



60 Words to Grow Your HR Vocabulary

If you are a Human Resources professional who needs to use English, you will be aware that knowing specific HR vocabulary is an important aspect of your day to day job, whether for presentations, meetings or emails.

But HR English is also worth knowing if you don't work in the HR area, since all employees have contact with the HR department from time to time.

So whether you're an HR professional working for a multinational or somebody who has a desire to work for an English speaking company but specializes in another area, this HR vocabulary list of 60 words and expressions will be useful for you.

I teach you 60 essential words for HR English with definitions and sentence examples.

At the end of this post, you will find a link to download this list as a pdf so you can either print it or save it in a folder on your computer.

Let's get started...

Key:

v = verb

pv = phrasal verb

n = noun

adj = adjective

c = collocation

1. Absence

n | a period of time when someone is not present at a place, job, etc.
E.g. He has had a substantial number of absences this year.

2. Hold accountable

c | responsible for and having to explain your actions.
E.g. The Director knew that he would be held accountable for any flaws in the strategy.

3. Apply

v | put yourself forward as a candidate for a job.
E.g. Fifty people applied for the analyst position.

4. Performance appraisal

n | a meeting in which an employee discusses his or her progress, objectives, and needs at work with his or her manager.
E.g. Our company carries out performance appraisals once a year.

5. Asset

n | something valuable owned by an organization available for the payment of debts or to generate income | a valuable quality.
E.g. We consider the company culture to be our most valuable asset.

6. Attrition

n | a term used to describe voluntary and involuntary terminations, deaths, and employee retirements that result in a reduction to the employer's physical workforce.
E.g. The high attrition rates are something that we need to resolve urgently.

7. Authoritarian

adj | enforcing strict obedience to authority at the expense of personal freedom.
E.g. His leadership style is on the authoritarian side.

8. Autonomous

adj | independent and having the power to make your own decisions.
E.g. Regarding the decision making, she has been very autonomous.

9. Set the benchmark

c | a standard point or reference in which something can be compared or evaluated.
E.g. We have set the benchmark for the succession plan strategy.

10. Bias (towards)

n | prejudice in favor of one thing or person compared with another, in a way considered to be unfair.

E.g. The company has a bias towards younger people.

11. Breach

n | an act of breaking a law, agreement, promise or relationship.

E.g. The company was fined \$10,000 for the breach of contract with their supplier.

12. Briefing

n | a meeting for giving information or instructions.

E.g. The new HR Manager gave a briefing this morning about the new system which is going to be implemented.

13. Candidate

n | a person who applies for a job or is competing for a position.

E.g. There are five candidates competing for this position.

14. Cash flow

n | the total amount of money moving into and out of business.

E.g. The business will face a negative cash flow until sales increase by around 50%.

15. Close

v | to complete a business deal.

E.g. We decided to close the deal with our previous supplier as they were offering the best price.

16. Cohesion

n | when the members of a group are united.

E.g. The team is lacking cohesion.

17. Compulsory

adj | when something must be done because of a rule or law.

E.g. It isn't compulsory to give our employees a private health insurance benefit.

18. Conduct

n | appropriate behavior of a person expected by the organization they work for.

E.g. He was dismissed due to unsatisfactory conduct around certain employees.

19. Confidential

adj | to be kept secret.

E.g. Everything that was spoken in this meeting is completely confidential.

20. Credible

adj | able to be trusted.

E.g. I consider him to be a very credible person.

21. Cut

v I a reduction in the amount or number of something.

E.g. Due to the crisis we have to cut costs.

22. Discrimination

n I the practice of treating people differently from others, especially in an unfair way.

E.g. The commission was set up to address issues of discrimination in the workplace.

23. Dismiss

v I to officially end the employment of someone.

E.g. The company dismissed two employees last month.

24. Doable

adj I something that can be achieved.

E.g. I believe that this goal is perfectly doable.

25. Draw up

pv I to prepare something official in writing, e.g. a contract.

E.g. We have selected the candidate, and all we have to do now is draw up the contract for her to sign.

26. Enrolment

n I the process of officially joining a course, training or group.

E.g. For enrolment in the e-learning course you just have to pay the fee before the 5th June.

27. Ethical

adj I following accepted rules of behavior.

E.g. I don't think his behaviour was ethical.

28. Evaluate

v I to judge or calculate the value of something.

E.g. Let's evaluate how much this strategy could cost us in the long term.

29. Fall behind

pv I fail to do something in the expected timeframe.

E.g. We have fallen behind schedule in the system implementation. We need to come up with a new deadline.

30. Fill in for someone

pv l to replace an employee during an absence.
E.g. I have to fill in for Sarah during her maternity leave.

31. Fire

v l to remove someone from their job.
E.g. Two employees were fired after missing their sales targets.

