A. KEVIN ATKINSON

Global HR & Talent Executive

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Global human resources and talent executive with 20+ years leading people strategy, organizational capability, and workforce transformation for private equity-backed, high-growth, and Fortune-caliber organizations. Trusted advisor to CEOs, CHROs, and executive leadership teams, with direct board and private equity stakeholder exposure presenting on talent, succession, and retention-risk matters. Built FORTNA's global Talent & Development function from the ground up — spanning talent acquisition, HR business partnership, performance management, leadership development, succession and executive assessment, employee engagement, employer branding, internal communications, global mobility, and HR compliance — while partnering closely with Total Rewards leadership on compensation strategy and benefits harmonization.

- **Scale & M&A:** partnered on growth from $450M to $2B+ in revenue and 200%+ headcount expansion across North America, Europe, and Asia, aligning workforce strategy with operating and financial objectives, including labor cost optimization; led HR through five acquisition integrations.
- **Organizational Health & ELT Effectiveness:** led an enterprise organizational health initiative for the CEO and Executive Leadership Team, integrating executive diagnostics, DISC and cognitive assessments, and operating model redesign to improve enterprise decision-making, accountability, and leadership effectiveness during a period of significant business transformation.
- **Foundational HR Builder & Bench Strength:** joined Material Handling Systems (which merged into FORTNA in 2022) as one of its first HR employees, building HR infrastructure, the original compensation handbook, and succession-planning and leadership-assessment infrastructure from scratch; currently leading the full HR build for a greenfield international workforce site — the largest warehouse in Europe — and FORTNA's transition to an offshore/outsourced engineering talent model.

CORE LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

Executive & Board Partnership | **Global HR Strategy & Transformation** | **M&A Integration & HR Due Diligence**
Succession & High-Potential Planning | **Compensation Strategy & Market Analysis** | **Organizational Design & Change**
Employee Relations | **Employee Engagement** | **HRIS Strategy & Benefits Partnership** | **Global Mobility & Compliance**
International Workforce Programs | **HR Business Partnership** | **Performance Management** | **HR Technology & People Analytics**
Talent Acquisition & Workforce Planning | **Employer Branding & Internal Communications**
Change Management & Organizational Effectiveness | **Leadership & Culture Assessment**

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

FORTNA — Louisville, KY | Apr 2018 – Present

Vice President, Talent & Development (Global Head) *Jan 2022 – Present*

Senior HR executive reporting to the CHRO and serving as a strategic advisor to the CEO and executive leadership team, with periodic presentations to the board and private equity stakeholders on talent and succession matters, leading a 25+ person global team spanning Talent Acquisition, Learning & Development, Global Mobility, and HR Compliance — while coaching a global network of HR Business Partners with a separate reporting line — for a private equity–owned, hyper-growth engineering and manufacturing enterprise of 2,500+ employees.

- Built FORTNA's global Talent & Development function from inception, standing up Centers of Excellence that scaled with the business as revenue grew from $450M to $2B+ and headcount expanded over 200% across North America, Europe, and Asia.
- Serve as a trusted strategic partner to the CEO, CHRO, and executive leadership team — and periodically the Board and private equity stakeholders — aligning organizational design, workforce investment, and talent strategy with operating and financial objectives, including labor cost optimization and workforce productivity.
- Coach and develop a global network of 15+ HR Business Partners, facilitating enterprise talent review, performance management, succession planning, and high-potential development — including individualized development action plans and rotational assignments — applying leadership and culture assessment tools including CliftonStrengths, Predictive Index (certified administrator), Hogan, DiSC, and TypeFinder to build a qualified bench for critical roles.
- Leading FORTNA's transition to an offshore and outsourced engineering talent model, partnering with outsourcing firms to design sourcing, onboarding, and workforce strategy for expanded global engineering capacity.

