

UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESOURCES

2024-26 Strategic Plan



BROWN
University Human Resources

From the Vice President for Human Resources



ENGAGING EMPLOYEES IN COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP

Brown University is a truly unique place, distinguished by its academic mission, values and vibrant campus, and by our talented and diverse faculty, staff and students. Already an award-winning employer, Brown is well regarded nationally, and globally, yet we are laser-focused on the need for bold human resources (HR) thinking, innovation and adaptability.

In a changing world characterized by rapid technological advancements, demographic and generational shifts in our workforce, and more flexible work modalities we have embarked on a transformative journey within University Human Resources (UHR). This journey will continue to position Brown to attract, develop and retain a diverse and talented workforce characterized by operational excellence and business process enhancement.

We strive to build a high-performing, supportive, caring, diverse and inclusive employee culture that enables our employees to have thriving and purposeful careers at Brown. This three-year Strategic Plan for University Human Resources outlines our unwavering commitment to organizational and operational

excellence. The plan offers a roadmap for greater UHR impact within a community of employees who value the impact of their work.

We hope our Strategic Plan provides a simple and clear roadmap of our collaborative journey to transform HR at Brown and will inspire you by the potential it holds. We value your involvement and invite you to join us in this engaged and collaborative partnership, ready to seize the opportunities that lie ahead. We look forward to updating you regularly on our progress.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marie Williams".

Marie Williams
Vice President for Human Resources

Executive Summary

FIVE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Guided by a commitment to HR transformation and business process enhancement, UHR is seizing the opportunity to move beyond a set of legacy services and cultures to deliver value-added HR services and processes to our campus community that also recognize our employees for the impact of their work.

Brown and other higher education institutions are navigating significant shifts in the workplace — increased competition for talent, changing work arrangements and job modalities, and rapid technological advancements. Evolving our HR services and service delivery model ensures continued success in attracting, developing and retaining Brown’s talented and diverse workforce.

In 2023, UHR conducted a comprehensive HR operational assessment, gathering observations, feedback and suggestions from a wide range of campus stakeholders to shape the **FIVE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES** that form the foundation of the UHR Strategic Plan:

- **REDEFINE** the human resources service delivery model across the University.
- **BUILD** a connected, inclusive and high-performing workforce.

- **ELEVATE** the employee experience.
- **ENHANCE** culture, communication and community engagement.
- **PREPARE** Brown to effectively navigate the Future of Work.

The HR Strategic Plan is our Roadmap to transformation composed of 34 strategic initiatives that reflect all areas of our HR employee lifecycle to create an HR operation for Brown that is best in class. In addition to updates on our UHR website, we will report annually on our progress.

We are grateful for the insights, proposals and enthusiasm of our community of UHR staff and HR Business Partners who collaborated with UHR’s leadership team to develop the initiatives, goals and priorities that this plan comprises.



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Our Mission, Vision, Values and Value Proposition

LEADING WITH CARE AND EMPATHY

OUR MISSION

To attract, develop and retain a talented and diverse workforce by continuing to position Brown as a top employer of the highest quality.

OUR VISION

By fostering an HR solutions mindset, a culture of agility, and business process enhancement, we strive to become a best-in-class HR operation for Brown and within higher education.

Together, we will cultivate a collaborative and thriving community of exceptional talent. We will bring bold solutions, support each other in bold ways, and challenge ourselves to be best in class.

OUR CORE VALUES

With an unwavering commitment to operational excellence, HR professionals at Brown lead with care and empathy. Focusing on the “human” in human resources, our personal and responsive approach has a positive and inspiring daily impact on the work life of all University employees.

Our UHR values derive from our vision and influence the way we work, communicate and partner with our campus constituents at all levels. For maximum impact at Brown, we are intentionally focused on demonstrating and holding each other accountable to our core values every day.

We value results, innovation, excellence, accountability, transparency, collaboration and service.

