

Rm2 Employee Ownership



Case Study

People Untapped

People
untapped.®



About the company

People Untapped specialises in delivering learning and development services for people, teams and organisations. With a worldwide network of expert coaches, facilitators and consultants, they aim to provide innovative, interactive development experiences to really deliver learning that sticks – well beyond any interaction or learning event.



Why an EOT?

People Untapped is committed to five key values – partnership, growth, sustainability, truth and daring. Add this to the understanding that building a successful team is based on trust, not just working together, and the concept of employee ownership already fitted the company's strong business ethos.

Before the pandemic, Founder, Helen Hambleton and her late business partner, Lucy Funnell, had already been discussing how to plan for the long-term ownership of the business either through a trade sale or management buyout. In early 2022, after the sad loss of Lucy the previous summer from cancer, Helen reignited her planning about how best to manage the ongoing ownership of the company. She discovered that an EOT would deliver long term stability for clients combined with sustainability for the employees. Transitioning to an employee-owned model aligned perfectly with the values of the business and Helen

personally. As Helen herself was only 44 at the time, the sale of the business at such a relatively young age was a daring move. But this move meant that the future of the business was no longer dependent solely on her personal decisions.

Helen asked RM2 to conduct an initial feasibility study to evaluate whether an EOT would be the right solution to her long-term business planning. Following this, it was clear that this was the most values-aligned decision she could make for the company she founded and the people within it. She said “John Bezzant and Toni Smartt did a great job of the feasibility study, they explained everything in plain English and gave me confidence that they would support me every step of the way. Taking accountability for co-ordinating the legals and the future EMI plan too was a real added bonus – it felt like a real team effort.”

John Bezzant and Toni Smartt did a great job of the feasibility study, they explained everything in plain English and gave me confidence that they would support me every step of the way.

How RM2 helped

RM2 assisted the company with the financing of the deal, valuing the business and the structuring of the repayment of the deferred consideration. It is expected that the shareholders in the Company will be paid their deferred consideration over the next five years. The sellers will also earn interest on the amounts outstanding. Capital repayments to the shareholders should be free of capital gains tax.

RM2 also assisted with the legal documentation as well as incorporating the trust company and overseeing the implementation process.



*Helen Hambleton
Founder*

Taking accountability for co-ordinating the legals and the future EMI plan too was a real added bonus – it felt like a real team effort.

Now

People Untapped transitioned to EOT ownership in October 2022, with the EOT holding 90% of the share capital – the remaining 10% was retained by the original shareholders. In addition, the business has just introduced an Enterprise Management Incentive option scheme for senior employees, which enables leadership successors to acquire a direct shareholding in the business once the EOT debt has been cleared. For Helen, this means that all the employees have a genuine stake in the business, at whatever level, and can genuinely shape the organisation's future.

