

newsnviews

@cjrecruitment.co.uk

End of the UK's Flexible Labour Market?

Agency Workers Directive is back – Temps to have same terms as Permanent Staff

In 2002, we ran a seminar alerting employers to proposed EC legislation addressing the rights of agency (temporary) workers. Most employers had not realised the full ramifications of this well intentioned but wildly misguided proposal. Eventually, after vociferous lobbying from employer and agency federations, the UK government realised the damaging effect it would have on the economy. With other EC members, they fought to block the AWD - and it was deferred. This summer, the AWD was back high on the Brussels agenda determined to be in place next year. Again, with a blocking minority, the AWD was deferred. The AWD will not go away. This is a reminder of what is intended and an opportunity to look at how it could affect your organisation.

In essence, temporary workers will be entitled to the same pay and benefits as 'equivalent' employees in user organisations. This will include pay and pensions but also other benefits enjoyed by permanent employees such as share-schemes and bonuses to car parking and other tangible allowances. *The AWD proposes that such rights should begin after the sixth week of an assignment.*

"Socialism straight from Brussels that would spell disaster for Britain's economy" was the first reaction from the CBI, whilst the TUC applauded saying "Unequal treatment of temporary workers is as bad for business as it is unfair to workers".

Both rationales must be considered. If employers and unions can work together, the UK may well set standards that the rest of Europe will want to follow. If they can't, then

the consequences of the AWD could be disastrous for our economy and particularly for those who the unions seek to protect – temporary workers.

Unions must recognise the devastating impact the AWD would have on Jobs and Workers

Unions feel the AWD is needed to prevent the exploitation of vulnerable workers. Recently, the Working Time Directive, Minimum Wage, Fixed and Part-time Workers Regulations and, now, The Gangmasters Licensing Act, go a considerable way toward such protection. Whilst there are still pockets of abuse of vulnerable workers, offences could be specifically targeted and eradicated. The broad brush of the AWD does not appreciate the thousands of temporary workers who are happy and well rewarded for their work.

Temping is not second-class work.

Unions adhere to a view that temping is 'second class' work and a way for employers to avoid responsibility. They need to acknowledge that, but for the UK's flexible workforce, our economy would be struggling like many of our European neighbours whose employment policies have placed a stranglehold on enterprise and growth. They appear oblivious to the thousands of new permanent as well as contract jobs that have resulted from flexible workers proving the need; the thousands of the otherwise unemployed who have found work and development opportunities through temping; that temping gives many workers choice and freedom to pursue and integrate other

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Corporate Social Responsibility



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The real cost of undervaluing good staff



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Recruitment open day with asb/law



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Best Employers 2003 & 2004

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Select candidate profiles

aspects of their lives – such as education, sport or raising a family – one of the ways of finding that all too elusive life/work balance.

Managing the AWD will be a nightmare – especially for employers.

Administering the necessary processes will be untenable for most. Employers would have to set contractual terms* (currently the work of agencies) maintain and reveal accurate 'cost profiles' of their employees, taking into account pay, benefits and conditions of employment. The variables between employers' terms will mean significant inconsistencies for workers. Temps will naturally want (and be able) to switch (at no notice) to wherever they can achieve the most attractive terms.

Costs for temporary workers will soar. Clearly there are huge employment cost implications which will discourage most, particularly SME's (over 90% of UK businesses). However, it is the cost and distraction of complex administration that most fear.

Equal rights for temporary workers will test commitment and loyalty of Permanent employees who would find it hard to agree that transient workers without the same contractual constraints should necessarily merit equal status. Many are likely to disagree with a formula that equally values someone who does not have to offer the same level of commitment and may not have the same specialist knowledge and experience. Might this perceived

devaluation destabilise the permanent workforce? Could employers be plagued with a deluge of cases regarding unequal treatment?

**less than 25% of employers surveyed by the CBI said they would be prepared to do this*

For further detailed reports, surveys and points of view go to "Google" and type in Agency Workers Directive or go to: www.cbi.org.uk ; www.dti.org.uk ; www.tuc.org.uk ; www.rec.uk.com or www.chamberonline.co.uk.

