The truth about HR
the inside track on careers in Human Resources.
Welcome

**HR has given me a great career.** From the Welsh steel industry to a global role at PepsiCo, my roles have had a direct impact on the future business performance of the organisations in which I worked. Today I run HR’s professional body – the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

I started out in graduate recruitment, so in a sense my career now comes full circle, as I introduce this guide. It’s designed to encourage you to think about careers in HR in a different light.

This guide is for you if you’re looking for a career at the heart of business and see the enormous potential for driving performance through people.

The business world is changing – and so is HR. The profession is increasingly focused on long-term business success – sustainability if you like. Many roles now have an international dimension. There’s the opportunity to develop specialist skills in areas like training, benefits or organisation development. What’s more, as an HR professional your skills are highly transferable. You’ll be able to move smoothly between organisations and sectors.

Even if you don’t want to go straight into HR, read on. Many successful HR professionals started out in other roles and applied their work experience to HR, having seen the potential of the profession to drive real competitive advantage.

Every day of my working week I meet HR people in the most incredible variety of organisations. From the BBC to Tesco, from the London Olympics to the National Health Service, in any well-known organisation you care to think of, they are contributing to future success. So whether it’s saving lives, working for the world’s largest retailer, award-winning broadcasting or sporting glory that rings your bell, HR could be your ticket to a fascinating and rewarding career.

**Jackie Orme**
Chartered FCIPD
Chief Executive
At the heart of business

Ask any top CEO what makes their business special. Nine times out of ten they’ll talk about people. It may be a cliché, but it’s also true – outstanding people create exceptional organisations.

Attracting the best people is a vital first step, but that’s just part of the story. And it may not even be the hardest part. Performance is at the crux of the matter. How do you get those people, individually and collectively, to stay with you and to perform to the best of their abilities, day in day out? And how do you get them working together to drive your organisation’s performance?

That’s the nub of the task for Human Resources (HR). And why, today, it’s right at the heart of business. And it’s growing in importance: recent surveys in *The Economist* and *Harvard Business Review* both rated ‘talent’ as a top three priority for executive boards.

HR professionals help build and sustain strong, well-defined cultures. When organisations are culturally strong they are better able to attract top talent, they have higher morale and reduced staff turnover. Ultimately, that makes them more productive.

HR isn’t just about day-to-day people management, important though that is, it’s about improving performance and creating the right conditions to deliver business aims both today and in the future. HR professionals play a pivotal role in driving decisions that allow their organisations to thrive.

So what exactly is it?

HR covers a wide range of interconnected activities, but essentially they’re all about generating performance through people.

HR professionals recruit, train and develop employees, and look at how they get rewarded. They’re dealing with legal issues, helping to shape the culture of their organisations, and focusing on what keeps their colleagues productive and engaged.

‘We know that in order to deliver the best service to clients we need to have the best people – our people philosophy is geared to enable us to achieve this, creating an environment where talent can flourish.’

**John Griffith-Jones.** Joint Chairman, KPMG Europe

‘The CEO looks to me for personal coaching about his interactions with the board, chairman and deputy chairman. I attend all board meetings and guide his thinking on issues concerning the executive team, appointments and exits. I have to be the thought leader on organisational development, talent management and executive change. I’m also the closest confidant of the CEO.’

**David Russell.** Group HR director at William Hill (Quote from Management Today, 29.04.09. www.managemnttoday.co.uk)
The truth about HR
At the heart of business

In a nutshell, HR professionals manage the employer-employee relationship, and align an organisation’s culture with its people. When done well this is a highly effective way of promoting sustainable performance.

The best HR practitioners see their own profession as a business discipline. They help managers to see business as a people discipline. They recognise the need to work in partnership with others to deliver maximum benefit to their organisations.

**How has it changed?**
Historically HR was always regarded as a support function. More recently, with talented employees identified as a key source of competitive advantage, HR has taken on a strategic dimension.

Top managers now recognise that companies with strong HR practices develop strong corporate cultures and supportive environments for employees. These same organisations are often more innovative, efficient and productive than their peers.

