PROTALENT ADVISORY

THE PEOPLE PLAYBOOK SERIES

# The HRBP Profit Playbook

From people strategy to business impact: how HR Business Partners drive profitability.

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PREFACE

# A note from Janvi



> *HR has always moved profit. It just rarely got to say so, in numbers, to the people who sign off the budget.*

For a long time, finance, sales and operations were treated as the departments that make money, and HR was expected to keep things running behind them. I don't think that picture holds any more, and I don't think it was ever accurate.

Working with SMEs, startups and UAE/India-linked businesses, I keep seeing the same pattern. A resignation in a sales team, a slow onboarding, a hiring plan built on guesswork, a manager nobody has coached: each of these lands on the P&L. The HR leaders who can show that link get budget, trust and a seat in the room. The ones who can't are asked to "support".

This playbook is my attempt to close that gap. It is written for HR Business Partners and HR leaders who want to stop reporting activity and start reporting impact. You won't find theory here. You will find a simple framework, worked examples in AED, ready-to-use templates, the language that lands with CFOs and CEOs, and a 90-day plan to put it all to work.

If you have ever struggled to prove the value of your HR work in numbers, treat this as your blueprint.

**Janvi Mistry**

Founder & Managing Director, ProTalent Advisory FZE

**HOW TO USE THIS PLAYBOOK**

- Read Sections 1 to 4 in order. They build the mindset and the framework.
- Jump straight to Sections 6 and 7 if you need tools or boardroom language this week.
- Use Sections 8 and 9 to score yourself and plan your first 90 days.
- All money figures are in AED and are **illustrative examples**. Replace them with your own company data.

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SECTION 01 · PARTNER TO PROFIT DRIVER

# From Partner to Profit Driver

> *A seat at the table is earned with numbers, not with good intentions.*

For decades, HR has been described as a support function. The team you call when something breaks: a resignation, a conflict, a payroll error. Valuable, even essential, but always one step removed from the part of the business that makes money.

That description is running out of road. The organisations growing fastest are no longer asking whether HR can influence profitability. They expect it to. The role of the HR Business Partner is moving from *partnering with* the business to *owning the link* between people decisions and financial results.

## Why this shift matters right now

When budgets tighten and performance pressure rises, "we care about our people" is not enough to protect an HR plan. Leadership wants to know what it returns. That means HR needs to be fluent in the same few numbers every CFO already watches:

| Cost | Revenue | Time | Margin |
|---|---|---|---|
| per hire | per employee | to productivity | lost to attrition |

These numbers sit on the finance dashboard, in the investor update and at the centre of every board conversation. If your work is not visible there, it is easy to treat as optional.

**THE CORE IDEA**

Your job is no longer only to *align* with business strategy. It is to help *shape* it, and to prove it with data the business already trusts.

## What changes in practice

- **Before:** you report what HR did (surveys run, trainings delivered, policies updated).
- **After:** you report what moved (cost saved, revenue unlocked, risk avoided).
- **Before:** you wait for a brief from the business.
- **After:** you walk in with a number, a lever and a proposal.

SECTION 01 · PARTNER TO PROFIT DRIVER

# The wake-up call for HRBPs

Most HR decisions already touch profit. They just are not described that way. Look at three everyday examples:

1

### Keep sales people longer

When you reduce voluntary exits in a revenue team, you protect pipeline, client relationships and quota. You have defended revenue.

2

### Onboard faster

Cut two weeks off a new hire's ramp-up and their first deals, tickets or projects land sooner. You have pulled revenue forward.

3

### Build the bench

A stronger leadership pipeline means fewer expensive external hires and fewer gaps when someone leaves. You have protected continuity.

**NOT "SOFT WINS"**

These are profit levers, and as an HRBP you are the person closest to them. The only thing missing is the measurement and the language.

## What's ahead in this playbook

- Where your daily work connects to the bottom line
- How to reframe people initiatives in commercial terms
- Tools to track, measure and report profit impact
- Realistic examples of HRBPs driving tangible business results
- A 90-day plan to start, without waiting for permission

## Three questions to ask yourself today

| # | Question | If your honest answer is "no"... |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Can I name the cost of attrition in my biggest team? | Start with the calculator in Section 6. |
| 2 | Do I know how long a new hire takes to become productive? | Pick one role and track it from the next joiner. |
| 3 | Would my CFO recognise my last HR update as a business update? | Use the translation table in Section 7. |

**REMEMBER**

You already have the instincts. This playbook gives you the **language**, the **tools** and the **strategy**. Let's move from helpful to indispensable.

SECTION 02 · THE BUSINESS OF HR

# The Business of HR: Why Profitability Matters

> *You can't influence profit if you don't know where it comes from.*

If HR does not understand the numbers, it will struggle to be taken seriously by the people who live by them. In most leadership meetings, the P&L is the common language, and decisions are made in it. To lead, an HRBP has to be fluent in financial outcomes. In practice, that starts with five metrics.

