HR·LEAD
Powering Strategy
Through People.

Securing Buy-In from Management and Staff: **Elevating HR's Strategic Voice**



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Who I Am

Chief Human Resources Officer at Momentum Group, Co-Founder of PerformanceBeat, and creator of the Lies of HR podcast.

17 years of people strategy in fast-moving, multicultural businesses.

And a career spent trying to move HR from a support function to a business driver... mostly by getting it wrong first.

SECURING BUY-IN FROM MANAGEMENT & STAFF
ELEVATING HR'S STRATEGIC VOICE

Nobody tells Finance how to account for revenue. Nobody tells Legal how to interpret legislation.

But everyone seems to think they can do HR better than us...

The challenge isn't that HR lacks expertise. The challenge is that we often struggle to establish our expertise.



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Two Things Today

01

WHAT I LEARNED THE HARD WAY

02

WHY IT MATTERS MORE THAN EVER

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'I Told You So' Moments

Years ago, I pushed hard for a new performance framework - good data, clear rationale and a great opportunity for the company. It stalled anyway.

Not because the idea was wrong - because I'd never actually earned the authority in the room to make the recommendation stick.

It would take a leadership consultant to sell the very same idea, for a lot of money, to the very same people who hadn't listened to me.

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How many ***'told you so' moments*** have you had?



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Too many to count!

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Three Reasons I didn't get through



I spoke a different language!



I was looking for agreement instead of leading!



I gave away authority

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HR Speaks a Different Language

WHAT HR TALKS ABOUT

- Engagement
- Wellbeing
- Learning
- Culture

SO WHAT?

WHAT THE BUSINESS THINKS IN

- **Cost**
- **Productivity**
- **Risk**
- **Growth**

Lead with the outcome. The language follows.

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The Habit That Costs Us the Room

Many HR professionals are natural **facilitators**. That's a strength, until it becomes hesitation.

"What do you all think?" is a question. "Based on the evidence, here's my recommendation" is leading the way.

And because everyone experiences leadership, everyone has an opinion on how to define it, and we treat every opinion as equally valid. Experience creates opinions. It doesn't replace expertise. That's the line HR has to hold.

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Who is good in managing stakeholders?



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Stop Managing Stakeholders. Start Understanding Them.



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Your Stakeholders Aren't One Audience

FOUNDERS	Vision, risk, and the long game
C-LEVEL	The numbers and strategies
MANAGERS	Team performance, and one less thing going wrong
EMPLOYEES	Fairness, voice, and what changes for them

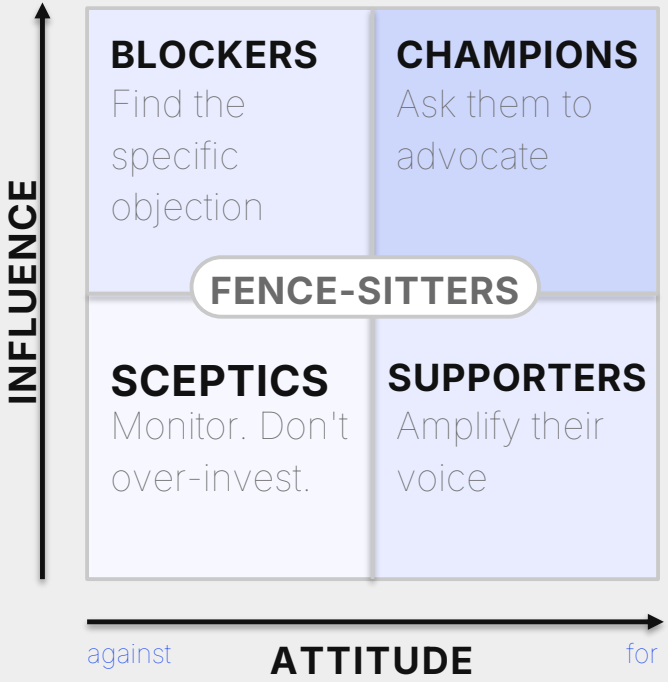
Same initiative. Four different conversations.