- Led HR diligence and integration for five acquisitions, owning organizational design, talent retention, compensation harmonization, and culture-integration planning as a core member of the M&A deal team.
- Led multiple reductions-in-force and organizational consolidation initiatives, managing workforce planning, severance, and employee relations risk in partnership with Legal; partner with local HRBPs who lead direct engagement with European works councils on cross-border workforce change.
- Served as a member of FORTNA's first DEI committee and helped draft the company's DEI policy; served on the cross-functional committee that harmonized PTO policy across merged entities, and partner with the Total Rewards team on market compensation data and HRIS/benefits vendor and Workday configuration decisions.
- Redesigned FORTNA's performance management and talent review processes — shifting from an annual to continuous quarterly review cycle with a dynamic goal-setting framework that adjusts to shifting business priorities, introducing internal candidate bios, and training managers on calibration and bias mitigation — and currently leading the evolution beyond the traditional nine-box, including successor-readiness assessments and post-review outcome planning with HRBPs.
- Led a CEO-commissioned enterprise organizational health initiative for FORTNA's Executive Leadership Team — designing and facilitating a two-day workshop integrating executive diagnostics, DISC and TypeFinder cognitive assessments, and operating model redesign — to improve enterprise decision-making, accountability, and leadership effectiveness during a period of significant business transformation.
- Co-created The FORTNA Way, the company's enterprise cultural framework, and independently authored its accompanying Culture Toolkit, embedding both directly into core talent processes — performance management, goal setting, interviewing, and candidate assessment — to translate cultural values into everyday people practices.
- Leading a comprehensive revamp of FORTNA's enterprise leadership system — a growing library of 20+ toolkits spanning Change Management, Talent Retention, Culture, Front-Line Leadership, Executive Leadership, and Matrix Leadership, including interactive HTML-based digital tools — with the independently authored Change Management Toolkit applying ADKAR and Lewin change models in a phase-gate framework used enterprise-wide by HR, PMO, and transformation teams.
- Lead FORTNA's employee engagement, listening, and recognition strategy: launched the company's first global employee engagement survey and its Workday feedback and dashboard tool, own executive reporting and action planning, and run FORTNA's new-hire recognition program.
- Built time-to-productivity and workforce capacity-planning dashboards with Engineering and the SIOP team — used by the CEO and executive team, and shared with the Board — informing a shift in contractor-to-FTE staffing mix from 50/50 to 60/40 for labor cost optimization and prompting a redesign of FORTNA's engineering onboarding program.
- Own internal and external employment brand communications — including performance review cycle communications, annual engagement survey communications, leadership video content, and multi-channel change communications for the Cheb, Czech Republic greenfield launch — in partnership with Corporate Communications and Marketing; manage FORTNA's LinkedIn talent brand presence and run internal employee career fairs to support internal mobility and engagement.
- Directed enterprise-wide implementation of Workday's global ATS and LMS platforms and led enterprise-wide HR compliance, including ISO 27001 governance and audit readiness.

Selected Strategic Initiative — Project Ridge (Cheb, Czech Republic)

Leading the end-to-end HR build for FORTNA's greenfield site in Cheb, Czech Republic — the largest warehouse in Europe — owning recruiting, employee relations, and learning workstreams, and partnering on compensation and benefits design, for a new international workforce.

- Designed and authored the complete HR policy and employee relations framework — including a comprehensive employee handbook — for a first-of-its-kind international workforce population recruited from the Philippines.
- Partner with RPO/immigration vendor to lead visa, relocation, and onboarding strategy for international hires into the Czech Republic.
- Lead recruiting and learning design, and partner with the Total Rewards team on compensation and benefits structure, for a multi-hundred-person cross-border hiring program spanning two countries.

