

Welcome

By **Ruella Crouch**, Managing Director

The last time I wrote the 'welcome' for the Recruitment Journal I was sitting in our offices surrounded by the Christmas lights of Carnaby Street and Regent Street, how time flies!! Summer is just around the corner, the evenings are lighter and there's generally a more positive feeling in the air.

At the risk of sounding very boring we are as busy as ever in the recruitment to recruitment sector, the market is still very buoyant at all levels. The senior end of the market in particular is very, very busy and we've been inundated with opportunities at the £50,000 plus mark, many on a retained or exclusive basis.

As we rapidly approach our eighth year in the R2R sector we're delighted that a record number of candidates, currently 90 per cent – are registered with us either through personal recommendation or through reputation and that 95 per cent of them feel so confident in our ability that they are working with us exclusively!

As many of you will know we are the only R2R to have won the Recruiter Award for Excellence a record three times and that we work with a comprehensive range of top tier clients right across the UK, placing candidates at all levels.

Opposite you'll find 10 reasons why you should only work with us if you're looking for a new role within the recruitment sector. If you're not looking yourself but know someone who is, give us their details and we'll pay you a referral fee of £300 during April, May and June once we've placed them and they've passed their probationary period.

Also in this edition of our Recruitment Journal we focus on how the budget will affect your business and the legal and business changes that will be implemented over the course of the coming year, the importance of soft skills in recruitment and a range of methods that you should be using to combat the skills shortage.

Finally we've some great ideas for getting out and about now that the sun is back!!

We look forward to catching up with you over the Summer.

Kind Regards,

Ruella.



Ruella Crouch

10 Reasons Why You Should Be Using Us Exclusively

The following adjectives were collated from a survey of clients and candidates conducted during November 2005.

Professional . . .

Ruella James is an organisation, which appreciates the repercussions that a poor match can have on a client's business and a candidate's career.

Results Driven . . .

We are dynamic recruitment company for the recruitment industry, able to offer innovative, unbiased and results-driven recruitment solutions.

Knowledgeable . . .

We have an excellent understanding of the markets within which clients and candidates operate.

Best Practice . . .

We are committed to 'best practice' where honesty, integrity and professionalism underline every aspect of the recruitment process.

Specialists . . .

Our team is trained to the highest professional standards in order to meet client and candidate expectations of excellent service.

Consultative . . .

We have a consultative approach, taking the time to properly understand the needs of clients and candidates.

Speed of Response . . .

We offer an efficient service tailored to specific requirements and time frames

Quality Focus . . .

We are a high profile organisation with access to quality opportunities, and talented individuals across the UK.

Well Represented . . .

We will ensure that you feel valued and well-represented, with equal emphasis on both parties throughout the recruitment process.

Personalised Solutions . . .

We are a qualified, specialist team of consultants that listens, questions and then consults, providing personalised solutions.

A Budget for business?



The Chancellor's budget last month, possibly his last before moving to the house next door at Number 10 Downing Street, surprised many with its headline-grabbing income tax cut. But what does it mean for business in general and the recruitment industry in particular? The Chancellor dubbed his Budget one of 'prosperity and fairness for families'. But the Forum for Private Business (FPB), which represents small companies in the UK, believes that it

contained little to achieve the same for smaller businesses. Tax cuts aimed at big business will do nothing to ease the burden for the majority of the private sector while the Chancellor reduced Corporation Tax from 30 per cent to 28 per cent but announced that the Corporation Tax for smaller companies will be raised to 22 per cent by 2009.

Chief Executive of the FPB, Nick Goulding, said: "The Chancellor has used smoke and mirrors to disguise the fact that there is nothing in this Budget to support small businesses. In fact, the resulting confusion created by some of his initiatives will serve only to increase the red tape burden." Mr Goulding said the new measures will deliver for larger firms not for smaller businesses – which make up the large majority of the recruitment industry.

