

Industry Innovators

Learn more about the 2017 CHRO of the Year EMEA and Talent Acquisition Leader of the Year EMEA Award finalists.

By Christa Elliott

CHROs and talent acquisition leaders are the driving forces behind a company's culture and productivity. The processes of finding, selecting, and managing employees are never simple, but thanks to the vision of great HR leaders, organisations have the ability to attract and retain top talent at all levels. The 2017 CHRO of the Year EMEA and Talent Acquisition Leader of the Year EMEA finalists have taken the necessary steps to accomplish this for their organisations, and these awards honour their great work and accomplishments.

The 2017 CHRO of the Year EMEA and Talent Acquisition Leader of the Year EMEA Awards recognise CHROs and talent acquisition leaders who have responded to industry changes and challenges with creative programmes and attention to the unique needs of the business they serve. The award winners will be announced at the *HRO Today Forum EMEA* on 6 and 7 November in Dublin.

Learn more about the finalists and their initiatives below. They are listed by award category, then alphabetically. These are all of our finalists at press time.



**CHRO OF
THE YEAR
FINALIST**

Suresh Anubolu
CHRO
GVK Biosciences Pvt. Ltd.

Revamped leadership strategy and HR initiatives have become Suresh Anubolu's calling card. As CHRO of GVK Biosciences, Anubolu makes it his mission to enhance the capabilities of the organisation's leadership team and expand the number and scope of roles available within GVK. He also reorganised various departments for maximum impact.

INNOVATION AND IMPACT:

Anubolu succeeded in increasing the breadth and depth of the organisation by hiring talented leaders, assimilating them, managing their transitions, and developing their skills through training and coaching. His vision for a strong job architecture framework also led to GVK rolling out new career paths, grades, competencies, and compensation.

One of the CHRO's greatest achievements, however, was the creation of a new HR centres-of-excellence (COE) structure. Anubolu separated talent acquisition and HR operations from other line roles by creating an "employee and business partner" position. This boosted employee engagement and improved great-place-to-work scores by 25 per cent over the last three years. Thanks in part to Anubolu's innovation, GVK has doubled its revenue and quadrupled its profit since 2012.



**CHRO OF
THE YEAR
FINALIST**

Antonio Climent
Vice President of HR EMEA
Laureate International Universities

Laureate International Universities' Antonio Climent was a key player in implementing the organisation's most critical European corporate initiatives during 2016. Amongst other accomplishments, Climent helped start up a shared service centre in Europe and transformed operations in EMEA through solid HR infrastructure.

INNOVATION AND IMPACT

Under Climent's transformational leadership, Laureate International Universities was able to launch its shared service centre—from structure creation to recruitment and onboarding—in record time. He was also responsible for developing commercial teams in Europe, assessing the sales force, creating the performance review process for salespeople, and defining key performance indicators (KPIs). His "Organisation Talent Review" standardised talent acquisition processes throughout the organisation's European operations, and when his responsibilities expanded into the whole of AMEA, Climent rose to the occasion by championing organisation-wide efficiency and effectiveness.



**CHRO OF
THE YEAR
FINALIST**

Mojca Domiter
Corporate HR Executive Director
Atlantic Grupa d.d.

Mojca Domiter used her leadership abilities to clearly outline the purpose, values, and vision of the Atlantic Grupa d.d. in a way that hadn't been done before. Today, the organisation defines itself as an "Ocean of Opportunities" and celebrates the core values of creativity, passion, and growth.

INNOVATION AND IMPACT

Domiter impacted operations at Atlantic Grupa in a big way through her participation in strategic directions, including efforts to define action plans, company culture, and HR strategic projects; and overall support of the business. Despite the challenges involved, Domiter established the identity of a company with more than 5,000 employees and positioned Atlantic Grupa's HR department strategically for the first time. Her "People Strategy" programme, which aimed to enhance the employer brand and to get employees more involved in the culture through "people cluster projects," opened up the possibility of nominating friends for vacancies, deferred bonuses, and flex benefits options, amongst other perks.



**CHRO OF
THE YEAR
FINALIST**

Oscar Gonzalez Undiano
HR Director
Azkoyen Group

In his 18-plus years of experience in HR, Oscar Gonzalez Undiano has shown incredible talent for implementing organisational and HR methodologies, best practices, and policies that allow his organisation succeed.

INNOVATION AND IMPACT

Paying particular attention to developing employees and managers, Gonzalez Undiano has helped Spain-based manufacturer Azkoyen Group standardise methodologies and information by executing on best practices in several locations, including Italy, the United Kingdom, Colombia, Portugal, France, and Germany. Gonzalez Undiano also has extensive experience leading change management in Spanish multinational companies throughout the world, and his vision allowed Azkoyen to support its strategy and management to turn its operating losses into profits.



