

Preparing to leave the corporate world; float or fail



Eight Top Tips to help you float

Want to change your career? Are you tired of corporate life? Our expert guide will offer advice and guidance on the best ways to make the transition into self-employment.

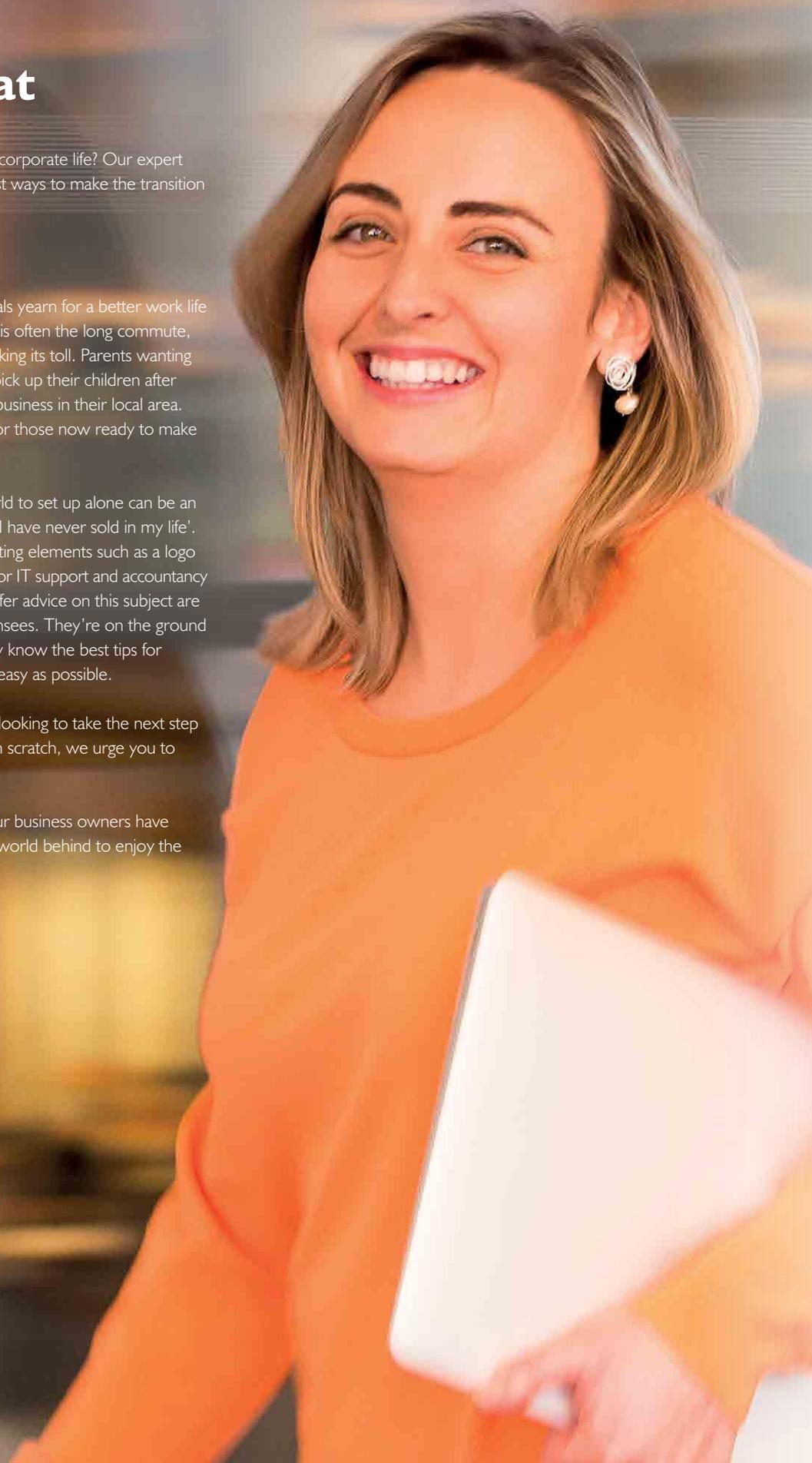
Introduction

According to research, 42% of HR professionals yearn for a better work life balance. When HR professionals contact us, it is often the long commute, or travel involved in their role, that is clearly taking its toll. Parents wanting to spend more time at home, or be there to pick up their children after school have turned to us to help build an HR business in their local area. We also hear from people facing redundancy or those now ready to make a change and take on the next challenge.

