

**Description:** As an HR professional, you have a lot of roles and responsibilities. You also have many daily activities that take valuable time away from focusing on the larger and more impactful strategic planning and HR work. Jillian Jordan, MRA HR Business Partner, is here to tell you the biggest benefits of HRBPs to your company.

**Key Takeaways:**

1. HRBPs, as it says in the title, really are designed to be a partner with the member organization
2. Some of the areas MRA's HRBPs specialize in: Payroll, benefits, compliance, record keeping, employee relations, process improvement, project management, working on strategic initiatives, change management, handbooks, compensation, investigations, and more
3. HRBPs can help or provide guidance to make you feel more confident in times that you may be unsure, or overwhelmed, or you want to avoid feeling overwhelmed and plan for an HRBP to be there to support you through planned transitions, projects, whatever it may be.

**Transcript:**

*Transcripts are computer generated -- not 100% accurate word-for-word.*

00:00:00:02 - 00:00:23:03

Intro

Hello hello, everybody, and welcome to 30 minute THRIVE, your go-to podcast for anything and everything HR, powered by MRA - The Management Association. Looking to stay on top of the ever-changing world of HR? MRA has got you covered. We'll be the first to tell you what's hot and what's not. I'm your host, Sophie Boler, and we are so glad you're here. Now it's time to THRIVE.

00:00:26:18 - 00:00:57:05

Sophie Boler

Hello everyone, and welcome to this episode of 30 Minute Thrive. We're excited you're here with us and I'm excited to introduce our guest for today, Jillian Jordan. She's a human resource

business partner at MRA and is about celebrate her one-year anniversary. So congratulations on that very much. But Jillian has had 17 years of leadership and HR experience under her belt, and I just want to mention some of the different areas and industries that you've worked in.

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Sophie Boler

It's been agriculture, food manufacturing, aerospace engineering, logistics, construction, retail, auto sales and the service industry. So it seems like you've done just about anything and everything.

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Jillian Jordan

A lot of different things.

00:01:12:20 - 00:01:32:23

Sophie Boler

But today I'm really interested in learning more about your current position as an HRBP or human resource business partner here at MRA. So I'll just dive into that right away. So many companies are enhancing their HR department by hiring an HR business partner. What exactly is an HRBP?

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Jillian Jordan

As simple definition of that would be just an HR business partner that comes in and partners with an organization to help them with their HR Business needs, for instance. It's pretty straightforward in the title, but if you want to expand that into what would like an MRA business partner, you're really looking at a much broader range of solutions that we can provide because you've got not just that person that's coming in and helping with business solutions and HR

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Jillian Jordan

Solutions, but you have the support of the 200 plus professionals that we have at MRA supporting. So I think that that's just such a cool part of what MRA does and can provide.

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Sophie Boler

For.

00:02:17:03 - 00:02:18:09

Jillian Jordan

Our business partner.

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Sophie Boler

For sure. So who does an HR business partner primarily work with?

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Jillian Jordan

So I guess if your question is about like the size of the company, really any size, you know, small, midsize, large, you're going to be looking at different solutions depending on the size and structure. If you're looking at if the question is implying like what kind of people do we work with, it could be HR Managers, it could be with the director level, could be management level, could be at the tactical administrative.

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Jillian Jordan

You know, transactional level. So we really pride ourselves on being flexible to be able to work with any level of individual that's in the company and really any kind of size company.

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Sophie Boler

Oh yeah, that's great to know that you have that flexibility of who you work with. Yes. So what does success really look like to an HRBP?

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Jillian Jordan

I think that's such a good question to ask, because every company really is different. I think that success for us means the success of our member, and that's something that is something I really enjoy being able to go in and talk to our members, understand what is their mission, vision value, and really tailor what we provide to what their needs are, and asking that question, What does success look like for you?

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Jillian Jordan

Is it three months thing? You know me out of here and you have this project done or is it the support for long term smaller amount of hours supporting that? So I think it really is something different for every company.

