CONCEPT

Agile HR: Backlogs, Sprints and Continuous Performance for HR Leaders

25 – 29 January 2027
London - Central London four-star



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Introduction:

Agile HR matters because many business units now plan in sprints and reprioritise monthly, while HR still runs annual cycles, long policy projects and approval chains that cannot keep pace. HR requests queue for weeks, performance reviews arrive too late to steer work and hiring lags behind shifting team needs. This Core Concept course shows HR leaders how to run HR work through backlogs, sprints and kanban boards, treat HR offerings as products for employees, and redesign performance, recruitment, learning and reward for agile teams. Participants leave with a 90-Day Agile HR Pilot Plan.

Course Objectives:

- Assess how far the current HR function operates in annual, hierarchical cycles and where agile ways of working would release the most value
- Translate Agile Manifesto and Agile HR Manifesto values into working agreements, roles and cadences for an HR team
- Run HR work through a prioritised HR backlog, sprint planning, kanban boards with WIP limits and retrospectives
- Redesign performance, recruitment, learning and reward practices so they support cross-functional agile teams and continuous feedback
- Measure HR agility with flow and employee-outcome metrics and handle resistance, compliance constraints and scaling risks
- Produce a 90-Day Agile HR Pilot Plan for a selected HR service with scope, team, cadence and success measures

Target Audience:

- HR leaders accountable for the performance and structure of an HR team or HR department
- HR business partners supporting business units that already work in squads, sprints or product teams
- Heads of HR expertise centres for talent acquisition, learning, performance and reward who redesign their processes
- HR transformation and people-operations leads responsible for changing how HR services are planned and delivered
- Organisation development leads helping leadership teams move towards networked, team-based structures

Course Outline:

Day 1: Agile Values and the Case for Agile HR

- Agile Manifesto Value Pairs Translated into HR Working Behaviours
- Agile HR Manifesto: Networks, Transparency, Adaptability and Intrinsic Motivation
- Agile HR Versus HR for Agile Organisations: Two Distinct Agendas
- HR Agility Self-Assessment Across Planning, Approvals and Feedback Loops
- Annual HR Calendar Audit: Locating Delays, Hand-Offs and Batch Work

Day 2: Agile HR Operating Model and Delivery Frameworks

- From Siloed HR Pillars to Multidisciplinary HR Squads and Chapters
- Scrum Roles Adapted for HR: HR Product Owner, Team Facilitator and Squad
- Kanban Method for HR Flow: Visualised Boards, WIP Limits and Pull Rules
- Employee-Centred HR Product Thinking: Problem Statements and Minimum Viable HR Offerings
- Team-Level OKRs Replacing Cascaded Individual Objectives

Day 3: Running HR Work in Backlogs, Sprints and Continuous Performance

- HR Backlog Building: Epics, User Stories and Acceptance Criteria for People Initiatives
- Backlog Prioritisation with Value-Versus-Effort Scoring and MoSCoW
- HR Sprint Planning, Daily Stand-Up, Sprint Review and Retrospective Cadence
- Continuous Performance Check-Ins: Conversation Guides and Feedforward Techniques
- Agile Recruitment: Hiring Sprints, Candidate Pipeline Boards and Hiring-Manager Demos

Day 4: Agile Talent, Rewards, Metrics and Adoption Risks

- Agile Learning: Microlearning Sprints and Just-in-Time Skill Pathways
- Internal Talent Marketplace for Gigs, Short Assignments and Squad Staffing
- Rewards for Agile Teams: Team Recognition, Peer Bonuses and Pay Decoupled from Ratings
- HR Agility Metrics: Lead Time, Throughput, Cumulative Flow and Employee Satisfaction Signals
- Adoption Pitfalls: Agile Theatre, Policy Constraints, Manager Resistance and Scaling Limits

Day 5: Agile HR Pilot Case Work and the 90-Day Plan

- Technology Company Case: Replacing Annual Appraisals with Quarterly Team Check-Ins
- Hospital Group Case: Cutting Nurse Hiring Lead Time Through Recruitment Sprints
- Pilot Service Selection Canvas and HR Squad Charter Drafting
- 90-Day Agile HR Pilot Plan: Backlog, Sprint Calendar, Metrics and Stakeholder Demos
- Pilot Plan Challenge Session with Sponsor Questions and Revision Log

Skills You Will Gain:

- Agile HR Practice Design
- HR Backlog Management
- HR Sprint Facilitation
- Kanban Flow Management
- HR Product Thinking
- Continuous Feedback Coaching
- Team Goal Setting
- HR Agility Measurement

Why Attend This Course:

- Return with a 90-Day Agile HR Pilot Plan for one HR service, already challenged by sponsor-style questioning
- Clear HR request queues by moving work onto a visible board with agreed priorities and WIP limits
- Replace late annual reviews with regular check-ins and team goals that managers in agile units will actually use
- Compare agile HR experiments with HR leaders from technology, healthcare, finance, energy and public-service organisations

Conclusion:

Agile HR works when HR applies to itself the same short cycles, visible priorities and feedback it asks of the business. The course moves from agile values and an honest assessment of HR's current rhythm, through squad-based operating models, Scrum and Kanban adapted for people work and product thinking, to backlogs, sprints, continuous performance and agile recruitment, then to learning, talent marketplaces, rewards, metrics and adoption risks. The final day turns case work into a 90-Day Agile HR Pilot Plan ready for sponsor approval.