

Growing Together

How Bruce Power is Building a Strategic HR Function With McLean & Company

Executive Summary

Bruce Power, one of the world's largest nuclear power plants, has built its HR function into a more strategic and capable partner to the business.

Since 2017, the organization has developed a people strategy from scratch, upskilled its HR team through the McLean Academy, and advanced culture-focused initiatives.

With McLean & Company as a consistent partner, Bruce Power has strengthened both the strategic direction and capability of its HR function.

Challenge

Bruce Power deepened its engagement with McLean & Company at a time when the HR function needed to evolve. A people strategy did not exist, and the team needed to build both the capability and structure required to operate more strategically.

"As we've evolved as a Human Resources team and the company has evolved, it's important for us that, as we're looking to enhance our strategic offerings throughout the organization, we're able to lean on McLean & Company to help drive that through."

Karen Smith

Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer
Bruce Power

The logo for Bruce Power, featuring the word "Bruce" in blue and "Power" in orange, with a stylized sunburst icon above the "P".**BrucePower™**

Innovation at work

Karen Smith is the Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer at Bruce Power, one of the world's largest nuclear power plants, located in Ontario, Canada. Bruce Power has been a McLean & Company member since approximately 2017.

The McLean & Company Solution

Bruce Power partnered with McLean & Company across several foundational areas to build both the strategy and capability of its HR function.

Co-Creating the People Strategy

When Karen joined as CHRO, one of her first mandates was to create a people strategy for Bruce Power, which had not previously had one. McLean & Company was central to how that work got done.

"One of the things that McLean & Company specifically assisted with is the people strategy. When I started the role, the mandate was to create a people strategy, which was something we didn't have. And so we would work through McLean & Company material, and we would talk through how we were going to create that. It was very much a co-creation with the experience from McLean as well as other resources that we were able to pull through."

Executive Counselor

Karen's Executive Counselor relationship began in her first weeks as CHRO and has been a constant through her tenure. It provides a space to work through challenges and stay connected to what matters most, including the culture work that Bruce Power is navigating.

"McLean & Company has been very impactful for my professional growth, just by having a resource to be able to speak to and run through problems and challenges with. I know that I can pick up the phone, I can send an email, and I can have our Executive Counselor on the phone."

"One of the things I've been focused on with our Executive Counselor is talking about culture. As the world is evolving and the company is evolving, how do you make sure that we are supporting the employees as we drive that culture forward? It's just such an easy discussion to have when you're going through this and having someone to listen and provide insights as you're going along the journey."

McLean Academy: Upskilling the Whole HR Team

Bruce Power has made the McLean Academy available to the entire HR team, using it to build skills both within and beyond each team member's current area of focus.

"One of the things that McLean has helped the whole Human Resources team at Bruce Power with is really upskilling through McLean Academy. We've had conversations with the whole HR team about the offerings and what each individual can do to upskill in an area that they're either in and want to learn more about, or something that is a totally different area or a different center of excellence for them to be able to learn and build their own career. That has been very impactful, and I think one of the biggest value-adds that the McLean membership can provide."

Outcomes

People strategy built from scratch: Bruce Power now has a people strategy, co-created in partnership with McLean & Company, where none existed before.

HR team upskilled organization-wide: through the McLean Academy, HR team members across the organization have access to targeted development in their areas of focus and beyond.

Culture work underway: ongoing Executive Counselor conversations are helping Bruce Power navigate cultural evolution and support employees through it.

HR elevated as a strategic function: the HR team is playing in spaces it had not previously been asked to play in, driving strategic value to the business.

HR operating more strategically: the function is now contributing more meaningfully to business priorities and operating at a higher strategic level.

"A recent accomplishment that I'm proud of is really the development of our team and the growth I've seen throughout the whole Human Resources function. It's not only elevating the work that they do individually, but it's elevating the work that we're doing as a team. And what we've seen is it is driving strategic value to the business and allowing us to play in spaces that we've never been asked to play in before."

Advice to Other Leaders

"Our experience with McLean & Company has been fabulous. And when I think of the whole team that supports Bruce Power, they are an extension of my team. McLean & Company provides us with best practices across all facets of HR, and we are excited when they have new pieces of information to share and how we can leverage it within our whole team."

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