

As a business of recruitment and talent advisors, we work closely with HR teams every day, ranging from small departments within SMEs to the HR business units of major global multinationals. We often find that the challenges of HR teams are similar, regardless of the size of the business. They include making sure there is a good level of motivation and engagement across the organisation, that talent is successfully recruited and retained, effective training and development programmes are available and employees are being rewarded correctly. HR teams also have to make sure they are up to speed with the latest trends impacting businesses such as changes in employment law, online collaboration, gender diversity and flexible working and must find ways to ensure everyone in the organisation is benefitting from developments in these areas.

All of these aspects of HR management are considered when choosing the winner of the HR&D team of the year. Last year's winner Convergys was nominated for the award for its innovative business partnering model and International HR Director Noel Lythgoe explained that because of the significant changes his team had been through during the previous five years, they felt it was time they entered the CIPD awards. *"We felt that being part of the awards (win or lose) would be a great opportunity to enhance the name of our brand and to shine a light on the business partnering activity that had contributed to the ongoing success of Convergys despite the economic downturn."*

According to Noel, making the nomination was a fairly straightforward process. His team worked collaboratively to bring to life, on paper, the business partnering model that ultimately allowed the HR team to 'get under the skin' of Convergys and become a key stakeholder in strategy and decision making. Noel pointed out that the UK represents only around 1% of the 'global footprint' of the Convergys business worldwide, yet through the process of entering the CIPD awards and then subsequently winning HR&D team of the year, his team received recognition from Global Leadership, which *"...raised the profile of the team enormously."*

In Noel's words; *"HR&D Team of the Year is a very prestigious award and one that we were delighted to win. We're now a valuable part of 'Global HR' and are frequently called upon to make a contribution to the success of the wider business. The whole team attended the awards dinner, making it a fantastic evening of celebration and recognition. To win an award which is specific to our own industry was felt by all to be a huge vote of confidence from our external peers, and one which each member of the team continues take an immense amount of pride in."*

If your business has developed innovative HR&D strategies over the last twelve months, we recommend that you considering entering this year's CIPD HR&D team of the year award.