

# UP YOUR PROGRESSIVE HR GAME



Introduction	3
Respect your HR journey	4
Anything can be done ... just figure out how to do it	6
Balance your decisions with metrics, observation, and a macro approach	8
Change is a catalyst to try new things	10
A passion for people and teams will pave your way	12
What's next on your professional agenda?	14

# Introduction

The pace of change is only getting faster. It's more important than ever to check in with yourself as much as possible and reflect on your personal and professional passions. Make it a point to carve out time for yourself every couple of months to stop and appreciate what went well and examine what was difficult.

For progressive HR leaders, it's essential to not only look at the people needs of your organization, but it's also critical that you examine the ways you want to up your game as an HR leader.

At HiBob, we encourage our team members to ask questions, find buddies, and mentor one another—all with the idea that we can help each other succeed every day. With that in mind, we reached out to the HR network to ask progressive leaders in the industry for advice about how to up your HR game no matter what challenges come your way.

Continue reading to be inspired by some of the HR community's most progressive, knowledgeable, and thoughtful members.



# Respect your HR journey

There are as many journeys in an HR career as there are movies to stream on Netflix. What sets progressive HR leaders apart is that they understand there isn't just one path to a successful HR career.

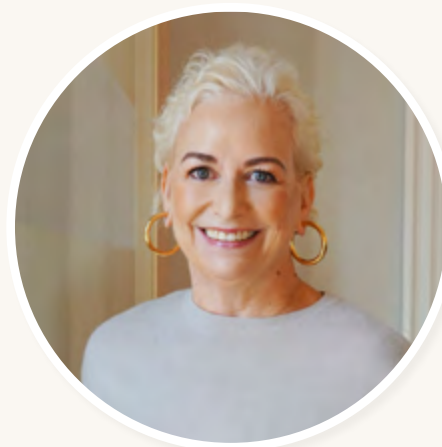
Margo Downs, consultant, coach, speaker, and former CHRO of Stitch Fix and Lululemon, advocates finding the path that works for you—and taking care of yourself along the way.

I had no idea that HR was even a career. My path took me from an MA degree in Anglo-Irish Literature to working in retail to stumbling upon the world of learning and development. My passion for learning then led me to HR, where I focused on building culture and making a meaningful difference in people's lives.

The most impactful way I've improved my HR career was to try. Fail. Try again. Get feedback. Listen. Get feedback. Reset. Experience. Learn.

[The COVID pandemic was] very difficult on everyone. As an HR professional, don't forget to take care of yourself. I'm hearing from many of our colleagues that they are very burned out.

The HR community carries a lot of the emotional impact that others are experiencing. It's important to truly check in to see where you are at this moment in time. Keep your heart open to yourself and others. Bring love to what you do. It's needed in the world.




## Margo Downs

**Margo Downs**, consultant, coach, speaker, and former CHRO of Stitch Fix and Lululemon, brings an innovative and inspiring approach to creating thriving cultures and authentic, confident leaders. She believes authentic cultures and innovative people strategies are the key to business success and enduring, healthy companies.

# Anything can be done ... just figure out how to do it

Regardless of their time in the position, progressive HR leaders are at the forefront when organizations encounter challenging times. Knowing how to adapt strategies, policies, and an organization's approach to people becomes an even more critical skill.

Jenniver Ivie-Lopez, founder and principal consultant at The HR Ally stresses the importance of keeping an open mind and listening to others as a way HR professionals can lead the business forward.



Doing “just enough” is never enough. What has helped me the most in my career is being optimistic and not pessimistic. Working in HR can be taxing on your stress levels and before you know it, you've turned into Debbie Downer. When that happens, it's time for a much-needed break.

In my opinion, you can't be a thought leader, business problem solver, and business leader if your view is clouded. My mantra is that anything can be done ... now how do we do it?

As an HR leader, listening is vital to take in all different viewpoints in order to provide recommendations for the business to move forward. If you are only listening to yourself and not others, your view is clouded. Continuous development is also so important when working in HR. This is true when keeping up with the ever-changing regulatory landscape, but also in learning how to do new things, and how to do them more productively with new tools and insights.

At the beginning of the [COVID] pandemic, there were so many unknown factors. Companies were waiting for guidance and businesses were leaning on HR to lead the charge. With very little to no precedence available to research, HR persevered and became an even stronger strategic member of the business.



