

the SOURCE

bulletin 11

spring 2011



on the button

Partnership HR: Why do we need to be experts in everything ourselves?



*Jon Forde, Pitney Bowes' HR director
for UK & Republic of Ireland*

Pitney Bowes' HR director, Jon Forde began in an open and honest manner, not always associated with the business world, to describe Pitney Bowes' 'journey' - to borrow an X-Factor word - towards HR transformation.

'Why do we need to be experts in everything ourselves?' asked the title of the presentation. 'We don't was Jon's response. An easy answer on the surface, but it had taken a number of less successful attempts to see it. It boils down to 'this idea that nobody can understand your business better than you can', thinking we can do it all ourselves. He admitted that the

HR team had become too close to the issues and that not bringing in external expertise to challenge the team's thinking and assist in the implementing and embedding of the changes, thinking they could do it all themselves, had in his view been a mistake.

The UK HR Team were struggling with broken systems and a lack of processes. No longer able to provide the level of support that the evolving business required, it was ripe for transformation. The team knew where they wanted

ResourceBank

to be - using a variable cost model to achieve greater transparency and be more accountable to the business. With the two earlier attempts at managing the HR Shared Services' transformation in-house only providing limited success it was clearly time to think differently and take the leap of faith needed to bring in the experts.

Project HiRST - HR Strategic Transformation for International - will redefine Pitney Bowes' UK HR Shared Services team, better equipping it to support the business in a more proactive, efficient and user friendly way. Inherent



in the project, Jon said, was accepting that the days of HR having to do everything themselves were gone and that there were external organisations out there who could incorporate themselves into the Pitney Bowes culture and provide real benefit and services to the employees.

It was OK, he found, to go outside the company to find and involve external experts such as ResourceBank, initially signed up to handle recruitment, and Office Angels, who supply Pitney Bowes' temporary staff. Apart from expert knowledge which business partners can bring, he believes they also provide a 'can do' mindset and the ability to challenge the in-house team in how they work and how they provide their services. It all depends, he told us, on the ability to accept help, and - critically - being comfortable sharing what doesn't work and why in public. Trust, too, plays an enormous part believing that your partners are 'in it for more than the money and will work for you with your best interests at heart', he added.

Pitney Bowes outsourced its UK recruitment to ResourceBank in October 2009. Less than a year later

Jon asked whether they would be able to apply some of the efficiencies and processes they'd brought to recruitment to other areas of Pitney Bowes' HR offering, such as transactional, first tier resolution and operational processes. They could.

Jon is hoping to outsource his transactional and operational centre by the middle of this year and the payroll function by September. Pitney Bowes is also working with Office Angels on system improvements, and plans to complete Project HiRST by June 2012, by which stage he will also have built up a list of specialists to use on an ad hoc basis. The work of course does not stop with identifying external partners. Integrating them into Pitney Bowes will involve great investment of time. It will be about getting them in front of senior people and ensuring that they truly understand the business. Regular reviews should also ensure that the business itself understands the value the partners bring to HR and the business as a whole.

He was frank when he spoke of the difficulties of HR transformation, and equally so when discussing the project's impact on existing staff. They

understand, he said, the changes and the need for them, and are aware of the potential impact on their own futures at Pitney Bowes. Jon has costs to cut, and inevitably this will affect staff.

As for managing the ongoing relationships with a growing number of external partners, this will be, Jon said, about boundaries. "Our partners are probably being asked to help us more than traditionally they do elsewhere and we need to continue to work together to bring about the benefits to the services we offer and which the business deserves." He's also keen to devolve more HR to line managers, but admitted that this continues to be a challenge.

Asked what he wishes he'd done differently in terms of this HR transformation, Jon joked 'getting the shared services changes embedded as part of the prior initiatives'. He acknowledged that he should have brought in the external partners earlier. As he said, it's a pretty brave step to admit you can't do something yourself, then to have to ask the business for money to bring in outsiders who can, but it has clearly paid off.

what the attendees thought:

Aliaxis Huw Davies, UK HR director,

Aliaxis: "There's no such thing as a free lunch, but these events are never a hard sell. ResourceBank is in it for the long run, and they have some great ideas - the model really works. It's a chance to meet like-minded individuals."