## The 5 business metrics every HRBP should know

| # | Metric | Formula | Why it matters | How HR moves it |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Revenue per employee** | Total revenue ÷ total employees | Shows how efficiently the business turns people into income. | Productivity, smoother onboarding, better role design. |
| 2 | **Cost of turnover** | (Cost to hire + onboarding cost) × number of exits | Makes the hidden price of people leaving visible in money. | Retention plans, culture-fit hiring, stay interviews. |
| 3 | **Time-to-productivity (TTP)** | Date full productivity reached - hire date | Shows how quickly new joiners start paying their way. | Onboarding, manager ramp plans, L&D. |
| 4 | **Profit per head** | (Total revenue - total costs) ÷ headcount | Shows net return per person after all costs. | Balancing talent investment with efficiency. |
| 5 | **Managerial span impact** | Team performance score ÷ direct reports per manager | Links team size and manager effectiveness to results. | Org design, manager training. |

**YOU DON'T NEED TO BE A CFO**

You do need to know which numbers your CFO is watching, and to show that your work improves them.

SECTION 02 · THE BUSINESS OF HR

# Worked example: a 60-person company

Numbers become real when you put them against one business. Here is a simple, **illustrative** UAE SME to practise on. Swap in your own figures when you try this.

| AED 12M | AED 10.2M | 60 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|
| annual revenue | total costs | employees | exits last year |

| Metric | Calculation | Result |
|---|---|---|
| **Revenue per employee** | AED 12,000,000 ÷ 60 | **AED 200,000** |
| **Profit per head** | (12,000,000 − 10,200,000) ÷ 60 | **AED 30,000** |
| **Direct cost of turnover** | (AED 18,000 hiring + AED 7,000 onboarding) × 10 exits | **AED 250,000** |
| **Time-to-productivity** | Average across last 8 hires | **80 days** |
| **Span impact** | One manager with 12 reports vs one with 6; compare team scores | **Compare, then redesign** |

## How to read these numbers

- **Direct turnover cost is only the visible part.** It leaves out the output lost while a seat is empty, the time colleagues spend covering and training, and the dip in team morale. Real cost is usually much higher.
- **Profit per head of AED 30,000 is thin.** Every avoidable exit costs close to a year of that return from one person.
- **An 80-day ramp is a pricing signal.** If a role can reach productivity in 55 days, the extra 25 days are cost the business is carrying.

**TRY IT NOW**

Pull three numbers for your own business this week: **headcount**, **exits in the last 12 months** and **average cost to replace one person**. Multiply. That product is your first profit conversation.

SECTION 02 · THE BUSINESS OF HR

# From gut feel to business case

It is no longer enough to say, *"We need to reduce attrition because morale is low."* Morale matters, but it does not compete well for budget against a new product or a sales hire.

## Compare these two statements

**GUT FEEL**

"People are leaving the sales team and it's affecting morale. We should do something about retention."

**BUSINESS CASE**

"We lost 8 sales people last year at roughly **AED 60,000 each**, about **AED 480,000**. A targeted retention plan that cuts exits by 30% in 60 days could protect **around AED 144,000** a year."

The second version names a cost, a target and a time frame. That is how HRBPs gain influence.

## Build a business case in three moves

1

### Find the number

What is the problem costing today? Use exits, ramp days, vacancies or incidents, multiplied by a cost.

2

### Name the lever

Which of the five profit levers (Section 3) does this problem sit on?

3

### Propose and measure

State the action, the expected change, the deadline and the metric you will report.

## A real shift, a real edge

Every initiative you own, whether hiring, performance, development or culture, either adds to the bottom line or takes from it. Being able to show which one is what separates a support function from a strategic partner.

| Old HRBP mindset (partner) | New HRBP mindset (profit driver) |
|---|---|
| Support business goals | Influence business outcomes |
| "Reduce attrition" | "Protect AED 250,000 a year in attrition cost" |
| Enable better managers | Lift team profitability by a stated percentage |
| Align with leaders | Lead workforce profitability strategy |
| Improve engagement scores | Raise revenue per employee, and show how |

SECTION 03 · PROFIT LEVERS

# Profit Levers You Can Influence

> *The strongest HRBPs don't ask how to support the business. They ask which lever they can pull to move the numbers.*

There are five areas where HR ownership translates directly into business impact. Most of them are already on your desk. They are just rarely reported as profit.

1 Attrition cost | 2 Time-to-productivity | 3 Workforce planning | 4 Upskilling | 5 People risk

LEVER 1

## Reduce the cost of attrition

Every resignation is a cost centre with several parts:

- Recruitment and replacement cost
- Output lost while the seat is empty
- Ramp-up time for the new hire
- Extra load and burnout on the people who stay

As a working rule of thumb, many practitioners estimate the cost of one exit at roughly **6 to 12 months of that person's salary**. Calculate your own figure; senior and revenue-critical roles sit at the high end.

### Your HRBP moves

- Identify the roles and teams with the highest turnover
- Study exit trends: why, when, and after which manager
- Build role-specific retention plans with line managers

**Profit impact:** fewer exits means less hiring spend and less lost productivity. Each avoided exit is money kept.

QUICK CHECK

If you can only measure one lever this quarter, start here. Attrition data already exists in your HR records, and finance understands it immediately.

LEVER 2

## Improve time-to-productivity (TTP)

The faster a new hire gets up to speed, the sooner they start earning their cost back. In a sales or delivery role, every week saved on ramp-up brings revenue forward by a week.