Leaving the safe confines of the corporate world to set up alone can be an extremely daunting task. You may be thinking 'I have never sold in my life'. Or you don't know where to start with marketing elements such as a logo or building a website, as well as where to turn for IT support and accountancy expertise. We know that the best people to offer advice on this subject are the people who have done it already; our licensees. They're on the ground running their own HR businesses daily. So they know the best tips for making the transition into self-employment as easy as possible.

If you're at that crossroads in your career and looking to take the next step in joining a franchise or starting a business from scratch, we urge you to read our brochure.

As well as an introduction to The HR Dept, our business owners have shared their top tips for leaving the corporate world behind to enjoy the rewards of being a business owner.



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TIP No.

1

Prepare your finances! Great planning equals long term success

Starting any kind of new business requires financial planning as every new business takes a little time to establish and for the cash to start coming in. Ensuring that you will be able to support yourself until you start receiving a steady income from your business is essential, whether you are looking at franchising or going-it-alone. The benefit with a franchise business package is of course you take advantage of all the success short cuts!

Be realistic about your living costs and factor in income from your partner or family around you. Six to twelve months' worth of living costs should be adequate until your business is established enough to allow you to top up your reserve money and begin earning a living from the business.

Operating under the HR Dept brand allows you to get your business off the ground quickly. We help you on the path to building a client base in your local area and fast. When you become an HR Dept licensee, we support you in every aspect of setting up and running your business. Our expert business coach will work with you during your first six months of trading to assist with both business and financial planning. We also include an accountancy package for the first year. Not only that, we offer four weeks' holiday cover for our licensees every year. Everyone needs a holiday, but as a business owner the income often stops when you stop! Not with The HR Dept. While you're away, our central office will provide your customers with the services and advice they need.

"Make sure you can support yourself until you're up and running properly."
Belinda Newton, licensee since May 2010 offers this as her top tip!

"Make sure you have a financial cushion for the first year or so. You'll be more relaxed and able to focus solely on growing the business instead of worrying about supporting yourself."
Alison Schreiber, licensee since March 2015

Reap the rewards of YOUR hard work

TIP No.

2

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Establishing a successful and profitable business will take up a huge amount of your time and effort – but oh is it rewarding! Working longer initial hours to become established means flexibility later! If a better lifestyle out of the corporate rat race is what you've been looking for, then, you must put the work in at the beginning. It's a careful balance between working proactively and reactively. As your proactive sales efforts kick in, you can react to client demands. But remember, you still need some proactive time set aside to continue to build your client base.

