



# HR+TIMES

Adding value to organisations...

## In this issue:

PROFIT FROM TALENT

THE BENEFITS OF MEDIATION

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL NETWORKING

WHERE ARE THE FAT CATS?

GRANT SUPPORT TO HELP YOUR ORGANISATION GROW

EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL GRIEF

VERY SATISFACTORY NEWS

TEAM TIME AND WHAT A TIME!

TRAINING CALENDAR 2011

CLEAR ADVICE FOR JOBSEEKERS



## PROFIT FROM TALENT

Many organisations will have made their plans for 2011. Some will be retrenching, others expanding and many fighting to hold their own. Whichever of those categories you fall into one key issue will hold equal importance and that is identification, attraction or retention of talent.

Few organisations, if any, can do much without people. Many organisations, whatever the sector, have similar equipment and processes and therefore can only secure competitive advantage through their staff. Those organisations that have very knowledgeable and skilled staff who are motivated and raring to go the extra mile will have a much better chance of good profitability and prosperity.

So how do you get the talent to gain good profitability? There are three clear routes although two of those are often neglected.

The first, a readily identifiable route, is through the hiring process, either by advertising or using a recruitment agency, the latter often lightening the recruitment burden and speedily providing candidates who meet the organisations requirements. While bringing new blood into the organisation has its advantages, although it may be costly in terms of higher salary, it also brings risks that the new member of staff may not shape up, or fit the culture and expensive mistakes are made.

The second two routes are often ignored or little used. The first of these is identifying talent already in the organisation. Many members of staff have a wide range of knowledge and skills and are often capable of fulfilling bigger roles and making greater contributions. They may not recognise that at first but if identified and nurtured you may find the talent and at relatively low cost that can transform your business.

Secondly is the identification of staff with potential. These are staff, who may have demonstrated a range of beneficial characteristics such as job knowledge, loyalty,

excellent attendance, or are trainers/coaches to new staff. They are often ripe for development into roles at higher levels in the organisation if given the right training, encouragement and environment. Through this you will find talent and again, at relatively low risk and cost.

Two other thoughts for you to boost your talent programme. Firstly don't lose talent. Keep in touch with the talent you have and ensure they are challenged, satisfied and rewarded. Use performance appraisal programmes to do the job formally and take actions to ensure they feel valued.

*Keep in touch with the talent you have and ensure they are challenged, satisfied and rewarded.*

The second area is don't forget the flexible workplace which is becoming more and more important in the quest to retain or secure talent. Part-time working is growing especially for those returning to work after a career break; homeworking suits more and more people and in many organisations location is not critically important; and portfolio workers are steadily increasing – those people who like to work for more than one organisation at any time.

Finally more and more organisations are outsourcing areas of business activity such as Human Resources and Payroll in order to find more cost effective services from highly talented and professional people.

If you require assistance with the development of personal development plans incorporating tailored training please contact Joy Cross on 01233 722486.

# THE BENEFITS OF MEDIATION

HOW TO SAVE MONEY AND INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY,  
Mark Shulman, Cumberland Ellis LLP

Cumberland Ellis

## Why is there more conflict in the workplace?

The world of work in the 21st century is experiencing unprecedented change and turbulence. New and faster forms of communications and a 24/7 mentality have created a longer working week and greater stress for both workers and employers. Advances in technology and globalization of products and workplaces have resulted in greater competition for jobs.

In such a changing economic world, mergers, acquisitions and other organisational change brings disruption, as well as fears of reduced remuneration, jobs losses and unexpected changes of career direction. All this brings attitudes and potential conflict.

With requirements for productivity and cost-cutting imperatives, stress-related medical conditions are increasing in the workforce. A joint report published in 2008 with the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development found that the average UK employee spends over two hours a week dealing with conflict which meant more than 370 million working days were lost in a year at a cost to British employers of more than £24bn.

