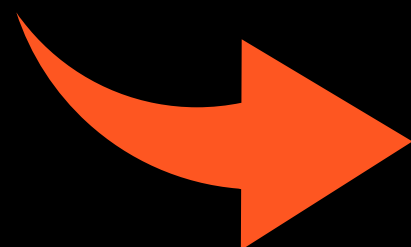




**HR IS NOT
YOUR
"FRIEND"
(THIS IS WHAT HR IS)**



The common perspective is that HR is not your “friend”.

Many people say that HR only serves the interests of the company rather than employees.

And although nobody thinks that marketing, sales, IT, finance or legal should be people’s “friends”, for many reasons HR is held to a different set of standards than most other business functions.

Whether HR is your friend or not is not the question. This is what HR is and can be for you.



1. STRATEGIC PARTNER

**Certainly, HR is not your “friend”.
Instead, HR is your strategic partner.**

HR helps you solve your business challenges, and explore and amplify your business opportunities with people-centered solutions. HR is your business ally and it happens to wear the people hat.

Focus on building a relationship of trust and transparency with HR.

In this way you can ensure you receive HR strategic support to help you deliver better results and achieve your business goals.



2. YOUR COACH

You would not necessarily expect to become “friends” with your therapist or coach.

Instead, your actual expectation is to receive the kind of guidance meant to genuinely help with you grow and improve.

That’s the way you have to see your relationship with HR. It isn’t that you can’t be “friends”. Rather, it is that you should focus on building a coaching relationship and not a friendship.

HR can be your coach, but don’t expect it to be your friend. To be a great coach, HR doesn’t need to be your friend.



3. FRIENDLY, NOT FRIEND

HR is not designed to be your friend, nor should you have that expectation.

Your role is not designed to be anybody else's friend, either.

It is certainly wonderful when friendships and meaningful relationships can emerge in the workplace, but that can't be the default expectation.

Instead, the expectation should be for everyone to be treated with kindness, compassion, dignity and respect.

That's what we mean by "friendly". And that's a reasonable expectation you should have for your HR partners.



4. BUSINESS AND PEOPLE

Without the business, the jobs wouldn't exist. Without the people in those jobs, the business wouldn't exist.

HR has to walk and operate in the fine line between business and people operations.

HR has to ensure that the business succeeds, and it does it with people. HR is a business leader with a people hat. HR has to be your interests in mind... but also those of the business. And that's very hard to do.

HR delivers its best value when it is an advocate of a healthy business operations with a people-centered culture. Don't try to make HR just about employees, because that's not what it is supposed to be. Neither just for the business. It's both.



5. HR CARES

HR genuinely cares for you, and it cares for the organization as well.

This is not a false dichotomy. This is HR's most important operational and strategic tenet: to do as much as possible, and as best as possible, to make people and business succeed, together, simultaneously.

HR doesn't need to be your friend to care about you and your success.

When it comes to your success, HR exists (in part) to provide the opportunities for your growth, development and to create a workplace that allows for that to happen.



6. HR IS NOT YOUR MANAGER

HR is not the police. HR is not the party organizer. HR is not a cost center.

More importantly, HR is not there to replace the responsibility that leaders and direct managers have with their teams and people.

Often HR is blamed (by everyone, including leaders and managers) for poor managerial and leadership styles and decisions.

HR definitely must help people and teams, and leaders and managers. But HR is not supposed to replace their role. Make sure that you keep your managers and leaders accountable for their work, instead of blaming HR.



7. VALUE CREATOR

HR is your partner to create value.

Value comes in many different forms: by helping leaders achieve the business goals, by supporting managers to manage their teams deliver results, and by helping people grow and develop.

HR creates this kind of value with several actions: architecting an amazing people-centered and business-oriented corporate culture, offering people solutions to business problems, designing solid learning and development programs, creating the right career management frameworks for good people to become managers.

That's how HR creates value.



8. DON'T BLAME HR

Very often HR is tasked with the responsibility to communicate decisions made by senior leaders (the board or C-suite). Some of these decisions are tough, and communicating them is no less hard.

Don't blame HR for the tough choices an organization has to make. HR has to advocate for business and people. And, sometimes, depending on the circumstances, HR has to advocate a little bit more for the business, or a little bit more for the people.

It is not easy for HR to communicate difficult decisions, especially when they didn't make those decisions.

