

BEST HR TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY

WINNER

STARK BUILDING MATERIALS UK AND ADVISERPLUS

After acquiring more than 600 sites in 2023, Stark Building Materials UK emerged as a major force in the building materials distribution market. This prompted a complete rethink of its employee relations (ER) model, to support a more scalable, consistent and strategic approach to people management.

The company recognised the critical importance of a robust and efficient People Shared Services function, and a futureproof relations framework to support its success. Aiming to become the UK's number one builders' merchant of choice for customers, Stark UK partnered with AdviserPlus to launch 'empower', a purpose-built ER case management solution.

Stark UK's shift from reactive to proactive people management was powered by the launch of empower by AdviserPlus, internally known as My ER Solution. The digital platform transformed manual processes and introduced a fit-for-purpose ER operating model, designed to build manager confidence and capability.

By outsourcing its ER advice line to AdviserPlus, Stark UK ensured consistent, compliant support aligned with its culture and policies. The solution delivers tactical ER advice and real-time coaching, a guided digital journey for managers, automated letter generation, and full visibility into ER trends through robust dashboards.



The impact of My ER Solution has been significant: tribunal claims dropped by 60%, damages costs fell by 80%, and legal fees were cut by 65%. These results reflect the power of proactive case handling, consistent processes, and a robust audit trail.

Stark UK's is a model for what modern ER can achieve when strategy, technology and partnership align. From measurable reductions to enhanced manager capability, this programme exemplifies excellence in HR digital transformation.

In the supplied testimonials, one regional sales manager said: "The system and advice is much better than what I had in my previous organisation. I feel like I'm empowered to make decisions, and I've got support at the end of a phone."

Jill Ennever, Stark UK's transformation lead, added: "[The AdviserPlus team's] hard work and dedication to moving at pace and getting under the skin of our business has been incredible. They have enabled us to transform ways of working, empower managers and gain the insight we need to make employee-centric business decisions."

HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Lloyd's

SHORTLISTED

- Aqua Restaurant Group
- EMCOR UK
- Flutter x Benifex
- Office for National Statistics

The move has enabled managers to self-serve more people matters by taking compliant action. Leaders of Stark UK have freed up both branch managers and HR teams from their day-to-day ER workload, allowing a

sharper focus on strategic priorities like talent and workforce planning.

Some 70% of interactions with My ER Solution are manager-led (this proportion is usually between 40% and 50% for organisations running similar initiatives.) Engagement is high – 62% of managers have opened a case with the platform – and the system has handled more than 2,100 cases proactively since the go-live date.

One judge described the strategy as a "fast, well-executed ER transformation for a complex, post-acquisition workforce." Another added: "This is an impressive turnaround for the HR team."

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