

## The Playbook for Integrating HR in a Roll-Up Strategy

In the world of roll-ups, where multiple companies are strategically acquired and consolidated into a larger entity, the HR function often sits at the crux of success—or failure. Integrating disparate organizations into a cohesive unit isn't just about aligning financials and operations. It's about merging cultures, retaining talent, and ensuring that the human capital driving these businesses doesn't get left behind in the deal-making dust.

Here's how savvy roll-up companies are weaving HR into their playbooks to create scalable, efficient, and people-centered organizations.

### Step 1: Map the Talent Landscape Early

The integration journey begins before the ink on the acquisition deal is dry. Conducting a comprehensive talent audit of the acquired entities is crucial. This goes beyond mapping organizational charts; it's about understanding the unique roles, skill sets, and cultural nuances each company brings to the table.

The effort begins with an assessment of gaps and overlaps, key performers, and future talent needs. The goal? To build a unified team structure without losing sight of the value each acquired company provides.

### Step 2: Align Cultures Without Erasing Identities

One of the thorniest challenges of any roll-up is cultural integration. Acquired companies often come with deeply ingrained values, work styles, and unwritten norms. A heavy-handed approach to alignment can alienate employees, leading to attrition and lost productivity.

Successful HR teams deploy listening campaigns—town halls, anonymous surveys, and one-on-one interviews—to gauge cultural compatibility and identify areas of friction. From there, they craft a set of core values that honors the individuality of each company while establishing a shared identity for the new organization.

### Step 3: Build a Unified Yet Flexible HR Infrastructure

Standardizing HR processes like payroll, benefits, and compliance is essential for efficiency, but it's a balancing act. Too much rigidity can stifle innovation, while too little can result in chaos.

Progressive roll-up companies adopt scalable HR platforms that accommodate diverse needs across geographies and industries. These systems streamline day-to-day operations while providing the flexibility to tailor policies to different business units.

#### Step 4: Prioritize Transparent Communication

Mergers are fertile ground for rumors and uncertainty. Employees often fear redundancies or dramatic changes to their roles. To combat this, HR leaders at roll-up companies emphasize frequent, transparent communication.

Monthly all-hands meetings, dedicated communication channels, and accessible FAQs are just a few tools used to keep employees informed and engaged. The message is consistent: We're building something bigger and better together.

#### Step 5: Retain and Upskill Talent

In roll-ups, retaining key talent is critical. HR teams focus on creating competitive compensation packages and clear career pathways to keep top performers motivated.

At the same time, reskilling and upskilling programs help employees navigate the changes brought on by integration. Think training on new technologies, leadership development for managers in growing teams, and cross-functional projects to promote collaboration.

#### Step 6: Measure and Iterate

HR integration doesn't end with a signed deal. Forward-thinking companies establish clear KPIs to track progress—employee engagement scores, retention rates, and productivity metrics, to name a few. Regular feedback loops ensure that the HR strategy evolves as the organization grows.

The best roll-up companies treat integration as a living process, not a one-time task.

#### The Human Capital Edge

At its core, a roll-up is a bet on scale. But while financial and operational efficiencies are often the headline, the real story lies in how well the people driving the business are integrated into the new ecosystem.

By prioritizing thoughtful HR integration, roll-up companies can transform a collection of businesses into a unified powerhouse—where culture, talent, and systems work together to unlock exponential growth.

After all, even the most ambitious roll-up strategy is only as strong as its people.

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