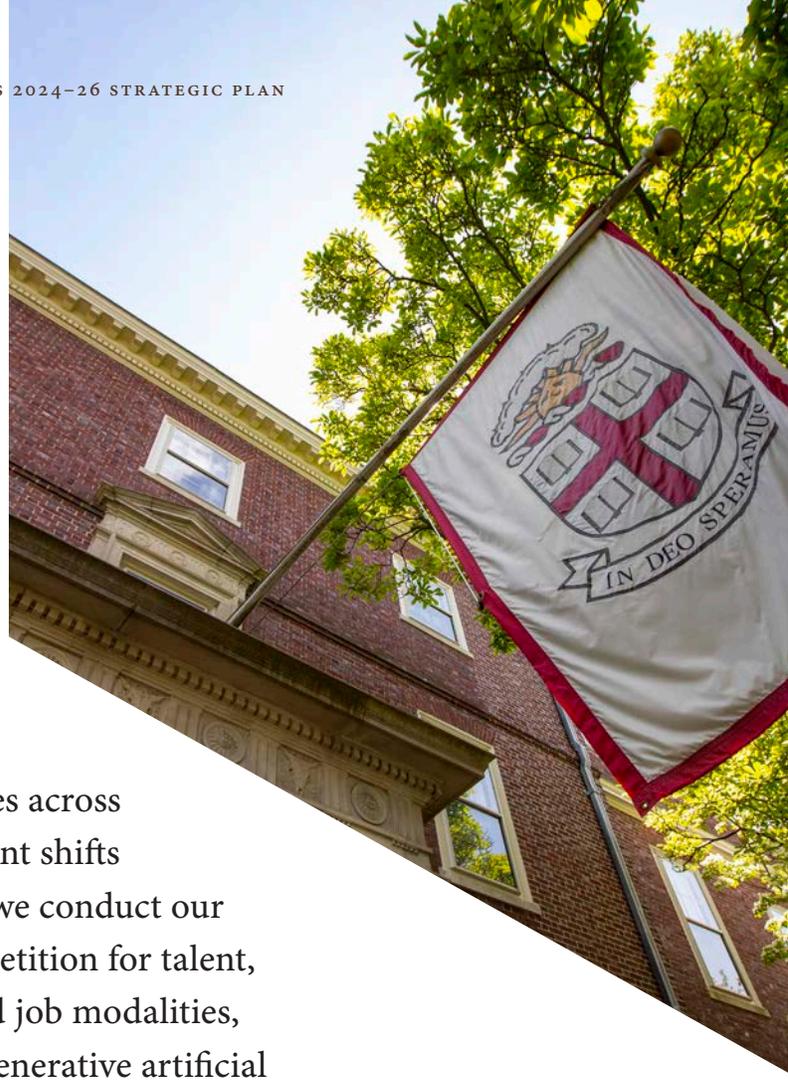


The Case for Transformation at Brown

Since the pandemic, Brown, and other higher education institutions and industries across the country, have been navigating significant shifts in the workplace that will impact the way we conduct our work for decades to come. Increased competition for talent, new approaches to work arrangements and job modalities, and technological advancements such as generative artificial intelligence (AI) require a bold and agile response.

In 2023, UHR conducted a comprehensive operational assessment wherein we solicited feedback and suggestions from a diverse array of campus stakeholders including the President's Cabinet, Executive Committee, College deans, UHR staff, HR Business Partners, and stakeholders from other key faculty and staff governance groups and committees. In collaboration with an independent consulting partner, we identified these desired outcomes:

- Understand the human resources operational areas and service delivery models at Brown
- Identify opportunities for enhancing future HR strategies and services
- Ensure that Brown's University Human Resources organization is positioned to meet the evolving needs of the University and its staff, faculty, students and community.



FIVE THEMATIC FINDINGS FROM THE UHR OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT

1. STRATEGY

Campus stakeholders are looking to UHR to provide a new range of strategic services to address current and future workplace challenges and opportunities.

2. STRUCTURE AND HR STAFFING

The current UHR structure is not optimally designed to effectively and efficiently deliver HR services.

3. HR SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

The current service delivery model is highly decentralized with inconsistent levels of service delivery across the campus.

4. SERVICES, PROCESSES AND TECHNOLOGY

Legacy processes, policies and systems limit UHR's ability to provide easy, timely and accurate access to HR information and services.

5. CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION

Opportunities exist to shift UHR's legacy culture to a new culture defined by partnership, transparency and collaboration.

FIVE KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE UHR OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT

1. REDEFINE THE HR SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

UHR will undergo a reorganization that will allow the unit to be more responsive to the needs of the University, and provide greater clarity to the campus community about where and how to effectively access UHR services.