### Your HRBP moves

- Audit the real onboarding experience, not the planned one
- Build manager-led ramp-up plans with clear 30-60-90 milestones
- Track TTP by role, so you can show improvement cohort by cohort

**Profit impact:** revenue starts sooner and fewer ramp-up delays slow the team down.

LEVER 3

## Optimise workforce planning

Hiring the wrong roles, carrying bloated teams or hiring ahead of demand (instead of in line with business needs) is quiet profit leakage. It is rarely labelled as a loss, but it shows up as lower margin.

### Your HRBP moves

- Build capacity models with Finance and Sales
- Align hiring plans to revenue and delivery targets
- Maintain succession maps for critical roles, so gaps do not force expensive emergency hires

**Profit impact:** resources sit where they are needed, which means cost efficiency and a performance lift.

| Lever | The number to bring to the room |
|---|---|
| **TTP** | Days saved per hire × daily value of the role × hires per year |
| **Workforce planning** | Roles hired but not needed, or needed but not hired, times their annual cost or lost revenue |

LEVER 4

## Upskill revenue-critical functions

Learning and development is only "nice to have" when it is not tied to anything. Sales enablement, customer success, technical delivery and digital operations are all places where better capability moves the top line directly.

### Your HRBP moves

- Point training budget at roles that drive revenue or protect it
- Run before-and-after impact checks (close rate, ticket resolution, renewal rate)
- Co-own L&D goals with the business head, not for them

**Profit impact:** more deals closed, stronger renewals and fewer escalations.

LEVER 5

## Reduce people risk

Toxic management, burnout and compliance slips cost far more than most leaders assume. The bill arrives as resignations, disengagement, disputes and damage to the employer brand.

### Your HRBP moves

- Spot risk zones early through feedback loops and pulse checks
- Coach leaders before a pattern becomes a crisis
- Keep a simple early-intervention playbook ready

**Profit impact:** a protected brand, better retention and fewer disputes.

## How to use these levers

In the next section you will get a simple framework that maps any HR initiative to one of these levers, and from there to a business outcome. The next time someone asks *"What's the return on your HR plan?"* you will not point to an engagement score. You will point to a number on the P&L.

**RULE OF THUMB**

If an HR initiative cannot be tied to **at least one** of these five levers, ask whether it is the right priority for this quarter.

SECTION 03 · PROFIT LEVERS

# The UAE lens: where the levers show up locally

The five levers apply everywhere. In a UAE business, a few local realities change how they look day to day. Use this page as a prompt for your own context, and always verify current rules with the relevant authority.

| Local factor | Why it is a profit matter | Lever |
|---|---|---|
| **Emiratisation requirements** | Eligible employers face targets and related obligations. Planning for them early avoids last-minute hiring and penalties, and builds a real local talent pipeline. | Workforce planning, People risk |
| **Visa, labour card and contract cycles** | Delays or lapses stall start dates, which stretches the time before a new hire contributes. | TTP |
| **Payroll and WPS compliance** | Errors create employee mistrust and regulatory exposure that is expensive to reverse. | People risk |
| **End-of-service benefits** | A known liability that grows with tenure. Tenure planning and retention affect when it is paid and how it is budgeted. | Attrition cost |
| **Cross-border teams (UAE and India)** | Different notice periods, expectations and onboarding realities affect ramp-up and retention. | TTP, Attrition cost |

## Which lever should I pull first?

| If you keep hearing… | Start with |
|---|---|
| "Good people keep leaving." | Lever 1: attrition cost |
| "New joiners take forever to get going." | Lever 2: time-to-productivity |
| "We're hiring a lot but still stretched." | Lever 3: workforce planning |
| "The team has the tools but not the skills." | Lever 4: upskilling |
| "There's tension in one department." | Lever 5: people risk |

Regulations change. Treat this page as a list of questions, and confirm current MoHRE and free-zone requirements for your entity before acting.

SECTION 04 · THE PROFITABILITY FRAMEWORK

# The HRBP Profitability Framework

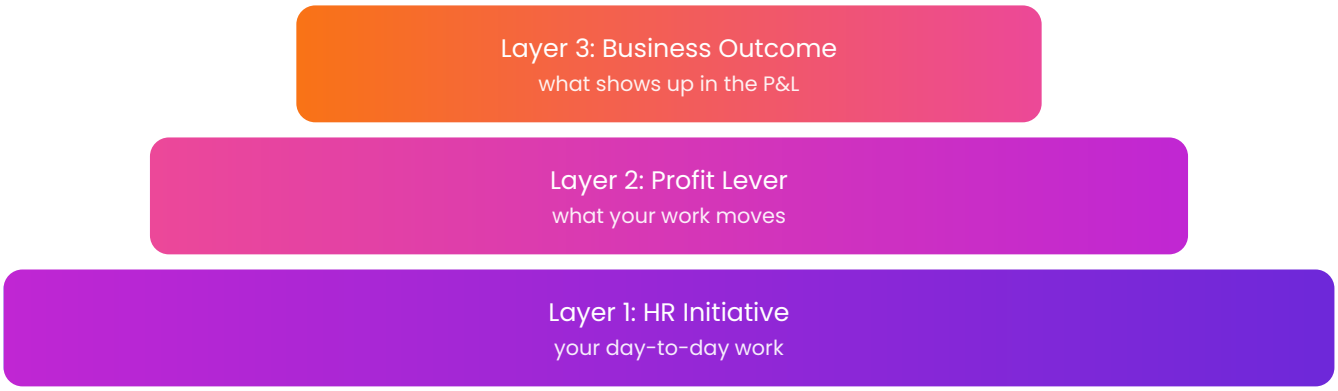
> *A simple model to connect every people initiative to a P&L outcome, with clarity and confidence.*

## Why use a framework?

When HR leaders cannot connect an idea to an outcome, they lose influence. A framework fixes that. It makes your work:

- **Easier to present** to business leaders
- **Easier to measure** after launch
- **Easier to repeat** on the next initiative

## The 3-layer model




Read it from the bottom up when you plan. Present it from the top down when you report.

