



Head of Employee Relations

Southeastern Trains

southeastern

Head of Employee Relations

Have a read and then apply!

Thank you for interest in this role. This pack covers the key information and some insights. Please have a read and if you have any questions please contact careers@southeasternrailway.co.uk

[Click here to follow the application process](#)

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**The opportunity –
what you need to
know**



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The opportunity

What you need to know

Where will I work?

You'll get to manage your own time. You can spend your time at home, in the office or in an internet café if it suits your style. You'll need to travel across Kent on a fairly regular basis and you'll need to get out and about to speak to frontline colleagues, managers and union representatives.

If you want It could even be part-time.

What is the job about?

Change, change and change And some more change. You will be part of the team that delivers the industry changes at Southeastern. You'll also: support the implementation of rolling stock (trains to you and me!), influence the internal communication and engagement strategy, assist in developing management capability and employee involvement and ensure that case management becomes employee focussed, agile and timely.

The opportunity

What you need to know

Do I need railway experience?

It would be helpful but is not essential. However, you will need experience of working with trades unions on collective issues and change. If you've focussed on individual cases and assisted in restructuring to date then that probably won't be enough on its own. Transferrable skills obtained from experience in logistics, airlines, buses, NHS, Royal Mail, BT, water, power, retail, construction or similar would be an advantage.

Is it for me?

You can view this role through an old fashioned and traditional lens. You could also read the newspaper headlines and draw the conclusion that this is all about managing agreements, managing a dispute and changing terms and conditions.

Of course, there will be elements of this and you will need to be comfortable with looking at the detail and understanding what proposals mean for the business and people. But what the role is really about is about being central to delivering change. Expertise in industrial relations and policies will not be enough. Your key focus will be on influencing people at all levels of the organisation, the trades unions and industry partners.

It is an exciting opportunity to ensure that business improvements are delivered for customers in a way that engage staff. You don't have to be an extrovert but you need to be confident and persuasive – you need to get involved early on and ensure colleagues and the unions are considered as part of change. If your preference is to sit on the sidelines draft papers and respond when asked a specific technical question then this role is not for you.

**About the company –
what you need to
know about SE**



southeastern

The company

What you need to know about Southeastern

We welcome and encourage applications from people of all backgrounds

We are going to do this recruitment a bit differently. We are going to involve our colleagues in your interview. The final stage will involve a presentation or a challenge for you to address. Whether you have worked in rail all your life or you want to come and see what it is about we want to hear from you. We want a workforce as diverse as the communities we serve and for you to meet our people as part of the process.

The standard blurb...

Southeastern is one of the busiest commuter rail companies in the UK running more than 2,000 trains, and carrying nearly ~~600,000~~* passengers every day between London, Kent and East Sussex.

Just over 4,500 employees - mostly from the communities that we serve - work together to provide this vital service and we are looking to expand our successful team. We have a strong set of values that shape the way we run our business and guide our staff in delivering what our customers need. These are:

- We aim to be the best
- We make the difference together
- We care passionately about our people and our passengers

Southeastern are proud to work with some fantastic organisations and our recent accreditations are part of our journey to becoming an even better place to work. We continue to work across the industry and forge closer working with Network Rail

*now nearer 470,000 ... The pandemic continues to affect how we all work and travel!

