

Facilitating and future proofing expansion at Liquidline

Helping Liquidline to achieve:

- Growth from £11.4 million turnover (2018) to £15 million (2019) and a projected £20 million (2020)
- Increased headcount from 55 to 100+ and expanded operations across the UK
- Developed a new people strategy to fuel a target of £30 million turnover by 2025



The difference it's made

Having a people plan with clear goals and KPIs enables Liquidline to track progress and see the value of the plan. The numbers speak for themselves: after hitting £11.4 million turnover the previous year, Liquidline met its target of £15 million in 2019 and is set to hit this year's target of £20 million. It's staff numbers have doubled since 2018 from 55 to over 100. There are also plans to expand operations across the UK. 'The goal is to exceed £30 million by 2025,' says Alison. 'They are very ambitious!'

Fast-growing companies get to a point when the current way of doing things needs to change to keep the momentum going. Whether it's moving people around to maximise their skills or getting new talent in to help push the company forward, a people plan can really help fuel future growth.

This is exactly what People Puzzles' Alison Hilton has been helping Liquidline to achieve. Since Alison joined the company in 2018 it has:

- Grown from £11.4 million turnover (2018) to £15 million (2019) and a projected £20 million (2020)
- Grown the headcount from 55 to 100+ and expanded operations across the UK
- Developed a people strategy to fuel a target of £30 million turnover by 2025

Liquidline had really caught the wave of people wanting fresh coffee and other refreshments on the go. In 16 years, the Ipswich-based company had gone from humble beginnings

renting out water coolers to supplying coffee machines to major businesses premises, with an impressive 6000+ client list that included Zoopla, Porsche and the shops of Victoria Beckham.

By 2018, Liquidline was turning over £8 million with ambitions to get to £20 million by 2020. However, the senior team realised it needed a people strategy to make that happen. The first thing Alison did was a review of the whole business and the £20 million by 2020 business strategy plan so she could match a people plan to it.

The plan focused on three key things:

Getting the right skills in the right place

Liquidline needed to bring in new skills to meet their goals and so recruited a Sales Director and a Head of Client Management to the senior team. As the business grows, Alison and the Directors regularly review the organisational design, the key posts and the capabilities needed in them.

Developing the senior team

Alison oversaw a programme of coaching and performance management classes for managers. The Directors now say that 'at that time, we didn't value the importance of clear objectives and accountabilities, the value of deeper conversations with our people to understand them better; to understand their strengths and how to maximise them – we do now!'



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DISCOVERY CALL**

We're offering a complimentary call to understand the challenges your business faces and offer practical advice to support you. Simply call or email us today to take advantage of this offer.

People Puzzles: Part Time HR Directors

At People Puzzles, we provide ambitious businesses with risk-free, affordable access to hard-hitting HR superstars. Our clients typically have a turnover of £5-50m with employee numbers of 50-500. Our HR Directors work at board level helping our clients to scale rapidly, increase profits and hit financial targets faster, taking away the 'people' stress to allow business owners to focus on what they do best.

“Having a strategic HR capability in our business has freed the Directors up to work on the business, not in it. In the last 20 months, I have shifted my views of HR and a people strategy completely – I now completely get the benefit of investing in my people in all senses – emotionally connecting with them, helping them to be their best, setting out career paths and making every day WoW for them.”

Gavin Pooley - Managing Director, Liquidline

Getting staff on board with the vision

With all the changes happening in the company, Alison knew it was important to keep staff motivated and engaged with the business aims. The values were revisited with staff culminating in a new vision, mission, values and plan.

There have been several strands to growing what the company describes as its employee 'WoW' experience at Liquidline, an ambition to make everyone's experience of the company amazing. Gavin believes that 'if you can shift from task to emotional connection, create an employee WoW experience for everyone, that will naturally feed into the customer WoW experience, we're committed to.'

The approach is clearly having a positive effect; customer referrals and retention at Liquidline is high, with a business engagement score of 7.7 out of 10.

'We didn't get why engagement levels were important, or the need to be collaborative, inclusive, and listen to your people,' says Gavin. 'But having a highly motivated workforce has made a big difference!'

There has also been a focus on reducing costs and increasing efficiencies with a new people system managing everyday HR, employing innovative recruitment solutions. This has halved the average recruitment costs at a time when the resource plan has doubled the size of the employee numbers.

The People Puzzles PinWheel

Our 'People Puzzles PinWheel' quickly captures what we believe are the essential elements of a healthy organisation's HR function, driven by your business strategy.



Take our online HealthCheck for your free personalised business report:

www.peoplepuzzles.co.uk/our-approach/health-check

People Puzzles: Part Time HR Directors

At People Puzzles, we provide part-time HR Directors to ambitious businesses; owner-managed, family run or corporate. Our clients typically have a turnover of £5-50m with employee numbers of 50-500, and do not have a truly strategic in-house HR resource that can deliver high-performing and engaged teams.

Most mid-tier businesses don't want, need or can't afford a full-time HR Director. Motivating and managing people tends to slide down the priorities. However, no business can get ahead without effective, happy and well-trained staff.

Our HR Directors work at Board level, overseeing all the people-based activity within the organisation. They are strategic and tactical, enabling the business to deliver its vision and business plan. We work flexibly as part of your team, usually onsite for 3-8 days per month, to find straightforward solutions to your people puzzles for a fraction of the cost of a full-time employee.



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