ASOS
The Online Fashion Store

Heidi Badelek, senior business partner, ASOS:

"ASOS is much smaller than Pitney Bowes, so there aren't many parallels, although I could certainly see the synergies. It's been enlightening to see how a bigger, more corporate, organisation coped. And it was good to hear about an alternative to the Ulrich model. Aligning with the business model shows that HR is listening and receptive to what the business needs."

gsk
GlaxoSmithKline

Althea Davies,
Head - HR services management,

GlaxoSmithKline: "I don't know an equivalent event - it's a great chance to network. Listening to Jon talk about work experiences so similar to my own validated what I have been through and where I'm going. It's been really useful."

RPO is it always the right solution?

Richard Pearson, managing director of ResourceBank, hosted an interactive session about RPO at the HR Business Network Forum at London's Kensington Roof Gardens.

In a very candid forum with some of the UK's leading HR Directors, Richard led a discussion that challenged the accepted wisdom that RPO is suitable for every company. The consensus was that 'a partnered model' worked well where the focus was on candidate experience, efficiency/process improvement and commercial accountability. However, the group accepted there would be some organisations where the economies of scale would not justify a dedicated team. However, he stressed that for organisations with high volumes of similar roles, outsourced recruitment to a single supplier had proved extremely effective.

Richard explained, "On average, RPO results in a 20% reduction in existing recruitment costs but often the costs are not the main driver for an organisation to opt for RPO. One of the biggest advantages of a resourcing partner is the positive impact on the employer brand. As a resourcing partner, we take the candidate experience very seriously.

"In addition, our systems provide clients with valuable management data, accessible at the touch of a button, offering a complete overview of the status and cost of recruitment. We can also provide a 'technology transplant' within just a few weeks by creating or updating the company's career website."

Richard offered the following top five tips for those starting out on the RPO process:

- 1 Ensure your business understands why you are outsourcing.
- 2 Get senior executive support from the outset.
- 3 Involve the whole business - it can't just be seen as an HR decision.
- 4 Undertake a trial in one division first.
- 5 Be realistic - the RPO company can't solve attrition issues overnight.

ASOS still continues to be the market leaders in new online fashion and March was our one year anniversary working with ASOS. We are delighted to have the opportunity to extend our relationship into 2011.

Working on site provides us the opportunity to integrate ourselves within the business and enables us to manage the process, alleviating pressure for the HR team.

streamline the recruitment processes and achieve a consistent approach across all business units.

“We are delighted that the judges recognised our achievements in helping Pitney Bowes to attract the best candidates.”

Outsourced Recruitment Takes Off

Gate Gourmet, the world's largest independent provider of catering and provisioning services for airlines and railroads, is outsourcing recruitment for all UK and Ireland head office roles. Gate Gourmet selected ResourceBank to handle recruitment for HR, finance, purchasing, training and quality control roles.

Vikki Woodison, HR director for Gate Gourmet UK and Ireland commented, “Outsourcing our recruitment presents us with the opportunity to improve our processes whilst also recruiting more cost effectively. I've been building a relationship with ResourceBank for over a year. They have clients which operate in our industry and also recruit for roles which we will need at head office. Their relevant experience gave me the confidence that ResourceBank will be able to deliver results for our business.”

Sarah Hopkins, director at ResourceBank added, “We are delighted to be working with Gate Gourmet. Having known Vikki for a while, it's great to be appointed as Gate Gourmet's outsourced recruitment partner. Our dedicated Gate Gourmet team will be based at our Henley and Telford offices.”

ResourceBank celebrated success at this year's Recruiter Awards for Excellence. Our team at Pitney Bowes was highly commended in the category of Best Embedded Recruitment Team.

Richard Pearson, managing director of ResourceBank commented, “Providing the right team who could hit the ground running and engage with the Pitney Bowes' recruiting managers was one of the key factors of our success.

“We were also able to demonstrate a measurable difference to the Pitney Bowes business by providing a scalable resourcing team to



ResourceBank