2. BUILD A CONNECTED, INCLUSIVE AND HIGH-PERFORMING WORKFORCE

UHR will engage in more strategic and proactive activities in recruiting, employee engagement, performance management, professional development and training for staff and managers. In addition, UHR will develop and communicate Brown's Employee Value Proposition (EVP) and continue to communicate Brown's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging.

3. ELEVATE THE EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

UHR will respond to generational shifts and other significant changes in the composition of the workforce that are challenging the University's ability to retain talent. New approaches for onboarding and intentional strategies for elevating levels of employee engagement will be critical to retaining top talent.

4. ENHANCE CULTURE, COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

UHR will engage and invest in a cultural change, moving from an organization that is largely focused on compliance and transactions to one that is contemporary, best-in-class and focused on high levels of partnership with campus stakeholders.

5. PREPARE BROWN TO EFFECTIVELY NAVIGATE THE FUTURE OF WORK

UHR will be more thoughtful and connected to continuously evolving societal, economic, technological and political forces that are rapidly changing the nature of higher education and its corresponding workforce. New approaches will help to hire and retain top-tier staff.





We aim to be a best-in-class University Human Resources operation, setting the standard at Brown and within higher education.

The Overarching Goal

BEST-IN-CLASS HUMAN RESOURCES

THE CURRENT OPPORTUNITY

Meeting the needs of the Brown community requires our most thoughtful consideration and effort. To navigate significant shifts in the workplace, we must move beyond a set of legacy services and cultures that have often been defined as transactional. Brown has a unique opportunity to adapt to the evolving work environment by implementing innovative and value added HR solutions.

Guided by the five key recommendations, and with investment from the University, we will transform UHR into an organization of the highest quality, allowing us to serve as true strategic partners to campus stakeholders.

Our strategic plan is centered around enhancing the employee lifecycle depicting our commitment to diversity, the employee experience, retention, and the journey to be best in class.

- **REDEFINE** the human resources service delivery model across the University.
- **BUILD** a connected, inclusive and high-performing workforce.



- **ELEVATE** the employee experience.
- **ENHANCE** culture, communication and community engagement.
- **PREPARE** Brown to effectively navigate the Future of Work.

The Roadmap for Transformation

GUIDED BY CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT



Consistent with a culture of continuous improvement, the UHR Strategic Plan contains a Roadmap — a set of initiatives, operational goals and priorities that we will accomplish to enhance employees’ work lives at all stages of the employee life cycle.

The Roadmap is grounded in an adaptive management approach. Holistically focused on communication and training, processes and policy, tools and technology, and our most valuable asset — our team members, we will innovate with agility, standardize by function, and customize only when necessary. Efficiency and

effectiveness are our guides to streamline and enhance HR services at Brown. Using adaptive management, we will deliver value-added solutions that are impactful to our people, processes and technology throughout the employee lifecycle.

TABLE 1 | OUR ROADMAP

Our roadmap is composed of 34 strategic initiatives that reflect all areas of our employee lifecycle.

UHR Unit	Initiative, Goal, Tactic	Description	Timeline		
			FY24	FY25	FY26
Office of VPHR	Communications Framework	Develop a communications and stakeholder engagement framework to communicate clearly and consistently. This framework will enable UHR to guarantee quality and collaboration.	●	●	
Office of VPHR	Website Redesign	Embark on a comprehensive website redesign to promote Brown as a top employer, and attract and retain a diverse and talented workforce. This redesign will streamline content and include design enhancements to provide a visually appealing, accessible and user-centric experience for prospective and current employees.	●	●	
Office of VPHR	Project Management Approach	Develop a robust project management approach that includes implementing a project management tool and establishing a UHR Project Management Team. This approach will allow UHR to be more efficient, transparent and effective.	●	●	
Office of VPHR	Promote Brown as a top Employer	Promote the visibility of Brown as a top employer and UHR as a best-in-class operation in higher education.	●	●	●