**Is it right for you?**
HR roles and responsibilities vary depending on the size of the company. In some organisations, the HR professional will typically work across several disciplines, while in others there will be both generalist and specialist HR roles. Some companies outsource parts of the HR work and those outsourcing companies have become large and very successful.

If you’ve a strong interest in business and the factors that make a business a success, coupled with an interest in the way people work then HR is for you. In order for an organisation to run most effectively, its employees need to have the right skills, motivation, drive and commitment to an organisation. Finding creative ways to build a workplace where people want to work hard and feel loyal can really drive productivity and grow an organisation.

The challenges facing HR are constantly evolving. More flexibility will be needed in the way employees at different stages in their working lives are managed, developed and rewarded. HR has to find new ways to engage and motivate employees with contrasting and changing needs.

‘Successful organisations put a lot of focus on developing their people and HR is at the heart of this. Anyone who enjoys working with people and driving organisational change will thrive within HR.’

Nimai Swaroop. Group Head of Employer Branding and Marketing at RBS
Each organisation is unique and the scope of the HR function adapts accordingly. HR departments often embody the values of their organisations. You should look first for organisations whose values you share. Then you can choose between generalist HR positions and a wide variety of specialist roles.

The generalist

Variety is the watchword here. One day you’re working with management on attracting and developing talent to deliver the business strategy. The next you’re engaging with an employee focus group teasing out bugbears and motivational triggers.

You’ll need to be comfortable partnering with managers in the business and be ready to support (and challenge) them as they lead their teams. They’ll be looking to you for insights that can help drive lasting performance improvements.

‘As HR Business Partner, I act as the face of HR out into the business, and the voice of the business back into HR. It really is about managing two dynamic, intertwined relationships. No two days are the same. You have to build good relationships, trusting in the specialists’ expert knowledge whilst often thinking the business’ next thoughts before they’ve even thought them. The variety, the breadth, and the feeling of being trusted as an advisor to the business make for a thoroughly enjoyable role!’

Charlotte Fordham, HR Business Partner, HSBC
Recruitment, resourcing & talent planning

Your role is to help your business meet short and long-term strategic requirements in a dynamic labour market. You may have to plan for changing demographics, the supply and demand for labour, staff turnover and scarce skills.

You may be responsible for identifying and attracting the key people who create competitive advantage for the organisation. You might be actively recruiting them; alternatively, you might be developing networks that make it easier to attract talented individuals cost-effectively over the longer term.

You could also play an important role in identifying talent across the organisation and integrating that with succession planning and performance management.

‘In my current position I define, develop and implement resourcing strategy and policies for the NHS Leadership programmes. I build and maintain efficient and cost-effective supply methods for candidate attraction, selection & assessment, and administration.

My 20-strong team delivers fast-track leadership programmes covering internships, graduate schemes and post grad schemes; we also run an award-winning diversity initiative. These schemes received over 16,000 applications during 2009/10.

As a member of the senior management team I also play an active leadership role in the wider organisation.’

Robert Farace. National Resourcing Manager, NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement

Learning and talent development

When an organisation gets the best out of its people and combines their skills and capabilities, it boosts its performance. What's more, it helps those individuals discover their own strengths and potential.

As a learning and talent development (L&D) specialist, you could be delivering firearms training for police officers or development programmes for fund managers. Or you could be supporting managers who are acting as coaches and mentors.

L&D professionals help agile organisations execute strategy by aligning learning with business priorities. You’ll need to be able to think on your feet and you’ll benefit from having strong analytical skills.

‘For me, a successful L&D function begins with a deep understanding of business strategy. And you also need to be aware of what L&D can contribute. Only then you can create a learning plan that’s clearly measurable and focused on improving business performance.

To do that you need to ask yourself: What are the skills required for our business in the future? What are the skills we have today? The learning plan has to fill that gap.’

Peter Butler. Director of Learning, BT

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The truth about HR
Finding the right role for you
Organisation development

Organisations today are in a constant state of reinvention. They need to remain agile to cope with the challenges of a fluid, fast-paced external environment. As an organisation development (OD) specialist, you get to play a key role in managing the process of change.

You could be asked to deliver programmes that impact on the organisation’s culture or develop its people. They may involve re-organisation and the creation of more effective and customer-focused processes.