But in good news for staffing the Chancellor announced a delay to the application of the legislation relating to Third Party Transfer of Debt in the Treasury's bid to tackle Managed Service Companies (MSC's). The draft legislation that was published on 8th February had given the application date as the 6 April 2007, but this has now been delayed until 6 January 2008 for recruitment agencies. The Chancellor also confirmed that the legislation would not extend to end-users, which had originally been feared. This announcement will come as a great relief to the recruitment industry as it will give agencies extra time for them to work with the right business partners.

The legislation governing the future treatment of Managed Service Companies is to go ahead, although the Treasury has altered the definition of an MSC in an attempt to give greater clarity and certainty. The new definition builds on the original criteria of an MSC exercising control over the finances or general management of the company, adding a focus on the role and business of the MSC scheme provider itself. The exact definition of an MSC will be contained in the Finance Bill 2007 to be debated by Parliament in the coming weeks.

Commenting on Budget 2007, Eugene Lantry, Group CEO of Charterhouse Group International said: "It is clear that the Treasury have listened to the feedback provided in the consultation period."

So the verdict on the Budget? A mixed bag for business in general but a win for many sections of the staffing industry.

What's new for 2007

After the Age Discrimination rules came into effect last October you would be forgiven for feeling that businesses, particularly recruitment businesses, had enough new rules to deal with for one 12 month period. But time moves on and a number of new regulations come into force this year, indeed some of them this month.

Chief among them the new Flexible Working Regulations 2006, which have been introduced as part of the government's plans to extend family rights under the Work and Families Act 2006, will mean that employers will, from April 2007, be obliged to consider requests for flexible working from those who care for certain adults. This right has been available to employees with children under six (or with disabled children under 18) since 2003, and has seen good take up.

The other measures under the Work and Families Act 2006 which are in force are the extension of maternity rights for women expecting babies after this month. This will entitle all women to take up to one year of maternity leave (at present 6 months of service is necessary to benefit from this right), and will extend the period of statutory maternity pay, maternity allowance and statutory adoption pay from 26 to 39 weeks.

Additional measures have been announced which will include the further extension of the period of statutory maternity pay, maternity allowance and statutory adoption pay to 52 weeks but no date has been given for when these new rights will come into force.



Recruitment Skills

Finding the candidates



With the skills shortage continuing to bite, finding the right candidates for your clients' needs is becoming an increasingly difficult task for the average recruitment consultant. There are fewer candidates available with the right skills for each job role you are trying to fill and there are more recruitment professionals chasing those candidates. It's called the law of diminishing returns – if everyone keeps going

back to the same sources, everyone will eventually encounter the same problem, a shortage of good, qualified candidates. While there are an enormous range of job boards and other advertising media available to recruiters in the UK marketplace – all of which perform an extremely useful function - if staffing professionals want to go the extra mile to get ahead of the competition they need to come up with new and innovative ways of getting in touch with candidates that the competition can't reach.

Let's look at the options online. With a reasonable online advertising budget it is easy to generate hundreds of applications. However, more internet savvy recruiters are beginning to understand that the key benefits of using the internet to attract candidates, is not the great numbers that the internet can produce; but the quality of candidates that are available online. You might want to try to adopt a mixed strategy to attract different types of job seekers. Active job seekers are visiting job boards and actively searching for jobs while semi-active job seekers are using search engines to search for careers related content but have not yet visited a job board. A good net strategy will try to engage both of these groups.

Passive job seekers – people who would change jobs if the right opportunity was presented but are not actively looking – are the hardest candidates to attract. Recruiters need to develop a sophisticated job board strategy. Recruiters lured by the biggest job board or the job board offering the best deal can often become unstuck by the number of irrelevant applications in their inbox. Job boards should be selected primarily on the quality of the audience they attract; and whether that audience matches the type of candidate the recruiter is looking to attract.

Away from the web how do you go about attracting people who are not looking for you? The answer is by thinking creatively and using arresting ways of working within your own particular market. You need to be networking as much as possible and look at your business as a one-stop shop for career advice, rather than just a 'job shop'. Going to conferences, seminars and other events is a great way to get involved with your market. If you've never thought of using headhunting to attract passive jobseekers, now might be a good time to consider the benefits.

