

newsviews @cjrecruitment.co.uk

Climate...

Sun, snow, rain, hail, gale-force winds - the weather in Croydon on Tuesday 13th April! Changeable would be an understatement, yet how reflective this would seem of our recent business climate. With so many mixed messages coming through, our reputation as a reliable barometer on market conditions was at stake! So, in answer to the frequently asked question - "what's it like out there?"- here's an up to the minute, local outlook. Remembering that change is constant, but not all change is good, we have selected a few examples of some inspiring (and some not so inspiring) trends and new approaches with a little space to applaud those of us who are still managing to find time to achieve outside of the office!

The first quarter of this year has been more adventurous than the last half of 1998 with more employers actioning previous intentions. Contract interim management and temporary staff demand continues to grow and we are now experiencing a more confident "bite the bullet" approach to permanent staff recruitment - a reliable indication that organisations are more positive of future needs and prepared to invest accordingly. Whilst a culture of continuous improvement is now inherent, many organisations are allowing more bedding-in time for new ideas and strategies. This opportunity to catch breath appears to have had a stabilising effect on staff turnover with a distinct feeling of improved morale across all sectors. Mergers and acquisitions continue to keep us all on our toes - there is rarely a day when we are not changing names on our database. For the main part, it seems that there has been minimal impact from such changes with few redundancies. Where there have been redundancies, there have been as many vacancies resulting from growth in other companies.

Candidates today no longer have jobs for life expectations but they do have other expectations. Having been encouraged to ensure that their skills keep pace with

business needs, most expect training and development to continue. If they do not recognise this ethos in a prospective employer - they often undertake temp or contract work and continue their search. Interviews today are on a more even keel, returning to a two way assessment of mutual suitability. You are likely to notice candidates asking more questions than previously. This balance seems to encourage a more open and honest discourse, likely to achieve sounder candidate/job matches.

All in all the outlook for those of us in the south appears encouraging with a real feeling of balance for the first time in a long time.



- ③ **Kit-Kalling**
Keeping In Touch initiative toward greater customisation of services
- ③ **Softer Skills**
What they are - and why we need them
- ③ **Sell It Not Tell It**
Knowledge is not enough. Passion and conviction in Change - Management
- ④ **Candidate Profiles**
Exceptional candidates hot off the press
- ③ **Selhurst Park 9th May!**
Croydon Super J's corporate six-a-side knock-out!
- ② **Speed & Efficiency**
Not a contradiction in terms, when it comes to recruitment
- ② **Trust is the Key**
The value of team work between customer and supplier

By George he's got it !

It took a few minutes and a little heartfelt inspiration for George Vale to enter our Christmas Message Competition. By suggesting that we should try to extend the season of good will throughout the year, he won a £300 cheque for the Mansfield Settlement. A delighted George said "This charity does a lot of good work, particularly with young people in need of help. Mansfield helps them to overcome their difficulties and encourages them to achieve their potential"



George Vale (Head of HR at Union Railways) receiving a cheque for £300 from Catherine Johnstone

By designing & producing our own card, i.e. not sending out commercial cards, we have always been able to make a substantial donation to a charity with the money saved. This year, the 'Message for Christmas' competition enabled someone else to choose a charity.

ATTITUDE! ATTITUDE! ATTITUDE!

We were pleased to be invited to meet the senior management team at **Goldshield Healthcare**. This leading pharmaceutical marketing company went public last year and is determined to continue to achieve ambitious growth targets.

Ajit Patel, MD and driving force behind this dynamic operation, is happy to admit that he expects a lot from his people, believing that hard work is rewarding for all, not just the company. When recruiting, he is quite clear on what he wants.

"Attitude is all. We need people who are honest, conscientious, motivated, committed and, today, they must be prepared to change gear quickly. I'm more interested in their approach to future challenges, than what they've done in the past."

This approach is paying dividends in more ways than one. Goldshield's share price today is £3.79 - more than doubling their flotation price in only a matter of months.

