HR & Operations

Human Resources

There are a wide number of responsibilities that all HR employees at Sad Pumpkin Games will need to handle, which is why the first non-founder employee as the studio begins to ramp up recruitment in later stages of growth will be a human resources generalist. Principal among the responsibilities of the HR department is the recruitment and maintenance of new employees of diverse backgrounds.

Recruitment & Maintenance

The primary role of the HR generalist at Sad Pumpkin Games during the first stages of growth is to ensure we are hiring candidates for each position from a pool of applicants with diverse skills and backgrounds. Since Sad Pumpkin Games is primarily a remote working environment, applicants can be sourced from all over the nation not just in the vicinity of the office. In addition to locating and vetting a wide variety of applicants, the HR generalist will be responsible for completing any and all paperwork required to complete the employment process and enroll new employees in the necessary benefits packages and payment portals.

Conflict Management

In addition to recruitment, Sad Pumpkin Games' HR generalist will be the arbitrator of any interpersonal conflicts that arise among the staff, as well as a point of contact for any personal issues that may arise with an employee at the studio. As the studio grows in size, the HR personnel will also be responsible for the setup and maintenance of an anonymous feedback and reporting structure in order to allow employees to air their grievances and report potentially inappropriate behavior without the fear of reprisal.

Professional Growth

Another human resources task that will be handled by the Sad Pumpkin Games HR department is the identification and implementation of professional growth plans. As the studio grows and the patterns of development are cemented, employees should expect transparent descriptions of the different roles in the company, their expected responsibilities, and their compensation. This helps employees to understand what is expected in order to secure a promotion or to swap roles into another discipline. In addition to the codifying of job responsibilities, the HR department will help facilitate each employee's growth through the use of their education stipend and through company-wide trainings.

Diversity and Inclusion

Lastly, but definitely not least important, another responsibility of the Sad Pumpkin Games HR department will be to ensure that our hiring and business practices are consistent with our company values of diversity and inclusion. This extends to everything from hiring from diverse backgrounds to ensuring that company policies take into account varying perspectives from both inside and outside of the company.

Compensation Model

There are several different roles that would need to be filled throughout the various stages of Sad Pumpkin Games' growth plan, starting in the early stages with contracted artists but eventually leading into regular full-time roles on the team. All the full-time positions at Sad Pumpkin Games will have the same benefits and perks package and will have transparent schedules for bonuses and raises. Below is a list of roles required by Sad Pumpkin Games throughout the stages of growth, a description of each role, and a breakdown of the additional compensation apart from the salary.

HR Generalist

The primary responsibilities of an HR Generalist are to facilitate the scouting and recruitment of new employees, the upkeep of current employees' contracts, paperwork, and benefits, and to ensure that Sad Pumpkin Games is maintaining its values of diversity and inclusion. An HR Generalist would be one of the first hires as the studio enters the growth stage where it begins hiring employees, as it is one of the most important roles in the studio. The HR Generalist role would likely start salaried at around $50k, with the expectation that as the studio and team they are servicing grows their salary and/or position would be adjusted accordingly.

Producer

The primary responsibilities of a Producer are to ensure that the development teams at Sad Pumpkin Games are working as efficiently and effectively as they can. Producers are the go-to problem solvers for agile teams, and are an integral role to keep working on schedule and on budget. A Producer would be one of the first external hires for Sad Pumpkin Games, so that they can begin to develop the frameworks complete projects on time. The Producer role would likely start salaried at around $50k, with the expectation that as they are given responsibility for larger and more diverse teams their compensation would scale accordingly.

Artist

The role of Artist comes in differing flavors, but all share the same basic responsibility of designing and polishing art based on the flavor of artist they are hired as. Additionally, all Artists are expected to review and critique the art of others in the Artist role in order to develop a consistent, shared style. The starting salary for Artist would likely be $50k, with the expectation that as the studio grows and more Artists are required the role is either compensated appropriately for additional work or a number of Artists are promoted to Lead Artist in order to facilitate a team structure.

Engineer

The role of Engineer is responsible for designing, developing, and debugging code and software across both the client and server. Sad Pumpkin Games does not hire specifically for the role of Front-End Engineer or Back-End Engineer, as all those in the Engineer role should be comfortable in any part of the Sad Pumpkin codebase. The Engineer role starts salaried at $70k, with the expectation that as the team grows and more structure is required opportunities for promotion to Lead Engineer would be available, with the additional responsibility of team oversight and career development.