TABLE 1 | OUR ROADMAP *continued*

UHR Unit	Initiative, Goal, Tactic	Description	Timeline		
			FY24	FY25	FY26
Office of VPHR	Team Building	Create a unified oneUHR model with a focus on UHR team building, engagement and team cohesion.	●	●	●
Office of VPHR	HR Service Delivery Model	Develop a robust HR professionals community, including enhancing the HR Business Partner model.		●	●
Office of VPHR	Data Analytics and Reporting	Develop comprehensive data analytics and reporting for more informed HR decisions about the workforce and associated trends. This will include developing metrics for process improvement and measuring the effectiveness and impact of UHR. (In FY 2025 and 2026, we will produce annual UHR metrics reports.)		●	●
Office of VPHR	Policies and Procedures	Develop, review and update all policies, standard operating procedures (SOP) and guidelines. Implement a recurring cadence of every three years, and create a centralized database for SOP management and oversight.		●	●

TABLE 1 | OUR ROADMAP *continued*

UHR Unit	Initiative, Goal, Tactic	Description	Timeline		
			FY24	FY25	FY26
Benefits	Benefits Technology	Implement benefits-related customer service technology to improve capabilities for benefits programs and functions, including the expanded use of employee self-service options.		●	●
Benefits	ADA Process and Service Delivery	Develop an in-house strategy and approach to efficiently and effectively manage Brown's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodation and processes. This will allow UHR to better ensure consistent compliance with ADA laws, efficiency in ADA administration, case management and reporting, and increased employee satisfaction.		●	●
Benefits	Employee Wellness	Enhance the wellness strategy and incentive structure to increase employee engagement and employee wellness outcomes.		●	●

TABLE 1 | OUR ROADMAP *continued*

UHR Unit	Initiative, Goal, Tactic	Description	Timeline		
			FY24	FY25	FY26
Benefits	Continuous Review of Benefit Enhancements and Offerings	Conduct a comprehensive, and potentially cost-saving, review of benefit programs. Develop a proposed action plan, and implement approved employee benefit enhancements and work-life/family initiatives.	●	●	●
Benefits	SECURE 2.0 Provision Adoption	Conduct a thorough review of SECURE 2.0 elective and mandatory provisions, and implement adopted and mandated changes to both defined contribution plans.		●	●
Benefits	ACA Reporting	Determine the future of Affordable Care Act (ACA) reporting. Consider outsourcing to an ACA reporting vendor and perhaps issue a request for proposal (RFP).		●	●
Compensation	Staff Compensation Architecture and Career Pathways Initiative	Embark on a comprehensive project to reimagine job leveling/classification framework and salary structures. This will ensure staff are compensated fairly and competitively, and also identify career pathways to help staff develop and grow.		●	●

TABLE 1 | OUR ROADMAP *continued*

UHR Unit	Initiative, Goal, Tactic	Description	Timeline		
			FY24	FY25	FY26
Compensation	Enhanced Staff Job Audits	Enhance the staff job audit process to provide greater transparency for staff, managers and faculty in developing, reviewing and maintaining accurate job descriptions.		●	
Compensation	Compensation Training	Develop and administer a regular cadence of compensation-related training for managers and HR Business Partners to increase understanding of compensation processes and resources, and compliance with compensation laws, policies and guidelines.		●	●
Employee/ Labor Relations	Operations	Restructure Employee and Labor Relations functions for increased effectiveness and efficiency, allowing the unit to serve as a proactive strategic partner.	●	●	
Employee/ Labor Relations	Staff Retention and Engagement	Increase utilization of staff retention and exit interviews to capture data and trends. This will better inform the University about practices that enhance recruitment, retention and engagement.		●	●

TABLE 1 | OUR ROADMAP *continued*

UHR Unit	Initiative, Goal, Tactic	Description	Timeline		
			FY24	FY25	FY26
Employee/ Labor Relations	Case Management Technology	Implement an employee relations (ER) and labor relations (LR) case management system to ensure all cases are consistently managed, tracked and updated in a centralized manner, including the availability of real-time ER and LR reports, data and analytics.		●	●
Employee/ Labor Relations	ER/LR Operations	Review and revise all ER documents, forms and processes.		●	●
Employee/ Labor Relations	Reimagine the Annual Performance Management Process	Reimagine the staff annual performance management process to improve employee performance, coaching and career progression.		●	●