## What does mediation do?

Workplace mediation can re-orient the parties towards each other by helping them to achieve a new and shared perception of their relationship. There are three fundamental and distinctive elements of mediation:

- First, it is consensual in that the parties decide whether to participate and whether an agreement can be reached. It is the parties themselves that control the nature and terms of any resolution and the process is non-binding unless and until a settlement is reached.
- Second, the process is private and confidential. Anything disclosed during the mediation is “without prejudice” and cannot be relied upon outside the process or in legal proceedings if the parties fail to resolve matters during the mediation.
- Thirdly, mediation concentrates not on “rights and liabilities”, but on “needs and interests”.

## The business case for mediation

There is a clear business case for mediation, the key elements of which are:

- Time - mediation is often completed in one meeting, compared with the two days or more typically required for tribunal hearings;
- No need for legal representation – legal representation is optional for the parties and in the absence of a legal framework, less critical to outcomes;

# TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL NETWORKING



Networking offers a whole host of benefits for organisations including making a sale, learning something new which will provide a benefit, meeting a potential new employee, finding a new supplier and so on. Successful networking should not be shameless self-promotion of your business.

## Here are some hints for successful networking:

- Prepare before you go by seeking a delegate list and researching their businesses
  - Target the people you really want to meet, benchmarking is about making the right connections not collecting a pile of business cards
  - Don't bore people; spend your time asking a few relevant questions and if you detect you can help try and fix a meeting or walk off with the business card and write the problem on the card so you have aids to the follow up
  - When joining a group already talking, spend time listening and introduce yourself at the right moment. Follow up those where you have heard a matter that you may be able to help with
  - Don't stay too long with any one person, especially those that may give no future value, a polite “excuse me” is fine
  - Get there early as it usually gives more time to network with other early arrivals
  - Follow up within 24 hours, preferably by telephone.
- 
- Confidential - mediations are confidential so that parties are less likely to be trapped by positions adopted earlier;
  - Problem solving approach - mediation takes a problem-solving approach to disputes, which reduces disruption and potential future problems;
  - Agreement between the parties gives buy-in to the solution - it is therefore less likely to mean that one party is seen to “win” and the other “lose”, leading to greater workforce stability and lower employee turnover;
  - The process is perceived as fair - since both parties contribute to finding a solution and such “win-win” solutions support trust-based relationships.
- For further details, please contact Mark Shulman, solicitor and accredited Workplace and Employment Mediator, Cumberland Ellis LLP (Tel 0207 242 0422).

## WHERE ARE THE FAT CATS?



It seems that every time you open a newspaper or watch TV you hear about another person receiving an astronomical salary/bonus. Joe Public almost inevitably believes that everyone but him is on a mega salary. But that is far from the truth.

Nowadays, to be in the top 10% of earners, the average full time worker only needs to earn £15,000 more than the UK's average wage, a total of £47,112 per annum – a lot less than some people might initially think.

In fact, not everyone (or not as many people as we are led to believe) are so called 'fat cats'. Just 0.6% of earners bring home more than £150,000 – just 175,000 people out of nearly 30,000,000 workers.

The media would probably provide a greater service if it concentrated on low paid people. 42.8% of workers or 12,500,000 earn less than £15,612, an annual sum which is regarded by the Government as the poverty line. These are the workers who quite clearly are feeling the pinch from the Government's austerity programme. Some would even argue that the introduction of the National Minimum Wage has helped create the large numbers of workers below the poverty line as the rate has become the pay norm in many organisations.

Yes 'fat cat' pay will always be an irritant to many but low pay may be a hindrance to creating the motivated and committed employees needed to help Britain escape recession and climb the world productivity league table.

## GRANT SUPPORT TO HELP YOUR ORGANISATION GROW

At HR+ we work with many organisations, both large and small, but our defining legacy is to add value to that organisation.

We do this in many ways: our HR audits, which are FREE to organisations employing less than 100 staff, advise how compliant one is with current employment laws; our on-site coaching and mentoring provides a HR professional to support line management handle a difficult HR issue; put staff on our training programmes aimed at sharpening skills and our project work can be as varied as writing new policies or a staff handbook to managing a major change programme.

We are often able to find grants to help organisations take advantage of our work but at a lower cost than normal. Don't miss out on financial assistance which could transform your organisation.

To assess eligibility for grant support call Victoria Santer on 01233 722480 or Karen Welfare on 01233 722431.