Can you communicate change effectively with employees? You’ll need to paint a picture not just of what successful change will look like, but also of the risks and challenges that lie ahead.

Organisation development practitioners work in a planned and systematic way – diagnosing issues using relevant data. They take into account the whole organisation and look at how involving people can achieve sustained business performance.

‘As an OD practitioner, I’m in tune with the head, the heart and the guts of the organisation. You can learn all you need to know about how we’re doing through performance metrics (head), our emotional connection (heart) and the extent to which our personal and organisational values correspond (guts).

Day to day I live out the role of connector, conductor and constructor. I connect people to causes and improvement activities; I conduct research and deliver it to help our people do things better; and I construct the frameworks and pathways that help our people to make this a great place to work.’

Perry Timms. Head of Talent & Organisational Development, BIG Lottery Fund

Employee relations

Employee relations (ER) professionals maintain and develop effective working relationships across the organisation. They support managers by motivating and engaging the workforce.

Employees perform better when they understand the goals of the organisation. They’ll be more motivated to deliver if there’s an opportunity to feed their views upwards.

As an ER professional you’re contributing to a trust-based culture, a pre-requisite for any healthy organisation. You’ll need to speak the language of the business and understand how people management can drive performance.

Strong values are also important. You may be involved in managing the organisation’s relationship with its trade unions and workplace conflict. Whether you’re dealing with individuals or their representatives a genuine commitment to diversity, fairness and equal opportunity will facilitate dialogue.

‘My role is to give expert advice about the most complex HR matters, which covers off the legal risks, but also takes account of the organisation’s culture, the business drivers, and the need to keep our employees engaged and committed to the firm. Finding an ER solution is often about understanding what makes people tick, and not just what the legal risks are.

Working in ER requires an eye for detail alongside an ability to see the bigger picture. I’m often dealing with problems as they arise, but there are also opportunities for some project-based work, such as delivering training, competitor benchmarking and ensuring internal policies keep pace with the changing legislative landscape.’

Naomi Crossman. Solicitor, Employment Law Advisory Team, KPMG
Employee engagement

Employee engagement is a distinct discipline in larger organisations. It touches on related areas like employer branding and internal communication. It also connects with employee relations.

It’s about building connections between employees and their organisation. How do you get them to feel a sense of loyalty and pride in their work, to go the extra mile, to become ambassadors for the business?

You’ll need strong analytical skills, because before you can change attitudes they have to be quantified. You may be asked to develop surveys, run workshops and focus groups to gauge the mood of employees. You’ll need to be able to make connections and share insights with management colleagues.

A business can only be successful on a sustainable basis if its people understand and buy into its objectives. Your analysis and advice will be vital here.

Gill Hill. Senior Manager, Leadership and Development, Nationwide

Performance and reward

The reward function plays a critical role. Any organisation that wants to create and sustain a high-performance culture has to ensure that its people’s skills, behaviours, values, attitudes and contribution are rewarded and recognised.

Performance and reward professionals help set salary levels and allowances and manage pay relativities. You may be creating incentive and recognition schemes or evaluating benefits.

You need to be numerate and aware of the legal and regulatory landscape. It helps too if you’re a good communicator. You’ll be liaising with colleagues to create joined-up strategy. You could be asked to explain your organisation’s approach to rewards. And with issues like bonuses and pensions on your agenda, you may be engaging with top management.

‘You have to understand the drivers of employee engagement – what is the unique DNA that sets you apart? It’s easy to dismiss the management information that can give you real and unique insight. Whilst you don’t want analysis paralysis, you do want deep and meaningful insight and you use this to create a compelling vision for your employees.’

Gill Hill. Senior Manager, Leadership and Development, Nationwide

Samantha Gee. Director of Reward and Resourcing, Cancer Research UK

‘You only have to look at how much money a company spends paying people and ask how well they would manage an external contract worth that much money. As a Head of Reward my role is to develop and implement reward strategies that support the aims of the business and its people agenda. This covers aspects like positioning pay levels against the external market, developing salary frameworks that enable fair and equitable decisions, developing valued benefits offerings and aligning reward and performance through incentive schemes. Along with technical reward skills, it’s also really important to communicate well and engage the leadership, people managers and employees in reward as only when reward is understood and valued will you start to get most return on the money spent. Personally, I love working in reward as it has a hard commercial edge and provides a great combination of operational delivery (i.e. salary review) with the chance to do some thought leadership.’