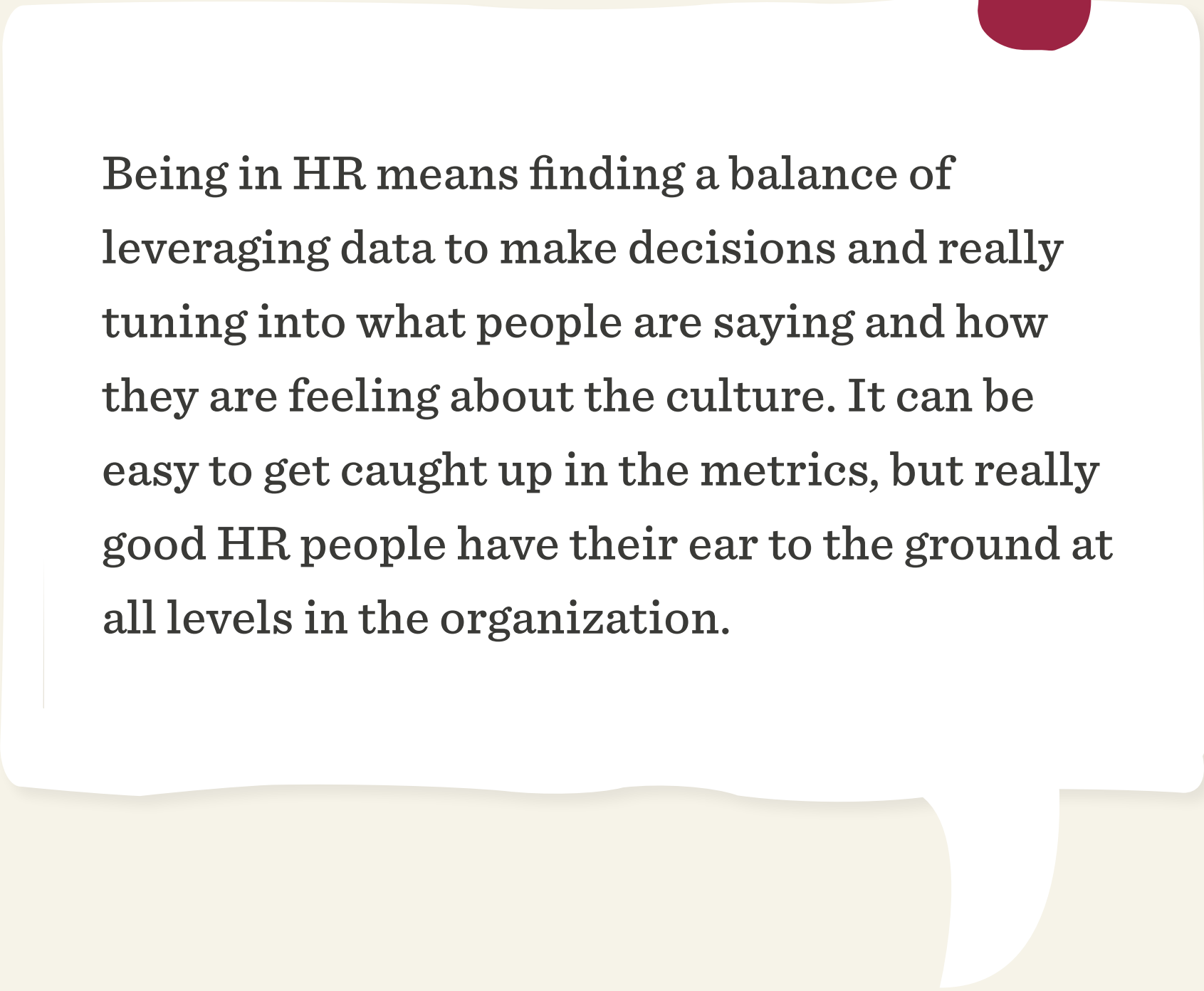
### **Jennifer Ivie-Lopez, CCP**

As the founder and principal consultant at The HR Ally, **Jennifer Ivie-Lopez** brings more than 19 years of progressive experience providing innovative solutions to human capital challenges. She's dedicated to providing start-ups, small organizations, and mid-sized companies with the specialized Human Resources expertise they require and deserve.

# Balance your decisions with metrics, observation, and a macro approach

in situations where they need to determine what's best for the business, operations, and for employees. When making decisions, exposure to as many ideas and groups—both in and outside of HR—is key to upping your HR game.

Christine McHugh, consulting executive and author of *From Barista to Boardroom*, stresses the importance of embracing a variety of approaches and data points when it comes to progressive HR methods.



Being in HR means finding a balance of leveraging data to make decisions and really tuning into what people are saying and how they are feeling about the culture. It can be easy to get caught up in the metrics, but really good HR people have their ear to the ground at all levels in the organization.