Community Manager

The role of Community Manager is especially important at Sad Pumpkin Games, and this role's responsibilities include creating and fostering online communities for our players as well as interfacing with players on social media platforms. The role of Community Manager would start salaried at $40k, with the expectation that as the number and size of the communities being overseen grow so would the compensation grow. As the number of Community Manager positions increases, the role of Lead Community Manager would be added with the responsibility of ensuring a shared voice among all Community Managers and managing their output and career development.

Quality Assurance

Many studios employ external brute-force testing strategies, or make use of internal 'contractors' in order to avoid paying their full-time QA testers, but the role of Quality Assurance at Sad Pumpkin Games is a full-time, salaried position. The responsibilities of the Quality Assurance role include the development and execution of test strategies, the validation of bug fixes, and the ad-hoc testing of builds before their release. Quality Assurance roles start salaried at $40k, with the expectation that as their responsibilities increase so would their salary, and the expectation that as the number of Quality Assurance roles increased the position of Lead Quality Assurance would be added.

Benefits and Perks

The benefits package of Sad Pumpkin Games extends equally to all employees. It covers their healthcare costs, provides ample vacation time, and includes yearly stipends which help cover the costs of home office upgrades and professional development.

Healthcare

Sad Pumpkin Games aims to offer a fully-paid healthcare option for all employees which covers medical, dental, and vision for the employee. Due to the distributed nature of Sad Pumpkin Games' team, it will be difficult to provide a perfect healthcare solution for all employees due to employer healthcare plans generally being tailored to a specific geographic area. Elective benefit options such as additional coverages or upgraded plans would be covered by the employees based on their individual needs, but the standard plans would be fully covered by the studio.

Time Off

Each employee is given a yearly pool of 4 weeks (20 days) of time off which can be used for any purpose the employee sees fit. While Sad Pumpkin Games highly suggests that employees take their time off, any unused time off will be exchanged at a 1:1 rate at the end of each year and added to the employee's paycheck.

Sick Leave
Sad Pumpkin Games does not specify a finite number of days which employees may use as sick leave. Instead, time lost due to any illness which would make contributing to the studio difficult or cause undue hardship on the employee is fully paid. Employees need to notify their supervisor or manager if possible that they are unable to work, but specific health information is not required.

Parental Leave
Sad Pumpkin Games believe that new parents should spend quality time with their newborns, and offers a sliding scale of time off pay for employees. The first 8 weeks of parental leave are covered at 100% salary, the following 4 weeks at 90% salary, then 4 weeks at 80% salary, and so on.

Home Office Stipend
Since Sad Pumpkin Games is a primarily remote working environment, employees are expected to have access to computers, offices, and internet connections capable of handling remote work. To facilitate this remote work, Sad Pumpkin Games offers employees a yearly stipend of $2,000 to cover the costs of home office upgrades, internet plan upgrades, or any other home office expense.

Educational Stipend
Sad Pumpkin Games believes in professional and academic growth of all its employees, as competent employees lead to better products. As such, Sad Pumpkin Games offers a yearly stipend of $2,000 to cover the costs of education expenses such as certification, trainings, and seminars.

Bonus/Raise Schedule
Employees have a right to expect a clear and transparent understanding of when they should expect bonuses or raises and how much they should expect them to be. As Sad Pumpkin Games strives for transparency at all levels, a schedule of bonuses and raises is available to all employees. Each year on May 1st, all employees' wages are increased correspondingly with the cost of living in their closest urban center. Additionally, May 1st is when bonuses and performance-based rases are calculated. These values correspond to the employee's contribution to the team, including both their raw output and their contribution to the work culture.

Facilities

As Sad Pumpkin Games is a remote office environment, it has little need for on-site facilities. Though there are some facility-like services that will be required by Sad Pumpkin Games, such as cloud-based code repository hosting which might otherwise be handled on-site. If Sad Pumpkin Games were to grow to a large enough size, management would potentially consider opening small, decentralized satellite offices in population centers where employees are clustered in order to better facilitate communication and planning, but full-time remote would still be the primary mode of development for the studio.