

Heka, tailored support and benefits to drive your business

As part of our quick founder questions series – or QFQs – we spoke to Steph Hind, cofounder of Heka about expanding employee benefits, offering adaptive solutions and the importance of optimism.

Temps de lecture : minute

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Before Heka, we were running a startup that made it easier for employees to find and book fitness classes and gym passes in their area. The drive behind starting that business was knowing people could be healthier, given the right platform and support from their employer to find something they liked that was right for them, at the right time.

After a couple of years of growth, we realised that flexible and tailored benefits should not only be applied to fitness, but to every aspect of life. We believed that everyone could use employer-backed initiatives to thrive. Heka was born, expanding our offering from gyms and fitness classes to everything from menopause support to nutrition.

Tell us about the business – what it is, what it aims to achieve, who you work with, how you reach customers and so on?

We believe Heka is one of the driving forces behind employees achieving their true ambitions for health and happiness. We've worked hard to make our platform adaptive and personalised, revolutionising employee wellbeing thanks to the way it is designed to cater to the diverse needs of

modern teams.

Recognising that a one-size-fits-all approach fails to engage the majority of employees, Heka offers over 5,000 benefits to choose from, ensuring that every individual finds something that resonates with their interests, goals, and personal ambitions. This flexibility is crucial, with 93% of users reporting feeling healthier and happier after utilising Heka's services.

Heka addresses a huge range of wellbeing needs - from mental health, fertility and menopause support, to financial wellness, nutrition and neurodiversity - ensuring comprehensive support for all employees whatever their situation. Heka is not just another benefits platform; it is uniquely designed to help employers foster a culture of wellness that is both engaging and effective, with a direct impact on staff retention.

By prioritising individual needs and preferences through adaptive solutions, Heka is setting new standards in employee benefits, making it easier for organisations to invest in their most valuable asset - their people.

How has the business evolved since its launch?

Heka launched in 2020 to support people across all areas of wellbeing. Since then, the breadth of services, tailored through interests, user inputs and technology such as geolocation, has expanded tremendously. We've now onboarded brands and services designed to suit all manner of employee needs and personal ambitions, from marathon training, better sleep quality, allergy testing, health cash plans, virtual GP, opticians, and the list goes on!

We're committed to continuing to expand the benefits each individual employee can access because no person is the same. It's this core belief

that enables us to promote wellness to our customer's employees and a mission that will only continue to accelerate. It's what makes Heka, Heka.

Tell us about the working culture at Heka

We have to walk the walk if we're going to talk the talk. Employee wellbeing is put at the front and centre of our business. We're a fully remote team based across the UK, so communication is vital and we're proud of the time and money we invest into ensuring the whole team feels connected to their day-to-day tasks, teams, and the brand as a whole. One initiative we are particularly fond of is offering our employees time in the week that is marked out (no impromptu diary invites!) for them to prioritise their personal wellbeing goals.

How are you funded?

We raised at Pre-seed and Seed stages and have since aimed for profitability, which we're on target to hit in the coming months. As with any business that aims to upset the status quo, we're focused on ensuring current and future customers are aware of the breadth of services our platform offers, why it really has changed the game when it comes to employee benefits, and demonstrating our consistent growth and innovation, both as a business internally and as a trusted platform for organisations and providers.

What has been your biggest challenge so far and how have you overcome this?

We are business partners but are also married. Naturally, when it came time to start a family, it was an all or nothing decision (we chose all!). Starting a family and running a business together simultaneously has no doubt been our biggest challenge - it is also the one that has provided the

most satisfaction. At all times, we have to think about our home and business requirements and it's a challenge that requires the utmost creativity, communication, and patience.

Embarking on this journey has felt like creating a new path in many ways. There isn't much precedent (or support) for founders who have young families, let alone founders who are navigating pregnancy and very early parenthood all at once.

Initially, in 2021 when Steph had our first baby, she was determined to have it all, set on juggling work and personal life at the same pace. Even on the day of her scheduled induction, to kickstart labour, Steph found herself sending work emails at 4am.

Outwardly, Steph was keen to emphasise (mostly to herself & investors) that 'You can run a business and have a baby'. But the honest reality is that it is really hard to do both of those things immediately.

By the time our second baby arrived, in 2023, we were infinitely more prepared. Steph took 12 months' maternity, and trusted in the team we had built around us! So confident were we in the skills, expertise, and professionalism of all those that help make Heka what it is, this decision never seemed like a risk, but an opportunity for others to step up while Steph focused on the most important task of all.

How does Heka answer an unmet need?

Heka actually offers a lot of the same services many companies already offer their employees. Cash plans, EAP, virtual GP, even fertility benefits in some forward-thinking companies. Where Heka differs is that we offer it all, and 5,000 other options, in one, personalised place. A 20-something male doesn't need menopause benefits, but he also might not be interested in the gym or running. Instead, he may want to work on his

nutrition and gut health, and Heka would support him with that.

What's in store for the future?

Expanding to more companies in the sectors we already support - law firms, recruitment companies, and marketing agencies, is a top priority for Heka. Heka already works with a magic circle Law firm and has received amazing feedback from both the business and its employees. We want to reach more employees in these sectors as we know the value we can bring.

Of course, Heka is also expanding to support companies in a variety of exciting sectors, many of which are new to the business.

What one piece of advice would you give other founders or future founders?

“What's the worst that can happen?” is the popular saying, but as a Founder you need to change your mindset and instead think “What is the best that can happen?”. That optimism will see you through the tough times, but will also ensure the good times keep rolling - as you need to take chances and believe to succeed.

And finally, a more personal question! What's your daily routine and the rules you're living by at the moment?

The rules we're living by at the moment are (mostly) set by our 3 year old daughter and 1 year old son. So that's; 5am wake-up, followed by banana pancakes & strawberry milkshakes, sunrise walks with our dog Conker, gym/run/cycle/swim, shower and dress (probably in a princess outfit for our 3 year old 'boss') and then diving into the working day. Sometimes

we'll train again in the evening, sometimes we'll go for a date night, sometimes we'll be up in the early hours getting our kids back to sleep. We don't have a TV, so we rarely sit down. It's never boring, but we do like to live full on!

Steph Hind is the cofounder of Heka.



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