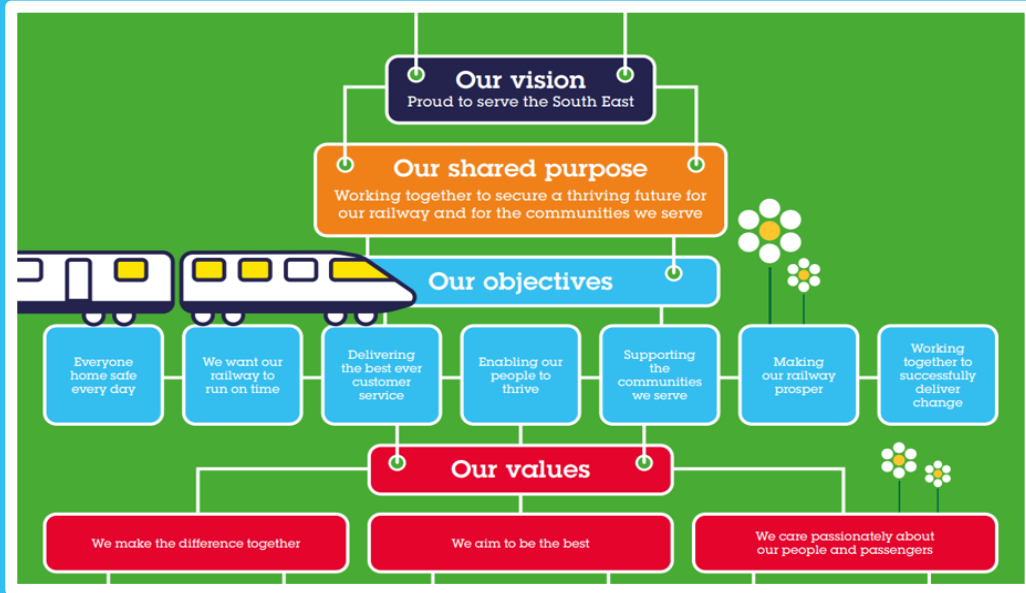
The company

What you should really know about working at Southeastern

- Winner of Rail Business of the Year 2023 as well as being highly commended in both the Diversity and Inclusion and the Wellbeing in Rail categories
- Ranked as part of the 5% club in the Apprenticeships Top 100 Employers 2022. The country's most outstanding apprenticeship employers for 2022 were recognised for their vital work boosting career opportunities for more people
- Currently seeking assessment against the Investors in People 'We Invest in Apprentices' accreditation and already hold Gold accreditation against the other two IIP Standards: We Invest in People and We invest in Wellbeing
- Financial Times Diversity Leaders ranking for 2023 comprising 850 companies across Europe seen to do more than just talk about their commitment to diversity and inclusion taking action to promote change and create an inclusive environment
- Named in The Sun's Top 8 menopause-friendly employers (in 2022)
- Won the Women in Rail Top Employer award in both 2020 and 2022



Hear more about the business plan, a review of 2022, our apprentices and views from our people



2022

What a year

Skills for life with Southeastern Apprenticeships

The graphic features four icons: a house outline, a heart outline, a speech bubble outline, and a lightbulb outline. The Southeastern logo (se) is in the bottom right corner.

In their own words

The detail and admin bits



The Good

Southeastern Railway
18,280 followers
6d · 🌐

We were honoured to have been named as Rail Business of the Year at the 25th Rail Business Awards.

The judging panel recognised that alongside our industry partners, we are working to deliver the best possible service to our customers in a complex and challenging landscape. This award recognises some of the excellent work delivered by our people in their endeavour to support others and secure a thriving future for our railway and the communities we serve, including:

- Launch of the (now industry wide) Rail to Refuge scheme to help those fleeing domestic abuse
- Pioneer of the Rail Mental Health Charter which has now been adopted by over 100 companies
- The installation of life saving defibrillators on every station for the use of customers, colleagues, and our local communities
- Deployment of security staff to reduce antisocial behaviour and key locations
- A Joint Safeguarding Strategy with the British Transport Police to support everyone who travels or works on our railway
- As well as taking home the big one, we are also delighted to have been highly commended in both the Diversity and Inclusion, and the Wellbeing in Rail categories. Colleagues from across the business were in attendance to accept the award.

Steve White, Managing Director said: "A railway is characterised by its people. This award is their award and we couldn't be prouder."

Rail Business Awards

Railway Gazette EVENTS

The Bad

Southeastern ✓
798.9K Tweets

Southeastern ✓
@Se_Railway

Providing real-time information about Southeastern services 24/7. For comments, complaints & fares information please visit our website or call 0345 322 7021

Travel & Transportation 📍 London, Kent and East Sussex
southeasternrailway.co.uk 📅 Joined August 2011

134 Following 252.2K Followers

Followed by Archway LGBT+ rail employees network 🇪🇺, Avanti West Coast, and 57 others you follow

Tweets Tweets & replies Media Likes

Pinned Tweet

Southeastern ✓ @Se_Railway · Feb 17

RMT strike action has been announced for March and April. We're working hard to understand what this means for you and how it will affect services. As soon as we know, more information will be available here: bit.ly/3F0i3Bt

RMT strike action in March & April

Strike action is due to take place by the RMT union on our network on the following days:

- Thursday 16 March
- Saturday 18 March
- Thursday 30 March
- Saturday 1 April

A series of overtime bans by Network Rail RMT members will be in effect from Friday 17 March through to Saturday 29 April and some disruption may also be experienced. We're working hard to understand the level of service that we can run during this time and will update you as soon as we can. southeasternrailway.co.uk/strike-action

📱 - Southeastern App | 📞 - 07866 002 690 | 🐦 - @Se_Railway

83 26 45 106.8K

and the Ducky

Southeastern ✓
@Se_Railway

1 We've been informed that a duck has been left on a train at #HerneHill - staff are looking after it at the station at the moment and will arrange for it to be safely collected, however if it is yours then please make yourself known to station staff.