LAYER 1

### HR initiative (your day-to-day work)

This is the action or project you are actually running. Examples:

- Improve the onboarding programme
- Create a retention plan for a high-turnover team
- Roll out manager training
- Redesign a team structure

Keep this layer clearly scoped, time-bound and owned by one named person (usually you).

LAYER 2

## Profit lever (what the initiative moves)

Map every initiative to one or more of the five levers. This is the bridge between HR vocabulary and business vocabulary.

| Profit lever | Typical result |
|---|---|
| **Reduce cost of attrition** | Lower hiring spend and less lost productivity |
| **Shorten time-to-productivity** | Faster revenue contribution from new hires |
| **Optimise workforce planning** | Better alignment between headcount and demand |
| **Upskill critical functions** | Sales growth, renewals, stronger delivery capability |
| **Reduce people risk** | Lower compliance cost and a stronger employer brand |

Use this vocabulary when you speak with business teams.

LAYER 3

## Business outcome (how it appears in the P&L)

This is the metric your CFO or CEO already tracks. It is your north star when you report impact.

| Business metric | What it reflects |
|---|---|
| **Revenue per employee** | Efficiency and output |
| **Gross margin** | Cost control and productivity |
| **Time-to-revenue (for sales roles)** | Speed of ramp-up |
| **Turnover cost per role** | Attrition control |
| **Leadership bench strength** | Risk mitigation and long-term value |

**WHY IT WORKS**

Layer 1 is what you do, Layer 2 is what it moves, Layer 3 is what the business gains. If any layer is missing, the story falls apart.

# Example: applying the framework

Say you are rolling out a new onboarding sprint for a growing sales team. Here is how the three layers fill in.

| Framework layer | Example input |
|---|---|
| **1. HR initiative** | Redesigned onboarding to shorten ramp-up from 90 days to 60 days |
| **2. Profit lever** | Time-to-productivity |
| **3. Business outcome** | About AED 90,000 per quarter in value recovered, roughly **AED 360,000 a year** |

## The same work, said two ways

**ACTIVITY LANGUAGE**

"We improved onboarding."

**BOARDROOM LANGUAGE**

"We delivered **AED 360,000** in annual productivity gains by cutting ramp-up by 30 days."

One sounds like a task completed. The other sounds like an investment returned. The work is identical.

## How the AED 360,000 is calculated

| Step | Illustrative value |
|---|---|
| Gross profit from a fully productive rep | AED 2,000 per working day |
| Average productivity during ramp-up | About 50% |
| Days saved per hire | 30 |
| Value recovered per hire | 30 × 50% × AED 2,000 = **AED 30,000** |
| Hires per year | 12 |
| Annual impact | 12 × AED 30,000 = **AED 360,000** |

## Your turn: map three initiatives

| HR initiative | Profit lever | Business outcome (AED / %) |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

SECTION 05 · CASE STUDY VAULT

# Case Study Vault: From HR to ROI

> *Numbers get attention. Stories get buy-in. Together they give you influence.*

The quickest way to prove HR's impact is to show it working, in the language the business uses: costs saved, revenue unlocked, risks avoided. The three cases that follow are written like the slides a CEO would be happy to present.

**PLEASE NOTE**

These are **illustrative scenarios** built from common patterns in growing companies. The figures are examples to show the method, not results from named clients.

CASE STUDY 1 · LEVER: TIME-TO-PRODUCTIVITY

## Onboarding redesign = AED 360,000 in productivity gains

### Context

A mid-sized services company with a 12-hire annual sales plan had a 90-day average ramp-up. New reps lagged, quarterly forecasts were unreliable and managers were pulled into repeated hand-holding.

### HRBP action

- Audited the actual onboarding journey of the last eight joiners
- Worked with sales enablement to build a 30-day "fast track" programme
- Added a buddy system and a digital resource kit with scripts, pricing and case references

### Outcome

| 90 → 60 | AED 90K | AED 360K |
|---|---|---|
| days to full productivity | value recovered per quarter | annualised impact |

Presented to the CFO as a simple time-versus-revenue curve, which made the case in under two minutes.

CASE STUDY 2 · LEVER: COST OF ATTRITION

# Attrition fix saves AED 225,000 in hidden costs

## Context

A growing B2B company had 30% annual attrition in its 40-person customer support team. Remaining agents were stretched, backlogs grew and response times slipped.

## HRBP action

- Launched a stay-interview programme with every agent
- Redesigned roles and workloads with managers using that feedback
- Introduced internal mobility paths and milestone bonuses for tenure

## Profit lever

Reduce cost of attrition.