TABLE 1 | OUR ROADMAP *continued*

UHR Unit	Initiative, Goal, Tactic	Description	Timeline		
			FY24	FY25	FY26
Recruitment	Enhance Staff Recruitment	Enhance the strategies used to attract and retain a talented, diverse workforce that includes an employee value proposition, diversity resources, community engagement and outreach initiatives, pre-boarding and onboarding activities, and additional hiring training and resources. Streamline the recruitment process and time to fill positions and provide regular recruitment training for managers and HR Business Partners.		●	●
Recruitment	HR Service Center Enhancements	Increase supportive/consultative resources while leveraging technology to automate transactional work.		●	●
Recruitment	Student Employee Engagement	Collaborate with campus partners (Center for Career Exploration) to enhance the student employment experience on campus for greater transparency and standardization, efficiency, and valuable training resources.		●	●

TABLE 1 | OUR ROADMAP *continued*

UHR Unit	Initiative, Goal, Tactic	Description	Timeline		
			FY24	FY25	FY26
Recruitment	Student Pay Equity Study	Conduct regular undergraduate student pay equity studies. This will ensure proactive increases and transparency, and address pay equity concerns.		●	
Recruitment	Graduate Student Information Management Process Enhancements	In consultation with the Graduate School and the Office of Information Technology (OIT), evaluate process improvement and automation opportunities to optimize the graduate student experience for making appointments and processing payments.		●	●
Learning, Development, and Engagement	Enhance Self-directed Learning	Enhance the self-directed learning opportunities through Workday Learning and LinkedIn Learning.		●	
Learning, Development, and Engagement	Identify Skill-building Offerings	Conduct a needs assessment to identify and support skill-building needs, such as communications, project management and communities of practice. The findings will be included in the Staff Essentials program.		●	

UHR Unit	Initiative, Goal, Tactic	Description	Timeline		
			FY24	FY25	FY26
Learning, Development, and Engagement	Staff Essentials Program	Develop and pilot a Staff Essentials program.		●	
Learning, Development, and Engagement	Employee Engagement, Recognition, and Appreciation	Enhance employee engagement, recognition and appreciation program events.		●	●
Learning, Development, and Engagement	Executive and Staff Coaching	Develop a proposal for in-house executive and staff coaching, and career pathways coaching. This will provide oversight through internal programming.			●
Learning, Development, and Engagement	CliftonStrengths for Managers	Create a strengths-based culture at Brown by further educating managers in their understanding and application of strengths for themselves and their teams. This will include a new program (Lead With Your Strengths and Individualize Your Approach) with an introductory e-learning session and two instructor-led sessions.		●	

Measuring the Impact of the Plan

ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

As we embark on our 3-year strategic plan to be a best-in-class HR operation for Brown and in higher education, we must intentionally focus on recruiting and retaining a diverse and talented workforce so that Brown can continue to be recognized as a top employer. In addition to believing that at Brown, we must be bold in all that we do, we are committed to an HR culture and work approach that demonstrates our value and IMPACT that continues to enable Brown University to accomplish its mission, vision, and strategic goals. To do this, we will endeavor to demonstrate our **UHR IMPACT** in the following ways:

UNIFIED HR SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

Enhance our HR service delivery model to ensure greater integration, coordination, engagement and execution of best-in-class HR services. An enhanced HR Service delivery model HR service delivery model provides value-added services and will allow us to become an efficient and effective adaptable organization.

RESULTS-ORIENTED

Implement a strategic roadmap and clearly defined goals to chart our course for HR transformation and the delivery of HR services and programs that result in Brown continuing to attract and retain a diverse and talented workforce: replace this wording with: attract and retain a diverse and talented workforce.

HUMANIZE OUR WORK — PUTTING THE “HUMAN” BACK IN HR

Foster an engaged, caring and supportive workplace for our employees that demonstrates our commitment to invest in the work-life needs, growth and professional development of our employees.

INNOVATIVE HR THINKING

Challenge the status quo by implementing innovative and agile HR solutions that better position Brown to adapt to a rapidly evolving work environment and changing workforce needs, as well as a commitment to continuous HR process improvement.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

Develop a transformation scorecard that regularly measures our progress and success in accomplishing our strategic priorities and initiatives.

PERFORMANCE

Be intentional in driving performance that enhances employee and business operational excellence, service excellence, and team and fiscal health, all of which are characteristics of a highly efficient and effective adaptive organization.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Promote our willingness to be accountable and transparent. This includes compiling and disseminating an annual report that documents our progress and accomplishments related to our strategic initiatives and HR transformational journey.

CONSTITUENT-CENTRIC

Adopt a “How can we help?” service mindset by utilizing a collaborative constituent-centric approach to proactively and satisfactorily service the HR needs of our campus community.