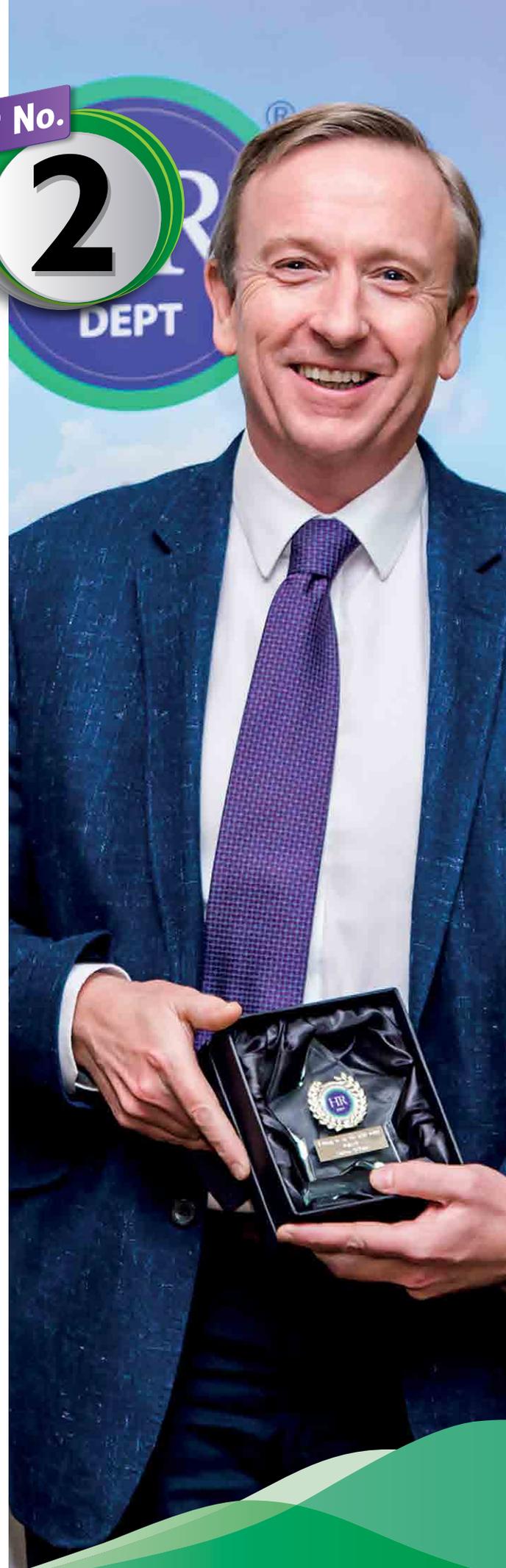
As a new business owner, you'll be taking care of so much more than your client work. You will need to market your business, prospect for new customers, take care of the accounts, finances and staff. And make sure you provide a service that will keep your customers coming back. There's so much to factor in, so you need to be prepared to put in the time and effort the business needs so that you can reap the rewards.

At The HR Dept we discovered that the hardest part of setting up a business isn't the HR side of things, but the business and marketing aspects. We found that existing HR professionals often miss these business set-up skills themselves. When you become an HR Dept licensee, we support you in every aspect of setting-up and running your business.

There's a lot to think about but we've done some of the thinking for you – we can be your experts in these areas so you don't have to be. From accounts to employing staff and your holidays, creating your website and marketing content, we give you the support you need, and the contacts, to help you get your business off the ground. This means you can start on your customer work as quickly as possible.

Tracey Hudson, a licensee since September 2005, comments on the support she receives.

"I don't have to spend time thinking about creating a website or reinventing the wheel with marketing materials. That was the element of running a business I didn't have much experience in and just wouldn't know where to start. I know that if I had attempted it alone, I would have failed and been back in corporate life by now which I really wouldn't have enjoyed."





TIP No.

3

Is the opportunity right for you?

Choose a franchised business model or start a business that you can really get behind and be passionate about. If you're not passionate or interested in the business, you will not put in the sincere effort and hard work that it needs to be successful. Most people leave the corporate world behind to pursue a more rewarding, flexible and enjoyable career and lifestyle.

Customers want to know that they are receiving a good service and that the company they buy from shows that they care about their customers. If you don't show a passion for the product or service you are providing, it will shine through in your customer service and they will be much less likely to buy from you again.

Our model is working with SMEs to support them in all their HR needs – the SME world is very different to the corporate world, so we help you to understand their needs and ways of working, helping you to win business more quickly and deliver excellent service.

From the moment, you decide to become an HR Dept licensee, we're there to support you. We'll guide you through your decision-making process to make sure that our opportunity is right for you. We want you to be successful, so it is just as important to us as it is to you that The HR Dept is the right opportunity for you and that you are right for our brand.

Before joining us, you will have the opportunity to meet with the central office team and existing licensees. This will give you a real feel for the business and help your decision-making process. We are looking for individuals who have the drive and energy to grow a successful business and who want to work in partnership with us.

"You need to work out if it's right for you or not. Take the time to really understand the business model and visualise yourself doing it."
Ian Pilbeam, licensee since June 2014 came to an HR Dept Discovery Day to fully evaluate the opportunity before he took the plunge!

"You've really got to want to do it and be passionate about it."
Peter Bailes, licensee since April 2010

"We know how much your business means to you and will help you do what it takes to make it successful."