Samantha Gee. Director of Reward and Resourcing, Cancer Research UK
Other key areas relating to HR

**Diversity**
Some organisations have formal teams responsible for diversity, for others diversity and inclusion are embedded in everything they do. In relation to HR activities, this means everything from recruiting employees, rewarding them, training and developing them is done in a fair and consistent manner.

Diversity isn’t about treating everyone equally; it is about acknowledging difference and treating everyone fairly by taking those differences into account. In other words, everyone gets something out of good practice on diversity.

**International HR**
Managing people globally is a growing challenge for HR professionals. When CIPD surveyed 4000 HR professionals in 2009, 30% said they had international responsibilities.

When you work internationally you gain first hand experience of how talent, culture and human capital operate in our interconnected world. You’ll need to take account of the many differences in the way people think, act and respond across different continents and cultures.

Internationally focused HR provides a fantastic opportunity to share knowledge and resources across the globe and break down barriers across borders.

‘The very fact that I’ve found my way to the top civilian post here demonstrates that HR is seen as a credible profession, certainly in public sector organisations.’

**Clare Davies.** Assistant Chief Officer, Surrey Police.
Corporate Social Responsibility
Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) covers all aspects of corporate governance.
It includes global responsibilities such as protecting the environment and ensuring that overseas suppliers uphold good labour standards. This moves beyond traditional business stakeholders such as shareholders or local suppliers to include social partners such as local communities.
CSR is also about relationships with employees and customers. It inevitably involves working in partnership with other organisations or groups.
Analysts are becoming more alert to the long-term risks of doing business. Many take the view that companies that operate ethically are more concerned about sustainable profitability. As a result, CSR and performance are becoming more closely entwined.

Consulting
HR consulting has developed in response to a growing demand for external advice on people-related areas.
As an HR consultant you are likely to be working with many different types of organisation on a wide variety of activities. You could be defining and implementing people strategies, reshaping organisational structures or helping to introduce cultural change. You may advise on managing the cost and effectiveness of employee benefit programmes; developing strategies for attraction, retention and reward. Or you could find yourself designing and delivering leadership development programmes.

‘I was asked to act as managing director of Paul UK while a new MD was being appointed. To the chairman, I was an obvious choice given my knowledge and understanding of the business.’
Esther O’Halloran. HR Director at Paul UK
Career journeys: Tim Pointer

‘HR gives you an “access all areas” pass into business. From very early on in my career I was engaging at a senior level.’

For the full story: cipd.co.uk/thinkhr
Tim Pointer is Head of HR at Pentland Brands, a global brand management company encompassing sports, outdoor and fashion. Its brands include Speedo, Mitre, Berghaus, Hunter, Gio-Goi, Boxfresh, ONETrueSaxon, Lacoste footwear & Ted Baker footwear.

I’ve always been fascinated by resonant brands. If you’re really into a brand – its products, campaigns, events, collaborations, celebrities etc – then surely working for that brand is the ultimate expression of your passion? Why HR and not Marketing? Well, I think that these two disciplines share many traits, but I chose to focus on those people that create and grow brands, rather than those who consume them.

Our people invigorate and reinvent their brands everyday. They have to. Consumers don’t just buy a product; the brand they choose is a vibrant expression of who they are. And in HR we create the culture, and develop the people, that sustain these global brands.

HR gives you a passport to get right across any organisation, and to move between industries and sectors. But if you want to be accepted, to be credible, you’d better know your stuff.

It’s also incredibly varied. On any given day I can be running an event, presenting our strategy, analysing an acquisition, coaching my team, or designing communications; the list goes on. My role is global, and to date I’ve lived overseas – in Sydney – for 5 years.

It can be very challenging. When you’re handling a site closure, for example, and you’re confirming redundancies, of course you get some raw reactions. But that’s when you find out what you’re made of, whether you can support your colleagues through one of their toughest times.