*“Don't miss out on financial assistance which could transform your organisation.”*

## EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL GRIEF

The Tribunal Service has recently published its annual statistics for the year to 31st March 2010 and it makes very unpleasant reading. In brief:

- Claims submitted are up 56% on the previous year
- Single claims were up 14% on the previous year
- The most common claims were: unauthorised deductions from wages with 75,000 claims; unfair dismissal at 57,400 claims and breach of contract with 42,400 claims.
- The biggest increases in the type of claim were: working time up 297%; unauthorised deductions up 122%; redundancy payments up 76%; age discrimination up 36%
- Average compensation ranged between £4,886 for religious



discrimination to £52,087 for disability discrimination. The average compensation for unfair dismissal was £9,120.

- Maximum compensation ranged from a low of £9,500 for religious discrimination to a high of £729,347 for disability discrimination. The highest compensation for an unfair dismissal case was recorded at £234,549.

AVOID THE GRIEF by joining our HR telephone helpline service where you can obtain expert advice on a range of HR issues from expert HR Practitioners. Go one step further and sign up to our A+ product and in addition to HR telephone advice you will receive indemnity insurance which covers the cost of having a dedicated employment lawyer to defend actions at the Employment Tribunal and any compensation up to £250,000 is paid for.

## VERY SATISFACTORY NEWS

According to a survey by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, job satisfaction increased across UK workplaces during last autumn.

In the survey of 2,000 employees job satisfaction (the difference between the percentage satisfied and dissatisfied) rose to +42, up from a balance of +35 in the summer. The finding illustrates what the Institute has called the 'fixed grin' phenomenon that workers in tough times are more content because they are simply pleased to have a job. The findings echo what happened during early spring 2009 against the backdrop of recession when job satisfaction hit +46, before falling as economic and employment conditions improved.

Also the economic scene is not all bad news. Many manufacturing companies are taking advantage of a weak pound to export; service industries are gathering momentum; banks are lending (maybe not enough but they are) and red tape is being cut.

Please call Karen Welfare for further details on 01233 722431.

## TRAINING CALENDAR FOR THE SECOND QUARTER OF 2011 (PUBLIC SESSIONS)

DATE	LOCATION	PROGRAMME
11-04-11	Huntingdon	Equality & Diversity
13/14-04-11	Kent	Recruitment & Selection
04/05-05-11	Kent	Effective Business Manager
18/19-05-11	Kent	Effective Business Manager
22/23-06-11	Huntingdon	Recruitment & Selection

To book a programme please call Karen Welfare on 01233 722431.



## TEA TIME AND WHAT A TIME!

Next time you are brewing up tea for your work colleagues just remember that the average Briton spends 24 minutes a day making hot drinks at work which is equal to 188 days and 21 hours in a working lifetime.

This was the result of a survey commissioned for the launch of T6, a hot and cold water dispenser. The survey also found that four in ten of us do a tea or coffee run for work colleagues at least twice a day.

Based on the average national wage of about £26,000 per year the results of this survey would suggest that each worker costs £416 a year in lost productivity waiting for the kettle to boil. Although the sixty four thousand dollar question is would we get anything done without the good old cuppa!

## CLEAR ADVICE FOR JOB SEEKERS

Here is some advice from the College of Optometrists for those seeking a new job – wear glasses to the interview.

The research found that if you want to impress a prospective employer you should put on a pair of spectacles as job seekers are more likely to be hired if they wear glasses to their interviews.

The research found that a third of adults think spectacle wearers look more professional, while 43% think they appear more intelligent. 40% of those with 20-20 vision would consider wearing clear lenses if it would improve their chances of getting a job.

Well if thousands can spend time 'decorating' their CVs to make them more employable what is wrong with the face?

HR+ Ltd is a specialist HR and training consultancy known for adding value to organisations through its assignments. Contact may be made as follows:

Telephone: 01233 722480 Email: [info@hrplustraining.co.uk](mailto:info@hrplustraining.co.uk) Website: [www.hrplustraining.co.uk](http://www.hrplustraining.co.uk)