**Gemma Tumelty, Managing Director,
The HR Dept**

Shock horror BUT no-one knows everything!

TIP No.

4

When setting up a business, it is important to surround yourself with people who can support you. They can fill in your skills gaps when needed. This means that your business is more likely to be successful and allows you to draw on the knowledge and advice of others to make your business successful.

At The HR Dept, we take pride in our cooperative approach to working. We encourage our network of licensees to work closely together to provide a supportive environment optimised for the growth and success of everyone. With The HR Dept you work for yourself, never by yourself. Not only will you benefit from our support, you'll be part of a team; a whole network of other HR professionals with knowledge you can draw on.

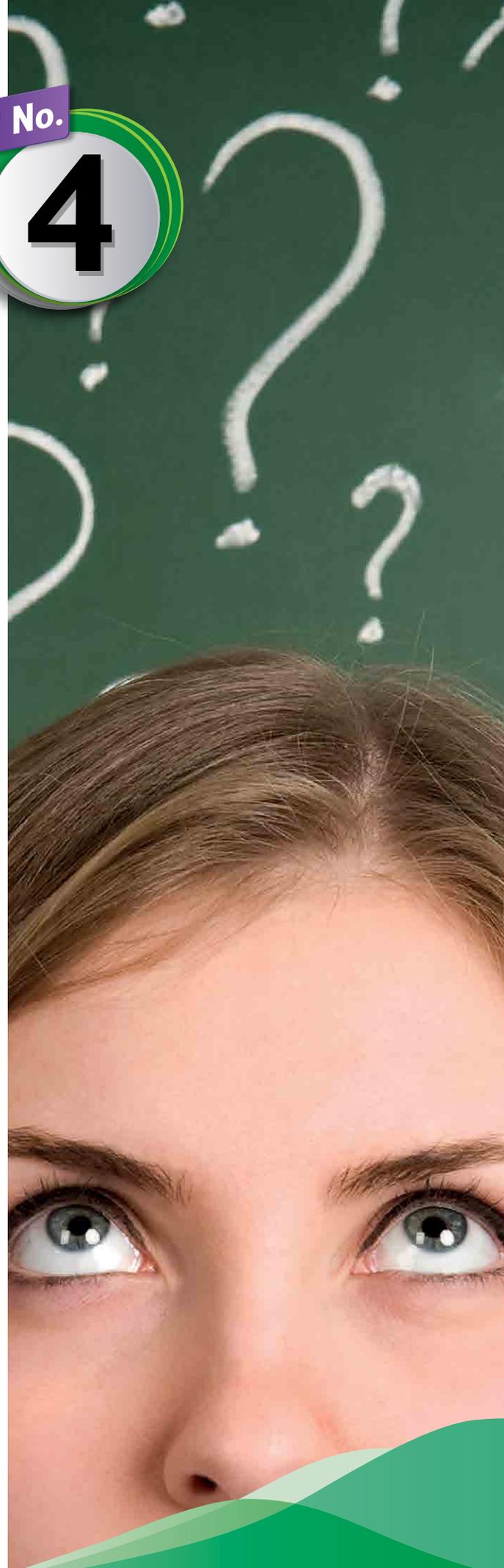


"I really benefit from having a network of other HR consultants, I can ask them to see what they've done and what's worked for them."

John Jenkinson, licensee since June 2012

"If I support the network, it supports me. It's a great way to learn from others who are doing the same thing as you."

Ian Pilbeam, licensee since June 2014





TIP No.

5

The backing of family and friends

It is important to have your family and friends on board with your decision so that they can support you throughout your business venture. You're going to be working hard and will need their support and cooperation.

The business move will affect everybody's lives, not just yours. Without their support, it will make it extremely difficult for you to be successful. Involve them in the decision-making process. You will have more freedom in the long run but in the early days you will need to work hard on the business to make it successful and help you bring in a steady and reliable income that will benefit your whole family. But your family will be pleased to see you at home more and able to attend key events.

Family members working for you and with you.

