

# Case Study

## A people-centred approach to business growth

Why operational and strategic  
HR is foundational for  
sustainable success

Helping people and organisations thrive  
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## CASE STUDY

# Flexible HR support that grows with you

In just three years, the relationship with our telecoms client evolved from a simple HR health check for a start-up of four to a full, outsourced HR solution for a thriving business of over 100. As such, this case study is a manifesto for HR as a driver of business success, illustrating why business leaders should give HR a seat around the decision-making table, right from the start.

“Working with Seymour John was a critical enabler for the rapid scale up of Lit Fibre. As well as helping us scale our team, they also put in place a people plan and structure that helped us create a fantastic culture of high performance and engagement. The team at Seymour John truly became part of our business offering seamless support at all levels of the company.”

Tom Williams, CEO, Lit Fibre

### The Context

From day one, our client understood the foundational importance of HR as a driver of business success. Initially brought in to support them in the development of an in-house HR function, the leadership team recognised the benefits of working with a complete outsourced solutions supplier that collaborates as a valued business partner.

### Where people flourish organisations thrive

If an organisation is only as good as its people, then, as the people function, HR is formative for its success. Outsourcing the function to an expert, like Seymour John, freed up the founders to concentrate on growing their business, saving them time, reducing costs, and mitigating risk, by ensuring best practice across the whole of the organisation.

### Our Approach

Early on, we worked with the founders to define the culture, values, vision, and purpose of the business, providing a North Star to ensure everything done subsequently was strategically aligned.

From policies and procedures to organisational, cultural and community development, ours was a complete 360° operational and strategic HR approach, aligned with Lit Fibre's growth goals.

For us, it was an opportunity to help build a business from the ground up and demonstrate the efficacy of HR as a driver for business growth. This was only made possible by the unerring trust the founders placed in our team and their openness to guidance and, sometimes, challenge.

Trust has been key, at all levels. Progressive companies are eschewing the rigid, top-down structures that inhibit innovation for flexible, bottom-up communities that are more agile and commercially creative. Trusting people and giving them more autonomy leads to greater levels of engagement, empowerment and, as a result, productivity. Trust – in us, and its people – has been a hallmark of Lit’s success story.

### **Moving beyond culture to build a genuinely collaborative community**

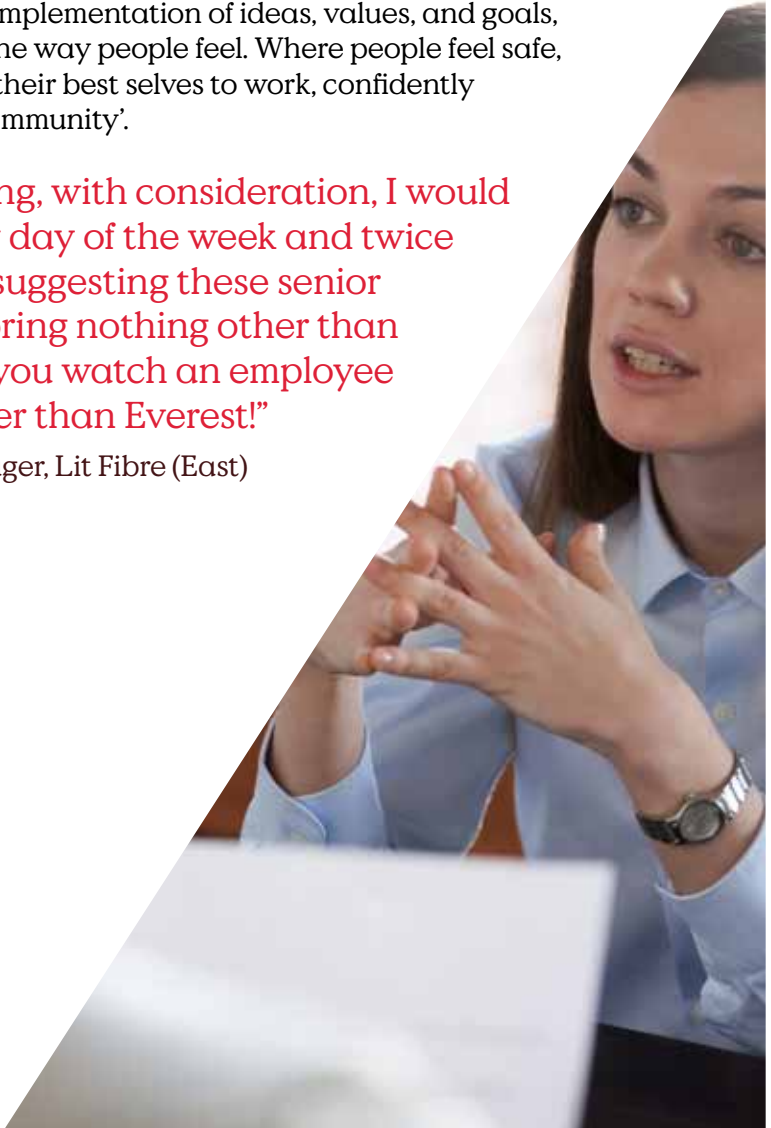
It is well documented that values-led, purpose-driven organisations have a competitive advantage. They drive growth, profitability, and employee satisfaction. They are more resilient during times of challenge, too. Defining and articulating values and purpose create cultural alignment.