Know which room you are in.

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Map Influence Against Attitude



Informal influencers have no title, so they get plotted low. But everyone checks with them first.

Plot people by real influence - not by the org chart.

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Why People Resist Change

- **Loss** - what am I giving up that currently works for me?
- **Uncertainty** - will this actually be applied fairly?
- **Past experience** - the last HR rollout went nowhere
- **Competing interests** - finance wants cost control, staff want flexibility

Resistance is rarely about the idea - it's about what the idea threatens.

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Don't Skip the People Living the Change

- **Answer "What does this mean for me?"** before anyone has to ask it
- **Give employees a real hand in shaping the rollout** — even a small one beats being told
- **Equip line managers to carry it, not just announce it** — they're who people actually believe

Buy-in from the top starts the initiative. Buy-in from the floor decides if it survives.

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Why C-Level Leaders Behave Differently

- **Decisiveness, resilience,** and **comfort with conflict** got them here
- **Speed** and **accountability** are rewarded, hesitation isn't
- **Ambition** and a **willingness to make unpopular decisions** come with the seat

When they challenge your proposal, it's not resistance. It's often exactly the behaviour that made them successful.

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Three Questions Before Every Conversation

1. What keeps them awake at night - growth, margins, risk, execution?
2. What has made them successful - speed, precision, relationships, innovation?
3. What would success look like for them?

If your initiative helps them succeed, buy-in becomes much easier. People don't support HR initiatives, they support initiatives that help them achieve their goals.

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Try It: Reframe One Proposal

- **Pick one initiative** you need support for
- **Name the stakeholders** whos buy-in matters most
- **What they actually care about** - not what you want them to care about
- **Write your reframe** - one sentence each, in their language

3 minutes. Keep it and use it tomorrow.

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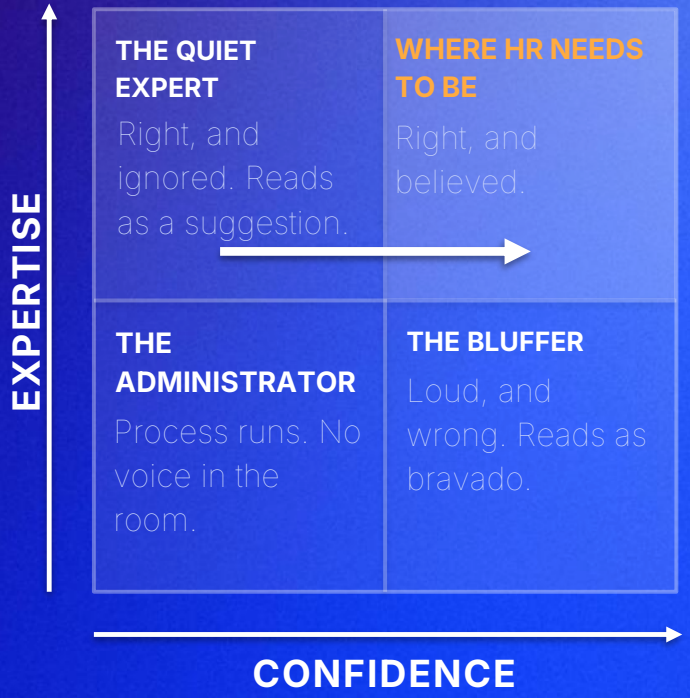
Authority is Granted…
Only After It's Claimed.

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Expertise + Confidence



Most of HR is still left of that line.

The expertise is not the gap. The gap is saying it like you mean it.

One move. Same expertise, delivered as a RECOMMENDATION.

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Back to That Consultant

He didn't have better data than me. He didn't know our business better than me. He had been inside the company for three weeks.

He had exactly one thing I didn't: **he walked into that room expecting to be believed.** Same idea. Same evidence. Different delivery. That was the whole difference.

BUT

Don’t forget: Behind every number in that room is somebody's job, somebody's manager, somebody's Monday morning.

