

KATE BROWN

SHRM-SCP | MBA

contact.katebrown@gmail.com

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

HR leader with more than 28 years of experience across manufacturing, industrial construction, and maritime operations. Partners with ownership, executives, and frontline leaders to build practical HR systems, guide employee relations, and support organizational change. Brings broad experience in benefits, payroll, talent development, compliance, and workplace safety.

CORE EXPERTISE

HR strategy and operations | Employee relations and investigations | Talent acquisition and workforce planning | Benefits and retirement administration | Payroll | HRIS implementation | Performance and leadership development | Employment policies and compliance | Safety and change management

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Human Resources Manager

Lawson Rigging & Fabrication | Sabula, IA | February 2025 – October 2026

- Led HR across three integrated entities in industrial construction and maritime operations, supporting onsite employees, multi-state field projects, and vessel crews.
- Partnered with ownership, project managers, field leaders, and employees on recruiting, onboarding, employee relations, investigations, performance management, benefits, and offboarding.
- Oversaw safety and compliance functions and supervised the Safety and Compliance Coordinator, including oversight of credential verification and applicable workplace safety and U.S. Coast Guard requirements.
- Developed attendance programs, pay structures, advancement pathways, return-to-work guidance, and manager tools tailored to operational needs.
- Served as designated backup for payroll processing to support operational continuity.

The IFH Group

Rock Falls, IL | September 2013 – February 2025

Human Resources Manager | Promoted December 2015

- Promoted as responsibilities expanded following the Washington facility acquisition; oversaw HR and payroll operations in Illinois and remotely supervised the Washington HR Coordinator.
- Led HR operations supporting approximately 210 employees across manufacturing facilities in Illinois and Washington; partnered with leadership on hiring, retention, compensation, employee relations, and compliance.
- Implemented a new HRIS, overseeing data migration, testing, and user training to improve HR administration and reporting.
- Oversaw multi-state payroll operations and supervised the Payroll Coordinator, while serving as backup processor and directly processing payroll as needed; managed benefits administration and annual open enrollment.

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE CONTINUED

The IFH Group | Human Resources Manager continued

- Developed onboarding, succession planning, and manufacturing training procedures in an ISO 9001 environment.
- Served as World Class Manufacturing People Development Pillar Lead, collaborating with Operations, Quality, and Automation on standardized procedures and continuous improvement.
- Assisted the CFO with the acquisition of a manufacturing facility in Arlington, WA, and supported HR operations remotely during COVID-19.

Human Resources Generalist and Safety Coordinator

The IFH Group | Prior to promotion in December 2015

- Supported recruitment, new-hire orientation, policy and safety training, HR documentation, benefits, compensation, and leave administration.
- Coordinated safety training, risk assessments, OSHA compliance audits, PPE availability, and accident and near-miss investigations.
- Chaired the safety committee and managed workers' compensation claims, corrective-action documentation, and safety reporting.

Human Resources Coordinator

Precision Metal Works | Maquoketa, IA | January 1998 – September 2013

- Served as the primary HR contact, reporting to the President and partnering with management on benefits, compensation, and employee engagement.
- Managed full-cycle payroll, benefits administration, and leave management.
- Conducted new-hire orientations and maintained safety training, OSHA records, and policy and performance training programs.

EDUCATION AND CREDENTIALS

MBA and BS in Business Administration | Ashford University

AAS | Northeast Iowa Community College

SHRM Senior Certified Professional (SHRM-SCP)

Leadership Excellence Graduate | Academy Leadership

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Volunteer advocate, We Work the Waterways, supporting awareness of maritime careers.

Former board member, Maquoketa Chamber of Commerce, four years.

Additional service includes a winterization committee and a K–6 after-school program.