

HR CONSULTANCY OF THE YEAR

WINNER

STREETWISE HR

Streetwise HR sprouted from the visionary seeds sown by Debbie Cohen in 2012. Armed with just a notebook and a pen, Cohen had a passion for doing HR differently. Today, her team proudly calls themselves the ‘secret assassins of people problems’, swooping in quietly, solving challenges with precision, and leaving businesses stronger than before. There’s no tick-box HR here, just smart, strategic partnership that gets results.

Nowhere is that more evident than in this firm’s 18-year partnership with Southampton Freight Services (SFS), a family-owned logistics company which embeds its values of loyalty, respect and compassion into every part of the business. Over nearly two decades, Streetwise HR has become fully embedded within SFS, acting as its complete HR function – from boardroom strategy to frontline support. One judge commended Streetwise HR’s “ongoing and deep relationship”, noting that they felt a “sense of teamwork” when reading about the partnership.

Over 18 months, the Streetwise HR team guided SFS through transformational change, without receiving a single grievance. They integrated 11 new employees while aligning company cultures and unifying people processes. They also managed the offboarding of 10 people, and supported the business through two tragic



SHORTLISTED

- Charlotte Sweeney Associates
 - Founders HR
- The Francis Crick Institute
 - Inspired HR
- Let’s Talk Talent
 - Moorepay
 - People Station

deaths, as well as wellbeing challenges, and structural growth, balancing compassion with commercial focus.

Their work has included the rollout of annual DSE assessments, ongoing health and wellbeing reviews, and hands-on support for colleagues managing serious

illness. Judges noted that Streetwise HR sat alongside SFS leaders, highlighting “clear teamwork and trust”.

The team provided daily coaching and live management support, empowering leaders to handle complex people issues with confidence. Streetwise HR’s gurus don’t just advise, they attend management meetings and help shape SFS’s people strategy. Their guidance has prepared the business for upcoming legislative changes through a bespoke training programme to strengthen management capability across teams.

Streetwise HR overhauled SFS’ recruitment and

onboarding process, improving candidate experience, streamlining compliance, and reducing reliance on agencies. The results speak for themselves: faster hiring, greater retention, consistently low attrition rates, a track record of zero tribunals, and a values-driven workforce.

Despite operating in a fiercely competitive sector, SFS has maintained low attrition, avoided employment disputes, and achieved sustained business growth. The business continues to operate with strong cultural integrity, a testament to Streetwise HR’s people-first approach and deep understanding of SFS’s values.

SFS described Streetwise HR as “a complete HR support package” that helped transform the business with professional onboarding, robust legal compliance, and dedicated support for both team members and management. Most importantly, they have a “dear friend” they can always rely on.

Described by SFS as “part of the family”, Streetwise HR exemplifies what a modern HR consultancy should be – strategic, personable, and relentlessly effective. Its long-standing partnership with SFS showcases the transformative power of true HR collaboration, where commercial success, cultural strength and employee wellbeing go hand in hand.