TEAMWORK

Embrace the diverse perspectives, strengths and talents of our HR team and campus HR business partners to work toward our common goals for HR operational excellence and for Brown to be a great place to work for all of our employees.





We are committed and excited to share our progress over the three-year journey of transformation through:

- Regular updates on our website at hr.brown.edu.
- Periodic updates at University committee meetings, such as Administrative Leadership Group (ALG), staff town hall meetings and meetings with University governance committees.
- An annual metrics dashboard.

WE ALREADY HAVE PROGRESS TO REPORT

During the past two fiscal years, we made significant strides toward fostering excellence in Brown's work environment, enhancing our organizational effectiveness and establishing a culture of continuous improvement.

The achievements of FY23 and FY24 are organized by the stages of the employee life cycle.

ATTRACTION

We made Brown's career opportunities more accessible and appealing, developed Future of Work Initiatives, and demonstrated Brown's appreciation of employees.

- Enhanced DEI recruitment outreach
 - ✓ Centralized our DEI outreach efforts
 - ✓ Reimagined the UHR Careers website
- Flexible work arrangements
 - ✓ Updated the Alternative Work Assignments (AWA) Policy
 - ✓ Streamlined the Position Work Locations (PWL) and AWA processes
- Employee appreciation
 - ✓ Extended Winter Break
 - ✓ Added Employee Appreciation Days
 - ✓ Published a two-year holiday calendar

RECRUITMENT AND ONBOARDING

We streamlined and enhanced the recruitment process, and our orientation and onboarding activities, to set the stage for a positive employee experience from day one.

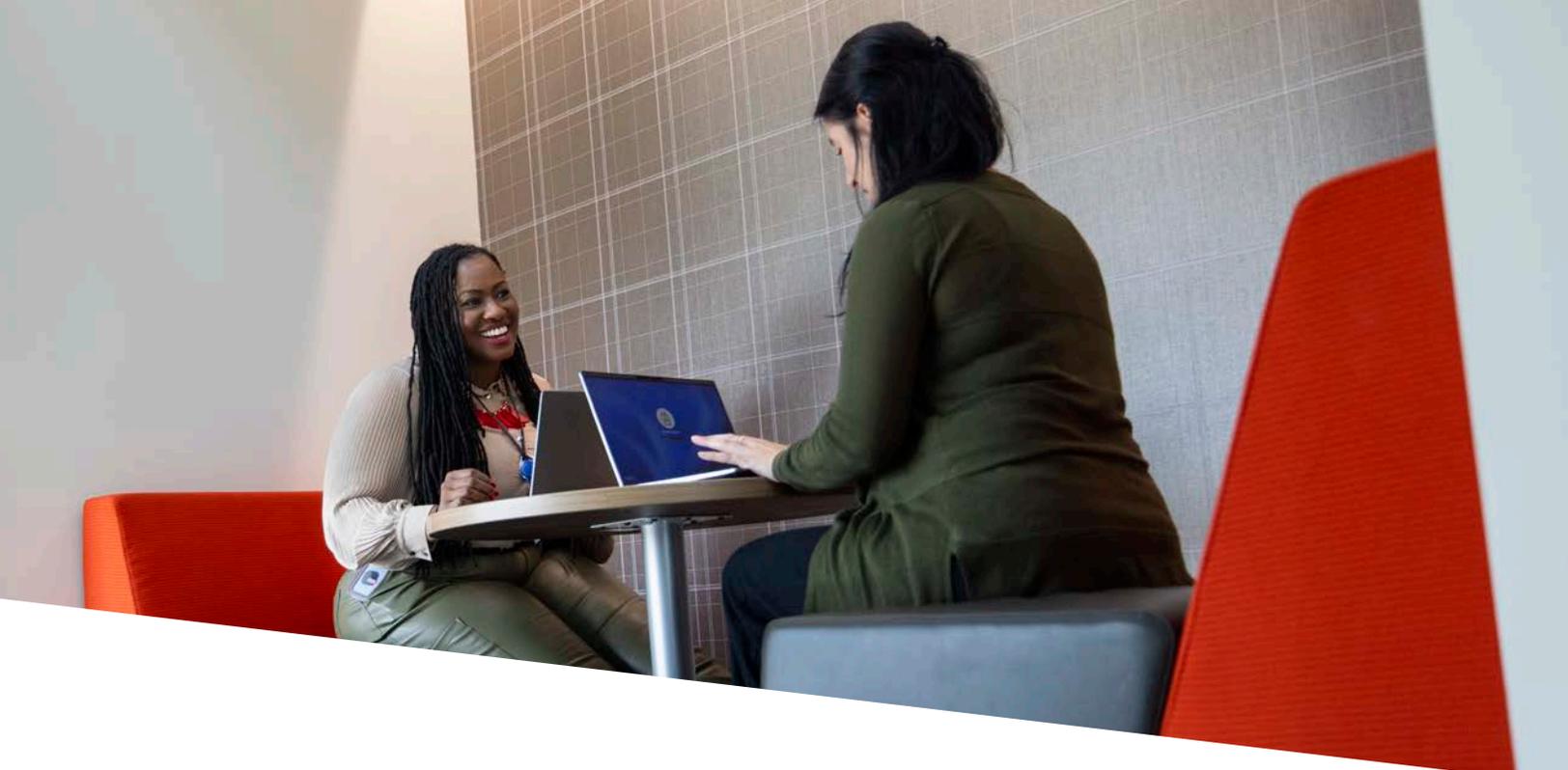
- Streamlined recruitment process
 - ✓ Analyzed time-to-fill data; identified and addressed bottlenecks
 - ✓ Eliminated senior leadership approval steps for most job requisitions
- Recruitment support
 - ✓ Added a recruiter to assist in research recruitment
 - ✓ Collaborated on student employment with the Center for Career Exploration
- New hire orientation and onboarding
 - ✓ Enhanced in-person orientation and onboarding experiences
- Community building
 - ✓ Introduced initiatives to build a strong sense of community among employees