Working as both a generalist and a specialist as well as supporting many different groups and functions is what has helped me the most in my career. By having this level of breadth, I developed new insights, new perspectives, and new ideas for my work and for the organization.

Progressive HR leaders focus on guiding the organization to evolve its culture based on the needs of employees and the shifting macro environment. I suggest that HR leaders help their organizations question “sacred cows,” and use caution when grasping for what was. Instead, adopt a mindset of experimentation. Try new things, knowing that some will stick while others won’t—and that’s okay.



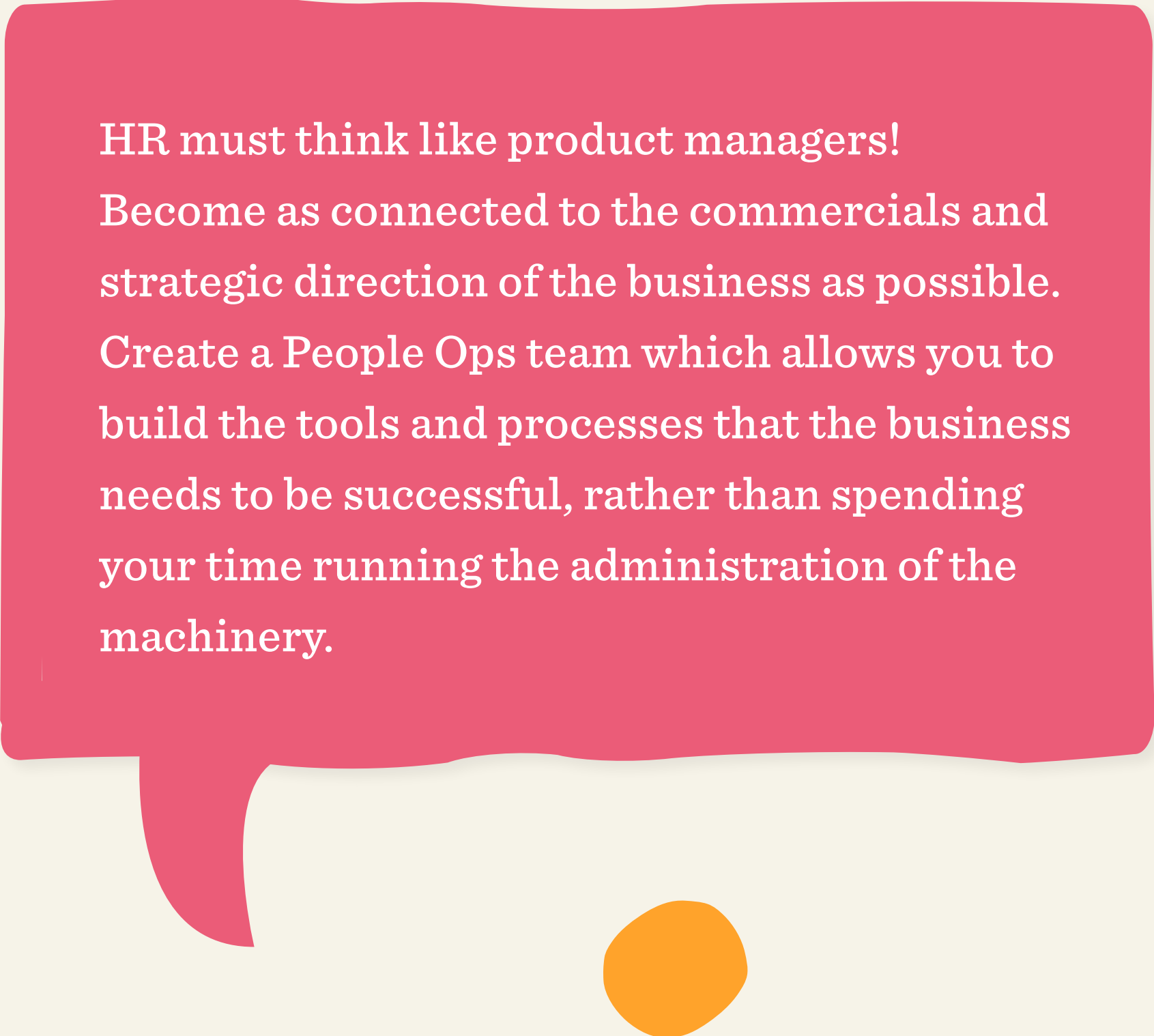
## Christine McHugh

As a consulting executive and the author of *From Barista to Boardroom*, **Christine McHugh** brings her executive leadership experience to consult and coach on strategic planning, operations, culture, and talent development within customer-centered service industries.