In this article and in most surveys and reports, temporary workers are regarded as agency workers, casual workers, seasonal workers, interim managers and virtually anyone who isn't self or permanently employed.



ELECTRONIC NEWSVIEWS

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Croydon Commits Corporate Social Responsibility in our town

Many companies want to be involved with their community but don't know where to start or what they can afford to contribute.

A new scheme, The Croydon Commitment, bridges this gap by linking businesses with local voluntary organisations needing support.

Help may be financial, practical or managerial ranging from funding and project management to mentoring schemes.

Such initiatives are not only of direct benefit to recipients but can also bring kudos to companies involved and satisfaction to staff, many of whom enjoy rewarding personal development as a result of their involvement.

Philips Electronics spearheaded the initiative and are responsible for the funding of business broker, Janine Jasper who CJR sourced as its contribution to the scheme. Janine's job is to maximise private sector involvement by guiding firms to the areas of greatest need in the community on projects or schemes that comfortably match their available resources.

Early projects include Mansell Construction and Howard Fairbairn Associates aiding Archbishop Lanfranc School in the design and construction of a building extension.

A mentoring partnership (Partners in



Temps' Manager Nicola Reed taking a Key Skills workshop at Selhurst High School for Boys.

Leadership and Community – PILCOM) between a Home Office employee and the Chief Executive of a young people's charity (Croydon Youth Development Trust) also started in September.

And in November female engineers from Mott MacDonald will give a workshop presentation to a group of girls from Westwood Language College.

Other companies who have committed include Mondial Assistance, Lexus Nexus, Marks & Spencer, Ikea, LloydsTSB, EDF Energy and Wates Foundation. The official launch of the Croydon Commitment is on November 1. Interested? Contact us at CSR@cjrrecruitment.co.uk

Who is Sylvia?



"She remembers the details of intricate documents that have only brushed her desk. She always knows where I should be, what I should be doing and what I thought about a particular issue. She may have extra-sensory powers, because she seems to know what I want before I ask for it. She smoothes the way for me - obstacles wither in front of her, senior managers agree to actions that they would reject if anyone else made the suggestion. She makes people, photocopiers and printers behave properly. She is my place of sanity in a chaotic and over-stretched world. She is, quite simply, a temp beyond price."

She is Sylvia Stevens. The above is an extract from a testimonial written by Joan Semeonoff her line manager at LBC. Not surprisingly, Sylvia won CJR's Top Temporary Worker Award.

Support Support - or endure the real cost of undervaluing good staff

Turnover amongst support staff is running high. Secretaries, administrators, customer care and others at support level continue to flow through our doors knowing that, in the current market, they can easily acquire new jobs or contract work. During the past twelve weeks up to mid October, reasons for leaving (which we ask all candidates) were surprisingly consistent. Most feel undervalued. However, undervalued translates as (and in the following order)

- lack of recognition/appreciation
- lack of personal/role development opportunities
- employers' expectancy of unrelenting long hours
- pay levels not reflecting the growing demands of their job

Interestingly, money was not the main reason why good candidates move on.

The real cost of losing good staff.

Too many organisations do not fully measure the bottom line impact of staff turnover. Whilst it is easy to cost recruitment fees and advertising costs, the cost of interviewing, induction and other processes is generally underestimated. Then there's the disruption to colleagues who may feel unsettled and also leave. Managers despair over the loss of experience and the distraction of a new employee who will, despite all, need attention and still represent a risk. And it doesn't stop here – you can lose managers who feel unsupported and customers whose relationship can be more to do with an individual than the organisation.

What action should be taken to retain existing staff.