We need to speak business so our people get represented - not so they get forgotten.

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Change Used to Have an End Date. Not Anymore!



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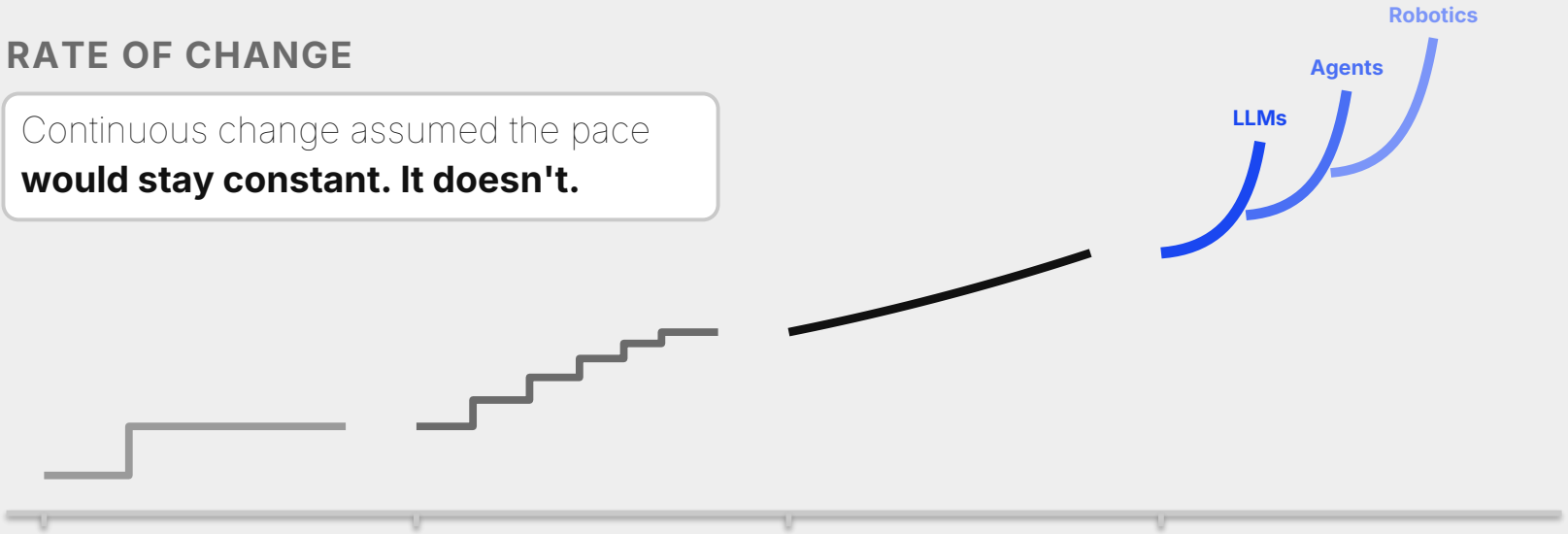
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Change Has Changed

RATE OF CHANGE

Continuous change assumed the pace
would stay constant. It doesn't.



20 YEARS AGO
Change Management
An event. Unfreeze, roll out, refreeze.

10 YEARS AGO
Rapid Change
The timeline compressed. Event after event.

5 YEARS AGO
Continuous Change
A permanent state. Refreezing disappeared.

TODAY
Exponential Change
Each new curve starts before the last one ends.

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What's Left When the Process Is Automated

THE WORK OF HR

Process. Policy. Paperwork.
Automated

Judgment. Trust. Belief.
Cannot be automated

- **JUDGMENT** — Knowing which exception actually matters
- **TRUST** — Built face to face, over time - never issued by a system
- **READING THE ROOM** — Everything in this talk has been building to this
- **THE CONFIDENCE TO SAY IT** — "Here's my recommendation" - and be believed

“I don't think HR needs a bigger seat at the table. I think HR needs to stop behaving like a guest at the table.”

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Questions?

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