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Sophie Boler

And I like how you worded that is like your success is the success of the company. Yeah. So you talked about also working with small companies, midsize companies and large companies. So how do you really determine how many HR HRBPs are needed for a member?

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Jillian Jordan

What we do is utilize our member relations team along with the HR HRBP manager and we want to assess the business needs to find the right fit for the organization. So whether it's like culture, whether it's the specific skills that are needed for that project or as a project. But, I mean, it could be, it could be a number of things that we're doing.

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Jillian Jordan

So I think we really work as a team to make sure that the right person is out into the into the right place. So the HR Business partner also feels successful, right, that they are being able to successfully put in, you know, hey, this is my best work and I'm really feeling like I'm making an impact to this member.

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Jillian Jordan

So I think that that's just a big part of that. And I know my manager does a really good job of recognizing the things that I like to do. And so I excel in it, making sure that I know the places I go are a good fit for my skill set and my personality and those kind of things, Definitely.

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Sophie Boler

So we're really learning more about you and your specific responsibilities, but I'm also interested to know about the team of HRBPs you work with every day. So can you really describe the team

you're on?

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Jillian Jordan

Yes, I love talking about my team. Everyone is so friendly. I've really enjoyed I mean, you said I've been here almost a year now. I'm getting almost to a year. And I do feel like everyone has really welcomed me. I feel like everyone is really, really friendly. And when you think about, you know, when we meet regularly, I feel like we have such a diverse group of individuals who have experience from different backgrounds, different industries, and I just love learning from them.

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Jillian Jordan

I don't feel like we have that like competitive nature. I don't think. I guess I just feel like everyone's so supportive of my success and invested in, you know, how are you doing? Like what classes are you taking? Oh, yeah, I took that OD last year. Last year? That was really good. Did you like it? You know, I think that people are just genuinely interested in your growth as a professional.

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Jillian Jordan

The things that you're interested in here at MRA. So I feel just so fortunate to be able to have been surrounded by people who are just so, so friendly, so nice, and are there to learn from and grow from. We just don't have that, you know? It's just nice to know that you have people that have your back.

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Jillian Jordan

You have people that, oh, I'm going to call this person because I know they're really good at this,

or I'm going to call my BFF up and say, Hey, how did you do this? Or what would you suggest for that? There's no shame in not knowing. the answer, right? Is we're all just here to learn and grow from each other and to be better professionals.

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Sophie Boler

That's great that everyone's truly a team player.

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Jillian Jordan

Yeah, I do feel like that.

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Sophie Boler

So just kind of diving deeper into the life of an HRBP What initiatives does a HR BP take on?

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Jillian Jordan

Yeah, I.

00:07:28:08 - 00:07:28:23

Sophie Boler

Guess the list.

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Jillian Jordan

Is busy. All of are, Yeah. So try not to fall asleep while I go through this . But I mean, it's really so many things. It could be like payroll benefits, compliance, recordkeeping, employee relations, process improvement, project management, working on strategic initiative, change management, some of our most frequently requested services, though I would say our working out handbooks, providing an extra set of hands-on reviewing job descriptions, compensation like the comp and class studies and performance management, assisting with HR

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Jillian Jordan

Optimization and performing investigations, which I think is such a great service that we provide being able to take that third party perspective and really interview people and provide data and fast so that, you know, our members can look at that information and, you know, make good decisions about their, their practices for sure.

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Sophie Boler

Yeah.

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Jillian Jordan

So I think a part of that so those are kind of like a list of what we do. But essentially what we want to do is, you know, I've said this a little bit already, but we really want to get to know the business, right? So we want to understand what matters to you. We want to understand how can we really minimize the transactional tasks that we can focus on partnering with the business and and HR



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Sophie Boler

Strategic needs. So you just mentioned transactional and strategic. Can you explain a little bit the difference between transactional versus more tactical and strategic? Yeah.