## Outcome

- Attrition fell from 30% to 18% over six months, which is 12 exits down to about 7
- At an estimated **AED 45,000** per exit (agency fees, training time and lost output), five avoided exits is roughly **AED 225,000**
- Reliance on external recruiters dropped noticeably
- Featured in the CHRO's update to the board

| Cost of one support exit (illustrative) | AED |
|---|---|
| Recruitment and agency cost | 12,000 |
| Onboarding and training time | 8,000 |
| Lost output and backlog impact | 25,000 |
| **Total per exit** | **45,000** |

**WHAT MADE IT WORK**

The HRBP did not start with a programme. They started with a conversation with every agent, and used what they heard to decide what to change.

CASE STUDY 3 · LEVER: PEOPLE RISK

# People risk caught early becomes brand risk avoided

## Context

Anonymous pulse feedback in a 25-person business unit showed repeated signs of one manager's harmful behaviour. Left alone, it threatened resignations, a possible labour complaint and reputational damage.

## HRBP action

- Partnered with legal and compliance to understand the exposure
- Coached the manager through structured one-to-one feedback sessions
- Introduced short, regular pulse checks as an early-warning signal

## Profit lever

Reduce people risk.

## Outcome

- Three at-risk team members stayed, avoiding roughly **AED 180,000** in replacement and lost-output cost (3 × AED 60,000)
- Team trust score rose by 21% within a quarter
- No formal complaint was raised
- The early-warning process was adopted company-wide at the COO's request

| 3 | +21% | AED 180K |
|---|---|---|
| resignations avoided | team trust score | estimated cost avoided |

**LESSON**

Risk that is **prevented** never appears in a report, which is exactly why it is worth quantifying. If you do not put a number on what did not happen, nobody will credit it.

SECTION 05 · CASE STUDY VAULT

# Steal the structure: make your own case slides

Every case above follows the same four parts. You can replicate it for any initiative in about an hour.

| Component | What to fill in |
|---|---|
| **1. Context** | What was broken or not working? Include one number to show scale. |
| **2. Action** | What did you do? Name the tools, collaborators and execution steps. |
| **3. Lever** | Which HR-to-profit lever did this pull? |
| **4. Outcome** | Measurable impact in business language: AED, %, days or risk avoided. |

## Where to find your evidence

- **Exit records and replacement invoices** for attrition cost
- **Start dates and first-milestone dates** for time-to-productivity
- **Sales, ticket or delivery data** before and after training
- **Pulse and manager feedback** for early risk signals
- **Finance's own numbers**: always ask them to confirm your cost assumptions

## Draft your first case

| Part | Your notes |
|---|---|
| **Context** | |
| **Action** | |
| **Lever** | |
| **Outcome** | |

**TIP**

Agree the cost assumptions with Finance *before* you present. A number the CFO helped build is a number the CFO will defend.

SECTION 06 · TOOLS & TEMPLATES

# Tools & Templates to Apply Now

> *What gets measured gets respected. What gets packaged gets presented.*

This section turns the ideas into things you can build and use. Here are five tools every HRBP should have in their profitability toolkit. Ready-made versions come with this playbook: an Excel workbook (profit map, attrition calculator, TTP dashboard and 30-60-90 tracker) and a PowerPoint impact deck.

TOOL 01

## HR Initiative → Profit Map

**Purpose:** maps one current initiative to its profit lever and business outcome.

**It contains:** initiative summary · the lever it activates · business metrics influenced (cost saved, time gained) · stakeholders to align (CFO, business head, Finance)

**Why it matters:** it helps you pre-sell an idea before the project starts. A filled-in example is on the next pages.

Open the Profit Map (Excel) →

TOOL 02

## Cost of Attrition Calculator

**Purpose:** puts a dirham figure on voluntary exits, by role.

**Inputs:** role salary · replacement cost as a % of salary · ramp-up days · backfill time · department impact factor

**Why it matters:** it turns "attrition is a problem" into "attrition is costing us AED X a year" on one clean sheet.

Open the Attrition Calculator (Excel) →

| Illustrative calculator row | Value |
|---|---|
| Annual salary of the role | AED 120,000 |
| Replacement cost (assume 30% of salary) | AED 36,000 |
| Ramp-up: 60 days at 50% productivity (salary ÷ 365 × 30) | AED 9,863 |
| Vacancy: 30 days of lost output (salary ÷ 365 × 30) | AED 9,863 |
| **Estimated cost of one exit** | **AED 55,726** |

Adjust every assumption to your company. Add a department impact factor for roles where a vacancy costs more than salary.