My career in HR so far has meant I’ve worked around the world, for brands I love, on projects that matter, and with people I admire. What’s not to like?
Clare Davies joined Surrey Police in 1991. In January 2010 she was appointed Assistant Chief Officer. As a member of Surrey’s chief officer group she is responsible for delivering and improving its support services.

I’ve spent most of my professional life in HR. I now head up support services for Surrey police. In that capacity I’m deploying money, technology and people to support front-line policing.

HR has given me a great grounding for my current position. I got early exposure to strategy and developed my leadership skills. In today’s business partnering model, leadership is all about helping others do their job as well as possible. That gets to the heart of what HR is all about.

The very fact that I’ve found my way to the top civilian post here demonstrates that HR is seen as a credible profession, certainly in public sector organisations. In the police service the link between the way we manage and treat our own people and our impact in our community is well understood.

Policing has been transformed in my time here. We now have an extremely tolerant and vibrant culture. HR has played its part in encouraging that.

In essence, HR for me is about delivering performance through people. It’s not a soft option, it’s actually a really tough profession.

The most difficult decisions we make in HR are the ones that affect people’s livelihoods. We never forget that we are dealing with individuals but my top priority will always be delivering effective policing services to our community.

There will be more hard choices when the next round of spending cuts hits home. In Surrey we have a strong track record of being innovative about protecting front line services and are confident that we will find a way through.

But many public sector institutions are going to have to reinvent themselves to become leaner and more focused. They’ll be relying on high quality HR professionals who can help deliver that change. It’s a huge challenge, but a fascinating time to be in the profession.
‘Public sector institutions are going to have to reinvent themselves. They’ll be relying on HR professionals to manage the change. It’s a fascinating time to be in the profession.’

For the full story: cipd.co.uk/thinkhr
Career journeys: Esther O’Halloran

‘For my first HR role my employers wanted an Italian. I said I’d learn the language, dye my hair black and change my name to Hallorano. I’ve never looked back.’

For the full story: cipd.co.uk/thinkhr
Esther is HR Director at Paul UK, the French artisan baker. She has held senior HR roles in retail and catering business and is a regular keynote speaker at UK and international HR Conferences.

Like a lot of people, before I looked into it properly I’d thought HR was all about box ticking and form filling. I couldn’t have been more wrong.

Back in the 1990s I was an area manager for Whitbread. My job then was all about solving problems through people. I didn’t realise it at the time, but I was already acting like an HR professional.

A recruitment role came up when Whitbread was growing its Costa coffee store chain. I knew in my bones I was right for it. But they were looking for an Italian. So I told them I would dye my hair black, change my name to Hallorano and learn the language. It was my first HR role and I’ve never looked back.

I’d always gravitated towards people-facing activities. The buzz you get when you’re helping people is one of the best things about the job for me. When someone says thank you it’s worth its weight in gold.

That’s not to say that the financial side’s not important. HR is all about getting performance out of people. We’re integral to business and getting more so. You need to be highly resilient and really quite tough.

To potential HR recruits I’d say follow your passion, get into a business that gets your juices going. And pick a culture that’s right for you. Personally I’ve always favoured smaller, more entrepreneurial departments. I like to be hands-on.

On a practical level I’d also suggest getting a grounding in operations. It can make a huge difference. You’ll come across people who think you’re treading on their turf. You can win their confidence as long you know your stuff. Above all, be yourself. Natural enthusiasm will carry you through.
Career journeys:
Nimai Swaroop

‘I love the diversity you get in a global business. I’m travelling the world and interacting with all kinds of people. It’s exciting to be working somewhere which is helping to shape the future.’

For the full story: cipd.co.uk/thinkhr
Nimai Swaroop is Group Head of Employer Branding and Marketing at RBS. He has specialised in marketing and recruitment for a number of multinational businesses.

I began my career in marketing, but after a while it got frustrating. It’s become a very commoditised profession with lots of specialisms. It can be tough to make your mark.

I’ve found HR to be a far more dynamic space. It cuts across so many disciplines. One day you’re looking at talent or resourcing, the next you’re immersed in change management. You get a real sense of business in the round.

When the opportunity first arose for me to develop recruitment marketing for a global business what got me excited was the chance to apply my marketing knowledge to the HR space.

