

Applicant Brochure





Welcome to RHR

This brochure is for job applicants considering a career in the retail industry, who would like to know more about using recruitment consultants — and in particular, RHR.

Who we are

RHR (Retail Human Resources) is a trading division of Retail Human Resources plc. We have been trading since July 1988, making us the longest standing recruitment business specialising in the retail industry. We're also the largest independent retail recruitment firm in the UK.

Our role is to recruit managers and retail professionals for our client companies. We work for many of the leading names in retail and our current clients include Marks & Spencer, Tesco, John Lewis, Arcadia, Debenhams, House of Fraser and many more. During the last ten years we have worked for almost every significant retailer in the country.

What we do

Our clients ask us to find retail executives, managers, buyers, merchandisers, HR professionals and a wide range of retail professionals. We then find these people either through advertising, direct approach or, most commonly, from our extensive candidate database. We then screen them to ensure they have the right skills and experience, usually by a face to face interview, to ensure that our clients receive a shortlist of suitably qualified candidates from which they can select their employees.

At no cost to you

There is no charge at all to our job applicants (candidates). Our client companies pay us to find their employees, usually on a retained basis. Most recruitment firms work on a success-only basis, where they're paid by the client if they successfully recruit an individual for them. We prefer to work by the client paying us on a retained basis which alleviate the pressure of getting individuals to accept a job. Nevertheless, it is our job to sell our client companies to you — in the same way that a fashion store manager's role is to sell their clothing to customers or a food store manager sells their food to their customers.

Get the advantage

It's an advantage to you, the job applicant, to use our services because most of the jobs we handle are not advertised at all. The only way you'll know about these opportunities is by working through us. And, because we face to face interview and screen our applicants, the interview with us is usually the first stage in our client's interview process. This means that once you've been interviewed by us, the process with the client can often be shorter. It also means that instead of having, say, four first interviews with four different clients, you need only attend one — with us. We also have a duty of care to you, the candidate. We'll give you feedback on your interview with us and will normally get far more detailed feedback from the client companies that meet you than you can obtain for yourself.

On top of that, we'll ensure that you're fully briefed and prepared for any client interview you attend. If you're offered a position we'll often act as broker between you and the client to ensure that a fair and appropriate remuneration package is offered. Many of us don't like to talk about money. We take the embarrassment out of that process for both sides.

Your consultant will be like your career guidance counsellor, although we must always point out our primary role is working for our client companies.

Our consultants

Our consultants are mostly from the retail industry and they're the most highly trained and skilled recruiters in this industry. We make no apology for the fact that they are salespeople. It is their role to sell our clients' vacancies to you. They are also skilled recruiters, using the most advanced methods of recruitment and selection.

Our ability to help you is entirely dependent on what assignments we are handling at the time of your application. So, if we say we can't help you at the moment, it's not because we think your application is inferior in any way. We may also suggest meeting with you for a face to face interview on a speculative basis if we anticipate working on a suitable role in the near future. This will always be made clear to you.

Telephone Interviews and Skype

We would always prefer to meet you face to face. Not only because we have a much better chance of assessing your suitability for our roles (and the client's suitability for your needs), but also because many of our clients will insist that we conduct the first interview. However in certain circumstances, particularly if you're some distance from our offices (more than two hours travel), we can arrange a telephone or Skype interview.

We have a reputation for honesty, integrity and professionalism that, we believe, is unrivalled in our industry.

Where to start?

All you have to do is apply to one of our vacancies or register online at rhr.co.uk

Once we have met you

Once we have met you, your consultant will tell you there and then whether or not we feel we can help you; and in all cases, you should find the advice they give you useful. If the consultant does feel that they can help you, they'll usually ask for a few simple commitments from you. These will include that you tell us where else you have applied and that you don't apply direct (or through other agencies or consultants) to companies where we agree that your details should be submitted.

We'd also ask you, for a period of four weeks, to remove your CV from any CV banks that are attached to job boards and to change any social media settings that state you are looking for a career change. We'd only ask you to do this if we felt we had a good chance of securing you a role. This is because we don't want any duplication in the submissions of your CV. Sadly, although it is unethical, many agencies will take your CV from these sites or social media networks and tout it to potential employers. If we're already submitting your CV and the client has already seen it several times, this can devalue your application by making you look desperate. For that reason we recommend that you don't put your CV on CV banks attached to job boards and that you ensure your social media profiles are set to say that you are NOT seeking a career move.