The HR Dept itself started out as a family-run business back in 2002. Within our network of HR professionals, we have a husband and wife partnership and brother and sister team. Jan Hulaat and Jim Bottoms, our first brother and sister team, joined in July 2012 and their business has gone from strength to strength.

Our licensees have also been able to provide their children with invaluable work experience, enabling them to build a future not just for themselves but family members too.

See what Sheila Hudson licensee since June 2008, had to say about her own experience."

"The development of my own business is key and has offered my own family its own opportunities. As the business has grown I recognised that I needed to continually develop the business and this has allowed me to do this. My daughter has worked with the business on a part time basis and my husband has dealt with my book keeping. This has freed me up to concentrate on building my business."

"I have a supportive husband in a full-time employed job and he helps me. I think it's important to get your friends and family involved and on-board. My husband was very much part of my decision-making process. He had to be because the business affects every aspect of my life!"

Jayne Hart, licensee since May 2014

Do your research and understand the market

TIP No.

6

Whether you are joining a franchise or looking to start out alone, make sure you have done your research.

Put yourself in a potential customer's shoes and look at the type of organisations that would be your competition. Is the market already saturated? What could you offer as a new business that would set you apart from others? Understanding the market so that you know the industry is a good fit for you, and being aware of the potential size of your target audience, is key.

If you are considering taking on a franchise, look at what their customer-facing website is like. Were you able to find it easily? Does the company have any customer testimonials? These are all key areas to consider if you want to give yourself the best platform to market your own business.

At The HR Dept, our approach to new licensees is to give them the information that they need to make their decision. We are open and honest and this is one of our core values which we stand by.

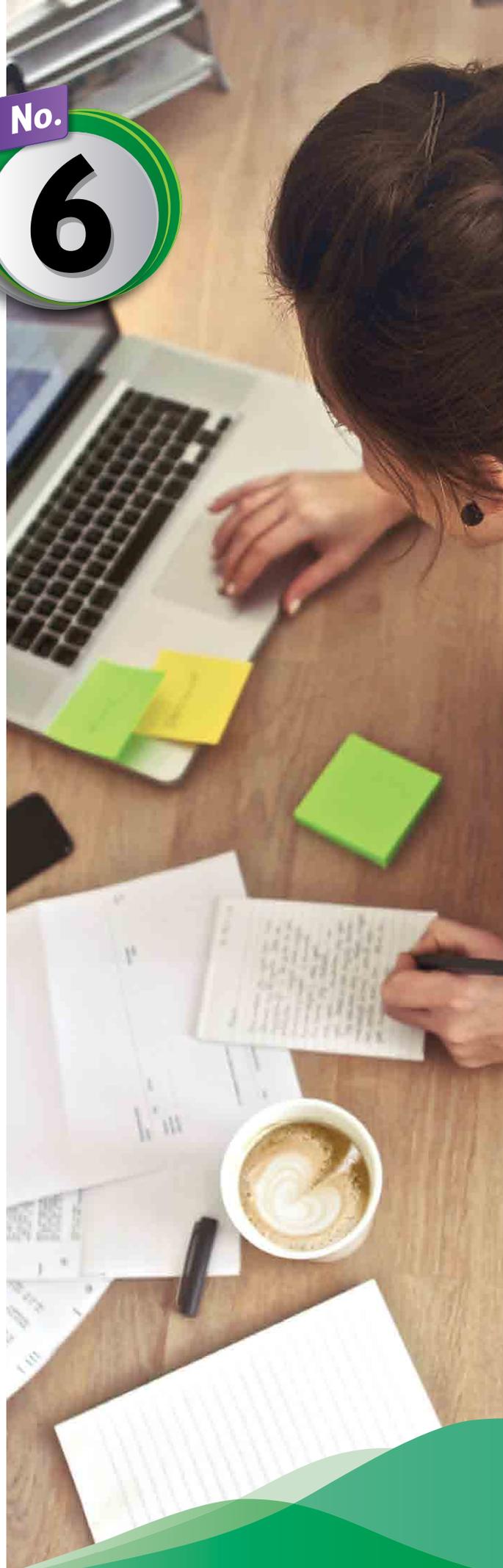
If you are interested in our business model, we encourage you to speak with our existing licensees, so you can hear their experiences first-hand. When you come on board with us we can help you identify potential business targets with detailed territory research profiles. This forms part of your initial business planning stages so you have a clear route to market from day one.