SYNERGY AT SUPERDRUG

It was no surprise to hear that a different approach to management recruitment and development was proving highly successful for one of our major clients.

Around two years ago Superdrug was one of the first to put a twist into their approach to management recruitment. They asked us to seek out those with wider and varied backgrounds - not specific. They wondered if by previously bringing in highly specialist managers, they might inadvertently have been nurturing friction between the various functions in their company. This more worldly approach has meant that a marketing manager need not be someone whose experience is predominantly marketing. An HR Manager with exposure to say sales or purchasing management would be viewed as bringing more value than say a graduate

whose career path had only been in Personnel. We found this refreshing.

All too often, diverse backgrounds, to most employers, are viewed as unsettled, lacking commitment or completely inappropriate. At last we were able to recommend talented candidates who had lived and were truly multi-skilled, empathetic, and likely to bring considerably more to the party than most. Internally this policy is working well. The management development programme at Superdrug now encourages cross function career development, recognising that skills are indeed transferable and fresh viewpoints often valuable. Staff turnover has dropped, with those who wish to move on looking within Superdrug first and then other opportunities within their parent company, the Kingfisher Group.

the long hello

A worrying aspect of recruitment today is the increasingly protracted time it takes to expedite the selection process. It is imperative that employers recognise that in the current climate good candidates are highly sought after and not around for long. Many companies have experienced painful and costly recruitment campaigns only to find that the candidates they finally make an offer to have gone. Whilst a sure-footed approach is laudable, two or three interviews, personality/aptitude testing, assessment centres, medicals, references and other quality driven processes can prove unhelpful if not streamlined. In some cases shared decision making policies have meant further delay - waiting for the say so of a manager away on leave has often been the final straw for a candidate under pressure from other offers.

Speed and Efficiency

(need not be a contradiction in terms)

Well done **IAPA** (International Airline Passengers Association) and **Darome Teleconferencing**. Both trusted us to send only appropriate CVs, arranged interview and test times and made offers within 36 hours and four working days respectively. It can be done!

TRUST IS THE KEY

Thank you Martin Gammon (**MD Aviation & Airport Services**) for entrusting us with a key appointment for an Operations Director. By sharing his vision and involving us in AAS's strategic planning, we were able to identify the right candidates quickly. Martin saw this appointment as a priority and made himself available in the search and selection process. Within six weeks an offer was made and accepted - despite involving three

interviews, psychometric assessment and a site visit and walkabout!

It really can be done!



SOFTER SKILLS

Softer skills are proving to be as important as technical skills when it comes to employers' selection criteria. In an era where candidates are more technically qualified than ever before, employers are finding CVs inspiring. The problem is, that although technical skills and training are impressive, personal qualities and characteristics often turn out to be decidedly lacking. More employers are now recognising that though some skills and qualifications are essential, others can be learned - often easily and quickly. More important are the personal attributes and characteristics ("softer skills") needed to inspire confidence in others. Evidence of being able to pull a team together, win over difficult customers, remain calm under pressure, for instance, are more likely to inspire employers than just technical expertise. We are delighted at this approach as we are now encouraged to present some of our more exceptional candidates who impress us in person and not just on paper.

KIT-KALLING

As you know, at CJR we have never telephone canvassed our clients. We do send you occasional CV's on candidates we know you'd want to hear about but even then, we remind you only to respond if the CV is timely. We also send out newsletters, employment law/training updates, candidate lists, arrange seminars and even the occasional conference but in future, if we are not already in regular contact with you, we will be calling you twice a year as part of, what we call our Keeping In Touch policy.

Each of our consultants has been allocated personal responsibility for groups of clients to ensure not only that our information on you is fully up to date but also in the hope that we can have a greater understanding of your overall situation and needs. Equally, we hope that you will be asking more about us...you may find that we can offer considerably more help than your current perception may suggest. We do not profess to be able to answer all of your questions... but we usually know someone who can!