TOOL 03

## Time-to-Productivity (TTP) Dashboard

**Purpose:** tracks how long new hires take to contribute and how that changes over time.

**The dashboard shows:**

- Average TTP by function
- Improvement versus the previous cohort
- Revenue or output contribution over the first 90 days
- Onboarding experiments, linked to their results

**Why it matters:** it shows that onboarding is not HR admin. It is revenue acceleration.

Open the TTP Dashboard (Excel) →

TOOL 04

## HRBP Profit Impact Deck

**Purpose:** helps you present your work to senior leadership in business terms.

**Deck sections:**

1. Objective and lever
2. What was done
3. Impact in AED or %
4. Next move
5. The business ask: resources, support, recognition

**Why it matters:** it makes every HR review feel like a growth update, not an HR update.

Open the Profit Impact Deck (PowerPoint) →

TOOL 05

## 30-60-90 Day HRBP Profit Plan

**Purpose:** a roadmap to apply this playbook one quarter at a time.

- **30 days:** map initiatives to levers and run the attrition calculation
- **60 days:** present one profit deck and start one pilot
- **90 days:** set a regular impact-reporting rhythm

**Why it matters:** it moves you from reactive to strategic in a single quarter. The full planner is in Section 9.

Open the 30-60-90 Tracker (Excel) →

SECTION 06 · TOOLS & TEMPLATES

# Template: HR Initiative → Profit Map

Copy this layout into a document or slide. The example in each field shows the level of detail to aim for. Overwrite it with your own initiative.

Use the ready-made Profit Map (Excel) →  Use the Impact Deck (PowerPoint) →

## 1. Initiative summary

| Field | Example input |
|---|---|
| **Initiative title** | Fast-track onboarding programme for the sales team |
| **Owner** | HRBP, Sales and Commercial |
| **Timeline** | Eight weeks, from kick-off to first cohort review |
| **Business function** | Sales |
| **Problem to solve** | Long ramp-up is delaying revenue realisation |

## 2. Profit lever activated

| Profit lever | Tick the ones this project moves |
|---|---|
| Reduce cost of attrition | ☐ |
| Improve time-to-productivity | ■ selected |
| Optimise workforce planning | ☐ |
| Upskill critical functions | ☐ |
| Reduce people risk | ☐ |

## 3. Targeted business metrics

| Business metric | Estimated impact | Baseline | Target |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Revenue per employee** | +AED 17,500 per person per year | AED 200,000 | AED 217,500 |
| **Time-to-productivity** | -30 days per hire | 90 days | 60 days |
| **Onboarding completion rate** | +18 points | 71% | 89% |

## 4. Key business stakeholders

| Stakeholder | Role | Status |
|---|---|---|
| **Sales Director** | Project sponsor | Aligned |
| **CFO / Finance Head** | Validates financial impact | Informed |
| **L&D Lead** | Execution partner | Aligned |

## 5. Outcome snapshot (after execution)

| Result area | Outcome |
|---|---|
| **Cost savings** | About AED 90,000 in the first quarter from faster onboarding and less reliance on extra hiring |
| **Productivity gains** | First cohort reached target 18% faster than the previous one |
| **Strategic value** | Sales Director extended the programme to every new team and tied it to quarterly targets |

## 6. Boardroom line (executive summary)

**SAY IT LIKE THIS**

"By redesigning onboarding, we unlocked **AED 90,000** in productivity in a single quarter and cut ramp-up time by **one third**. This was not an HR win. It was a revenue one."

## Bonus: ready-to-use pitch elements

### Email pitch

Three lines: the problem in AED, the proposed move, the date you need a decision.

### One-slide summary

Lever, metric, baseline, target, ask. Nothing else.

### Impact line

"We saved AED 14,000 last quarter by cutting TTP by 17 days."

**PRINT IT**

Keep a filled map for every initiative you run. After a quarter, you will have a portfolio that doubles as your HR impact report.

SECTION 07 · BOARDROOM LANGUAGE

# Boardroom Language for HRBPs

> *To be heard at the top table, speak in outcomes, not activities.*

## Why this matters

Most HRBPs get stuck giving tactical updates:

- "We ran an engagement survey."
- "We rolled out onboarding changes."
- "We launched a retention programme."

Business leaders are not interested in what you did. They want to know what *moved*: revenue, cost, risk, margin or time. Compare that with:

**THE SAME UPDATE, TRANSLATED**

"We cut onboarding time by 18 days, which pulled quota attainment forward and added **AED 360,000** in annual productivity."

That sentence earns attention, respect and budget.

## How to translate HR speak

| Common HR speak | Boardroom translation |
|---|---|
| "High attrition in operations roles." | "We lose roughly AED 250,000 a year to attrition in operations." |
| "We redesigned onboarding." | "Ramp-up time dropped 24%, so revenue contribution starts sooner." |
| "We launched manager training." | "Manager effectiveness improved and exit risk in those teams fell by 35%." |
| "We improved engagement scores." | "A 9-point lift in team scores came with a measurable rise in output." |
| "We improved the hiring process." | "Hiring quality improved, and 90-day turnover fell by 40%." |

Percentages and amounts above are illustrative. Use your own verified figures in practice.

SECTION 07 · BOARDROOM LANGUAGE

# A formula for executive narratives

You do not need to be a natural storyteller. Use this plug-and-play sentence in decks, emails or verbal updates:

THE FORMULA

"By **[HR initiative]**, we **[metric that moved]**, which resulted in **[business outcome in AED or %]**."

## Examples

"By redesigning onboarding, we cut ramp time by 15 days, accelerating revenue by **AED 90,000** last quarter."

"By addressing exit risks in two teams, we prevented **AED 120,000** in attrition-related losses."

"Through better workforce planning, we avoided **AED 150,000** in redundant hiring cost."

