

# Creating Empowered And Autonomous Cultures: My Experiences Working As Global Head Of Human Resources

The last two years have had a massive impact on the way the working world runs, and my advice to peers has changed drastically to accommodate this. I've brought some key industry experiences together in the hope that they can guide you as you embark on your own HR careers.

## Maximising And Optimising Talent Hiring

We're currently experiencing a drive from recruiters to hire and retain more talent. The Great Resignation has dominated the news throughout 2022, and many have needed to devise new strategies to bring in new talent and encourage them to stay.

This is particularly important for a smaller organisation like Sinequa, as we're

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competing against industry goliaths for top talent. To get ahead, it's important to remind recruits of your unique selling points – which for Sinequa is our culture and diversity with an impressive number of nationalities for an organisation of our size. Ensure that any campaign is designed around these points and that you're truly selling the values of your company. For example, if you encourage career development, ensure you're showing prospective team members how you offer genuine experiences, relationships and opportunities.

Recruitment is a lot more than getting people in the door. It's making the commitment to have them stay through managing and optimising pipelines for career and professional development. At Sinequa, I've found that policies that encourage employee development, for example, an annual provision of training focused on career advancement, i.e., leadership skills or a rich onboarding experience, are key to retaining your staff.

Essentially the trick is to bring your staff into the company's foundation – show them that their careers matter to the company and act on these displays.

## The Future Of Hybrid Working

The future of work and hybrid models is already here as we are adjusting to the new normal, post-pandemic. The reshuffled digital workplace challenges HR to think, coach, and manage differently. In addition, HR leaders are now challenged to support their teams beyond the office. This is no mean feat, but there are some ways leaders can make these new arrangements less challenging to teammates.

Technology has a crucial role here. Interestingly enough, Sinequa's technology has been instrumental in helping our customers tackle the future of work, ensuring all employees have seamless access to information whether they work in the office or remotely. Investing in such technology is crucial for an organisation to show their commitments to its team.

The highlight of these arrangements is the flexibility of hybrid models, and there's a lot

that HR can learn. It's vital that HR remains agile in its approach to work. People's needs are changing, and hybrid models are bringing new issues into the workplace – some have been liberated by remote working whilst some have become less visible. The world has changed, and we must continue to evolve if we want to lead the way.

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## Strategies For Engaging Your Team And Modernising Their Experience

It's essential your strategies are mindful of your two most important resources: your people and time. Building engagement and new technologies into any strategy will help your team remain invested in the company.

Engaging your team outside of their work commitments is a crucial way to ensure that your team remains connected. For example, in the US, we run Community Weeks, where our team can come together face to face. This improves their collaboration whilst providing an opportunity for team-building and the chance to give back to the community. Our French team, for example, has weekly Aperos.

It's also important to build your company's successes into your team – enabling every employee to feel responsible for

the company's immediate and long-term success. Injecting this purpose into the day-to-day running not only connects your team to leadership, but will also motivate them to succeed. We host an annual kick-off in March that allows the company to come together to celebrate our successes and plan for the future.

Overall, I'd recommend introducing policies that enhance collaborative and diverse perspectives. For example, we've seen success with our global hybrid and remote schedules, which enable the team to work wherever is best for them. When taken alongside provisions such as free healthcare and a wellness stipend for employees and their families, these actions show that we are committed to their health and well-being.

**Changing Priorities For HR In 2023**

The recruitment and talent retention issues are likely to continue long into 2023. The top priority for every HR Leader will be to recruit, retain, and develop strong cultures. Candidates' mindsets have shifted drastically, and it's currently a buyer's market that employers must fit into. As a result, recruitment is currently more akin to marriage – with both parties needing to have the right fit and feel comfortable with the arrangement.

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A trend I see becoming more popular is the four-day work week. Everyone dreams of the George Jetson three-day work week, however, in reality, each company has to evaluate what works for them, their culture, and ultimately their customers. As HR leaders, it's important we recognise the value of flexibility and its importance to employees, and respect our team's ability to be flexible and their reasons for wanting to be.

The pandemic has given many a chance to re-evaluate what they want out of life and their careers. So, it's important, as

an organisation, to get it right, and offer employees a chance to make a difference in both their lives and careers. When companies get this right, it creates a culture of empowerment and autonomy. And the data is clear: empowered and autonomous cultures are more successful because employees are more productive, and greater productivity leads to greater revenue.



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Global Head of Human Resources at Sinequa.

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