For HR professionals who may be considering joining The HR Dept, Sara Abbott licensee since March 2006 has these words of advice:

"If you're thinking about moving away from corporate HR, then I'd definitely recommend you give it a go. If you have strong HR skills and the thought of being your own boss appeals to you, then The HR Dept is for you.

The company offers extensive support in starting up your business, so you can focus on your services to clients and building a business. The HR Dept has grown in all areas and we know what works and what does not for the small business sector. Our support team is second to none."



TIP No.

7

Selling for success

Although you may have the adequate skills you need to offer your specific service, you may lack the sales and marketing skills you need to push your business forwards and generate new enquiries.

Marketing and selling your business is an essential part of business ownership, and part of gaining those all-important first, new and recurring customers. It's also a massive part of your ongoing development and progression. Remember that as you grow the business and employ staff, you will need to increase your income by gaining more and more customers.

For your business to succeed, your customers need to know where you are and what you do. Without this you will really struggle to get your business off the ground. Before launching your business, you will need to promote your launch and let people know when you'll be opening.

After your launch, you will need to continually promote your business to keep customers interested and to drum up new business. By offering a loyalty or reward scheme and excellent customer service, you will keep existing customers coming back, again and again. Referrals and repeat custom will make up a huge chunk of your business.

Anyone who runs a business will know that sales and marketing are key to success. We won't find the leads for you, you will be the local contact. So it is your job to go out and prospect to the right people.

However, as part of your investment, we provide you with a comprehensive induction programme and ongoing sales coaching. It will give you everything from a lead generation plan to information on target customers and how to get them to buy from you. In addition, our dedicated central office marketing team are continuously learning and developing their skillsets. This means we can continue to deliver cutting-edge marketing resources to our network to support you in achieving your goals.



"Market your business and get out there to drum up new business!"
Debs Witcomb licensee since February 2017. Debs has unrelenting energy and is a very good marketer in our network. She often shares her success tips with other licensees!

Are you prepared to make the jump?

If you get it right and you choose the right venture for you, your family and your lifestyle, owning a business will be an extremely rewarding exercise. The decision to leave the corporate world is never an easy one, but once you've gone through the transition, almost everyone has told us they'd never go back.

A business is a huge investment and the decision will affect not just you, but the people around you too. By taking advice from our licensees, you're listening to the people who have made that transition already and have built a successful and profitable asset. One that has allowed them the financial freedom and flexible working life they've been looking for.

"Starting your own business will be the most rewarding thing you've ever done. You build relationships and you can really see the difference you're making to people's businesses."

Belinda Newton, licensee since May 2010



About The HR Dept

The HR Dept provides outsourced HR advice and practical support to small businesses who need corporate level expert HR advice provided by experienced professionals – but without the cost of an in-house employee.

Giving practical, pragmatic, commercially-focused advice is what The HR Dept is all about – helping business owners to achieve their goals and dream through their people. This local and personal, but nationwide service, is delivered through a network of franchisees located all over the UK, Ireland and Australia, currently serving 6,000 SMEs.

We help employers achieve the results they want by telling them what they **can** do, not what they **can't**; this is something we extend to our licensees. You can utilise your skillset whilst earning a great income with our franchise business model. It's a rapid route to market and an opportunity to grow a business quickly.

If you'd like to learn more about how running this kind of business could be your next step, you can meet our team and a current licensee at one of our Discovery Day events in Bristol which take place monthly.

For more information on our unique offering visit www.hr-professionals.co.uk and download our information flyer.

Or come and meet us at our stand at the HRD Summit in February.

We are
a winning
team

We are customer
FOCUSED

We continually update our
skills and knowledge

We are
professionals

Our core values

We are honest and
open with each other,
our customers and our
business partners

We work with
a sense
of urgency

We embrace change
and strive for
continuous improvement

We have fun!



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