**CHRO OF
THE YEAR
FINALIST**

Aco Momilovi
CHRO
Rimac Automobil d.o.o.

Aco Momilovi saw Croatian companies losing young talent time and time again to out-of-country opportunities and decided to do something about it. His “Campus Management” programme allowed Rimac Automobil to partner with colleges and student organisations all across Croatia, giving the employer’s brand exposure via conferences organised by and for students, internship and mentorship opportunities, organised visits for students, and lectures given by employees. This strong cooperation with students was honoured with award recognition from student associations a few years in a row.

INNOVATION AND IMPACT

Momilovi’s project ensured employees from different departments collaborated, boosted employee engagement and retention, and increased new-grad hiring. In addition to conceptualising “Campus Management,” he also organised and negotiated all events, partnerships, and internships. Above all, the programme illustrated that the company not only takes a special interest in its employees, but also cares about its national backdrop.



**CHRO OF
THE YEAR
FINALIST**

Vipul Singh
Vice President and Head of HR
ADP Private Limited

ADP India had a growing need to attract top talent, and Vipul Singh responded with a plan to not only bring in new employees, but also retain current high performers. Under Singh’s leadership, ADP established and implemented numerous programmes and initiatives in the areas of career growth and development, compensation practices, and benefits and incentives.

INNOVATION AND IMPACT

It’s difficult to summarise the impact that Singh’s leadership has had on ADP, but the retention numbers speak to the vice president and head of HR’s success. The company saw a 92 per cent retention of top performers in 2016 and a 99.7 per cent retention of managers in the programme’s first year. The annual attrition rate of new hires has also been consistently less than 3 per cent, and in the last six years, ADP has been consistently recruiting close to 200 associates every month with a yield (offer acceptance to join ratio) of 92 per cent.



**CHRO OF
THE YEAR
FINALIST**

Andrew Stephenson
Group People Director
Lookers

When it comes to HR transformation, leaders might benefit from taking a page out of Andrew Stephenson’s playbook. Since joining Lookers in 2016, Stephenson has completely transformed the business’ HR and talent acquisition function by rebuilding the department as a full HR business model and hiring innovative leaders. This also meant building out training into apprenticeship, capability development and executive leadership development strategies and implementing a new HR system within Lookers.

INNOVATION AND IMPACT

Stephenson’s focus on training and leadership development ensures that Lookers will have a steady supply of effective leaders for years to come. His development and training programmes shifted focus to centre around Lookers’ core values, and as a result of his leadership, benefits offerings and future career opportunities are competitive differentiators. Now, 95 per cent of employees recommend Lookers to a friend, and the company has also been ranked as the number one auto retailer on Glassdoor in the U.K.



TALENT ACQUISITION LEADER OF THE YEAR FINALIST

Michelle Adams
Director of Talent and Development
O2 U.K.

O2 U.K. owes the success of their talent acquisition function to Michelle Adams. The director of talent and development was the key sponsor of three main initiatives that improved the firm's relationship with its staff, made its workplace more inclusive, and increased employee engagement throughout the organisation.

INNOVATION AND IMPACT

Adams' "Career Returners" programme—a paid, 11-week programme for professionals returning to work after an extended career break of between two and 10 years—allowed O2 to expand the talent pool whilst showing care for employees. Her "Talent Conversations" programme—which uses one-to-one coaching conversations to look into the desired career trajectories of staff—also helped the organisation by engaging and retaining top talent at both the executive and graduate level. O2's "Phased Retirement" programme—aimed at preventing the total loss of a lifetime's worth of skill and experience when employees decide to retire—allowed O2 to hold onto workers longer without sacrificing employee well-being.



TALENT ACQUISITION LEADER OF THE YEAR FINALIST

Steph Ahrens
Executive Director
Morgan Stanley

Steph Ahrens is well known at Morgan Stanley for transforming the way the firm approaches campus recruiting around the globe. Since September 2015, Ahrens has co-led a global team of recruiters to ensure a consistent campus recruiting experience across EMEA, APAC, and the Americas. Thanks to her vision, Morgan Stanley has seen more consistency in hiring best practices and greater employer marketing collaboration than ever before.

