



# BUSINESS LEADER SURVEY 2022 REPORT

Leadership and Management Development



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and smart** – these are  
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of our clients.

**Optimistic, ambitious, and smart** – these are common characteristics of our clients: experienced business leaders of companies usually turning over between £5m and £50m.

So, following 12 months of new and unexpected major world events, we asked these leaders of mid-tier companies about the biggest challenges they are facing as a business, from a people perspective and personally as a business leader.

**Here were their top 5:**

1. Recruitment and retention of good people – with one comment summing this up as **'It's chaos out there!'**
2. Uncertainty in the economic outlook – rising inflation, ongoing unexpected events, perhaps soon a general election – it's all change, all the time
3. Loss of consumer confidence threatening a slowdown in sales
4. Disruption and cost increases in the supply of raw materials
5. Impact on margin and profit

**We may all be operating in this same economy, but we certainly aren't all in the same boat.**

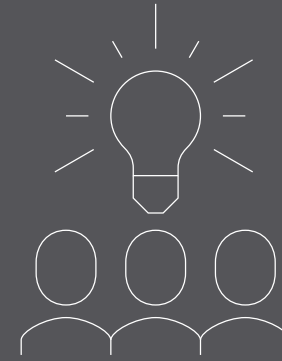


**Alex Kinchin-Smith,  
MD People Puzzles**

# What makes us different from the rest?

There are also companies thriving and growing so fast they are struggling to keep up with demand. The world is changing, and some companies are finding it easier to adapt.

These very commercial business issues identified by our clients sit alongside the other big people issues of the last two years: the great resignation, the challenge of running a company, promoting wellbeing, managing remote and hybrid working, and actively supporting and developing company culture.



At People Puzzles, our board-level HR Directors specialise in helping companies to develop a people strategy that builds solutions to these challenges into the rolling people planning for the business.

In this report, we discuss the survey's key people-related concerns, and what can be done to mitigate the challenges being faced – or turn them into opportunities.

**We hope you find our insights useful.**

**It's all about the people.**  
Attract, retain and develop.

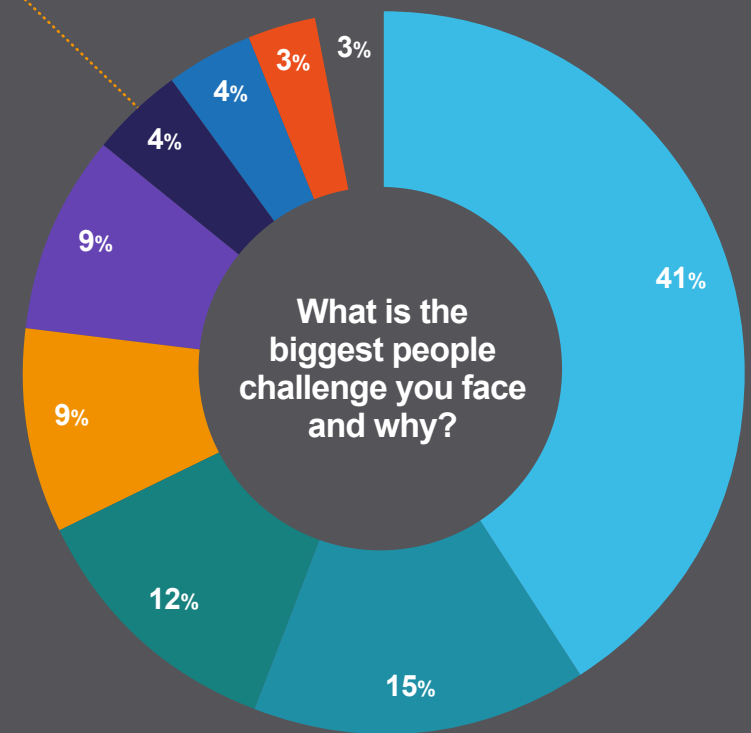
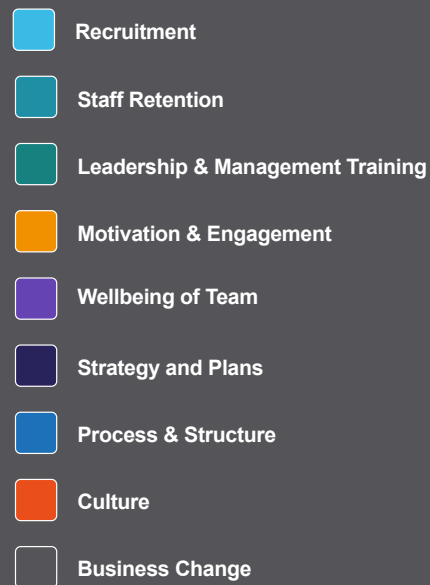




Get the people stuff right.  
It's not rocket science.