Senior Director / Director, Global Talent Acquisition (Global Head) *Apr 2018 – Jan 2022*

- Joined Material Handling Systems (which merged with FORTNA in 2022, retaining the FORTNA name) as one of its first HR employees and built foundational HR infrastructure from the ground up — including new-hire onboarding, orientation, and early organizational development processes, along with the company's original compensation handbook, pay-governance framework, and job-leveling structure, where none previously existed.
- Architected and centralized FORTNA's first global talent acquisition function, building the scoring frameworks, predictive hiring models, and recruiting infrastructure to support a PE-backed growth trajectory.
- Achieved 97% fulfillment against predictive hiring forecasts for high-volume manufacturing roles, while increasing diverse leadership hires 25% through a global DEI sourcing strategy.

- Built the company's first Affirmative Action Plan and compliance strategy; developed FORTNA's global employer value proposition (EVP) and talent-brand architecture — including a redesigned careers site and recruiting marketing strategy — positioning FORTNA as an employer of choice across multiple continents.
- Launched university and early-career talent pipelines — including the LADR rotational program — recognized with the University of Louisville's "Employer of the Year" award, building program capacity to 60+ students per semester.

MasterBrand Cabinets — Jasper, IN

Senior Manager, Talent Acquisition *Apr 2016 – Apr 2018*

Owned talent acquisition vision, strategy, governance, and operational results for a $2.1B North American manufacturer, building recruitment infrastructure to support high-volume, multi-site operations.

- Governed talent integration efforts across six corporate acquisitions, aligning recruitment resources with business realignments and footprint expansion.
- Developed a multi-year recruiting roadmap encompassing candidate sourcing, employer branding, vendor strategy, and performance analytics.
- Launched innovative sourcing strategies targeting non-traditional pipelines through campus, diversity, and social recruiting channels, improving manufacturing talent pipelines 115% through targeted social campaigns.
- Negotiated and eliminated redundant advertising and recruitment vendor contracts, saving $125K+ annually and cutting agency spend 50% and cost-per-hire 40% in one year, while applying active sourcing techniques that cut average time-to-fill by 15 days.
- Led development of rotational and entry-level talent programs to cultivate early-career professionals and establish long-term succession pipelines.

Hollister Incorporated — Libertyville, IL

Manager, Talent Acquisition *Jan 2014 – Apr 2016*

Designed and implemented the enterprise-wide talent acquisition framework for a $1.8B global medical device company operating across four continents.

- Devised a cross-regional recruiting model enabling global recruiting teams to jointly manage headcount planning and delivery.
- Led talent acquisition and leadership assessment for a 400-employee manufacturing operation in Bawal, India, partnering with local HR and plant leadership on hiring strategy and workforce planning.
- Standardized hiring processes across geographies by deploying a global ATS and initiated intern and graduate program pipelines in APAC and EMEA with international HR business partners, enhancing recruiter productivity and cross-functional transparency.
- Partnered with marketing to rebuild the careers site and launch the company's employer value proposition across digital and on-campus channels, while reducing staffing agency costs 40% and cutting time-to-fill by 40 days through vendor consolidation and direct-sourcing improvements.

EARLIER CAREER

Talent Strategies Manager, Career Education Corporation (2012–2014) — Built corporate sourcing and employer-branding strategies impacting 5,000+ annual hires.

Digital Media Talent Sourcing Manager, Anthem (2012) — Built the company's social and digital candidate-generation strategy.

Supervisor, Talent Acquisition, Verizon Wireless (2007–2012) — Led a 20-person multi-state recruiting team across 16 states delivering 4,000+ annual hires, including a stretch assignment as an HR Generalist supporting regional sales leadership.

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP & BOARD PARTNERSHIP

- Presented talent, succession, and retention-risk updates to the board on multiple occasions over an eight-year tenure, in partnership with the CEO and CHRO, and partner with board members and private equity stakeholders on executive search and critical leadership decisions.
- Lead executive assessment processes that inform succession planning and board-level talent reviews, and extend executive recruiting support to additional portfolio companies across the private equity firm's broader holdings.

EDUCATION

M.Sc., Digital Marketing Leadership — University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen, Scotland, UK

B.L.S., Organizational Studies — University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA