



Management Consultancy Services For Professional Services Firms



A stylized, grey, handwritten-style logo consisting of three overlapping, wavy lines that form the letters 'W', 'W', and 'W'.

WALLACEWALKER[®]
management consultants

“Building organisational capability”

Professional profile of Wallace Walker



Serving corporate and professional service clients

Background

Simon Wallace and Paul Walker formed Wallace Walker in early 1997. Formerly consultants in leading consultancy practices and experienced senior managers in blue-chip multinationals, Simon and Paul started Wallace Walker to help their clients to develop their organisational and management capabilities and performance.



Philosophy and approach

The philosophy underpinning all our work is our belief in delivering tangible results to our clients. We achieve this by ensuring that we have a thorough understanding of our clients' businesses, priorities and cultures, and this enables us to provide advice and support which is specific, relevant and practical. Our approach is to work in partnership with our clients, and to provide genuine added value through the transfer of our process and intervention skills during the lifetime of the assignment.

Client profile

Wallace Walker has successful experience of consulting with:

1. Professional services, including:

- ◆ law firms
- ◆ trust companies
- ◆ accountancy practices
- ◆ international investment management firms

2. Corporations, including:

- ◆ global engineering
- ◆ banking and financial services
- ◆ aerospace
- ◆ food manufacturing

3. Others organisations, including:

- ◆ government (MoD, agencies)
- ◆ hotel groups
- ◆ retail
- ◆ shipping

References

We would be delighted to provide references to help you gauge the impact of our approach and the quality of our results. Should you wish to speak to one or more of our clients, please call us direct and we will provide contact names and telephone numbers.

Making contact with Wallace Walker



Serving corporate and professional service clients

If you would like to contact us to find out more about any of our services please enter your details below, specifying the nature of your enquiry, and forward them to either of our offices at the addresses given below.

Alternatively, please contact us at our offices directly or through our web site (www.wallace-walker.co.uk).

All information provided will remain in the strictest confidence, and will not be passed to any other organisations.



Name: _____

Title: _____

Company: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Please contact me to discuss: _____

Please provide further information about: _____

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Outline of professional services portfolio



Serving corporate and professional services clients

Wallace Walker is a management consultancy established to assist companies to implement their business strategies by helping them to build their organisational and management capabilities. We provide consultancy services to an international client base covering strategy formulation and implementation, cultural and organisational change, leadership and management development, organisational restructuring, performance management, and human resource strategy and implementation.



In addition to our corporate consulting, Wallace Walker provides specialist expertise and experience to professional services firms. Our support is provided to firms operating at a global, international, national and regional level. Specific areas of support include:

- ◆ strategic, organisational and management planning;
- ◆ performance planning and management;
- ◆ planning and implementing organisational, structural and cultural change;
- ◆ building a client-focused firm;
- ◆ business process improvement;
- ◆ developing human resource strategies and infrastructures;
- ◆ M&A planning and implementation;
- ◆ improving partner/director performance;
- ◆ partner and fee-earner management training and development, including team-building;
- ◆ training and development;
- ◆ implementing recognised quality standards and models.

Wallace Walker's expertise also includes support to professional services firms pursuing international and global business strategies, and we assist them to develop the strategic, organisational and management capabilities to operate across borders. We provide experience of working with leading corporate and global organisations, and we have researched and benchmarked best practice in cross-border management. Specific areas of support include:

- ◆ strategic, organisational and management planning for professional services firms pursuing global and international strategic development;
- ◆ organisational and cultural change programmes to build cross-border mindsets;
- ◆ developing global and international human resource strategies and infrastructures;
- ◆ implementing global and international training and development strategies, structures and processes;
- ◆ training and development to support cross-border management.

Each of the above support areas is described in more detail in Wallace Walker's professional services portfolio.

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Strategic, organisational and management planning



“Many firms are incapable of implementing their business strategies simply because they don’t have the organisational and management capabilities to do so.”

Today, more than ever, professional services firms are having to improve their strategic focus and develop more dynamic and flexible strategies if they wish to compete in a business environment characterised by accelerating globalisation, complexity and uncertainty. Many firms, however, will be incapable of **implementing** their strategies because they don’t have the organisational and management capabilities to do so.



Wallace Walker can help professional services firms to achieve such strategic focus, and to develop the organisational and management capabilities necessary to successfully implement their business strategies.

Working alongside the partners or the firm’s management team, we can facilitate the development of a comprehensive strategic plan setting out:

- ◆ a clear vision for the future;
- ◆ an overall business direction and strategy;
- ◆ strategic goals;
- ◆ critical success factors;
- ◆ performance indicators and targets;
- ◆ a blueprint for the firm’s required organisational capability covering structure, systems and processes, staff, skills, shared values and culture, and organisational style;
- ◆ the organisational and cultural change necessary to deliver the strategy;
- ◆ the resource implications of the strategy;
- ◆ the management implications of the strategy;
- ◆ an action plan covering key tasks, responsibilities, and timescales for implementing the strategy.

We can assist with cascading the strategic plan to individual groups and facilitate the development of group business plans. These plans can then be cascaded down to the level of an individual fee-earner. Cascading to the levels of groups and individual fee-earners is an important discipline for achieving strategic focus and alignment throughout the firm, and for assigning priorities, clear accountabilities and responsibilities for the delivery of the firm’s strategy.

We can also provide specialist support using the following advanced technical capabilities:

- ◆ strategic business modelling;
- ◆ business continuity planning;
- ◆ business simulation.

Performance planning and management



*“How a firm spends its chargeable time determines its income.
How it spends its non-chargeable time determines its future.” (Maister, D)*

A glance at any table of comparative performance indicators will confirm what all professional practitioners know: there is a wide variation in the performance of professional services firms in chargeable hours, margin, leverage, quality of work, use of non-chargeable time, and so on. Yet the factors which determine whether a firm will benefit from the commercial opportunities presented by the rapidly changing marketplace for professional services are predominantly internal in nature. It is the quality of a firm’s performance management which is a **critical success factor** in ensuring implementation of strategic and business plans, and the consequent improvements to both fee-income and profitability.



Wallace Walker can assist professional services firms to improve performance and profitability by helping them to implement professional performance management systems.

Working alongside the partners or the firm’s management team, we can design, develop and implement bespoke performance management systems which will enable them to manage efficiently and effectively the areas where the firm must deliver improved performance. The following table illustrates typical performance indicators for a professional services firm.

KEY STRATEGIC GOAL: TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE AND PROFITABILITY						
CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS:	PROFITABLE REVENUE	CLIENT FOCUS	STRATEGIC DIRECTION	PRACTICE LEADERSHIP/ MANAGEMENT	STAFF CAPABILITY	IT AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT
PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:	Margins	Quality of work/ portfolio	Implementation of strategic plan	Accountability	Fee-earner/ staff ratio	Systems effectiveness
	Charge-out rates	Quality control	Use of non-chargeable time	Effectiveness of top mgmt	Technical expertise/ excellence	Systems integration
	Chargeable hours	Mgmt of existing key clients	Market development	Effectiveness of group mgmt	Morale	IT competence
	Leverage	Developing new clients	New product development	Performance management	Flexibility	Process automation
	Billings and collections	Service delivery	Rainmakers	Culture	Recruitment	Information management
	Expenditure against budget	Image and reputation	Commercial focus	Compensation	Training	Client access/ information

Example of performance indicators

Planning and implementing organisational, structural and cultural change

“The old ways are more than systems and structures; they are states of mind. Very few managers find it natural or comfortable to rethink; that is, to challenge the intellectual (and emotional) bases of the way they operate, even though rethinking offers large, and often cheap, scope for improvement.” (Heller, R)

Increasingly, professional services firms have to plan and implement change as part of their business strategies; the need for this change to be planned and managed effectively and efficiently is a business imperative. Unfortunately, the track record of firms implementing major organisational, structural and cultural change suggests that this is not an area where many of them have successful experience on which to draw. This can result in them making fundamental and avoidable errors in the management of change, examples of which include:

- ◆ allowing too much complacency;
- ◆ failing to create a sufficiently powerful team to lead and drive the change;
- ◆ underestimating the power of a vision;
- ◆ under-communicating the vision;
- ◆ permitting obstacles to block the vision;
- ◆ failing to create short-term wins;
- ◆ declaring victory too soon;
- ◆ neglecting to anchor changes in the culture of the firm.

Wallace Walker’s professional services and corporate consulting experience give us the expertise to advise clients on best practice for planning and managing major organisational, structural and cultural change. Working alongside the partners or the firm’s management team, we can develop strategies and plans for effectively managing and implementing major change.

Building a client-focused firm



“Achieving a client focus should be a priority for top management. The fact that a firm undertakes unprofitable work is a clear illustration of a lack of a client focus.”

Without question, the degree to which a professional services firm is truly client-focused will have a major impact on its profitability and performance. Quality of work, quality control, management of existing client relationships, the ability to develop new and profitable clients, service delivery, and the firm's image and reputation are all key aspects of a client focus. Maximising the firm's performance on each of these indicators should be a priority use of non-chargeable time. They should form a central part of the firm's performance management processes, and should have the same level of importance as chargeable hours, billings and collections, margins and so on.



Wallace Walker can assist professional services firms to improve their client focus. We have the experience and expertise to develop client-focused strategies, disciplines, and working practices and procedures that will improve profitability and performance.

Working alongside the client, we can identify what the firm needs to do to develop a client-focused practice, and how this can be achieved. This would include:

- ◆ assessing the current position against each of the areas of client focus;
- ◆ reviewing the current market focus, and examining the profitability of target markets and clients;
- ◆ identifying the required improvements to the firm's organisational capability;
- ◆ working with the partners or practice management to develop a programme of change to improve organisational capability;
- ◆ agreeing appropriate marketing and business development structures;
- ◆ agreeing a process to ensure the effective performance management of the principal areas of client focus;
- ◆ supporting the implementation of the change programme, including the training and development of partners and staff;
- ◆ providing technical expertise to assist with the design, development and implementation of specific disciplines, working practices and procedures;
- ◆ providing technical expertise to develop marketing and business development plans.

Business process improvement



“Most firms have significant scope to improve their efficiency and effectiveness; unfortunately, however, most aren’t organised to do so.”

Whatever their size and areas of expertise, all professional services firms have critical business processes. Some of these will be key to managing the firm’s cost base, others will be drivers to delivering their professional services, still more will help develop the firm for the future. These business processes include:



- ◆ developing innovative approaches to solving client problems;
- ◆ finding new ways to lower the cost of performing professional tasks;
- ◆ generating unprompted referrals from clients;
- ◆ turning one-off client assignments into long-term relationships;
- ◆ gathering market intelligence and analysing emerging client needs;
- ◆ generating awareness of capabilities in target markets;
- ◆ turning enquires into contracts;
- ◆ developing new services;
- ◆ attracting and retaining high-potential new recruits;
- ◆ transferring skills to junior professionals;
- ◆ developing and growing new partners from junior ranks;
- ◆ disseminating and sharing skills and knowledge amongst partners.

Wallace Walker can assist professional services firms to improve their key business processes. Working alongside the client, we can undertake a full review and audit of the existing processes and recommend how to improve them or, where required, assist in the development and introduction of new ones.

