

Sligo's Frankli is shaping the future of talent management

Sligo-based Frankli has developed a platform that helps employers and employees alike keep pace with the dynamic and fast-changing world of work.

[Frankli](#) has developed a people-centric HR technology platform that helps businesses manage and improve employee performance and engagement.

This early intervention software achieves this through a suite of consistent, measurable and impactful tools that empower employees and create and embed ideal workplace cultures.

“We are tackling the complex and outdated process of performance management, specialising in growing companies and distributed teams,” explained Frankli founder Noel Dykes. “HR technologies have not kept pace with changing workplace dynamics and new generations of the workforce who demand more real-time interaction and require different management approaches.”

Dykes explained that the global talent management market is worth €7bn, growing at 9pc annually.

“Companies can run their entire end-to-end performance review cycle in Frankli, bringing a sense of stability, consistency and discipline to this once dreaded process,” said Dykes.

“Our platform offers a suite of user-centric tools for goal setting using OKRs (Objectives & Key Results), measuring performance through pulse surveys and driving improvements through regular 1:1s, and 360 reviews.

“Our customers are reporting significant time saved, better alignment to mission and values as well as an increase in overall engagement and productivity.”

Returning with perspective

Dykes founded Frankli after returning home from New Zealand in late 2016.

“In my last role there, I gained invaluable experience growing a successful IT consulting company, from both a commercial and people leadership perspective.

“It gave me a great taste for business and the problems I encountered first-hand managing the performance of large teams made me sit up and think there must be a more intuitive and personalised approach.

“People want more regular input, feedback and recognition on their contribution at work. They want to align on purpose, and they look for consistent management support to help them achieve their career goals. An annual, static approach to this doesn’t hit the mark in terms of frequency and relevance in meeting the needs of your people and is what led me to found Frankli.”

Dykes was fortunate to attract and work alongside a number of key people at the early stages of the business, enabling it to build out a strong product and engineering team with solid business and HR acumen.

“Most recently, Ronan McCabe has joined as a full-time director of Frankli to help us grow our business outside of Ireland. I’ve known Ronan from the start-up scene for some time, and I’ve always admired his creative energy and personable approach to getting things done.

Country feedback

One of the largely untold stories about tech in Ireland is the sheer talent pool that exists in pockets along the west coast, especially in places like Sligo and Galway where the local third level bodies such as IT Sligo, GMIT and NUI Galway astutely prepare for future professional trends and business needs.

“There are some great companies, people and support agencies in the north-west,” says Dykes.

“There’s a strong sense of start-up community here that’s brought together through [Tech North West](#). We’re also quite fortunate to leverage relationships and facilities in both the Portershed in Galway and the CoLab in Letterkenny where some of the team are working from.

“Outside the region, I’ve always been impressed by the calibre of founders, thinking and ambition emerging on the island. Our reputation for innovation and doing business is strong and rightly so. Having spent more than 10 years overseas, I must admit I spend a lot of time thinking globally and encouraging that mindset in our team. Ireland is the perfect base and launchpad for exactly that.”

Frankli is in the midst of raising a pre-seed round with €200,000 left to raise.

“To date, we have successfully secured HPSU status and funding through Enterprise Ireland with matched private angel investment. We are also backed by the NDRC.”

His advice to fellow founders is to go with their gut. “Always trust your intuition, get comfortable making unpopular decisions and appreciate as your business and team evolve, so should the role you play. Whenever I ignored these factors, things haven’t always gone to plan.

“Stay true to why you went into business, build resilience, think long-term and don’t be afraid to reach out and ask others who are that bit further along in their business journey for advice.

“Building a small network of trusted advisors who have done it before allows you to learn from their mistakes quickly and course correct.”

To stay agile, especially during the workplace disruption caused by Covid-19, the company employs a range of external tools as well as its own core product to operate smoothly.

“As our team is distributed and growing, our investment in tooling is ever-evolving. Our priorities, when thinking about tools, would look to automation, real-time collaboration, alignment and also asynchronous communication.

“We use a number of the Atlassian tools in our development environment to run continuous deployment pipelines into AWS (Amazon Web Services). We use G-Suite for email and collaboration on docs, Slack for real-time internal comms and Intercom to engage with new prospects and support our existing customers.

“We conduct all customer discovery calls, meetings and demos through Zoom.

“Naturally, we use Frankli to define and align our company as well as team and individual OKRs and hold regular 1:1s to discuss individual development priorities and performance,” Dykes concluded.

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