

Ready for the Recovery

In our last update we focussed on the pitfalls of recruiting without a comprehensive understanding of employment law and the danger of not practicing rigorous pre-employment screening.

In this paper, we show how the current economic climate can offer opportunities to employers. The new year gives you the chance to prepare your business for the recovery. With the economic outlook improving, now is the best time to shape your business to gain a competitive advantage. Nowhere is this more prudent than in staff planning; having the right workforce is critical to the success of your business.

Confidence building

Candidate confidence is returning to the market and you need to be aware of how this can affect your company. Recent research by Brook Street showed that nearly a third of those asked planned to leave their current role now the recession has ended (Brook Street Big Question, www.brookstreet.co.uk). With this increase in candidate confidence, many businesses can leave themselves vulnerable to a sudden talent shortage if their workforce is not adequately engaged. However, you can mitigate this risk and ensure your business is ready for the recovery by adopting a flexible workforce strategy.

Strategy for success

Using a flexible workforce strategy and implementing robust staff planning can ensure your business stays one step ahead of the competition and also allows you to:

- Gain access to the right talent, with the right skills, at the right time.
- Utilise a mix of temporary, permanent, fixed-term and contract employees, providing greater agility for your business.
- Use effective engagement models to enable your business to build a proactive staff plan and become an employer of choice.

With over six decades of expertise leading the UK recruitment industry, Brook Street use innovative sourcing channels, tailor-made to meet the needs of our extensive client base. Through working in partnership with each of our clients, we are able to easily identify a more efficient workforce strategy and deliver cost-saving solutions for you. Using a local, bespoke, structured sourcing plan will ensure your staff are engaged and your company is in the perfect position to win business in the upturn.

Manage your talent

Having the the right workforce solution to manage your talent is a key way to guarantee optimum performance of your company. For example, through the contingent worker model, pioneered by Brook Street for a large healthcare provider, our national network of local experts can assess, test, pre-screen and induct highly motivated individuals for you. Once the individual is successfully placed, we continually engage with the worker, thereby increasing productivity and return on investment for your business. The primary benefits of this model are:

- Costs savings compared with employing permanent full time employees.
- Increased budget control through cost take out and improved workforce planning.
- Decreased HR and training workload with reduced time to hire period.

This unique approach to managing your talent can greatly improve employee engagement and help to position you as an employer of choice in your local marketplace.

Visit www.brookstreet.co.uk

Optimistic outlook for the UK

Many employment market analysts have predicted an upturn in the economy in 2010. According to the latest reports from the Bank of England, the UK economy has started to expand again and the ONS has recently announced that the UK is officially out of recession.

This trend can also be seen in the UK employment scene with positive figures reported recently:

- The number of people unemployed in the UK has fallen unexpectedly for the first time in 18 months.
- Total unemployment stood at 2.46 million for the three months to November 2009, down 7,000 on the figure for the previous three months.
- The rate of unemployment now stands at 7.8%, down from the 7.9% reported in December 2009.
- The number of 16-24 year olds out of work also fell between September and November, down from 943,000 to 927,000.

(BBC)

Encouragingly, many of Brook Street's clients are now predicting headcount gains. These cover temporary, contract and permanent positions across the UK for Q1 2010.

Developing the skills your business needs to lead the upturn

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Make yourself an Employer of Choice

In today's marketplace employers are continuing to look at new ways of positioning themselves locally as an employer of choice, as well as increasing employee engagement and loyalty.

Brook Street believe that taking this approach will give you access to a wide range of talent as well as a clear advantage over your competitors.

According to the Employers of Choice Forum, there are **six core principles** that every company should adhere to in order to attract and retain the best talent:

Caring for people, appreciating each individual and showing they are personally valued, is fundamental to success.

Honesty and fairness woven into the fabric of everyday workplace practice, earn trust and respect.

Open communication at all levels builds confidence, stimulates innovation and increases effectiveness.

Involving people in work related decision-making strengthens personal commitment to maximum performance.

Coaching and developing each person releases their unique potential and builds organisational capability.

Ethical behaviour, practiced at all levels, reinforces a sense of meaning and belief in the organisation.
(www.employersofchoice.org)

We work closely with all our clients, understanding how their business operates and encouraging best practice. This enables them to be in the strongest position possible when sourcing new employees. If you would like to learn more about how Brook Street can help you become an Employer of Choice, contact your local branch today.

You can also access more information about recruitment industry practice and related legislative developments via the Employer Zone on our website at: www.brookstreet.co.uk/employerzone

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Looking at talent in a different way

The most important asset of any business is its workforce. Recruiting and retaining the best workers is vital to an organisation's success, particularly during an economic downturn.

In past recessions, many organisations lost the skills of the young and 50+ generations and were then poorly placed to move forward quickly when conditions improved.

The Age and Employment Network (TAEN) – suggests that the key risks to a business that is not monitoring its staff demographics include:

- Increasing mismatch between the competencies and characteristics of the available labour pool and those required.
- Loss of operational knowledge caused by exits and retirements.
- Impaired productivity.
- Falling or stagnating growth.
- Declining health and wellbeing of workers.
- Limited capacity amongst the organisation's managers and leaders to assess and respond to the changed environment.

(www.taen.org.uk)

If you would like to understand more about the different aspects that make up your workforce or if you would like a free copy of Brook Street's "A Guide to Age Discrimination", please contact your local branch.

Investing in future talent

A £1bn Future Jobs Fund scheme to create jobs for unemployed young people commenced in October 2009. The fund is aimed at those aged 18-24 who have been without work for 12 months or more. If you create jobs that last at least six months and which improve local communities you can bid for funding - set at a maximum of £6,500 per person. For more information please visit:
<http://campaigns.dwp.gov.uk/campaigns/futurejobsfund>

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