In a way I was lucky; that chimes with the times. There’s a real push on now to develop employer brands. Organisations want their people to embody and champion their values. And that’s changing their approach to recruitment.

In my current role I’m charged with building an overall feeling so potential recruits ‘get’ what’s unique about our company. I get a real buzz when we pitch that message right and see the results.

I love the diversity you get to experience in a global business. I’m travelling the world and interacting with all kinds of people. And it’s exciting to be working somewhere which is helping to shape the future.

As a profession HR is evolving fast, but you don’t necessarily have to be a specialist to get involved. At RBS we’re always interested in people who bring fresh attitudes to the table. You will need to be a good communicator, and it helps to be pretty resilient. But if you’re interested in business, you’re good with people and you’re not afraid of change it’s a great career option.
Do you have what it takes?

It’s not just about liking people.

HR isn’t the job for you if you’re not a ‘people person’, but liking people won’t be enough on its own. More precisely, you have to be interested in getting the absolute best out of people.

The skills you need might not be what you expect.

It’s not just the softer ‘people skills’ that are important. You’ll have a strong interest in business and the strategy that underpins its success. You’ll need a good level of numeracy and analytical skills. Being able to work closely with your colleagues and earn their trust and respect is another critical factor.

Some specialist roles such as reward management emphasise analytical strengths. Areas like training, organisation development and employee relations rely on strong communication skills and a high level of emotional intelligence. And IT skills are increasingly in demand across the board as organisations move their systems online.

‘My career in HR so far has meant I’ve worked around the world, for brands I love, on projects that matter, and with people I admire. What’s not to like?’

Tim Pointer. Head of HR at Pentland Brands
So what kinds of qualities are important?

The CIPD HR Profession Map offers a comprehensive view of how HR adds sustained value to organisations. Our research into HR functions has identified some key behaviours necessary for success in HR.

➡️ **Curiosity**
Are you actively interested in what’s going on around you? Are you always looking for better ways of doing things? A questioning attitude and willingness to learn can be very valuable in an HR role. You will continually be looking for ways for you and your colleagues to work better as individuals and collectively.

➡️ **Decisive thinker**
Being able to analyse and understand data and information quickly is important. As part of that you should be able to arrive at robust, defendable views. Whether you are looking at the financials of an organisation or project success indicators you should be able to apply any information, insights and knowledge in a structured way and propose practical options based on the best available evidence.

➡️ **Skilled influencer**
You’ll need to influence people at all levels both within and beyond the organisation. Many HR initiatives succeed through partnership. You’ll need to win commitment, consensus and support if you want your plans to bear fruit.

‘Anyone with an interest in shaping organisations, who has a flair for people, enjoys change and diversity in their job would fit in well within HR.’

Nimai Swaroop. Group Head of Employer Branding and Marketing at RBS

To see the CIPD HR Profession Map go to: [www.cipd.co.uk/hrpm](http://www.cipd.co.uk/hrpm)
The truth about HR
Do you have what it takes?

Driven to deliver
If you accept personal responsibility and have the drive to follow through on your promises you will earn the respect of your colleagues. That will make it easier to deliver on collaborative projects. You should plan, prioritise, monitor performance and be accountable for delivery.

Collaborative
You need to be able to work effectively and inclusively with colleagues, clients, stakeholders, customers, teams and individuals both within and beyond the organisation.

Courage to challenge
There are times when a distinctive point of view enriches the debate. Having the courage to challenge entrenched views can be a useful strength.

Role model
If you work in HR, you need to lead by example. You should act with integrity, impartiality and independence, and aim to apply sound personal judgement in every situation.

Personally credible
Human Resources isn’t like engineering: there’s rarely a definitive answer. The human side of things is always ambiguous, you never get to the bottom of things. Therein lies its great appeal. If you are able to think things through rationally, apply sound judgement and use your emotional intelligence to defend your decisions, you should prosper in HR.

‘You need to have a wider understanding and appreciation of the business world in general rather than from just a ‘HR policies’ perspective to succeed.’