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

We conducted reviews of compensation and benefit programs to ensure market competitiveness, equity and employee satisfaction.

- Salary review
 - ✓ Conducted focused salary reviews for over 600 positions
- Job description review
 - ✓ Executed a comprehensive review of job descriptions (now accessible to staff in Workday)
- Compensation cycles
 - ✓ Implemented four, yearly compensation cycles for job audits and equity submissions
- Compensation support
 - ✓ Added a compensation consultant to assist in recruitment and job classification
- Staff pay equity study
 - ✓ Executed a non-union staff pay equity study to identify and address pay disparities
- Benefit program review
 - ✓ Completed a comprehensive review of benefit programs to assess market competitiveness
- Employee Education Program
 - ✓ Began including non-degree courses offered by Brown's School of Professional Studies
- Benefit enhancements
 - ✓ Enhanced adoption and parental leave programs; added pet insurance as a voluntary benefit
 - ✓ Eliminated waiting period for Dental
 - ✓ Added stepchildren eligibility to Tuition Aid Program (TAP)
- Employee Assistance Program
 - ✓ Transitioned services to Spring Health for enhancements





PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We reimagined our professional development programs, adding new opportunities that foster a culture of continuous learning.

- Manager Essentials Training Program
 - ✓ Developed and piloted a comprehensive program for managers (183 participants)
- Labor Strategy Council
 - ✓ Established a strategic, forward-looking labor framework for campus collective bargaining (with Executive Vice President Sarah Latham)
- Staff Development Day and BEAR Day
 - ✓ Reimagined events with record attendance
- BEAR Jamboree
 - ✓ Held a new employee engagement and networking event (200+ staff attended)
- Manager journey map
 - ✓ Created a map for managers that explains various training and development offerings
- Next-level e-learning
 - ✓ Created 14 self-directed e-learning modules based on staff needs

EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

We improved our performance management processes to ensure that employees receive regular, constructive feedback and recognition for their contributions.

- Restructuring of Employee & Labor Relations
 - ✓ Instituted an assistant vice president and a designated labor relations team

OFFBOARDING

We developed strategies to gather the valuable observations of departing employees.

- Gathering feedback
 - ✓ Made improvements and adjustments that enhance the overall employee experience

**WE VALUE
YOUR IDEAS,
SUGGESTIONS
AND FEEDBACK.**

**HOW CAN
WE HELP?**

Write to us at
vphr@brown.edu.

Your participation in this important UHR transformation will allow us to explore additional ways to support and serve Brown employees.

Note: The initiatives presented in the plan are subject to change.



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