6:50 PM · Feb 24, 2023 · 1.8M Views

1,238 Retweets 442 Quote Tweets 8,038 Likes

Southeastern ✓ @Se_Railway · Feb 24

Replying to @Se_Railway

1 The #HerneHill duck has been handed over to a wildlife organisation who will continue to look after it.

Thank you all for your concerns for its welfare (and, of course, your quacking puns!)

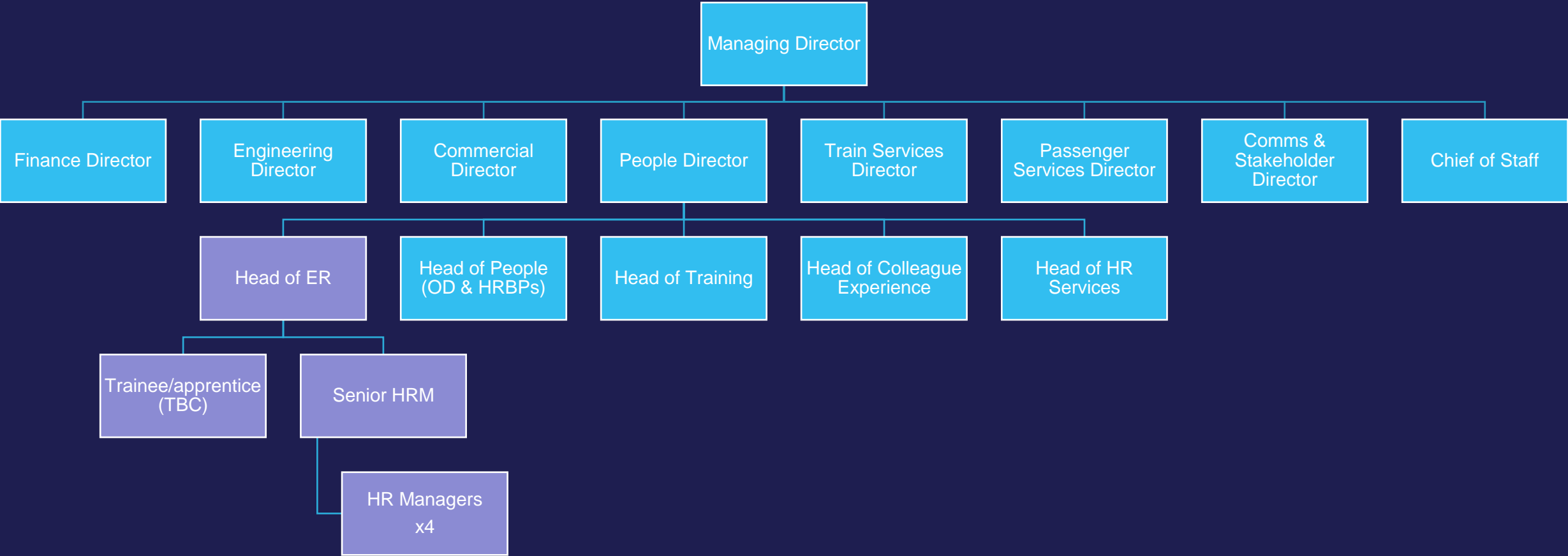
25 83 948 104.5K

Southeastern ✓ @Se_Railway · Feb 25

Following on from yesterday's #duckadventures - we're pleased to say (quack) that the duck is in very safe hands:

We have made some great progress over the last year but the strike action continues. We also need to do more to improve performance and attract customers back to rail. Do you have experience of working with the trades unions – will challenging TU talks be like water off a duck's back to you?

