

Interview with People Spark Solutions: A year of Growth, Community, and Resilience

What did you set out to achieve this year?

We wanted to focus on addressing what clients needed most - with external challenges like new governments and global conflicts, we noticed a significant rise in demand for one-on-one coaching. These complex challenges have impacted business leaders, making it harder for them to reach their financial goals and effectively manage their teams, and themselves. To support them, we planned to expand our leadership development services, creating more space for leaders to process, reflect, and build trust in a psychologically safe environment. We wanted to be a trusted sounding board for leaders who often feel they have nowhere to turn.

Has everything gone according to plan?

We achieved our goal, seeing 50% growth in leadership development services this year, and broadening our client base - whilst remaining true to our aim of working with values-based organisations. We've worked with some amazing social enterprises this year and we have become a go-to partner for high-growth tech companies who want to nurture productive, healthy workplaces.

What are you most proud of this year?

I'm immensely proud of our team's adaptability in responding to client needs. They've reacted with pace, energy, and integrity to fulfil client demands even when time was tight - always putting the clients first and doing what was right for them. We've purposefully carved out time for our own development too, which is reflected in our client work, for example this year we helped clients understand more about neurodivergence by working with a specialist partner.



What advice have you been giving businesses this year?

My advice to leaders this year has been simple but critical: focus on the basics and practice gratitude. In challenging periods, gratitude and presence can be stabilising forces for business leaders and it's important to take time away from the day-to-day and reflect on small wins and what is going well. I also advise leaders to build trust, clarify roles and responsibilities, and foster strong connections within their teams. Trust is everything and we need to lean into it now more than ever.

What was the most enjoyable business event you attended this year?

The CIPD Annual Conference and Exhibition (ACE) in Manchester stood out for me. The event, focused on people-centered practices, and provided a rare chance to stop, regroup, reconnect, and share. It was an opportunity to engage with peers, exchange ideas, and reflect on the journey - something I am always encouraging my own clients to do.

What have you learned about yourself this year?

This year, I reflected that whilst People Spark

Solutions are experts in our field and the go-to organisation for leadership and team development, we shouldn't be afraid to ask for help in other areas. I worked with Northeast based The Experience Bank to form an independent advisory board to support the business side of People Spark - and ultimately provide another 'safe space' for myself and the team for ideas and reflection.

Describe 2024 in three words.

It has to be "energizing, focused, and uncertain". It's been an exciting year but there have also been so many unknowns and that's difficult in the people profession, but also for anyone running a small business.

What are your aims for 2025?

In 2025 we will be celebrating our fifth birthday! To have launched and sustained a business through such volatile times feels like an achievement and we want to use the strengths and lessons of our journey so far to support other businesses in navigating the future's challenges, which we know will be equally unpredictable.

Do you have any New Year's resolutions?

I hate New Year's resolutions! I just find them so unsustainable. I believe in incremental changes over time - small, consistent steps, whether in work, health, or wellbeing - are much more likely to lead to lasting improvement. I'm really proud of the team's community engagement which has been at an all-time high this year - I want us to continue to contribute our expertise to local causes in 2025 and deepen our community involvement. Supporting places that foster inclusivity and empowerment locally is really important, and I'd like to focus more on that whilst working with businesses who also have a social conscience, through People Spark.

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