from providing PA support to senior team members, to involvement in larger HR projects e.g. engagement, culture & values or developing in-house programmes. Some roles at this level may take the lead on smaller projects, for example the organisation of company volunteer days. If the industry you are working in is considered high-risk you may find you spend a lot of time on Health and Safety. If your organisation is quite small, it may be rare to be exposed to various employment relations scenarios.

- **Recruitment** - Usually arranging interviews, undertaking referencing, generation of employment agreements and upkeep of any internal systems
- **Remuneration** - Coordinating company-wide reviews and preparing documentation. This may be mail merges for the roll-out of collective agreements
- **Onboarding and exit processes** – communication with managers and employees on the process and coordination of related activities
- **Employment documentation** – in relation to any employment changes secondments, allowances, parental leave etc.
- **Health and Safety** – assisting with completing site checks, hazard reviews or workstation assessments, may include upkeep of information in an online tracking tool
- **L&D and events** – close to the detail of the facilitation of training events, and organisation wide employee initiatives
- **First line advice** – a customer service element is included here when being the first port of call to all employees, knowing how to direct queries appropriately
- **Data entry and maintenance** – responsible for the correct recording of employee information including payroll details
- **Exposure to Employment relations** – usually no direct responsibility but may attend meetings, take minutes and prepare documentation

## To develop as an HR Administrator / Coordinator

To be best positioned for your next step as a people professional, it's best to have exposure and where possible experience in a wide range of HR responsibilities. This may mean to develop your skills you might decide to a side-ways career step in an HR administrator / coordinator role to one that offers experience in the areas you have spent less time on. This will ensure you have a well-rounded point of view when considering people matters as you progress. Review where you spend most of your time in your current role and find out if there is opportunity to increase your variety in your current team. If you have ticked most of the boxes and feel comfortable in your knowledge of those fields, then the remainder can be great development areas for your next step as an advisor.

A key skill required for moving from an administrator / coordinator is the transition from administration-based responsibilities to increasing your confidence to share your knowledge through conversation and face-to-face situations with managers and employees. Identifying where you can practice these skills in a supportive environment is a great first step to preparing yourself for the advisory space.

## HR Advisor

HR Advisor roles can vary across different organisations depending on the organisation size and the size of the wider HR team. In a sole HR Advisor position, you may be required to manage recruitment, induction, employment relations, health & safety, learning & development change management and exits, sometimes payroll. An HR Advisor in a bigger team may not be required to do recruitment, remuneration, learning & development and payroll as there are dedicated specialists whom complete these roles.

You may have started as an HR Administrator or Coordinator and are now in a position where you provide advice and support to managers on all things people related, or you have come into HR from another avenue e.g. line manager, either way, this is where your advisory skills are put to the test. At this level you are providing advice and you are supporting managers through a variety of people related matters, such as:

- Recruitment, interviews and selection
- Employment
- Induction
- Disciplinary process
- Performance Development and management
- Health & safety
- Policy review and development
- Remuneration review and guidance
- Annual or sick leave management
- Payroll queries e.g. annual leave, sick leave, public holidays

Dependent on the team size you are in or if you are sole practitioner, will depend to what extent you may provide advice. If you are part of a bigger team and have Senior HR Advisors, you may only provide advice and support on lower level people matters as you develop to more complex cases. If you are a sole practitioner, you may be expected to be more on an expert generalist and have a higher level of confidence on the above topics, particularly legislation issues.

## To develop as an HR Advisor

As a generalist HR practitioner it is advantageous to be experienced in all areas of HR, it is not necessary to be an expert in each area e.g. learning & development, payroll, however, being able to provide advice to an extent will help you succeed. Things you can do to build your development plan:

- Map out the areas of HR where you have had minimal exposure and areas of high exposure.
- Outline where you wish to develop e.g. do you wish to move to a specialised field such as employment relations or learning & development, what do you need to develop your skills and experience there.
- Seek out a mentor and proactively develop your skills.
- Review what is required as a Senior HR Advisor and use that as a foundation for your development plan.

## Senior HR Advisor

Senior HR Advisor roles can vary across different organisations depending on the organisation size and the size of the wider HR team. In a small organisation a Senior HR Advisor may be expected to deliver as if they are a HR Manager and have the skills and experience to provide advice and support at a higher level.