## Leadership and Management Training

When asked the question 'what is the biggest people challenge you face at the moment and why?', leadership and management training was a key challenge that stood out.



12% of respondents saw the need for leadership and management training, highlighting 'improving competency' and 'confidence' within their team.

They explained that they want to:

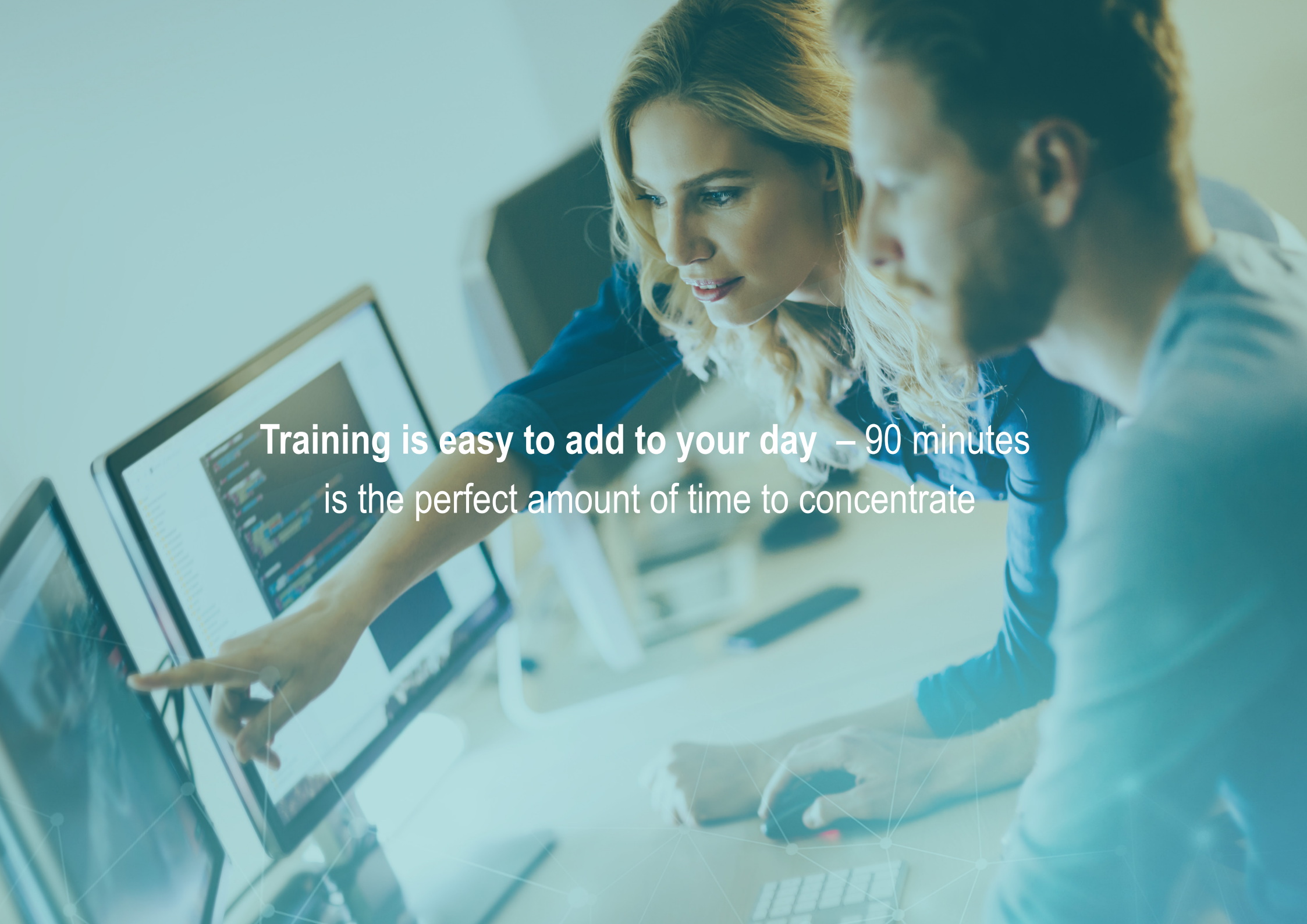
- Develop the managers and leadership team, who are inexperienced of working in a business that is becoming more corporate.
- Upskill the existing team of 'technical experts' in the importance of customer experience and service.
- Give employees the confidence to grow with the company in the long term.
- Help leaders grow in confidence and skills in managing people well, to help prevent and avoid the exhausting and complicated HR disputes.