32. Foster

v l to promote the growth or development of something.
E.g. They were discussing the best way to foster a positive work environment.

33. Framework

n l the basic structure, system or process of something.
E.g. We decided to restructure the communication framework.

34. Ground-rule

n l a basic rule or informal agreement about how something should be done.
E.g. One of the ground rules to make our meetings more creative is 'nothing is personal'.

35. Impact

v l to have a strong effect or influence on somebody or something.
E.g. The new HR Director has had a huge impact on team morale.

36. Incentive

n l something which encourages or motivates a person to do something.
E.g. We decided to invest more in Learning and Development programs because we believe this is one of the best incentives for our employees.

37. Innovation

n l the introduction of a new idea or method.
E.g. One of our company's core values is innovation.

38. Jargon

n l the language used by a particular group of people.
E.g. "Thinking outside the box" is a jargon often used in corporations.

39. Launch

n l the official introduction of a new product or system.
E.g. Four new products will be launched this year.

40. Milestone

n | an important stage in the development of something

E.g. At the beginning of each month we set milestones for that particular month.

41. Misconduct

n | unacceptable behavior by an employee.

E.g. The sales manager was found guilty of gross professional misconduct.

42. Outsource

v | when a company obtains a service from an outside supplier

E.g. The decision was made to outsource all IT related positions.

43. Overtime

n | time spent working in addition to your normal working hours.

E.g. Overtime pay increased by 10% in the last quarter.

44. Payroll

n | the total amount of salaries that a company pays to its employees

E.g. The monthly payroll is close to \$1 million.

45. Position

n | a job

E.g. I'm applying for the HR business partner position.

46. Promotion

n | when someone is moved to a higher or more important position in an organization.

E.g. Her promotion was based on exceptional results.

47. Resign

v | to decide to leave a job or position.

E.g. He resigned as CEO.

48. Recruit

v | to find suitable people to join a company or organization.

E.g. Now that the economy is recovering, companies are starting to recruit more.

49. Be made redundant

c | when you are no longer employed because there is no more work available.

E.g. I was made redundant after working at the company for twenty years.

50. Remuneration

n | payment for work or services.

E.g. The remuneration package was below my expectations so I declined the proposal.

51. Staff retention

n | keeping employees in a position or job.

E.g. Our main focus this year is to increase staff retention.

52. Salary

n | an amount of money that an employee is paid each year.

E.g. This position has an excellent salary.

53. Shortage

n | a situation in which there is not enough of something.

E.g. There is a shortage of IT professionals in this country so we need to hire from overseas.

54. Stakeholder

n | a person who owns a share in a business.

E.g. The project faces opposition from a number of key stakeholders.

55. Supplier

n | a company or person that provides a service to an organization.

E.g. We are a leading supplier for the automotive industry.

56. Systematic

adj | done according to a particular system in an organized way.

E.g. We adopted a systematic approach to recruiting.

57. Takeover

n | taking control of a company by buying a sufficient amount of its shares.

E.g. This company is a very attractive takeover target.

58. Turn down

pv | to refuse, not accept.

E.g. He turned down our 3% pay rise proposal.

59. Vacancy

n | a job that is available in a company and that people can apply for.

E.g. There are currently three vacancies in the communications department.

60. Wage

n | an amount of money that is paid either weekly, fortnightly or monthly, to an employee for their work. It can also describe an hourly rate of pay.

E.g. I accepted a 5% wage rise.

Conclusion

Once you have been through the list of HR vocabulary, take the ones which you didn't know and store them in an organized way so that you can review them.

For this I recommend a flashcard app like Quizlet or Flashcard Deluxe.

Reviewing the new HR vocabulary is extremely important for retention. Learners normally need to see new vocabulary several times to retain it.

To really make the new HR vocabulary stick in your memory, look for opportunities to use it.

So this could be discussing a HR topic with your teacher or writing a short essay about a related topic while using the new vocabulary you learned.

Learning this list of 60 Human Resources words will give you a solid foundation for participating in meetings, writing emails and giving presentations about Human Resources topics.



By Steven Hobson - Founder & Coach, Impactful English
<https://impactfulexenglish.com/>

Steven is a Cambridge University qualified teacher, a certified Life Coach, and owned a language school for 10 years. His approach, which has consistently helped clients accelerate their English improvement for business communication, combines coaching, mentorship, and teaching communication techniques.

Steven has helped 100's of professionals from a diverse range of countries become confident and fluent communicators in English, and provides one to one coaching as well as business English workshops/training for companies.

Helping professionals become
**fluent & confident English
speakers** for business
meetings and presentations.

APPLY FOR FREE COACHING SESSION

"After the coaching with Steven, I'm much more comfortable speaking about different topics and sharing my thoughts."

Dalton Damoulis - Vice President, Renewables, Aker Solutions