INNOVATION AND IMPACT

Ahrens' work toward a globally connected, data-driven talent acquisition function has enhanced candidate experiences and improved digital communications throughout Morgan Stanley. Her 2015 "What Will You Create?" marketing campaign helped improve Morgan Stanley's rankings in the Universum's 2016/17 Most Attractive Employer Rankings and led to more referrals and cost savings.



TALENT ACQUISITION LEADER OF THE YEAR FINALIST

Kevin Blair
Global Talent Acquisition Leader
Cisco

Transitioning HR from a reactive department to a proactive business partner is never simple, but Cisco's Kevin Blair has made the shift possible at his organisation. Over the past three years, Blair has led the charge on revamping all aspects of the talent acquisition function including candidate engagement and experience, employment branding, recruitment processes, leadership development, tools and technologies, corporate social responsibility, and onboarding.

INNOVATION AND IMPACT

Thanks to Blair's redesigned strategy, the talent acquisition team has just passed their third quarter of hitting all KPIs. His development of a solid employer brand also helped Cisco gain over 18,000 Twitter followers in just 18 months, along with 12,000 followers on Instagram and 100,000 new followers to its "We are Cisco" Facebook page. One-hundred-and-fifty social ambassadors are also now at Cisco to help share the authentic employee message and core values of the organisation with candidates.



TALENT ACQUISITION LEADER OF THE YEAR FINALIST

Debbie Griffin
HR Director
Shawbrook

When her organisation needed a way to attract more talent, Shawbrook HR Director Debbie Griffin decided that employing an RPO provider was the best solution. This decision turned out to be the right one and resulted in significant savings for Shawbrook.

INNOVATION AND IMPACT

Before Griffin decided to employ an RPO, recruitment at Shawbrook took a lot more time, capital, and other resources. Now, just six months after the company moved to an RPO solution, the organisation is saving 44 per cent on agency fees, and candidate satisfaction is at a 100 per cent. The switch also reduced time to hire to just 22 days—versus a target of 40 (industry standard)—and allowed Shawbrook to deliver a resourcing strategy aligned to its growth plan.



TALENT ACQUISITION LEADER OF THE YEAR FINALIST

Bernadette Haslam
Head of Talent Acquisition, Switzerland
Zurich Insurance Company Ltd.

Bernadette Haslam brought Zurich Insurance Company onto the cutting edge when she devised and produced the first 360-degree, interactive virtual reality tour for employer branding purposes in Switzerland, and possibly in Europe. Her tour leads prospective applicants around the state-of-the-art Skykey building in Zurich, highlighting the variety of opportunities available within a global insurer.

INNOVATION AND IMPACT

Haslam's virtual reality experience targets millennial job seekers and aims to reduce the cost of hire and increase employee retention by making insurance more exciting. With 800 hires and over 30,000 applicants each year, Zurich hopes that this innovation will help attract applicants and quickly identify top candidates. Millennials are 70 per cent of Zurich's new hires, and the company plans to use Haslam's tech to raise its positioning on employer of choice lists from top 100 to top 20 over two years.



TALENT ACQUISITION LEADER OF THE YEAR FINALIST

Kevan Nicholson
Regional Director, Talent Acquisition EMEA
PAREXEL

PAREXEL's Kevan Nicholson is a seasoned talent acquisition leader who has worked in the clinical industry for the past 10 years. His skills and expertise have helped the company reach new heights in recruitment and work towards a better quality of candidates.

INNOVATION AND IMPACT

Currently, Nicholson leads an international team of recruiters for PAREXEL who work strategically and creatively with the business leaders to ensure they hire high quality candidates who are a great cultural fit. He has also been instrumental in supporting PAREXEL's decision to offer flexible work arrangements for its employees. Today, almost 20 per cent of PAREXEL's 20,000 global employees telecommute, have flexible schedules, or work from home at least some of the time.



TALENT ACQUISITION LEADER OF THE YEAR FINALIST

Craig Williams
EMEA Talent Acquisition Leader
Wells Fargo & Company

When Craig Williams joined Wells Fargo as the EMEA region talent acquisition leader, the organisation's recruitment function was in need of a total overhaul. Williams was up to the task and completely transformed the staff, capabilities, and business confidence in talent acquisition through major improvements to key talent channels, less reliance on agencies, greater hiring diversity, and more.

INNOVATION AND IMPACT

By cutting down on agency usage, Williams helped generate about £2 million in savings for Wells Fargo. Hiring key team members to shore up staffing gaps, making stakeholders more accountable for hiring practices, and bolstering programmes important to the recruitment function also enabled the organisation to bring in quality hires for the year with turnover rate of less than 1 per cent on new hires. Under Williams' leadership, internal mobility also increased by 26 per cent.