Developing human resource strategies and infrastructures



“The inspiration lies in the evidence that ordinary people can produce extraordinary results - if, paradoxically, you treat them like ordinary people.” (Wickens, P)

It is stating the obvious to say that the only source of sustainable competitive advantage a professional services firm has is its staff. People **are** the firm. It is they who, individually and collectively, contribute to the successful (or not) implementation of the firm’s strategy. The quality of a professional services firm’s human resource management practices will have a significant impact on its ability to maximise the contribution from this key resource. Some of the human resource issues that need to be effectively managed in any professional services firm are:



- ◆ gaining partners’ and fee-earners’ interest and involvement in human resource management;
- ◆ identifying and retaining highly qualified partners and fee-earners;
- ◆ ensuring sufficient quality and quantity of professionals and support staff;
- ◆ ensuring fee-earners have the technical and managerial skills to perform effectively;
- ◆ increasing the depth of professional and managerial talent in the firm;
- ◆ effectively communicating the required management competencies and culture;
- ◆ ensuring partner and management succession;
- ◆ sustaining and improving performance at all levels in all areas of the firm;
- ◆ implementing human resource systems for recruitment, performance management, training and development, succession planning, remuneration and benefits;
- ◆ establishing a total quality culture, and changing people’s attitudes to quality;
- ◆ establishing training as part of the firm’s culture;
- ◆ linking people practices to the firm’s strategic objectives.

Wallace Walker can assist professional services firms to improve their human resource practices. We can help them to develop the human resource strategies and infrastructures that will best serve the interests of the firm.

M&A strategic and organisational planning and implementation



“The truth about organisational change is that getting the numbers right is the first step, and very important; but animating the structure to achieve the right actions by rightly motivated people is vital.” (Heller, R)

Increasingly, professional services firms have to compete in markets characterised by accelerating change, consolidation and restructuring. Both to control and benefit from this change, a growing number of firms are considering the strategic logic and desirability of seeking a merger or acquisition.



There are several fundamental reasons why this may be a preferred strategy. These include:

- ◆ increasing income or achieving profit growth;
- ◆ achieving a critical mass;
- ◆ expanding or diversifying the client portfolio;
- ◆ creating new market opportunities;
- ◆ increasing the range of services;
- ◆ developing nationally, internationally or globally.

Unfortunately, however, research suggests that a high percentage of mergers or acquisitions fail to achieve the hoped-for or planned benefits. Typical problem areas include:

- ◆ a lack of clear leadership following the merger or acquisition;
- ◆ a failure to achieve a harmonious management structure;
- ◆ a failure to build the necessary organisational capability;
- ◆ a failure successfully to integrate the two cultures;
- ◆ a failure to manage the change process;
- ◆ a failure to manage the people issues;
- ◆ a loss of key partners.

Wallace Walker can assist professional services firms to plan and implement a merger or acquisition. We can provide the expertise and experience to enable them to manage successfully all of the above problems areas. Our professional services and corporate consulting experience can assist our clients to manage the new and important challenges created by their changing market place.

Improving partner/director performance



“A professional firm’s values, standards and, indeed, strategy are not defined by what a firm says it aspires to, but what it is prepared to enforce. A firm can get a reputation as a firm only if there are certain non-negotiable minimum standards to which everyone within must adhere.” (Maister, D)

In today’s competitive environment, professional services firms cannot afford to carry under-performing partners. Inadequate performance at partner level can do serious damage by undermining the morale of other partners, fee-earners, and staff and, ultimately, diminishing people’s loyalty to the firm. Too often, however, firms do avoid the need to address under-performance, usually because of its highly sensitive nature and the concern that, handled badly, there could be far-reaching and difficult to manage consequences.



Under-performance can stem from a number of factors: a lack of competence, personal style issues, underlying assumptions regarding the way the firm should operate, a lack of commitment and application, a lack of clarity of role, compensation issues, personal blind spot, and so on.

Wallace Walker can assist professional services firms to resolve partner under-performance. We can provide specialist expertise and experience in the form of 1:1 coaching and counselling to address any aspect of under-performance. Working with the client, we can gain clarity on the perceived issue, agreement on how best to address it, and develop a tailored approach to resolve it.