It's true that in the current market, candidates are difficult to find. But by adopting the right strategies when you do find the right people you are sure to make a placement – and surely that has to be good news.



Soft skills – your secret weapon

In a recent survey from financial recruiter Robert Half senior managers said that the qualities that most contributed to attaining their current positions were overall business acumen (27 percent) and interpersonal skills (21 percent). For recruiters soft skills are essential – staffing is a people business and without being able to relate to, and engage with, others it will be difficult to succeed. Soft skills are especially vital for consultants to possess since they interact with so many different individuals on a daily basis.

The soft skills set includes:

- **Communication.** You must be able to clearly express observations, suggestions and solutions to senior management and other individuals in the company. Asking questions helps to avoid communication gaps.
- **Listening.** Consultants need to arrive at each engagement with an open mind and be willing to hear and understand what the client has to say. Active listening allows a consultant to conduct a more thorough analysis and develop effective solutions.
- **Multi-tasking.** Solid organizational skills and the ability to manage and implement the multiple phases of a project are highly valued by businesses.
- **Diplomacy.** You should be able to demonstrate tact in taking the best approach to resolving sensitive situations.
- **Adaptability.** A successful consultant should be able to quickly acclimatise to new environments and corporate cultures as well as interact with people at all levels.
- **Teaching and Mentoring.** The ability to teach through training, mentoring and encouragement is an asset that can allow you to progress in your career.

At the end of the day, recruitment is a sales environment. But people buy from people and by developing your soft skills you can help to ensure your own success.

Spring break!!

April marks the beginning of Spring when winter gloom is cast aside for another year and people turn their attention to the opportunities that the new season can bring. Whether its holidays, shopping or just getting out and about in the sunshine, this guide to some of the best sites on the web for enjoying the new season will ensure that your Spring 2007 will be one to remember.

Holidays



Easyjet.co.uk

Once it was just cheap flights, but now they do hotels and car hire too. The original low cost airline can help you plan that Spring holiday you've been promising yourself all winter.



Expedia.co.uk

If you want someone else to take the strain and organise your holiday for you, look no further than Expedia. With everything from beach holidays to city breaks, this web resource covers your holiday needs from front door to poolside.



Action-outdoors.co.uk

Want something a little bit more energetic than working on your sun tan? This site can offer you it all. Paragliding courses, mountaineering, rock climbing, hiking and multi-sports trips for those who will try anything once.

Shopping



Uk.shopping.com

Don't make any impulse purchases before you check out uk.shopping.com. It's a price comparison and review site which lets you know the best products to buy and how much you should pay for them.



Amazon.co.uk

It used to be about books, CDs and DVDs but not any more! Amazon now covers a wide range of items from electronics to homeware. If you haven't visited it for a while it's time to go back for another look.



Harveynichols.com

If getting out and about is more your thing and you want to pamper yourself why not take a look at the Harvey Nichols website. With stores in London, Birmingham, Edinburgh, Manchester and Leeds, the site will give you a head start before you turn up with your hard-earned cash.

Out and About



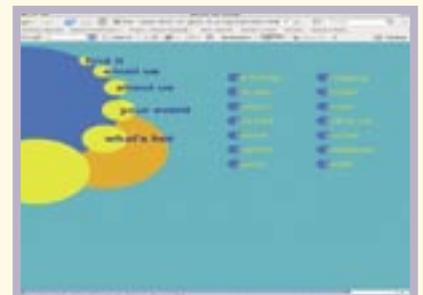
UKwhatsonguide.co.uk

UKwhatsonguide is a comprehensive listings site which tells you about fun events across the length and breadth of the country.



Watson.uk.com

Aimed at the younger market, this is another UK listings site which is especially good on music, festivals and other fun events for the young and the young at heart.



Whats-on-guide.co.uk

Want to indulge the more cultured side of your personality? This site is great for theatre, movies and exhibitions as well as some great ideas for days out with the kids.