The chart





Improving
colleague
engagement



Inclusion
and diversity



Leadership
skills and
nurturing
talent



Wellbeing

Our People Strategy

Enable our People to Thrive “Continuing to make Southeastern a place where everyone has a voice to make things better, feels they belong, feels they can grow and embraces wellbeing”

When our people feel they have the power to make decisions and make a difference, they can thrive in their roles – and ensure our customers have the same rewarding experience. It takes us back to our purpose of working together towards a thriving future for our railway and for the communities we serve. We’re turning how we think about leadership on its head – giving all our people more autonomy, mastery and purpose. Our leaders’ priority will be their people, moving away from a ‘command and control’ culture to giving people more support to meet their work and personal goals and involving them in decisions

Summary of job Description – see full JD

Purpose:

To drive change and improvements in working practices through effective trades union and employee engagement. To understand, influence and suggest ways of improving business processes and employee involvement to make Southeastern a better place to work. Responsible for maintaining a positive relationship with employees and the trades unions whilst ensuring the consultation/negotiation of all change programmes, HR policies and procedures are undertaken in accordance with the procedural agreements. Overseeing case management to ensure effective resolution for employees and the business.

Accountabilities:

- Identify employee relations implications of the short / long term company plans highlighting perceived problem areas. Develop an employee relations strategy to meet the company's objectives whilst mitigating risk.
- Take the lead role in all planning all significant staff restructuring initiatives, maximising the benefits for the company whilst ensuring that effective communications takes place at all levels.
- Ensure the correct application of the collective bargaining procedures and interpretation of employees' terms and conditions ensuring maximum cost benefits to the company whilst avoiding any unnecessary delays.
- Assist in the development of the individual case management strategy by ensuring that high profile cases are managed, other cases are resolved quickly and lessons are learnt.
- Assist line managers in the interpretation of agreements relating to employees' pay, terms and conditions ensuring timely implementation and consistent application.
- Organise and chair regular Company Council meetings ensuring that all issues are addressed in a timely manner.
- Support the business leads by either chairing or actively facilitating negotiations and consultations with the Trade Unions and Company Councils on Company wide issues including annual pay and conditions reviews.
- Act as the point of contact for Trades Unions, responding to items of correspondence in a timely manner and progressing all issues with relevant directorates.

Skills, experience and knowledge

- Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to perform effectively in a consultancy role, as well as to influence decision-makers.
- Strong negotiation skills.
- Resilient and able to operate under pressure and deal with difficult situations.
- Good planning and organisational skills.
- Problem Solving- Identifies potential difficulties and causes, generating workable solutions and making rational judgements.

The small print

The salary and benefits

Southeastern recognises the value of every individual employee and offers benefits that reflect this. As well as a **generous salary***, we offer an **comprehensive benefits package** which includes;

- A Contributory Final Salary Pension Scheme
- Free rail travel on Southeastern and GTR rail services (extends to family members for leisure/educational travel)
- After a qualifying period, reduced rate travel on other train operators, including European services
- Up to 32 days annual leave entitlement (including bank holidays)
- Access to an array of discounts for retail and leisure products through our benefits scheme.
- Family friendly benefits including enhanced maternity/paternity leave, parental leave and carers leave.

*Sadly other companies will pay more - let's be honest! We want to know about your skills, experience and passion. The salary will be circa £85-90K. The opportunity, support and colleagues will make this job for you!

The rules bit ...

If you have been unsuccessful in the recruitment process for the same/similar position you will not be eligible to apply for a period of 6 months from that date. *The job has not been advertised for over a year so you'll be ok!*

All offers of employment are subject to us obtaining satisfactory references (covering all education, training, employment and unemployment in the preceding 5 years and any previous railway employment). We will also complete right to work in the UK and criminal record checks. This is to ensure we are employing the best person for the role and to protect our customers, colleagues and our reputation. There will also be a pre-employment medical. We are unable to offer sponsorship to work in the UK.

This post will close before the intended closing date should sufficient number of suitable applications be received. Therefore, if you are interested in applying for this role, we suggest that you do so at the earliest opportunity to avoid disappointment.

SOUTHEASTERN is owned by SE Trains Ltd, a subsidiary of the Department for Transport's public sector owning group, 'DOHL.' DOHL has responsibility for three rail companies, LNER, Northern Trains Limited and SE Trains.

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In the first instance please direct your questions to careers@southeasternrailway.co.uk

[Click here to follow the application process](#)

No agencies or executive search companies for now

Steve Foster People Director

Thank you