Management training and development, including team-building



“Most organisations are over-managed and under-led.” (Kotter, J)

The importance of effective management and leadership within a professional services firm cannot be overstated; it is a critical success factor in improving profitability and performance, as well as in achieving successful change. Until very recently, however, relatively few professionals - and even fewer partners - had been trained to be effective managers or leaders; indeed, many had no wish to be. But the increasing pressures on professional services firms to improve their performance and competitiveness means that the management role within the firm is now of paramount importance. The subsequent strategies to develop partners and fee-earners to fulfil their management and leadership roles are increasingly accepted as a key enabler towards sustained competitive performance.



Wallace Walker can assist professional services firms to improve practice management and leadership by helping them to implement partner and fee-earner management training and development.

Reflecting the firm’s future requirement for leadership and management at executive and group levels, we can design, develop and implement bespoke management training and development for partners/fee earners which will support the firm’s strategic plan and operational considerations (see below).

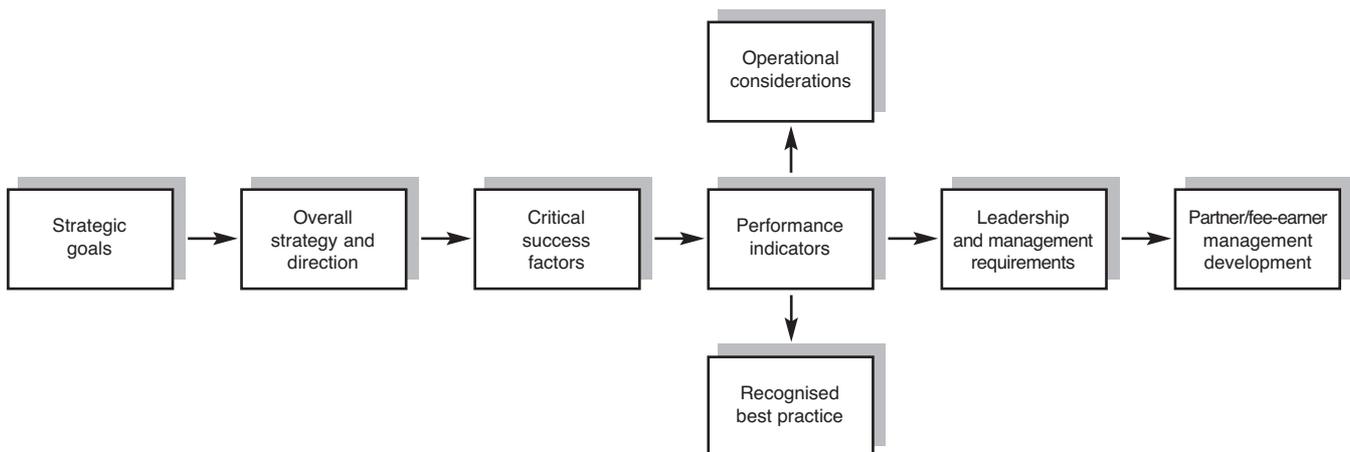


Figure: Wallace Walker methodology

Key themes covered by Wallace Walker include:

- ◆ Strategic planning;
- ◆ Performance management;
- ◆ Deciding on group priorities and how a group should be run;
- ◆ Managing a client project;
- ◆ Utilising billable and non-billable time;
- ◆ Leadership skills;
- ◆ Managing change;
- ◆ Client service and relationship management;
- ◆ Improving personal effectiveness;
- ◆ Team-building and development;
- ◆ People management;
- ◆ Basic management skills.

Training and development



“Almost 1 in 3 firms believe that the lack of skilled staff is holding back the growth of the firm.” (Barclay Commercial Services)

A firm’s ability to deliver its services at least in line with client expectations, and at least as well as its direct competitors, is a determinant of its continued success. It follows, therefore, that the training and development of staff is an essential part of maintaining and improving a professional services firm’s competitive capability. Of course, this is about more than just technical training; the leadership and management of the firm will be a critical success factor of its ability to deliver, as will the collective competence of non fee-earning staff.



