

# East of England Co-operative

## Job Description – *Colleague Relations Manager*



Location	Wherstead Park, Ipswich ( <i>hybrid working basis</i> )
Department	People Team
Reports to	People Operations Leader

### Job Purpose:

To help us on our journey to become a top 10 UK co-operative we are working to grow our business, focusing on inspiring others and simplifying how we do things, whilst all the time striving to elevate ourselves through building on our strengths and improving our capabilities.

Our Colleague Relations Manager will be instrumental in helping our line managers effectively lead their teams and address complex people queries within their team, by them and their team providing coaching and advice on our policies, legal requirements, processes and best practice.

They will also lead key initiatives relating to colleague relations in the business including information and consultation processes, identifying recommendations to elevate our people policies, procedures and ways of working, as well as managing relevant 3<sup>rd</sup> party relationships.

### Our Co-op's Values:

*Performance in your role depends as much on **how** you perform as well as **what** you do. Use your skills and behaviours to be a positive member of your team, being a role model for Our Co-op's Values.*

 <b>Do the right thing</b>  This value reminds us of where we've come from and why we're here. It celebrates and helps us to build upon our unique past and gives us the authority to put doing the right thing first. We'll make decisions that help to save our planet, and work hard to show we can be trusted to do the right thing for the wider community.	 <b>Unstoppable</b>  This value unleashes our potential, to lead change in a way that's exciting. We'll embrace change, challenge norms and have the courage, and permission, to try and fail and learn from our mistakes.	 <b>Stronger together</b>  By harnessing the talents and energy of our co-op and the communities around us, we can make a greater impact and enjoy the benefits of being a co-operative.	 <b>A place for people to grow</b>  It's important that we help every one of our colleagues to expand their knowledge, skills and experience, to help achieve their full potential. We want our colleagues to be excited to continuously learn, share new ideas, and be rewarded for their effort and positive impact.
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### Principal Accountabilities:

#### Accountability 1: Team Leadership of Colleague Relations Team

- Lead, develop and coach the Colleague Relations Team to ensure they perform at their best in line with our values, ensuring their skills and capabilities are maintained and developed.
- Establish a culture which promotes the wellbeing of our colleagues and within which they feel supported in achieving their full potential.
- Effectively communicate with colleagues so they are fully aware of the priorities, performance and goals of the People Team as well as the wider business.

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- Strive to achieve and maintain high engagement, taking account of colleague feedback and survey results.
- Encourage a culture of continuous improvement within the team.
- Develop and monitor service standards, coaching the team to meet and exceed those.

### **Accountability 2: Deliver Colleague Relations Support to our co-op**

- As the ER expert, lead the team to deliver high quality advice, coaching and support to line managers across the business on people processes including conduct, capability, absence and change management.
- Ensure pro-active and effective case management.
- Promote a culture where people issues are addressed in a manner which considers our ethos on wellbeing, DEI and fairness, as well as commercial considerations.
- Proactively develop relationships with key stakeholders in the business to ensure that line managers in the business have a good understanding of our people policies & procedures; and to understand the key people issues impacting their business.
- Empower line managers by developing their skills and capabilities on people processes through case management coaching and support.
- Ensure line managers understand how to best leverage the support of the Colleague Relations Team.
- Identify opportunities to elevate skills and capabilities and ways of working in conjunction with other key stakeholders including People Partners, L&D and Senior Management.
- With a focus on continuous improvement, review and identify opportunities to simplify processes and procedures (including digitalisation / automation, where appropriate).
- Lead on HR policy and related procedures (including making recommendations on areas for improvement) and maintain the Colleague Handbook.

### **Accountability 3: Lead Colleague Relations Initiatives**

- Lead initiatives that develop a positive and effective attendance culture across the business.
- Lead or support the delivery of ad-hoc projects where colleague relations support and advisory activities are required, including information / consultation / negotiation processes (with our Trade Union partnerships as appropriate). For example, TUPE transfers, change programmes and pay discussions etc.
- Use Management Information and insight on people processes to identify key trends and opportunities for tactical and strategic changes.

### **Accountability 4: Compliance**

- Keep abreast of potential changes in employment legislation, recommending changes and actions we need to take to address those in good time.
- Ensure that we maintain appropriate case management records, managed in accordance with GDPR best practice. Develop case management tracking capability to ensure continuity of advice and guidance provided.
- Ensure Colleague Relations Team processes and ways of working are compliant with legislation, regulations, as well as our own governance and control requirements.

### **Accountability 5: Manage external relationships**

- Oversee our relationships with outsourced providers including occupational health and transcription services to ensure we are achieving good value for money and great service standards, always seeking opportunities to improve their cost effectiveness.

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- Be the key contact for identified third party relationships including our Trade Union Partners, Co-operatives UK, ACAS etc.

### Essential Skills, Knowledge & Experience:

- Significant knowledge and experience of supporting complex people / ER processes.
- An excellent knowledge of current UK employment legislation; and experience of applying this practically in accordance with organisational policies and ethos.
- Skills to lead, develop, coach and motivate a team.
- The ability to coach line managers to empower them to make effective people decisions which consider our ethos on wellbeing, DEI, fairness as well as commercial considerations; and to coach own team to deliver the same.
- Effective planning and organising skills to manage own projects, as well as the team's work volumes to support a timely and efficient service to the business.
- Comfortable to challenge the status quo and make change happen, driving a continuous improvement culture.
- Able to use data insight and other feedback to measure performance and identify opportunities for improvement, developing and delivering effective solutions (i.e. processes and ways of working) for both the team and line managers to operate to.
- A commitment to building a positive colleague relations environment through pro-active collaboration with stakeholders within the business; and strong relationship management with 3<sup>rd</sup> parties, including our trade union partners and suppliers.
- Can flex personal style to different people and circumstances including influencing and negotiation tactics.
- Confident with IT systems and able to explore the capability of technology in realising efficiencies.

### Other Requirements

- This is a hybrid-working position which will require you to balance time in our office and working from home (for which you will need a suitable workspace and broadband facilities) or sometimes from other sites.
- Some flexibility on working hours may be required to provide support to our retail business.

### Desirable Skills, Knowledge & Experience:

- Experience in a Retail or other FMCG environment would be advantageous though not essential.
- Experience of working with Trade Unions is likewise advantageous though not essential.

*This job description is not exhaustive but outlines the key accountabilities for this role which may be subject to change according to the needs of our co-op*