MARATHON MAD

Congratulations to Madeleine Bladon for completing the 26 mile London Marathon in 4h 46 m! Maddie had always wanted to do it, she began to believe that she could do it and on Sunday 18th April she did it! Whilst achieving a personal goal, Maddie earned £1,700 through sponsorships for St. Catherine's hospice!

Well done also to Neil Tuson of Quest Education & Development. A tad faster than Maddie as this was his 10th marathon! Neil's charity this year was Africat and we understand that he once again achieved an impressive sum from many of us in business who sponsored him.

ONWARD & UPWARD

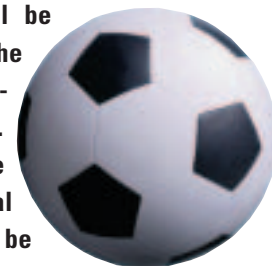


Geraldine Healy was unable to join the throng and support Maddie on the 18th as she was climbing Snowdon ("in the snow and the hard route. . ."). Well done Gerry. Like Maddie, now so inspired, she's already planning her next expedition!

Croydon's Super J's at Selhurst Park!

Meanwhile the rest of the team are practising for our big day at Selhurst Park. Yes our company may have a "girlie" name but we also have a football team!

On 9th May we will be competing against the might of other six-a-side corporate teams. Jeremy (ardent Palace supporter and local football hero) will be managing our side with a view to knocking out as many opponents as possible. We hope to achieve an acceptable position without embarrassing our cheerleaders. . . don't even ask!



a lighter look at appraisals

Are you ever stuck for words in writing employee appraisals? You might find these extracts, apparently from Royal Naval and Marine reports, helpful...

- "His team would follow him anywhere, if only out of sheer curiosity"
- "Works well only when under constant supervision and when cornered like a rat"
- "This man is depriving a village somewhere of an idiot"
- "This Manager should go far and the sooner the better"
- "When she opens her mouth it is only to change feet"
- "Since the last appraisal this employee has reached rock bottom and is still digging fast"
- "He would be out of his depth in a car park puddle"
- "She sets low standards and then consistently fails to achieve them"

Candidates Who Stand Out From the Crowd

► **Commercial Director** A self-motivated and dynamic leader, who thrives on the development and implementation of new systems and business streams. A cost and service astute individual who enjoys new challenges within ever demanding industries. Leads from the front with good interpersonal and creative presentation skills. Accustomed to full budget P&L responsibility within a group or divisional environment. Overall, an achiever. £50,000+

(ref 504900)

► An exceptional **Facilities and Premises Manager** with experience of managing offices up to 135,000 square feet with budgets of over £5 million with supervisory responsibility for over 40 personnel. Extensive experience in rationalisation and streamlining of budgets and an extremely proactive work ethos. Immediately available and seeking a salary of c£40,000

(ref 503707)

► An extremely competent and proactive **Visual Merchandiser/Marketeer** with experience of business development and creative ability, excelling in design and writing based roles. Experience of high level liaison as well as organising the production of and contributing to company brochures, literature and articles in many newspapers and trade magazines. A very progressive and ambitious person, who would flourish in a role that would allow freedom to use initiative and creative flair. £20,000 upwards

(ref 504665)

► An extremely personable and enthusiastic **Sales Support Administrator** with a predominantly financial services admin and sales background. Has full FPC and experience of overseeing staff. Certainly possesses a very willing and flexible attitude with an organised approach and a good level of PC literacy. Demonstrated a good sense of humour. Would suit a support role in the financial services sector offering a salary of £15,000+

(ref 50485)

► An ambitious and professional **Customer Services Manager** with over five years supervisory/managerial experience within a call centre environment. Again, proactive in style, self-motivated and a team player as well as leader who enjoys training and developing staff. Naturally a first class communicator with exceptional organisational and administrative skills. Now seeking to utilise these skills at a management level. £18-21,000

(ref 504133)

