NORTH ORGANIZATIONS™ · SELECTED WORK

TOTAL REWARDS · COMPENSATION STRATEGY

Building a Compensation System That Can Scale

ILLUSTRATIVE CASE STUDY

Total rewards, career architecture, market positioning, governance, and pay decision systems for a growth-stage organization.

ILLUSTRATIVE CASE STUDY · GROWTH-STAGE ORGANIZATION

Tanya Booke, MSHR

Organizational Effectiveness & Leadership Consultant

Confidence North™

ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN · LEADERSHIP · LEARNING · HR · CHANGE

Ad hoc pay decisions eventually become the wrong kind of legacy.

At small scale, compensation lives in the founder's head. At growth-stage scale, that becomes the source of the problem.

INTERNAL INEQUITY

Similar work rewarded differently across teams.

OFFER LOSSES

The market moves; the offers do not.

RETENTION RISK

Employees leave for pay clarity, not just pay.

MANAGER FRICTION

Every raise conversation becomes a negotiation.

COMPLIANCE EXPOSURE

Undocumented decisions create defensibility gaps.

Turning ad hoc compensation into a scalable operating discipline is not an HR project. It is a business one.

One integrated system, not twelve initiatives.

The full framework treats compensation, benefits, career, performance, and governance as one operating layer.

These are the components. The design connects them.

A compensation system is only as strong as the weakest connection between its parts.

Five principles that anchor every pay decision.

01

PAY FOR PERFORMANCE

Compensation reflects impact, not tenure alone.

02

INTERNAL EQUITY

Similar work, similar levels, similar pay — with rationale documented.

03

EXTERNAL COMPETITIVENESS

The market defines the floor; strategy defines the ceiling.

04

TRANSPARENCY

Employees understand how pay decisions are made, even when specifics remain confidential.

05

COMPLIANCE

Every decision is defensible on its own terms.

Principles are how the system stays coherent when specific decisions get hard.

Legible growth starts with legible structure.

Career architecture makes the invisible visible — for employees, managers, and the compensation system underneath.

Each step is a decision the organization has made explicit. Together, they turn "why does she make more than me" into "here is how growth works here."

Career architecture is compensation architecture in slower motion.

Decisions defensible in the moment they are made.

Market discipline is not the same as market data. Both are needed. Neither is sufficient alone.

RELIABLE DATA

Trusted market sources chosen deliberately, not conveniently.

CONSISTENT MATCHING

Roles matched to benchmarks by defined criteria.

DOCUMENTED MARKET POSITION

The organization's chosen posture on the market curve.

MANAGER GUIDANCE

Managers equipped to explain pay decisions confidently.

EXCEPTIONS PROCESS

A named path for when the framework doesn't fit.

Market data without discipline is expensive noise.

The system runs on rhythms, not exceptions.

ANNUAL REVIEW

Compensation cycle synchronized with performance and planning.

COMPENSATION COMMITTEE

Named executive owners for policy and precedent.

PAY EQUITY

Regular analysis with named remediation paths.

DASHBOARD

Health signals leadership actually watches.

EXCEPTION MONITORING

Where and how the framework is being stretched.

MANAGER GUIDANCE

Support tools that reduce the ask on HR.

Governance is the difference between a compensation framework and a compensation system.

What this work demonstrates.

TOTAL REWARDS STRATEGY	COMPENSATION
CAREER ARCHITECTURE	HR STRATEGY
GOVERNANCE	WORKFORCE PLANNING
ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS	

A compensation system is a business system.
Design it accordingly.

Illustrative portfolio sample. Market data, salary structures, targets, and legal requirements would be validated for each client engagement.

Discuss a Total Rewards or Compensation Engagement →

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