The unprecedented level of change in markets for professional services means that firms must provide the training and development to help staff at all levels - partners, fee-earners and non fee-earners - to help them meet the ever-changing demands of their job.

Wallace Walker can assist professional services firms to maintain and improve their skill base. Reflecting the firm’s future requirement for skills, we can design, develop and implement bespoke training and development programmes for all levels of staff to help them support the firm’s strategic plan and operational requirements (see below).

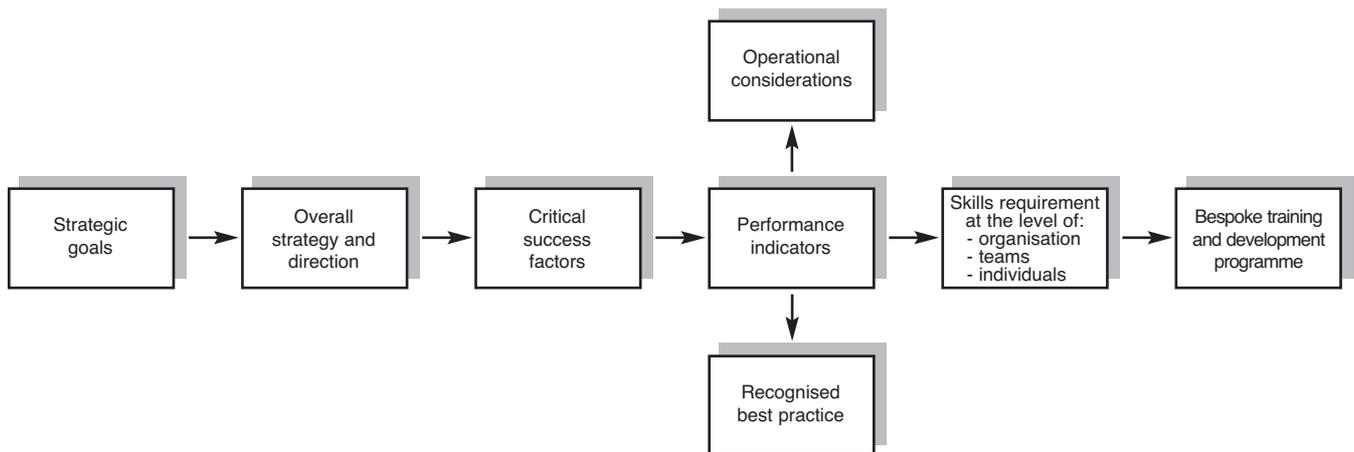


Figure: Wallace Walker methodology

Key themes covered by Wallace Walker include:

- ◆ Strategic orientation;
- ◆ Client handling skills;
- ◆ Personal effectiveness;
- ◆ Supervisory skills;
- ◆ Utilising billable and non-billable time;
- ◆ What is professionalism and how do we nurture it?
- ◆ How do we add value?
- ◆ Problem solving;
- ◆ People management;
- ◆ Team-working;
- ◆ Basic management skills;
- ◆ Marketing for professional services.

Implementing recognised quality standards and models



“Quality needs to be a business philosophy, not a programme or an initiative.” (Wickens, P)

A simple truth in today’s business environment is that quality, in all its forms, is a basic requirement demanded by customers. It can no longer be considered added value or an optional extra. Indeed, in the professional services business, the quality of service is becoming as important as the quality of advice.



The need for organisations to maintain and improve their processes and procedures has led to an increasing number of them benchmarking themselves against internationally and nationally recognised quality standards.

Wallace Walker can assist professional services firms to develop their organisational performance in line with recognised standards. Our consultants are registered to advise on:

- ◆ the international Investors in People Standard;
- ◆ the European Quality Model (EFQM).