For most ambitious businesses, people need to learn new practical skills and refresh their commercial and people skills every year.

A good training and development programme makes this easy to access, and easy to take back into their day jobs. In turn, this leads to better performance across the business, increases staff engagement and boosts motivation so that they are more likely to give their best to your business.



**Develop the skills.  
Drive business performance.**



Training is easy to add to your day – 90 minutes  
is the perfect amount of time to concentrate

# Develop Your Leadership Team

**Define leadership standards.**  
Clarify, measure and shape.

- **Define a leadership standard**

Clarify what great leadership looks like in your organisation, that fits your company culture. When designed in tandem with the business leaders it really improves take up, gets embedded quickly, then can be used to train future leaders.

- **Use a 360-degree feedback mechanism**

Measure each leader against the list using 360 feedback (from line manager, peers, and direct reports). The report will show gaps between where they think they are, and where others think they are, and provide training suggestions.

- **Shape a leadership development programme**

Look at the total leadership teams' relative strengths and weaknesses – and use it to shape a leadership development programme for the year ahead. Look at no more than 8-10 areas that need attention, turning them into modules for development.



# Power 90 management development

We all need coaching and development throughout our careers, but let's be honest, we don't have the time to take days out of the office! And we need concentration levels to remain high.

## So, why could Power 90 be the solution?

The Power 90 programme delivers to the needs of busy leaders and managers who want growth and action through 90 minute interactive modules.

Over the past 18 months our People Director, Shaun O'Hara, has been working with our wider team of 75 of the UK's best People Directors. Shaun has brought together their collective expert knowledge, and developed a programme called the P90 Programme, which has been widely adopted by our team of People Directors here at People Puzzles.

Shaun explains, 'Even before Covid, full day classroom training went out of the window, so we developed a set of 90-minute modules to upskill leaders and managers to cope with the day to day demands of their job, and train them for the skills they would need to master to progress in the future.'

The programme enables leaders to better drive business performance across their teams which then allows them to free up their time for the longer-term strategic work, so that they work "on" the business not "in" it. 90 minutes is the perfect amount of time to concentrate, whether on zoom or face to face, and then take new skills away to practice in the real world.

There are over 50 modules to choose in the programme, they cover a range of topics from leadership training: personal effectiveness to managing effective meetings and handling difficult conversations. The modules build out into a multi-year programme that have delighted clients, some of whom are now in year three!

One of my clients has seen their multi-year programme as a key enabler of the 300% revenue and margin growth over the last four years. Plus, they've a 92% company engagement score making them an amazing place to work.

Another client, now in year two of the programme has seen it stepping up leadership and management performance, contributing to 20% year on year revenue and margin growth. A third client ran a 6-month programme which contributed to an increase of their company engagement up to 82% during the difficult COVID period.'

The programme delivers both commercial business benefits and improves team engagement through improved management and leadership.