**Pro tip:** every business outcome should fall into one of four buckets. **Cost avoided** **Revenue enabled** **Time gained** **Risk reduced**

## Go from HR update to business update

| Don't say | Say instead |
|---|---|
| "We trained 200 managers." | "Leadership effectiveness improved, and exits in those teams fell by 18%." |
| "We created an L&D plan." | "Sales training lifted close rate by 11%, adding AED 600,000 to the quarter's pipeline." |
| "We ran an engagement initiative." | "We lifted engagement in a key team and saw productivity rise 9%." |

## Add these to your impact deck

| Slide type | Why it matters |
|---|---|
| **"What we did" → "What moved"** | Keeps the focus on impact. |
| **AED saved or earned: one visual** | Shows HR tied to business levers. |
| **One-line boardroom takeaway** | Repeatable, quotable, authoritative. |

SECTION 07 · BOARDROOM LANGUAGE

# The boardroom language cheat sheet

> *If you want a seat at the table, speak in impact, not activity.*

## Ready-to-use lines by scenario

| Scenario | Drop-in language |
|---|---|
| **Reducing attrition** | "We saved AED 225,000 in rehire and ramp cost through role-level interventions." |
| **Improving onboarding** | "Faster ramp-up unlocked around AED 90,000 of revenue per quarter." |
| **L&D initiative** | "Training added AED 600,000 to the pipeline. Pre- and post-analysis attached." |
| **Restructuring / org design** | "Headcount was optimised with no impact on output, saving AED 200,000 a year." |
| **People-risk prevention** | "Early coaching kept three at-risk team members, avoiding about AED 180,000." |

## Business impact phrases to borrow

"Improved productivity by…" "Reduced cost-to-hire by…" "Protected against risk worth…"
"Accelerated time-to-revenue by…" "Avoided unnecessary spend of…"

## Where to use them

### HRBP impact decks

One outcome line per slide.

### QBRs and MBRs

Open with the number, then explain.

### 1:1s with business heads

Bring a lever, not a list.

### Performance reviews

Describe your own year in outcomes.

**REMEMBER**

Numbers build trust. Language builds influence. Together they earn you the room and the respect. Now go and speak P&L like you own it.

SECTION 08 · PROFIT-DRIVING CHECKLIST

# The Profit-Driving HRBP Checklist

> *What gets measured gets improved. What gets listed gets done.*

Use this list as a weekly dashboard, a leadership prep sheet or a self-evaluation. It shows quickly whether you are operating as a profit-focused HRBP: someone who drives performance, cost efficiency and strategic value through people.

| ✓ | # | Checkpoint | Why it matters |
|---|---|---|---|
| ☐ | 1 | Have I tied my current HR initiatives to profit levers? | Without a lever you are moving furniture, not value. |
| ☐ | 2 | Can I explain my work in AED or % terms? | Pick revenue, cost or time, and quantify it. |
| ☐ | 3 | Am I actively tracking time-to-productivity or attrition cost? | These are quick business wins once you own them. |
| ☐ | 4 | Have I built an impact map for each key project? | Initiative → lever → outcome, from Section 4. |
| ☐ | 5 | Have I shown leaders a one-slide summary? | Simple gets read, remembered and funded. |
| ☐ | 6 | Do I meet Sales, Finance or Ops every month? | Real partners co-own outcomes with the business. |
| ☐ | 7 | Am I using language the CFO understands? | Replace "engagement" with "productivity lift". |
| ☐ | 8 | Do I have at least one HR pilot tied to a business unit's P&L? | Experiment, track, prove, scale. |
| ☐ | 9 | Do I collect and share success stories? | Influence grows when examples circulate. |
| ☐ | 10 | Am I seen as a problem solver, not a task executor? | Executors wait for briefs. Partners solve for results. |

SECTION 08 · PROFIT-DRIVING CHECKLIST

# Score yourself

Count the boxes you could honestly tick, and find your range.

| Score | Verdict | What to do next |
|---|---|---|
| **9 – 10** | **HRBP 2.0: the business multiplier** | Keep showcasing results and mentor others. |
| **7 – 8** | **High-potential HRBP** | Choose one or two levers to double down on this quarter. |
| **5 – 6** | **Tactical HRBP** | Pick three items and build toward business ownership this month. |
| **Below 5** | **Activity manager** | Start with Section 4: build your initiative-to-profit map. |

My score today: _____ Date: _____

## Bonus: your commitment line

**COMPLETE AND REPEAT**

"In the next 30 days, I will lead **[HR initiative]**, tie it to **[profit lever]** and measure it through **[business metric]**."

Print it. Frame it. Repeat it. The future of HR is not about completing tasks. It is about compounding impact.

## A weekly 15-minute profit rhythm

| Day | Habit |
|---|---|
| **Monday** | Pick the one number you want to move this week. |
| **Wednesday** | Update the tracker: exits, TTP or pilot metric. |
| **Friday** | Write one business-language line about what moved, and send it to one stakeholder. |

## My notes

SECTION 09 · 30-60-90 DAY PLAN

# The 30-60-90 Day HRBP Profit Plan

> *You don't need permission to drive profit. You need a plan.*

This roadmap helps you put everything in this playbook to work in three months. Whether you are new to strategic HR or ready to reinvent your role, it gives you credibility, confidence and control.