# Change is a catalyst to try new things

The pandemic helped businesses make decisions quickly and rip off the Band-Aid to try new things—from new modes of product service and delivery to working remotely and connecting virtually with customers. Now, as market conditions continue to change constantly, it's imperative for progressive HR leaders to find innovative strategies that work for their business.

Jessica Zwann (née Hayes), chief operating officer of Whereby, notes that the world of People Operations is changing fast. She emphasizes that progressive HR leaders should not be afraid to steal ways of working from other parts of the business and to use this period of change as a catalyst to try new things.



HR must think like product managers!  
Become as connected to the commercials and strategic direction of the business as possible. Create a People Ops team which allows you to build the tools and processes that the business needs to be successful, rather than spending your time running the administration of the machinery.

At the same time, remember what your business needs. There are so many inspiring stories and scary stories out there right now—take them all onboard, learn, and then apply what is appropriate to your team.

Just because one company is going fully remote doesn't mean your business can. Just because other organizations have adopted a strategy doesn't mean it's appropriate for the size and scale of where you are today. Being acutely in tune with the market is crucial, but being able to identify how to apply that to your own situation and be critical of your current company stage, is just as important.



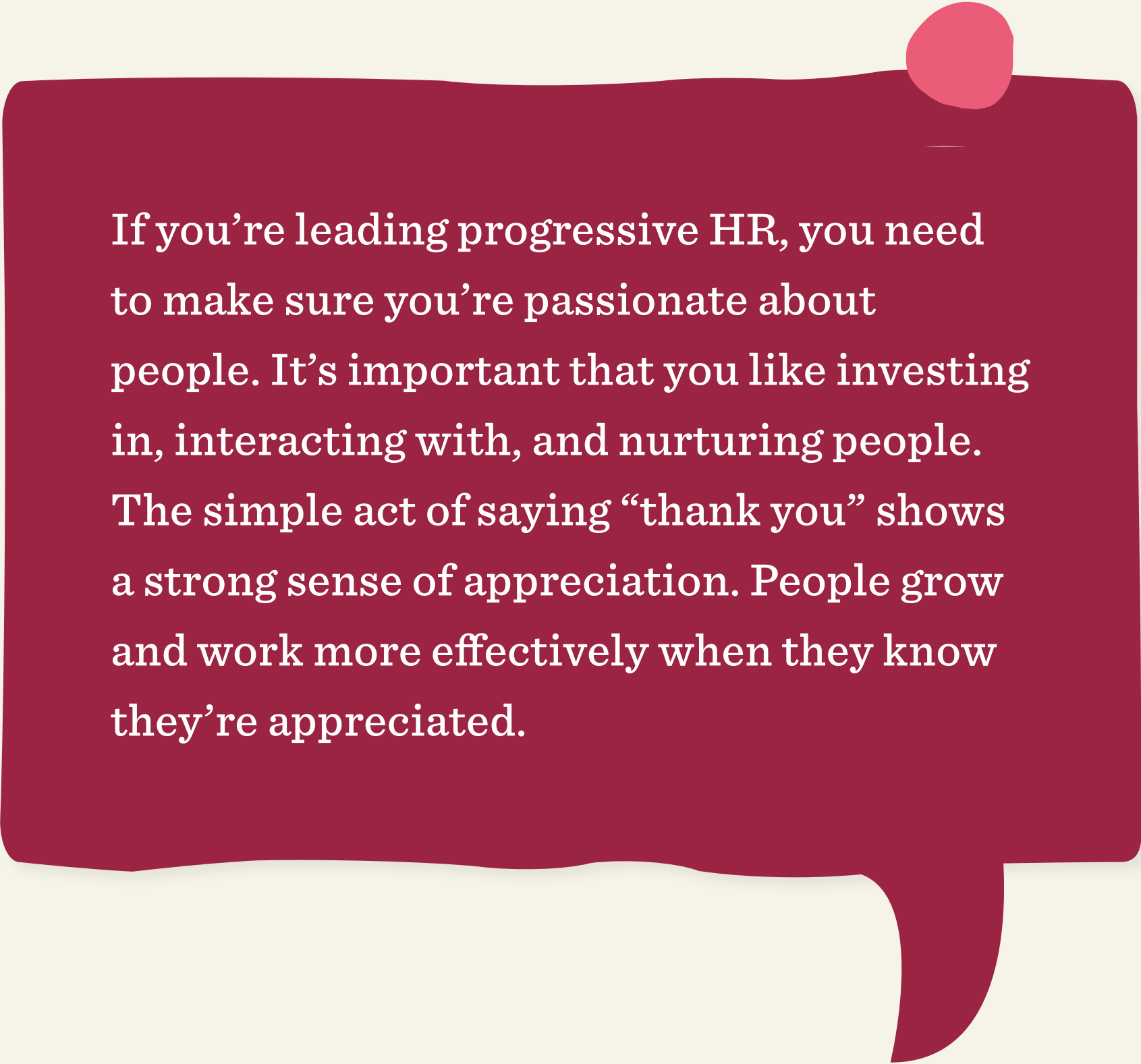
### **Jessica Zwann (née Hayes)**

As the chief operating officer of Whereby, **Jessica Zwann** describes her People Operations approach as building a new kind of people team that works in a fully distributed, flexible, asynchronous style. Tech-enabled innovation is at the core of Zwann's approach.

