

# HR Evolution Evolve. Adapt. Deliver.

## Transforming HR at Jaguar Land Rover

ORION CASE STUDY



**ORION**  
Transforming HR

**“I’m very pleased we went with Orion.  
Unquestionably, it was a good decision  
and a good outcome for Jaguar Land Rover.  
I hope and expect we will work with them again.”**



**Anna Kemp**  
Jaguar Land Rover

## 1. THE PROJECT

**“It made sense to turn to an expert consultancy.”**

**Jaguar Land Rover is enjoying huge success. In 2016, the company produced more than 500,000 vehicles, a third of all the cars made in the UK that year – making it Britain’s biggest motor manufacturer.**

The company has been reborn in the decade since it was bought by Tata. Production has risen by 240% since 2009. Jaguar Land Rover now employs around 40,000 people in the UK, nearly double the number of five years ago.

But rapid expansion brings challenges as well as rewards. How does a company make sure its HR function keeps up with the pace of change?

The HR function had grown organically but an evolution was needed – a brand new operating model, going back to first principles.

But it’s one thing to develop a new model for delivery. Another thing entirely to make it work. You need to bring along the people who will be working within it.

That calls for an investment .

When Jaguar Land Rover took their big HR leap, they brought in Orion to make sure their new operating model launched successfully.

Julia Benbow, JLR’s Talent Learning and Development Manager, explains: **“We needed to train our HR people to adapt to our new operating model. We knew it made sense to turn an expert consultancy.”**

## 2. WHY ORION?

**“We wanted an HR specialist, rather than an all-rounder.”**

**One of JLR’s closest business relationships is with DHL, who have worked with Orion in the past. A contact there recommended Orion to Jaguar Land Rover.**

Beverley Fairbank, JLR’s Employee Relations Director, says it soon became obvious that the people to help with the development of its HR team should go to Orion.

**“We were interested in Orion because of their experience. We wanted an HR specialist, rather than an all-rounder. Orion could demonstrate real, credible experience that was evidenced and benchmarked.”**

**“It was helpful that Orion had done business with someone we were familiar with. We didn’t need to go with a high street name, we needed to find someone who knew what we were going through.”**

Fairbank adds: **“They were realistic – and they were flexible about the fact that we wanted something very specific from them rather than a wider range of transformation support – which we know they also provide”.**

**“We were very impressed with the quality of the people Orion put forward. I’ve spent a long time meeting companies tendering for training, and you get lots of sales people with all the bells and whistles – and then later on it isn’t backed up.”**

**“But Orion aren’t like that. They were very quick to bring along the actual people who would be delivering the training for us. They were very credible, they had real bench-strength.”**

## “We wanted to push our people to think about their personal development.”

**Beverley Fairbank says: “We worked very closely with Orion to get the content of the syllabus right. We wanted to push our people to think a little bit more about their own professional development, how they could stop sweating the smaller stuff. Orion delivered a really successful set of sessions and training materials to help support us through the change.”**

Orion designed and delivered three streams of work, creating the materials and leading the training sessions.



#### **Business Partner Workshops**

Two sets of interactive and experiential workshops held over a period of two months. Groups of Business Partners who would be working together under the new structure were brought together to learn how their roles would be changing and how they needed to adapt. In the new Ulrich-inspired model, their roles were to be more strategic and less transactional. Through discussions and exercises, they practised difficult conversations they may need to have with their business areas, for example.



#### **Train the Trainer sessions**

Orion created a framework to enable JLR to train their HR leadership teams. Senior HR managers were equipped to deliver the operating model training to the rest of the HR team which was a really powerful approach. Senior HR leaders delivered the training, actively leading the change with their teams.



#### **HR Direct workshops**

This was designed for the Shared Service team. The aim was to help people understand and experience what it would be like to work in the new operating model and how to deal with change – “how do I fit in?”, “what’s my new role?”

## 4. THE CHALLENGES

**“When you bring about big change, you come up against resistance.”**

**Anna Kemp, Customer Service and Process Excellence Manager for HR Shared Services at JLR, says:** “Obviously when you’re seeking to bring about big change you come up against resistance. There are challenging questions. Orion were an important part of dealing with that. They offered us real support us. Full credit to them – they’ve clearly got a lot of experience doing this.”

Sometimes, says Kemp, it was helpful to hear that the opposition being vocalised by some members of the team was normal. **“It was very useful to be told by Orion: ‘Resistance is typical at this stage. Keep going, it’ll come right.’”**

Kemp says that also Orion brought another vital quality to the project: impartiality.

Internal hierarchies and long-term professional relationships may make it difficult for people to have their views challenged in public, she says, but **“some of the most senior, opinionated people rightly came under some challenge in the Orion sessions. In normal circumstances, that could be a very tricky thing – but Orion encouraged people to say it as it is. They did it in a kind, thoughtful and professional way. It was a really positive experience for everyone.”**

Beverley Fairbank agrees: **“Everybody felt respected through the change. After the training, they understood the reasons we needed to change.”**

Fairbank adds: **“From the first meeting, Orion were straightforward, realistic and practical. It wasn’t highfalutin’. Although they were direct with people when they needed to be, they worked well with the other consultants involved with the transformation.”**

**“Some big companies— the names you’d instantly recognise - constantly point the finger and say: ‘We could do that so much better, we really ought to have that work.’ That’s not how Orion operate.”**

# “I’m very pleased we turned to Orion.”

**The move to a new HR model was a bold step for Jaguar Land Rover, says Anna Kemp. “We were transforming nearly every function. It was a big change. Now that we’ve done it, it’s clear that Orion’s training programme was a key part of making it work.”**

Kemp says: **“We wouldn’t have been able to deliver this training ourselves. This was our first time. Orion have done this sort of thing so many times before. They gave the people here the ability to move into the new model with true confidence.”**

Beverley Fairbank says that JLR has benefited in another way too. **“We now all collaborate much more. We now have a real shared understanding across departments. It was the training we received from Orion that made this possible.”**

Kemp says that the successful implementation of the new HR model – which would have been impossible without Orion’s training programme – will certainly contribute to JLR’s profitability as it keeps growing.

She says: **“The Orion team are really strong, dedicated people. They worked hard for us and kept us on track. They brought experience and impartiality. I’m very pleased we turned to Orion.”**