

# the source

bulletin two

autumn 2006

how to

hit the

a discussion around  
accelerating executive integration

ground running

without hurting yourself

## 'do we let new recruits down?'

Karina Riddiford, asked the question, as she tackled the thorny and somewhat sensitive issue of 'induction and integration' at the latest ResourceBank HR Forum held at Mallory Court, Leamington Spa. Research shows that very few people hit the ground running ... without hurting something.

"The lack of comprehensive integration programmes merely illustrates the extreme pressures HR staff face. It just is not on our long list of priorities"

The reality makes for painful reading – research shows that:

- 1 in 4 managers change jobs each year
- Alarming 40% of them derail within 18 months
- Subsequent costs to a company are estimated at 4 x salary, plus bonus\*

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Karina Riddiford

\*Source Heidrick & Struggles

## hrforum

Guests from companies such as Betterware, Argos, SHL, Jaguar and Traction Technology had to ask themselves the question:

**'Can you honestly say your own integration programmes are successful?'**

Jane Watkinson, Argos with Karina Riddiford



**The answer was unfortunately a deafening 'No' for 90% of attendees.**

Jane Watkinson from Argos commented "We're guilty of leaving people largely on their own once we've given them the happy clap and a couple of weeks of diarised introductions. Karina's insights are good to reflect on, to make us think. It should change the way we do it, but it's not easy, as everyone needs a personalised route and each induction needs to meet individual needs which is time consuming."

Maria Antoniou, from Jaguar and Land Rover, agreed with the lacklustre performance, "Many of us do fantastic inductions for graduates, but not for senior executive transitions. There is an assumption that more senior people know how to play the game better. Plus, over ambitious expectations from employers wanting value for money from day one, which is unrealistic."

Karina concluded her presentation, "Given the significant resourcing costs to find senior people, its understandable that companies want to see a rapid return on their investment. However, for the individuals, transition is complex – it's about more than just delivering and it takes more time than companies allow. As HR people we need to be aware that there's a mismatch in expectations and we need to facilitate a happy outcome for executives and companies as ultimately it's in nobody's interest if an executive fails."

Maria Antoniou, HR Director at Jaguar and Land Rover with Karina Riddiford and Sarah Hopkins, ResourceBank



## newsflash



**F L A G S H I P**

ResourceBank is delighted to announce a new client as it launches a joint venture with Flagship Training Ltd – a leader in military and maritime training solutions.

Following a year long planning exercise, ResourceBank is launching and managing a dedicated 'Centre of Excellence for Recruitment' based in Portsmouth to attract and assess training staff for the Royal Navy.

The partnership aims to provide a long-term strategic base from which the Royal Navy can build a more effective platform and infrastructure to deliver a growing recruitment capability. It is anticipated that the Centre will be responsible for sourcing approximately 300 staff per year.



As an HR Director with an impressive CV including GUS, Innocent Drinks, Granada Group, Compass and Sainsbury's, Karina Riddiford offers a few insights and practical tips into the highs and lows of executive integration – something of a personal mission after witnessing too many lacklustre inductions.

**Recent research states the average integration is expected to take 3-6 months, whereas the reality is nearer 18 months. Only 39% of people report that they were satisfied with their organisation's induction efforts.** (Source RHR Int. Research)

## othernews

The Next HR Forum will feature Sue LaVerne, HR Director at Myriad Group (childrens retail brand adams) debating the 'HR Challenges of working in VC-backed businesses'.

It will be held in London on May 17th 2007. To reserve your place, please contact Susan Austin on Tel: 01952 281937.

# how to hit the ground running

Seeing the tricky situation from both sides of the fence, Karina suggests some coping strategies:

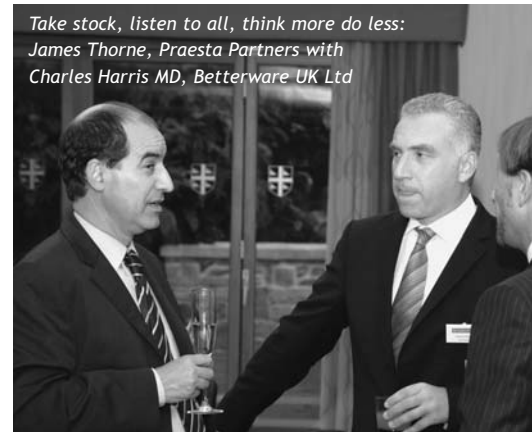
### The Classic Pitfalls

- **Unrealistic Expectations** you've paid handsomely for the search, now the new exec needs to make a vast difference in the first 100 days – impatience and undue pressure are recipes for failure
- **Execution errors** lack of knowledge and pressure to perform commonly results in execution errors and ultimately derailment
- **Formal introductions** too much focus on procedures, systems and policy. A brief 'meet & greet' simply isn't enough – more informal introductions and relationship building is vital
- **Transition and cultural complexities** understanding organisational styles, issues and politics – think more, do less
- **The onus remains on the individual to make it work** they do need to be proactive, but new recruits need help and support to make it work

### Strategies for the New Recruit

- **Think More do Less** resist the temptation to run headlong into action. Take stock, listen to all, learn the history before any action
- **Quick Wins** don't get bogged down with small issues, focus on the bigger picture and the end game
- **Cultural Clash** understand the company ethos and history – just because a way of working was successful in your previous company, it may not work in the new environment
- **Know yourself** be aware of your own style and how it adapts to your new environment – survival of the fittest

*Take stock, listen to all, think more do less:  
James Thorne, Praesta Partners with  
Charles Harris MD, Betterware UK Ltd*



## how to hit the ground running *continued*

### “Diplomats think twice before doing nothing”

Watch, listen and learn before taking action, making statements or assumptions about your new colleagues.

#### Build A Circle Of Trust

- **Go Deep** you can't do it alone, build credibility by selecting 10 people at the coalface, respect all views, engage with the most connected influencers and focus on relationship building
- **Go Broad** retain a strong external network to support you, people who can challenge your opinions, retain confidentiality and offer a different perspective

- Act Dumb Think Dirty pick your team within 30 days

#### Implications for HR professionals:

“I thought the perfect induction existed, but it appears it doesn't. But we can all do a few simple things to make integration easier and it will make a real difference.”

- The starting gun goes off when the announcement goes out – get execs to take ownership of integration and support them

- Facilitate stakeholder relationships – organise social events with teams ahead of start date. Think of less obvious, but well connected people who could help integration
- Be explicit about the culture and anticipate challenges for the executive. Make time to coach or find someone who can – 2 hours every 2 weeks for 18 months, not 100 days
- Help the exec achieve quick wins needed to build early credibility
- One size does not fit all – tailored activity for each individual is needed



ResourceBank MD, Richard Pearson  
– never stumped by anything!

## willow, wickets and wine

ResourceBank clients, staff and friends enjoyed the first ever cricket Twenty20 Cup held in Shropshire this summer. Bearing only a passing

resemblance to the more traditional version of our national summer sport, Twenty20 cricket features a breakneck speed, impossibly bright outfits and appeals to cricket buffs as well as non cricket lovers everywhere.

Four teams went head to head to find the cricket champions in the day long competition. County cricket teams from Shropshire, Staffordshire and Herefordshire were joined by international players from the Professional Cricketers Association. Twenty20 allows each team only 20 overs in which to score as many runs as they can, making each match quick to play and thrilling to watch.

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Sponsored by ResourceBank the fast paced game was eventually won by the home team, Shropshire.

#### get in touch...



Please contact  
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and let us show you  
just how effective  
an outsourced  
recruitment solution



can be for your business.

#### outsourced recruitment solutions

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