



THE RETURNER PLAYBOOK

HOW TO ATTRACT TOP TALENT & MAKE IT STICK



The Opportunity + Why Returners Matter

Every week, senior professionals from NI and ROI start quietly exploring a return home. They're not job hunting. They're soul searching.

They've built strong careers in London, Edinburgh, Manchester or further afield. They've seen scale, led teams, made things happen. And now they're ready to trade status for substance, and pace for purpose.

The talent is out there. The question is whether your business is ready to bring it home.



Why Returners Are Worth It

They've seen what good looks like. Returners bring fresh thinking, bigger systems experience, and sharper commercial instincts.



They come back for the right reasons. This isn't about lifestyle compromise. It's about long-term commitment and impact.



They want to build, not just maintain. They're not looking for a cosy number. They want challenge, autonomy, and space to grow.



They understand the market. They grew up here. They get the nuance. And they can translate external best practice into local progress.



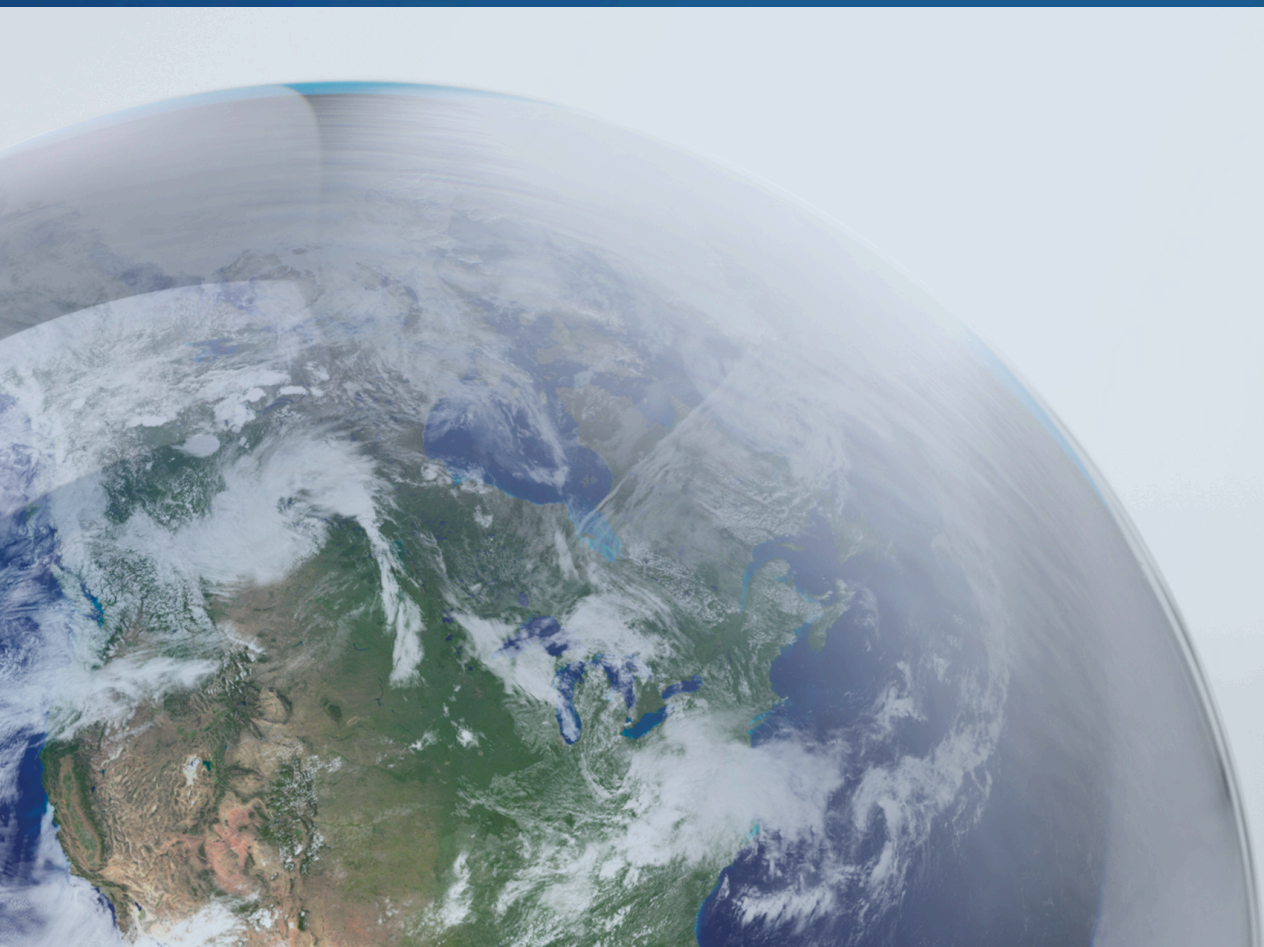
What Stops Businesses Attracting Them vs What Returners Really Want

What Stops Returners from Saying Yes:

- The job spec is too vague, too safe, or too small
- The salary doesn't reflect scope or value
- The pitch is weak or non-existent
- The process is slow or overly rigid
- There's no relocation support or onboarding plan
- The role doesn't match their ambition or capability

What Returners Are Actually Looking For:

- A clear role with decision-making power
- Work that creates progress, not just keeps things running
- The chance to shape, improve, and grow something
- Time and support to settle with their family
- A culture that values fresh thinking, not hierarchy



How to Attract Them

1. Rethink the brief

Clarify the outcomes this person will deliver, not just their title. What will they improve, fix or unlock in 12 months?



2. Build a better pitch

Tell the story behind the role. Why now? What's shifting? Make the opportunity real and relatable.



3. Be flexible on the role

If someone brings more capability than expected, don't box them in. The best hires help you rethink the brief, not just fill it.



4. Move fast, stay human

Structure the process, set expectations, and communicate clearly. Don't drag it out with layers of formality.



5. Support the move

Relocation isn't just logistics. Offer support on schools, housing, start dates and settling in. It makes all the difference.





Returners don't want to be persuaded. They want to be respected. They've built careers elsewhere, often in faster, bigger, more complex environments. They're coming home with ambition, not nostalgia.

What they need is a business that gets it. One that's clear on what it needs. Honest about the challenges. And open to doing things better, not just the way they've always been done.

This isn't about handholding. It's about building something new with people who've seen the best, and want to bring that experience home.

If you can offer that, and create a process that feels honest and grounded rather than corporate, you'll tap into a leadership talent pool most businesses never even reach.

We help organisations do that every day... and we'd love to help you too.

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