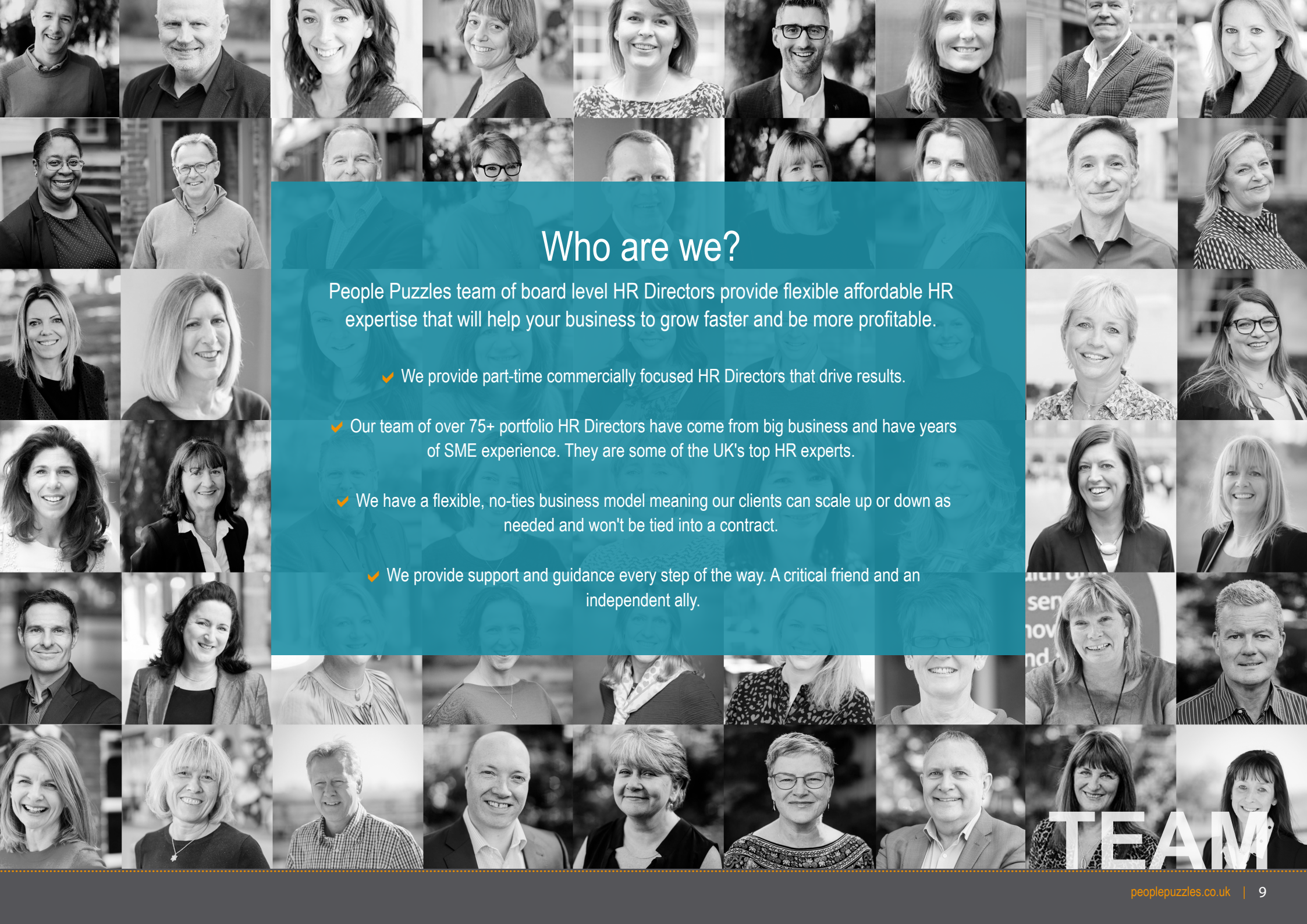


**Increased staff engagement can dramatically increase profitability**  
Stuart Calvert, People Puzzles  
HR Director and Regional Director

Leading an ambitious business continues to be one of the most challenging, interesting, difficult, and enjoyable jobs in the world. Whether your focus is on stability, survival, growth, or something in-between, we know that getting all the people stuff right is time-consuming and hard work!

At People Puzzles, we love helping business leaders adapt to today and plan for the future. Our team are people experts, always starting with the business strategy, and working that into what the business needs from its people to succeed over the short and long-term.

Our mission is to help our clients find the best solutions to their people challenges, build a great place to work, and build successful and healthy businesses.



# Who are we?

People Puzzles team of board level HR Directors provide flexible affordable HR expertise that will help your business to grow faster and be more profitable.

- ✔ We provide part-time commercially focused HR Directors that drive results.
- ✔ Our team of over 75+ portfolio HR Directors have come from big business and have years of SME experience. They are some of the UK's top HR experts.
- ✔ We have a flexible, no-ties business model meaning our clients can scale up or down as needed and won't be tied into a contract.
- ✔ We provide support and guidance every step of the way. A critical friend and an independent ally.

# TEAM



**GET IN TOUCH AND  
YOU COULD SEE THE  
IMPACT IN DAYS**

Make sure you are  
surrounded by experts

Call **020 3239 3307**

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