Beyond offering clear values to guide their approach and a purpose to give meaning to their work, our initiatives and interventions have given Lit’s people a sense of belonging, too. Organisational and cultural strategies can sometimes feel imposed. Ours has been a genuinely collaborative approach, instigating employee engagement initiatives and creating collaborative spaces where every voice is heard.

Where cultural development deals in the implementation of ideas, values, and goals, community framework strategies deal in the way people feel. Where people feel safe, accepted, and connected, they will bring their best selves to work, confidently contributing to the development of ‘the community’.

“Honest, with humour, directing, with consideration, I would put my neck on the line every day of the week and twice on a Sunday to be confident suggesting these senior professionals/heroes would bring nothing other than glory to your business whilst you watch an employee engagement level reach higher than Everest!”

Rob Coombs, Regional Delivery Manager, Lit Fibre (East)



## Our Solutions

By aligning strategy, structure, processes and people, HR is an enabler that impacts positively on the performance of every part of an organisation. By ensuring Lit Fibre is a great place to work, our strategic HR initiatives helped them attract, retain, and develop exceptional, values-aligned talent, crucial for the sustainable success of a fast-growing business.

“Seymour John have been an integral part in shaping and contributing to the wonderful company Lit Fibre has become. Even before your first day the onboarding interaction with the team is welcoming and genuinely made you excited to be joining Lit.” Tom

Foy, Head of Delivery, Lit Fibre

As well as acting as a coach and sounding board for the senior leaders, we engaged and empowered all Lit’s people, to develop a high-performing culture that is creative, productive, and effective.

Beyond ongoing HR advice and guidance – supporting and coaching managers in all aspects of employee relations – and the day-to-day administration of the function, we created policies, procedures, handbooks, and processes for all elements of the employee lifecycle, including not only the development of an onboarding and induction programme, but also (and this is something a lot of companies overlook) an offboarding programme.

In today’s Glassdoor world of digital transparency, how an employee leaves a company is as important as how they join. Exit interviews help us understand why an employee is leaving. Not only do they help ensure an employee leaves on good terms but also in understanding whether there is anything the business could be doing better.

Our day-to-day operational initiatives have included:

- Implementing an online HR platform – that enables easy, automated employee data capture, storage, and reporting – that grows with the business.
- Setting up the monthly payroll system.
- Overseeing all recruitment and selection, including sitting on interview panels and psychometric testing and assessment of candidates (see below).
- Initiating communications and employee engagement initiatives that will ensure the business remains a great place to work.
- Establishing reward and recognition programmes that not only help develop and maintain a high-performance culture, but also ensure the business can continue to attract and retain the best talent.



## Leadership development

Thomas Møller Lybæk, Talent Product Director at LEGO Group, recently said: “Leadership is not a position. Leadership is an act, a behaviour. And that means everyone can actually be a leader.”