PHASE 1 · DAYS 1 – 30

## Map and learn

**Objective:** build alignment with the business, find quick wins and connect your HR work to profit levers.

| Action | Outcome |
|---|---|
| Identify one key initiative you own | Anchored to a measurable business priority |
| Map it to a profit lever (Section 4) | Clear business value in plain terms |
| Hold 30-minute meetings with Sales, Finance and BU heads | Understand current pain points and opportunities |
| Run the attrition or TTP calculation (Section 6) | A quantified view of today's leakage |
| Create a one-slide summary of the initiative | Ready to show the CHRO, CEO or CFO |

YOUR THEME

Think like a business analyst, not a project manager.

## What good looks like at day 30

- You can state one HR priority and its AED value in a single sentence
- A Finance colleague has confirmed your cost assumptions
- One business leader knows what you are about to do and why

PHASE 2 · DAYS 31 – 60

## Execute and show impact

**Objective:** launch, measure and report your first strategic HR win.

| Action | Outcome |
|---|---|
| Launch the initiative as a pilot | Early traction and early results |
| Track metrics: baseline vs now | A weekly data habit |
| Share results by slide or email | Trust and visibility |
| Use boardroom language (Section 7) | Outcomes reported in AED or % |
| Capture a win story: a quote, stat or result | Material for internal storytelling |

PHASE 3 · DAYS 61 – 90

## Scale and influence

**Objective:** scale what worked, mentor others and embed profit-minded HR thinking across the organisation.

| Action | Outcome |
|---|---|
| Package the initiative into a repeatable playbook | Shareable with the HR team and other units |
| Mentor one peer on the profit lens | A multiplier mindset |
| Present your story at a leadership forum | HRBP seen as a growth partner |
| Run a mini ask-me-anything for the HR team | More profit-focused thinking |
| Set next quarter's goal on another profit lever | A quarterly rhythm of value-led HR |

**YOUR THEME**

Expand your influence by teaching what you have done.

**STARTER COMMITMENT (FILL AND FRAME)**

"In the next 90 days, I will lead _____, tie it to _____ and deliver _____ in measurable business value."

SECTION 09 · 30-60-90 DAY PLAN

# Printable planner

Print these two pages. Write in the deadlines, then tick the tasks off as you complete them.

## Days 1 – 30: map and learn

Objective: build alignment, identify quick wins, connect HR work to business value.

| ✓ | Task | Deadline | Notes / completed on |
|---|---|---|---|
| ☐ | Identify one key initiative I currently own | | |
| ☐ | Map the initiative to its profit lever | | |
| ☐ | Meet Sales, Finance and BU heads | | |
| ☐ | Run the attrition cost or ramp-up calculation | | |
| ☐ | Create a one-slide initiative-to-impact summary | | |

## Days 31 – 60: execute and show impact

Objective: launch, measure outcomes and show proof of value.

| ✓ | Task | Deadline | Notes / completed on |
|---|---|---|---|
| ☐ | Launch the pilot or initiative | | |
| ☐ | Track the business metrics tied to it | | |
| ☐ | Report results in business-impact format | | |
| ☐ | Capture a win story (result, quote or stat) | | |
| ☐ | Present an update to the CHRO, CFO or BU head | | |

SECTION 09 · 30-60-90 DAY PLAN

## Days 61 – 90: scale and influence

Objective: turn one pilot into a repeatable practice and spread the thinking.

| ✓ | Task | Deadline | Notes / completed on |
|---|---|---|---|
| ☐ | Package the pilot into a reusable HR playbook | | |
| ☐ | Mentor one peer on applying profit levers | | |
| ☐ | Present my story at an HR or business forum | | |
| ☐ | Host a 20-minute ask-me-anything for the HR team | | |
| ☐ | Set next quarter's goal on a new profit lever | | |

## My personal commitment line

**WRITE IT OUT**

"In the next 90 days, I will lead **[initiative]**, tie it to **[profit lever]** and deliver **[business outcome in AED or %]**."

## Day-90 review

| Question | My answer |
|---|---|
| **What number moved?** | |
| **What was it worth, in AED?** | |
| **What surprised me?** | |
| **Who needs to hear about it?** | |
| **Which lever is next?** | |

SECTION 10 · OPERATING SYSTEM

# Your new HRBP operating system

> *The business is not waiting for HR to prove its worth. It is waiting for HR to help drive it.*

This is not the end of a playbook. It is the start of a shift in mindset, in language and in how you show up at the table. You have seen the levers, studied the map and picked up the tools. What remains is the work itself: showing the business what a profit-minded HRBP can do.

## Summary of your shift

| Old HRBP thinking | New HRBP operating system |
|---|---|
| "Support the business plan." | Co-create and influence business priorities. |
| "Report engagement scores." | Present the AED return on workforce performance. |
| "Run L&D and onboarding." | Accelerate productivity and stop avoidable leakage. |
| "Be the people person." | Be the business person with a people strategy. |

## What this playbook was really about

Not buzzwords. It was about giving you the language, tools and mindset to operate as:

**A growth partner**
to your CEO

**A strategic partner**
to your CFO

**A future-proofing partner**
to your teams

The next generation of great businesses will not be built by brilliant products alone. They will be built by profitable people systems, led by people like you.

YOUR FINAL COMMITMENT

"I'm not waiting to be invited to the boardroom.
I'm walking in with the numbers, the story, and the confidence of someone who builds profit through people."

**Let's go.**

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