Esther O’Halloran, HR Director at Paul UK

To see the CIPD HR Profession Map go to: www.cipd.co.uk/hrpm
Getting in and getting on

‘Thinking of a career in HR? Just do it! Seriously, I can’t think of a more interesting, stimulating or challenging profession. The rewards, both personally and professionally, exist for me on a daily basis. Whether that’s being thanked by an employee for dealing with a sensitive issue well or simply seeing the results that you’ve enabled on an organisational level.’

Stephen Moir. Corporate Director: People, Policy and Law, Cambridgeshire County Council

The beauty of a career in HR is that you get such great insights into all aspects of business. There are many different ways in, whatever your level of experience or expertise. Once there you’ll develop skills that are highly transferable.

Starting out
Some organisations have graduate training schemes that you can apply for while at university. Many big businesses have entry-level HR positions which can be a great launch pad for your career. Either way, there are great opportunities if you are willing to work hard and get involved.

Moving up
As you develop your career continuing professional development will help you build confidence and credibility. You can raise your earnings by showcasing achievements and adapt to change by constantly updating your skills set. CIPD qualifications are an excellent way to help you achieve your career goals, build your HR knowledge and develop professionally.

Experienced HR professionals command attractive salaries. A graduate level HR officer can expect to earn on average £24,375. With the right skills and motivation, you can expect swift progression early on. HR directors average £75–100,000+. That rises to £200,000 or more for a group HR director. In fact, the top 20 of the FTSE100 Group HR directors can earn £500,000+.

(Source: Croner Personnel Rewards 2009-2010 & Towers Watson data)
‘When looking at a career path, I was undecided on what I wanted to do, however I had been drawn to HR as a profession that I believed I would enjoy and be successful in. I then carried out some research and undertook shadowing in an HR department. This confirmed my decision to choose to apply for HR roles and development schemes. When the Civil Service graduate scheme was advertised I applied because of the development opportunities and because my geography degree had given me a strong interest in the public sector and developing policy.’

**Sarah Turner.** HR Performance Project Manager, Cabinet Office

‘Take time to think about what you want from a career in HR. Very often people state that they want to work in HR because they enjoy working with people. It’s a good starting point, but there is a huge amount of breadth and depth to any HR career. Whether it’s resourcing, development, talent management, compensation, leadership, organisational design or culture, there’s so much more to the function than people may think.’

**Stephen Mulvenna.** European Head of Talent, Coca Cola.

‘The most important thing is to find a company that matches your own personal values. HR is generally the keeper of the values, and it would be incredibly difficult going into work each day doing work that didn’t match your own beliefs.’

**Donna Miller.** European HR Director, Enterprise Rent-A-Car
CIPD supports you in your career

At CIPD we’ve devoted a lot of time to figuring out how people work best in organisations. By putting those ideas into practice in working environments we’re improving ways of working and helping to make a difference to people’s lives.

Map your HR career
Here at CIPD we understand what good HR looks like and what HR professionals should know and be doing as they progress their careers. Our HR Profession Map presents the many aspects of HR together with critical success factors. Find out more at cipd.co.uk/hrpm

Advance your career through qualifications
CIPD qualifications support many successful HR careers. They demonstrate to potential employers that you have the necessary knowledge and skills to add real value to an organisation – helping to increase your employability and earning potential. Over 13,000 students in the UK and overseas join our programmes each year. Find out more at cipd.co.uk/qualifications
Gain recognition and support from the CIPD
Together with CIPD qualifications, membership of the CIPD provides the tools to underpin your professional success. You gain professional recognition in the workplace, access to a wealth of member-only online HR information and research through the CIPD website, networking opportunities and support in your professional development through practical CIPD tools, further courses and qualifications, and discounts on CIPD products. Find out more at cipd.co.uk/membership

About us
The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) is Europe’s largest HR and development professional body. As a globally recognised brand with over 135,000 members, we pride ourselves on supporting and developing those responsible for the management and development of people within organisations.

Develop your knowledge through:
— CIPD publications and information
  We produce a range of materials to support you in your HR career. Whether you need a book covering the main themes, a toolkit to set up a training course, or our employment law service HR-inform to provide sample policies and documentation, we have the ideal solution for you. Find out more at cipd.co.uk/bookstore

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