

HR Future Leader of the Year *Winner*

Ben Wrigley, group employee relations case manager, Wincanton

Ben Wrigley has been at Wincanton for just a year and a half. In that short time however, his irrepressible energy, undying focus and profound care for colleagues has brought forth works greater than ever might be expected from his position.

Joining in July 2021 as group employee relations manager, Wrigley quickly established himself as an inspired HR talent seeing an opportunity to take a strategic approach to drive employee engagement across the group.

Presenting these ideas at every level of the business, including the executive management team, Wrigley singled himself out as someone who would happily “light a fire” under engagement. These efforts, continuing today, have transformed the group’s approach to engagement – all entirely in addition to his day-to-day role.

Wrigley’s passion is extraordinary. He ceaselessly finds material expression in new victories for Wincanton’s HR team which defines his approach to the profession.

In the past year, Wrigley has been a leading stakeholder in a group policy review. Focusing on creating a strong employee relations culture and securing diversity and inclusion within policy, he helped to reduce an unwieldy list of 60 outdated policies to 27 modern, engaging policies.

At the same time, he has created five new bespoke training courses for the firm’s leaders, shifting the needle towards a people-centric method of management.

He has single-handedly trained over 200 members of the firm’s operations and people teams.

Wrigley is not one to go at a problem blindly, and has a considered approach perhaps most clearly evidence by a logical,



practical approach to employee relations. By adopting a policy of early intervention – first in improving engagement, then in early mediation – he has made a significant difference. His early conciliation and mediation, for example, has meant a staggering 53% reduction in employment tribunal claims across the group. This was achieved by deep personal effort to embed a culture of early mediation throughout the business which is not just excellence – it is leadership.

His focus on in-house case management and early resolution likewise delivered a 49% reduction in associated costs, and cut potential claims costs by £365,000 within his first year.

His work on engagement, too, has resulted in a 0.08% improvement to Wincanton’s employee engagement index, and an 11% increase in the participation rate.

Graduating with a law degree, he has years of practical employment law experience; in employee relations; as HR change partner; and as senior and regional HR business partner for firms such as Morrisons and Amazon. He has been accredited in mediation and has started his CIPD level 7 qualification in strategic HR management.

Wrigley, clearly, is built to be an inspirational HR leader. **HR**

Shortlisted

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Charlotte Barclay, APAM

Charlie Robson, McKenzie Intelligence Services