“The HR team at Seymour John is truly exceptional. They have played a key role in helping me accelerate my career through their 1-2-1 coaching and Aspiring Leaders’ program. They have helped me step up in Lit’s leadership team and become more and more confident in my abilities. Providing excellent guidance, I’m grateful for their mentorship and for supporting me to excel in my role. Whether I needed support or advice they’re always offering a helping hand! They’re not only experts in their field, but they’re also compassionate, friendly, and honest, making them the best HR team I’ve ever worked with.” Remzi Tomlin, Customer Experience Manager, Lit Fibre

Starting with the Leadership Team, we have designed and delivered bespoke development programmes to ensure every employee realises their full potential. Initiatives have included the:

- Instigation of a monthly leadership development programme for 20 members of the Leadership Team.
- Creation of leadership collaboration spaces where we share resources to support selfdevelopment and create a safe space for the leadership community to share ideas, experiences, and support one another.
- Development of the Executive Team, delivering preferences and effectiveness initiatives that meant they were able to operate at a highly effective level from the outset.
- Delivery of ongoing 1-2-1 leadership coaching for the Leadership Team
- Use of psychometrics, alongside 1-2-1 coaching, to create individual development plans to ensure high-potential employees are identified, supported, and able to realise that potential.



## Leaders@Lit

“I have benefited hugely from the Leaders at Lit program. It helped not just myself but also other managers in the business to develop and learn how to become better leaders in our organisation. I have been through this process at other companies but none like this, where you get to learn about yourself confidently and get the tools to really improve yourself. The course content and delivery were extremely interactive and most importantly enjoyable for all involved.” Tom Foy, Head of Delivery, Lit Fibre

## Aspiring Leaders@Lit

“I'd like to say a massive thank you to Vic and her team for all the support and knowledge they've shared with us during my adventure on the Aspiring Leaders' course. I have massively developed my leadership skills and learned a lot about myself during the process. Vic, Rowena and the rest of the team always got the best out of me with their fun and can-do attitude and allowed me to open up as a leader. Thank you for running such a fantastic course.”

Ali Simpson, Regional Delivery Supervisor, Lit Fibre

## Assessment & Profiling and Coaching & Mentoring

Exceptional performance begins with accurate insight. Assessment and profiling, and coaching and mentoring played a major role in helping Lit develop a high-performance culture.

To ensure the right appointment, identify potential for leadership succession, and assess individual and team performance, we deployed the latest assessment and profiling tools throughout the employee lifecycle.

### Employing the right people

When employing the wrong person can cost as much as three times a role's annual salary, we helped save Lit time and money by mitigating risk in their recruitment process.

Pre-employment personality profiling and psychometric assessment tools offer accurate and predictive insight into a candidate's personality, emotional intelligence, job fit, capability and interpersonal style.

This kind of profiling can be an invaluable interview aid for identifying strengths and probing areas for development. It is a proven approach that enables us to predict a prospective employee's ability to adapt and develop within an organisation, ensuring a cultural as well as technical-capabilities based fit.



## Identifying the rising stars

Are your leaders confident, passionate, effective? Are they introvert or extrovert? Do they have vision? Are they adaptable? Do they inspire? Can they nurture the talent of others?

We helped Lit get under the skin of their people to understand how they operate. By putting a microscope on underlying values and identifying an individual's leadership approach, we were able to assess how they aligned with Lit's culture to identify their best role within it. As such, we helped Lit focus their resources more cost-effectively by identifying the right talent for career-development investment, based on the organisational objectives.