Working with other agencies and consultancies

It may be the case that you're already registered with other agencies and consultants. We have absolutely no objection to this and, actually, it's often sensible to register with more than one. However, our recommendation would be that if you've had no contact from that agency in the last six weeks, or aren't satisfied with the service you've received, you withdraw your CV.

However, if you have met via a face to face interview with another agency or consultancy and are currently being interviewed by their clients, we wouldn't want to interfere with that process at all. We'd suggest strongly that you don't register with too many and you should remain registered only with those you regard as professional and trustworthy. It can be damaging for your career if your CV is being marketed in unprofessional hands.

We won't duplicate submissions to client companies that you've informed us our competitors have suggested. We would ask that you don't permit other agencies and consultants to duplicate any submissions we've made. And, of course, you shouldn't duplicate that application yourself.

All agencies and consultancies are not alike

We believe that our industry is well served by a number of professional firms that all have their strengths and weaknesses and key areas of specialism. However, like almost every other industry, there exists every extreme from the highly professional and efficient firms through to the opposite extreme. You'll have to judge for yourself, but stay away from those who make you feel uneasy, sceptical or undervalued.



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Quality Assurance

RHR holds the British Standards Institute kitemark for quality ISO9002. This is an internationally recognised award for quality assurance and, at the time of going to print, RHR is the only retail recruiter to hold this award. The BSI audits our business every six months to ensure compliance with the standard.

RHR also holds the Investors in People award which it has held since 1994. This is a public recognition of the care and effort we take in training our own employees to be professional and to fulfil their potential. We believe we are the only recruitment firm across all industries to hold both these awards.



Frequently asked questions

Does it cost anything for me to register with RHR?

No, only the cost of your travel to one of our offices.

So, who does pay you then?

Our client companies.



If the companies have to pay you, would I not be better off applying direct as then they would save a fee?

No. Client companies only pay their agencies and consultants if they wish to use their services. Many companies do not have the resource or time to do the initial screening and therefore find it cost efficient to work with outside suppliers. Furthermore, most of the roles we handle are not advertised by the client. If you don't register with us, you will never know about these roles.

I really need a job. Surely it would be better for me to apply to as many agencies as possible and also to remain on CV banks.

No, it really wouldn't. Imagine yourself as the recruiter within a large organisation. How would you feel if you saw the same person's details a dozen times? It makes you look desperate. Your job search should be carefully planned.

I worked with an agency before and they didn't help me. Why should I try that route again?

No agency or consultancy can guarantee to get you a job. Their ability to help you is wholly dependent on what assignments they are handling at the time. What we can guarantee is that we will be honest with you. If we don't think we can help, we will tell you. If we are going to keep your details speculatively, we will tell you. And if we tell you we think we will be able to find your next role, we really mean it.

Where can I find help with brushing up on my interview skills, and getting my CV sorted?

Register on rhr.co.uk and you'll find a lot of helpful information there. Also, theappointment.co.uk lets you source back issues online to view a number of articles around career advice.

I am worried that you might be working for my employer and they may find out that I am considering a career move. Can you reassure me?

We may well be working with your current employer. However, we have a duty of care in law to respect your confidentiality in the same way that we must respect your employer's confidentiality. Were we to breach your trust in this way our reputation would be in tatters and we could be heavily censured by our regulator, the Employment Agencies Standards Office.

You have said that I should not register with too many agencies. I am already registered with four. Therefore, I really shouldn't register with you, should I?

RHR is the largest player in this field. Whilst you should not be registered with too many agencies and consultants, you should not miss out on the most significant player. Furthermore, the reason we say don't register with too many is that some of these firms will send your CV out without your knowledge and approval, causing duplication. RHR will never send your CV out to an organisation without discussing it first, unless we have already secured your agreement to send it out speculatively.

May I see what you write about me when you send my CV to clients?

Yes – indeed it is your right under the Data Protection Act to see it.

I went on a job board and applied to lots of jobs, both direct to clients and to agencies. Now I can't remember where I applied. Is that a problem?

Only a little. Let us know if any of the agencies have been back in touch and formally registered you. If you're happy with them, then there's no problem. If not, then you can withdraw your CV. It would be helpful if you could let us know which job board it was and if there are any companies to which you are sure you have directly applied. For future reference, it's better to always make a note about where your CV has gone.

Is it not a good idea then to send my CV out widely?

No it isn't. You lose control. A good yardstick to use is, if the advert were in print, would you go to the trouble of writing to the company and putting a stamp on your application? If the answer is yes, then send it. If not, then don't bother.



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