► A highly motivated and well organised **Media Graduate**, demonstrating effective interpersonal skills developed through diverse positions in previous jobs. Hopes to work in a media orientated environment. Sound organisational/ admin skills with a practical (as well as instinctive) approach to tasks. Works well within a team but able to work independently. Confident and comfortable dealing with customers and colleagues at all levels. £13,000

(ref 504816)

► A hands-on **Personnel Officer**. IPD qualified with valuable experience of recruitment and co-ordinating the training and development function. Can be relied upon to use initiative and deals effectively with tasks demanding strong organisational skills. An effective communicator - a genuine 'people person'. A highly motivated team player with a flexible approach to work - able to rise to a challenge. c£20,000

(ref 402648)

► A polished and professional **PA/Senior Secretary** with good written and spoken French with intermediate level German. Excellent skills gained supporting board level management for several blue-chip organisations. Successful in establishing collaborative relationships across all levels. Accustomed to planning and organising workloads to meet business objectives and shifting priorities. An approachable and friendly style with the ability to use initiative and exercise confidentiality and tact. c£30,000

(ref 504656)

► A really delightful **Graduate** with a 2:1 in Marketing and Accounting seeking first permanent post since leaving university. A bright, self-motivated and enthusiastic candidate who enjoys working as part of a team and has already gained useful working experience. Hoping for a challenging role in a dynamic environment. Confident and hardworking - available for an immediate start. £14 -15,000

(ref 504615)

► An effective **Office Manager /Administrator**. Past ten years have been with one company gaining experience in finance, transportation, purchasing/ stock control and customer services. Clearly an effective communicator, who plans ahead and is used to working in an environment with tight deadlines, using problem solving skills on a daily basis. Now being made redundant as a result of company relocation. Available at short notice. c£18,000

(ref 504855)

► An impressive **Administrator** with outstanding customer service skills and strong sales ability. Accustomed to working in a hectic and demanding retail environment, whilst maintaining a professional attitude. Good communication and interpersonal skills, with supervisory experience that reflect the ability to motivate others and encourage a team ethos. Up to date business awareness, comfortable with targets and understands the importance of good organisation and planning c£16,000.

(ref 504763)

► **Market Research Manager** with a wealth of experience in the finance sector - thorough experience of life, pensions and investment products and related services. Proven analysing, planning and problem solving skills with the ability to interpret data and represent in a user-friendly format. A successful manager with an enthusiastic style and approach ensures projects run smoothly and to time. Valuable industry software knowledge and effective at providing PC support. c£20,000

(ref 504880)



► **IT Trainer/Project Manager** An impressive candidate experienced in training needs analysis, ergonomics and integrated task based training. Extensive knowledge of software including MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, IntelliSense, InternetTurbo CAD3 and Publisher. Having recently achieved RSA Teachers Certificate, now qualified in both one to one and presentation sessions on most IT issues. Ideally seeking an opportunity that will combine both training and support aspects of career to date. Salary £21,000

(ref 504871)

► An experienced **Personal Assistant**, fluent in Russian, German and English with conversational Italian. Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, quietly confident with a professional manner. Flexible, self-motivated and able to use initiative. Certainly capable of working both independently and as part of a team. £25-30,000

(ref 504667)

► **Graduate Secretary** with a delightful personality and excellent qualifications. GCSE's include seven A's and 2 B's, 3 A levels (including Maths) and recently graduated 2:1 Joint Honours BA in History and Law. Skilled in both shorthand and audio. Typing has been tested here at a speed of 74wpm. This candidate is methodical and pleasantly confident and is looking for a role that will encourage her to put to good use her skills and intelligence. Unafraid of hard work, able to handle pressure and demonstrates loyalty and a professional approach to all she undertakes. This is a 21 year old who will be a real asset to the right organisation. Seeking market level salary for the right opportunity - suggest min £13,000. Highly recommended.

(ref 504874)

► **Office Junior** with well developed customer care and organisational skills gained in the retail sector. now keen to transfer to a commercial environment where she can use recently gained pc skills (word/excel). A delightful young lady with a practical and realistic approach. c£10,000

(ref 503578)

Any questions ?
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