We have the expertise and experience to assist professional services firms in all stages of the process for benchmarking and assessment against each of these quality standards. The support can be delivered in a stand-alone form or as an integral part of a programme of organisational development and change.

Building the capability to operate as a global or international professional services firm

“Competitive advantage will come from sensing needs in one market, responding with capabilities perhaps developed in a second, and diffusing any resulting innovation to market and facilitating it around the globe.” (Bartlett and Ghoshal)

The dominant feature of today’s international business environment is globalisation. More than ever before, professional services firms pursuing global or international strategies must integrate and coordinate their activities to manage successfully both within and across borders. Their aim must be to achieve global competitiveness, local responsiveness, and worldwide learning and leveraging. They must build the organisational capability needed to serve global clients and to cope with global transactions.

This requires them to examine and address issues related to their structure: how they organise, the design of systems and processes, which aspects of people capability need to be global and which local (including the skills and depth of fee-earners), their values and culture (to create the ‘glue’ for both global and local mindsets), and their operating and management style (to ensure that global clients are managed in a seamless manner).

Wallace Walker has the expertise and experience to assist professional services firms to build the organisational and management capability to operate as a global or international firm. Our professional services and corporate consulting experience give us the expertise to advise clients on models of corporate management which are being used effectively to meet the challenges of globalisation.

Our support to clients can include:

- ◆ developing strategies for global and international expansion;
- ◆ developing blueprints for the organisational capability required to operate as a global or international firm;
- ◆ assisting with building the required organisational capability:
 - developing international human resource management strategies and practices;
 - facilitating management development to build the organisational ‘glue’ and cross-border mindsets;
 - designing and implementing cultural and organisational change programmes;
- ◆ advising on and implementing management structures and management style to support global and international strategies;
- ◆ team-building;
- ◆ developing action plans for implementing global and international strategies, and organisational and cultural change.

Developing global and international human resource strategies



“Building the corporate ‘glue’ that holds a disparate organisation together simply cannot be allowed to happen by accident.”

The key challenge for professional services firms with global aspirations is to build the organisational capabilities needed to serve global clients. This will involve creating an integrated and networked global organisation, where the ability to transfer knowledge, skills, resources and innovation across borders is the source of sustainable competitive advantage.



The critical success factor for a professional services firm will be to achieve the integrated management thinking needed to conceive, create and operate this type of global organisation. The ability to do this will be heavily influenced by the firm’s approach to international human resource management (HRM). Currently, many professional services firms are incapable of carrying out the global strategies they have developed because their human resource strategies are significantly less global than their business strategies. International HRM issues must be treated by firms with the same consideration given to client-related issues, partnership remuneration and organisation design.

Among the various factors which need to be addressed by a firm’s international HRM systems are:

- ◆ building a global culture which will encourage the managerial mindsets and attitudes to develop an integrated, networked organisation to cope with global clients and global transactions;
- ◆ developing the leadership and management capability and structure to support global strategies and operations;
- ◆ gaining partners’ and professionals’ interest and involvement in human resource management;
- ◆ ensuring sufficient quality and depth of professionals to serve global clients;
- ◆ ensuring partners have the technical and managerial skills to work effectively at a global level;
- ◆ increasing the depth of professional and managerial talent in the firm;
- ◆ identifying and retaining highly-qualified partners and professionals;
- ◆ developing a global and local approach to training and development;
- ◆ ensuring partner and management succession;
- ◆ sustaining and improving performance at all levels in all areas of the firm;
- ◆ implementing global human resource systems for recruitment, performance management, training and development, succession planning, remuneration and benefits;
- ◆ establishing a total quality culture, and changing people’s attitudes to quality;
- ◆ linking HRM to strategic objectives.

Wallace Walker has the expertise to assist professional services firms to develop global and international human resource strategies to support the implementation of their business strategies. Our corporate consulting experience enables us to advise our professional services clients on models of international human resource management which are being used effectively to meet the challenges of globalisation.