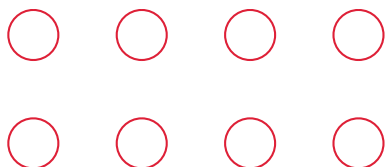
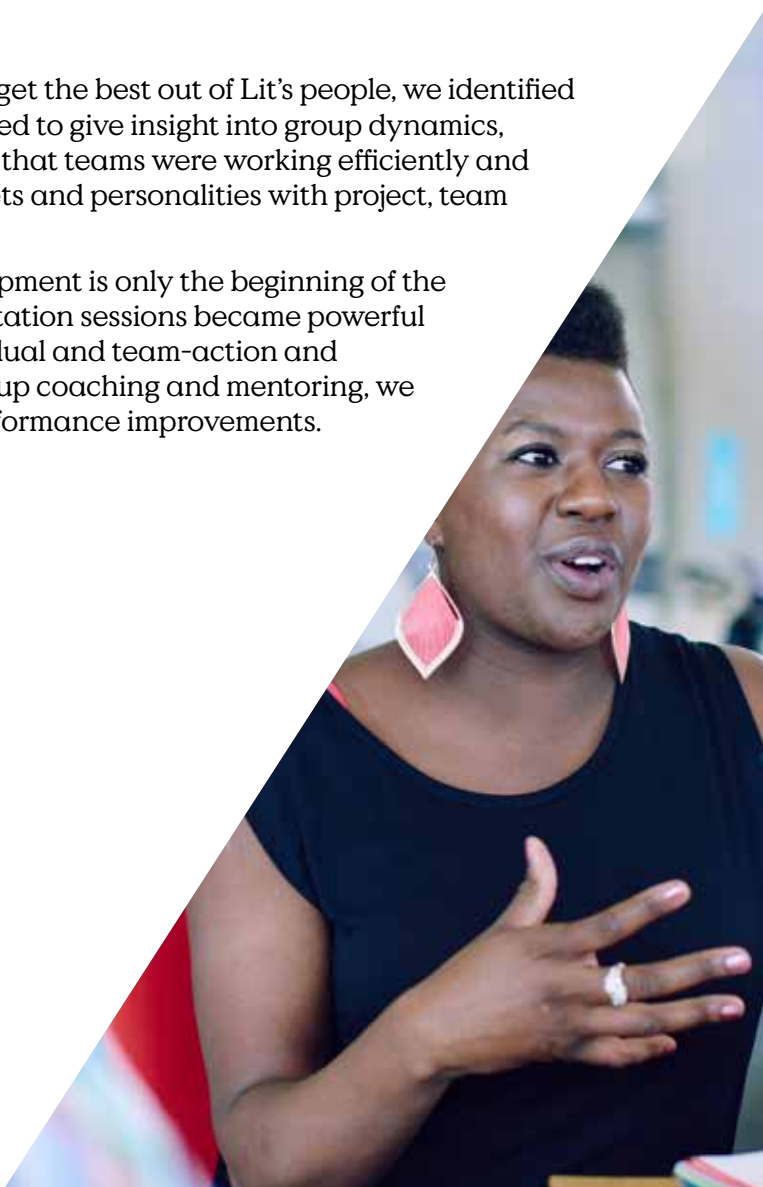
There is a difference between a true leader and a manager (organisations need both). Assessment and profiling helped us identify who was who, so we could ensure they were fulfilling their full potential within the right role for them.

By identifying behaviours that inhibit the ability to lead, we coached towards shifting mindsets and improving performance. The aim? To develop self-aware, self-directing leaders able to adapt and impact positively, whatever the context.

## Improving team performance

The best teams play to their strengths. To get the best out of Lit's people, we identified what those strengths were. Testing, adapted to give insight into group dynamics, helped ensure every voice was heard and that teams were working efficiently and effectively, aligning complementary skillsets and personalities with project, team and organisational objectives.

Identifying strengths and areas for development is only the beginning of the journey, however. 1-2-1 and group interpretation sessions became powerful drivers in the creation of next-step, individual and team-action and development plans. Through 1-2-1 and group coaching and mentoring, we transformed our insights into tangible performance improvements.



## The Results

Clarity around the culture, values, vision, and mission of the business has underpinned everything we have done. Lit Fibre's rapid growth speaks volumes about the impact HR can have as a driver of success by ensuring everything is strategically aligned. To this end, we now sit on the Executive Team, assuming the role of HR Director, enabling us to continue to influence, challenge, and advise the business.

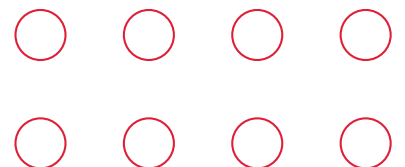
Our initiatives have helped foster a high-performing, collaborative culture and established systems and support structures that ensure growth is sustainable.

“Vic & Jo know the importance of every individual within an organisation, together achieving far more than you seem to believe. As time moves on, you soon realise the strong unwavering foundations they have naturally sewn into forging personable relationships, giving the same dedication and personal thought across all individuals and every level of the organisation.”

Rob Coombs, Regional Delivery Manager, Lit Fibre (East)

To read more about our outsourced service for startups and SMEs, download our brochure.

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To learn more about our full 360° operational and strategic HR outsourced service and how it can contribute to building a successful, sustainable business, **Speak with:**

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