In a large organisation where there are a number of HR team members, Senior Advisors are expected to have a stronger breadth of knowledge and experience across the range of generalist HR areas, such as; employment relations, health & safety, learning & development, change management and exits. Depending on the industry a Senior Advisor may also be required to have experience in collective bargaining rounds and dealing with unions regarding complex employee relations.

Mentoring and coaching lower level Advisors and Administrators also become a key part of being a Senior Advisor.

As a Senior Advisor you begin providing advice on a more strategic level and working with managers closely by helping them to forward plan for their business groups. The range of advice on people related matters are similar if not the same to that of an Advisor role. However, senior leaders in the business do ask for a higher level and strategic advice so that they are able to make the right business decisions that may impact their people.

At this level you are providing advice and you are supporting managers through a variety of people related matters, such as:

- Complex disciplinary process
- Complex and senior management performance development and management
- Mediation and settlement negotiations
- Remuneration round management
- Union relationship management and collective bargaining
- Supporting HR Manager/Director in HR Strategy development and implementation
- Management of a HR Advisors and/or HR Administrator

## HR Business Partner

HR Business Partners (HRBP) would usually be present in larger organisations as they effectively do what their title suggests – act as a business partner. HRBP's are typically assigned to partner with a GM or Head of a specific division or department and to support them in delivering to their business objectives.

HRBPs tend to focus broader than just HR and add value by highlighting that every business issue can be traced back to people – thereby focusing on opportunities to improve culture, engagement, policies and procedures, structures and most importantly, communication.

In HRBP roles it is a given that you will have experience in all aspects of the HR framework from induction to exits. These roles operate broader across the business and are commercially focused.

An HRBP would be expected to contribute to the department business plan and to customise solutions to deliver. Examples of this could be as follows:

- Department KPI is to increase volume of sales by 20%
- Sales team have had inconsistent performances over last 12 months
- HRBP recommends initiatives:
  - Effective communication of the KPI to the team making sure it is clear
  - Targeted Sales training to ensure team is fully equipped
  - Regular updates through one on ones with managers to track progress

HRBPs do not generally have direct reports but rely on HR Administrators or Coordinators for admin support. Normally there would be more than one HRBP supporting a large organisation.

These roles build on the HR Advisor level and one of the key differences is the requirement for them to fully integrate into the business units they are supporting. So they would attend regular department meetings and be expected to contribute progress toward initiatives both at a department and business level.

### **To develop as a Senior HR Advisor/HR Business Partner**

You should have or be developing skills that enable you to better understand the role of HR in making the boat go faster. By this we mean a stronger understanding of just HR good practice. This requires taking a broader view of the organisation, the industry it operates in and external impacts on the strategic direction not just internal impacts. You should be developing strategic thinking skills, should be able to really get alongside your customers and work with them, be able to understand basic financial statements and facilitate meetings/workshops with a range of stakeholders to achieve an outcome. You should gain experience of leading large projects and be starting to develop the skills needed to lead and motivate others. If you have this experience, you could apply to become chartered.

## HR Manager

HR Manager roles vary from sole charge positions in SMEs, leading the HR function in medium size companies to being part of a much larger team reporting to an HR Director in our largest businesses. Smaller HR Manager positions may therefore be more like HR Business Partners or Senior HR Advisor roles.

You won't always have people reporting directly to you, but typically you will and this is often an HR person's first direct experience of managing people. Previous management experience is therefore an advantage. At this level there is more of an expectation that you lead and facilitate the work of others and do less of the hands on work. This will include broad senior HR expertise across areas such as:

- Restructuring and mergers
- Complex disciplinary and dismissal cases
- Recruitment - branding, attraction, assessment etc
- Remuneration and benefits frameworks
- Performance management processes and systems
- Employee engagement and culture
- Health and safety

At this level you could apply to become Chartered.

## HR Director/ General Manager

At this level you oversee the entire HR function for your organization and are expected to contribute strategically and tactically to the leadership and achievement of the goals of the company. This requires a strong commercial and financial understanding of businesses, in addition to exceptional HR management skills/knowledge. Your responsibilities will be to:

- Develop and implement organisation strategies
- Lead a team of people professionals, including HR, learning, payroll, recruitment, health and safety etc.
- Contribute as a leader within the broader business
- Represent the people functions at leadership and board level

Sometimes roles at this level may include responsibility for a range of other corporate services such as Finance, Marketing and IT.

At this level you could apply to become Chartered.