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Jillian Jordan

So your transactional items are going to be those day-to-day task oriented, somewhat administrative tasks. And then when you look at the strategic initiatives, you're really taking your strategic plan and looking at what are all the tactical things you need to make that happen. And so when we say we're minimizing the transactional, it means we're taking a look at your process, seeing where you could be trimming it down so that you are spending less time and on those transactional items and that you are really focusing on your strategic needs.

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Jillian Jordan

And I think that there's a lot of business partners HR professionals out there who are looking at, you know, how am I going to get to these strategic needs? And if I am so bogged down by administrative tasks and I would say, you know, in my many years of working in HR there's never been a time where you may wish that we had more administrative tasks to do.

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Jillian Jordan

And, you know, you're always thinking about how can I further the department, how can I really get to these other very strategic and tactical things without spending so much time on the transactional?

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Sophie Boler

So how do an HRBPs responsibilities really differ from other HR roles in an organization.

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Jillian Jordan

I'm going to twist your question a little bit and just kind of talk about kind of the roles that just an example. So a couple of examples of what we could be doing. So we could be working with like a smaller organization and we have a management individual who is performing some HR tasks but really wearing a lot of hats and feeling like they don't have, you know, they don't always have the right amount of time to spend on HR because these are professionals now is kind of up in the air.

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Jillian Jordan

What am I going to be doing? I have this plan, I have these things that I have to get done. But you may have an investigation come up. You may have a disciplinary action come up. And it is really great to be able to assist members like that and allow us to be flexible and I say flexible a lot because we really are meant to be able to support them in whatever their needs are.

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Jillian Jordan

So that's one example. You know, the small, small company with somebody wearing a lot of hats, it could be like a mid-sized company where maybe the team needs more support. Right? They've had these lists of projects that they've been wanting to do for a really long time. And they've just never seemed to get to them because your day-to-day things, the tasks, they really take up the majority of the time.

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Jillian Jordan

And we want to make sure that we're supporting the work life balance initiatives that our members have right to support our H.R. teams, the internal HR. teams that they have. So I think that is more a little bit of a generic answer of like kind of the areas that you can see us coming into and helping just as like a couple of good examples.

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Sophie Boler

So I know you've mentioned just throw out the podcast the responsibilities of an HRBP, but I'm curious to know some of your specific projects that you have worked on or are currently working on for companies since you joined MRA.

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Jillian Jordan

Yeah. One project that really stands out that's been really fun is working on a recruiting project. So actually we, you know, we come in and we try to minimize the task of the transactional. And really what I've been able to do is work with the team. So it's definitely not me just doing all the work. It's a testament to the great teams that I work with, the great members that I work with, and we're able to look at the process, see where we can trim things down, specifically, maybe add some definition for some steps in the process, because there may have been, you know, we did this for years, but do we know why.

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Jillian Jordan

You know, I always ask, why are we doing this? Does this add value to the process? Right. So it can lead to challenging conversations, maybe not challenging conversations, but really honest conversations about like, why do we do this and what can we do better? And I've been able to see that process evolve and just how much pride the team has in them believing in this process and understanding why we do each thing that we do and in order to really even sell themselves as an HR

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Jillian Jordan

Unit to the rest of the organization, because that's essentially who we're servicing, right, is we're servicing our employees. We are helping them achieve their goals. So when I look at the recruiting project that I've been on that it's really exciting to see how far that things have come and just how much more excited people are about the process knowing why we do things.

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Sophie Boler

So yeah, it's got to be a rewarding job.

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Jillian Jordan

Yeah. And understand the value is that a lot. But I really want people to understand why are we doing things? And I think that's a huge part of it.

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Sophie Boler

Yeah, we just talked about having to have some challenging conversations sometimes. Are honest ones.

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Jillian Jordan

Yeah.

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Sophie Boler

So what are some of the challenges that you may face as an HRBP?