# A passion for people and teams will pave your way

One of the key decisions facing HR leaders today is how to retain their people. At a time when organizations around the world are struggling with market ups and downs alongside this “Great Resignation,” it’s never been more important for HR to put people and teams first.

Nirit Peled-Muntz, chief people officer of HiBob, agrees that people and teams pave the way for an organization’s success. She also reminds HR leaders that for their individual and professional success, they must ensure that as people ops professionals they’re doing what they love—and everything else will follow.



If you’re leading progressive HR, you need to make sure you’re passionate about people. It’s important that you like investing in, interacting with, and nurturing people. The simple act of saying “thank you” shows a strong sense of appreciation. People grow and work more effectively when they know they’re appreciated.

I always make sure I surround myself with smart, energetic, and passionate people who I believe can achieve their goals and who I can learn from. Just as HR leaders should be innovative, they should make sure people on their team feel comfortable doing the same. I am very intentional about how I delegate and the ways in which I support my team with guidance and autonomy. People need a safety net and a safe space to voice concerns.

To achieve your HR strategies, start by building a culture of trust on your HR team and throughout your organization. If people feel trusted and safe, they'll do more and achieve more. A culture of trust allows people to give feedback and voice their concerns. It also inspires discussions that lead to better teamwork, culture, and organizational productivity.



### **Nirit Peled-Muntz**

Nirit Peled-Muntz, chief people officer of HiBob, brings international and multi-national experiences to implement HR strategies and programs that support organizational growth and success.

# What's next on your professional agenda?

"I'm finding that a lot of HR people I work with have compassion and empathy fatigue which is normal and expected," says McHugh, author of *From Barista to Boardroom*. "It's so important for HR to take care of themselves and make sure that decisions they are making are not merely a reflection of their own burnout."

In the spirit of taking care of yourself and paying attention to your development, we're including an activity to help you reflect on where you've been, where you currently are, and where you're headed.



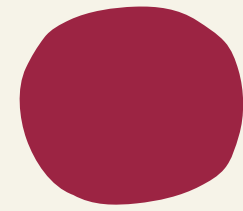
**Use the space below to reflect and respond to the following questions.**

**1. What do you wish someone had told you when you first started in HR?**

**2. What have been the most impactful things you've done to improve your effectiveness as an HR professional?**

**3. Based on the advice from these progressive HR leaders, which insights do you want to focus on over the next year?**





**What are three small, achievable actions you can take to embrace a progressive approach over the next four quarters?**

Action 1	Action 2	Action 3



# Meet Bob

**At HiBob, we've built a modern HR platform designed for modern business needs—today and beyond.**

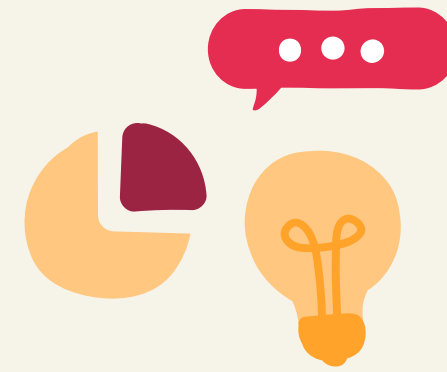
We focused on building something robust yet intuitive and easy to use, which has led Bob to be the **company culture platform** of choice for thousands of fast-growing modern, mid-sized organizations.

In a short time, Bob can be deployed to enable communication, collaboration, and connectivity that drives stronger engagement, productivity, and business outcomes.



## For HR

it automates many common processes, allows greater oversight and visibility of the business, and centralizes all people data in a secure, user-friendly environment.



## For managers

It provides access to data and insights to help them lead more effectively and streamline processes.



## For employees

It's the tools and information they need to connect, develop, and grow throughout their journey.

Now is the time to make smarter decisions  
when it comes to your people and organization.



To learn more about HiBob and our data-driven  
tools, get in touch with us at [contact@hibob.com](mailto:contact@hibob.com)

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