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Jillian Jordan

I think that in general HR. Is really challenging. Anyone who's been in HR or even just people that I've worked with said I would never want to do your job. It's so challenging. I love it. And i think that what we do specifically at MRA is the biggest challenge of being an MRA business partner would be exactly what we do is we have many different industries, many different size companies, many different personality types that we're working with many different levels of people that we work within the organization.

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Jillian Jordan

But I think that's why we excel at that, because we recognize that challenge, we prepare for that, and we have designed our business model to be successful at that. So it is one of the most challenging parts. But I think when you know what you're up against in any challenge of HR. I would say that is a really challenging situation.

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Jillian Jordan

But we're prepared for it, right? We know what we need to do and we can come at that challenge with confidence and just know that we did the right thing.

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Sophie Boler

You're ready for the challenge. You bring it high.

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Jillian Jordan

Well.

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Sophie Boler

Kind of flipping that question, what is your favorite part as an HRBP?

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Jillian Jordan

My favorite part is definitely the members. I really love working with the members, getting to know each individual that works for the member. I really have been very fortunate to have been welcomed onto these teams. They share their successes. They share snacks, they share lots of great things that we experience. Being on site with members is just understanding their mission and their value.

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Jillian Jordan

And I say that a lot because I've been so inspired by the members that I work with. I mean, there's been times where I've been like, this is so like almost in tears, just like what we do for the communities. And I think that's something that we do well as an HR business partner team is recognizing we're part of the communities.

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Jillian Jordan

We are not just this business, we are these many businesses that we work with and the impact that we have on the community is like, I feel like it's immeasurable.

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Sophie Boler

And you have a very dedicated team and you are very dedicated and.

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Jillian Jordan

Try to be.

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Sophie Boler

But just before we wrap up here, do you have any last thoughts to share with our listeners today?

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Jillian Jordan

I think I kind of covered all of my points. I definitely appreciate you allowing me to come and talk about this role. I think me personally, I have been I've actually worked at companies where I was a member, right? And I use the services, learning and development and the RBI trying to think some of the other areas that I've utilized, so many areas that have helped me, the hotline, etc.

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Jillian Jordan

And I guess the one thing I hope that HR. Business professionals take from this is that, you know, I've been where you're at and I sometimes I've asked for help, and it's been the best thing that I've done. Sometimes I haven't. And so if I can encourage anybody else who maybe is struggling with, you know, just don't have time for this project or.

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Jillian Jordan

Yeah, this process just really, really tough. And I just don't have the scope or the ability to understand where I can fix this. Please call us. Please let us know how we can help because I just I that's the goal is for us to help you with your business needs. And I hate for other people to be out there just trudging through it and suffering through just too much workload or things that you're just not that confident in

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Jillian Jordan

And we can help with that.

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Sophie Boler

Oh, yeah. Hopefully if you needed a little push to ask for help today was your was helpful. But thank you so much for joining us today and sharing a little bit about what you do and some great benefits of HR BPs. But to our listeners, if you liked our chat today and liked the topic, make sure you like the episode, share the episode, leave a comment or review and consider joining MRA as a member.



00:18:52:09 - 00:19:16:12

Sophie Boler

If you aren't a member already, we've got all the resources you need in the show notes below. And we have Jillian's email and her LinkedIn profile in the show notes. So if you want to get in touch with her or have a chat or ask her more HRBP questions, I'm sure she'd love to answer those. Otherwise, thank you for tuning in today and thanks Jillian, for your expertise and we will see you all next week.

00:19:16:17 - 00:19:39:00

Outro

And that wraps up our content for this episode. Be sure to reference the show notes, where you can sign up to connect for more podcast updates. Check out other MRA episodes on your favorite podcast platform. And as always, make sure to follow MRA's 30 minute THRIVE so you don't miss out. Thanks for tuning in and we'll see you next Wednesday to carry on the HR conversation.