- Identify areas of high turnover and find out why it's happening.
- Take action on feedback from exit interviews.
- Watch for signs of unrest – poor attendance, time-keeping, general malaise – make time to discuss with individual or team toward a positive outcome.
- Acknowledge 'rising stars' and investigate development or progression opportunities – otherwise don't expect them to stay*.
- Ensure your salaries are reasonably in line with current local markets – ask your agency's advice or simply look at the papers and see what others are paying.
- Consider reviewing your benefits package.
- If someone's performed well, rescued a difficult situation, worked long hours – acknowledge this. People don't necessarily want constant pats on the back or flowers – a simple 'thank you' is often enough.

In the present climate, employers cannot afford to underrate the value of their staff. Too many competitors out there are ready to offer them whatever it takes.

*Best practice example – see 'Walking the Talk'

'Everything you need to know about hiring temps'

(responsibilities of hirers and agencies – legal status of temps now and in the future)

'Learning over Lunch'

Employment Law Seminar
CJR and **asb law** at **asb law's** offices
Stoneham House, Scarbrook Road, Croydon
12.30 – 2pm Thursday 25th November

Limited capacity – book early

Walking the talk

Working in partnership with **asb law**

As a Preferred Supplier, we recently attended a Recruitment Open Day with **asb law**, now the largest law firm in the South East. The half-day session at their Crawley offices involved presentations from HR, divisional representatives and chief executive, Christopher Honeyman Brown.

They described their areas of work, **asb's** recent growth and development and its aspirations and strategy - placing 'people' firmly at the core. The presentations were excellent.

Genuine, uncomplicated and convincing words from an enthusiastic team who spoke with one accord. In fact, the shared values that define the essence of the firm are known as the **asb Accord**. There was none of the huff and puff you might expect from the profession - **asb's** objectives were highly focused, ambitious but realistic and the role we might play in helping them achieve their objectives was both clear and inspiring.

asb's thinking was certainly refreshing and we were particularly impressed by their recognition that turnover amongst support staff has to be stemmed. They realised that 'below the line' people have been underestimated - that constant churn is both destabilising and costly. The issue is being addressed, and action being taken includes greater acknowledgement of support staff through on-going structured T&D programmes.

We left with a clear picture of **asb's** skills and cultural needs, believing that **asb** values our expertise and that selecting and recruiting the right people need not be prescriptive.

What a breath of fresh air - achieving clients' objectives has to include lateral thinking and recognising potential – and we're good at that! Well done to **asb law**. The investment of time, money and energy in this first class presentation will reap huge rewards.



BEST OF BUSINESS AWARDS 2004



Above: R to L
Judges Jeremy Booth (CJR), Lucia Murru (Superdrug Stores plc) and Julie Bruce (Forsyth & Partners Ltd.)



Left: CJR Team at BoB's 2003 Dinner

In the run up to our 25th Anniversary we were short-listed as Southern Region Finalists in the Training & Development Category of the National Business Awards and winner of the 2003 BoB's Award for Best Employer. This year we took the opportunity to sponsor the Best Employer category. The winner, Faversham House Group, was then also voted the 2004 Winner of Winners!

Candidates Who Stand Out From the Crowd

► Facilities Manager

Conscientious and confident Facilities Manager with proven experience in Soft and Hard Multi Site Facilities Management - contracts and procurement, negotiation and administration. Accustomed to working on own initiative within a team environment, and has the ability to work under pressure to deliver quality effective business solutions ensuring compliance with current UK Health & Safety legislation. Salary £35k+

(Ref DS01)

► Legal Secretary

Well presented and professional legal secretary with a wealth of experience in criminal law together with vast experience in several other fields including personal injury, family, matrimonial, civil litigation, conveyancing and medical litigation. Fast, accurate audio/copy typing and good IT systems. Salary c£21k.

(Ref DS02)

► Office Junior

A bright and bubbly candidate, keen to find her first position where she can expand on her knowledge and skills. Good interpersonal and communication skills. Possesses a sound knowledge of systems and able to pick up new systems quickly. Enjoys working as part of a team but also capable of using her own initiative. Highly recommended and has the potential to be developed. Salary c£12k.

(Ref DS03)

► PA

Professional trained PA with a wealth of experience in a wide range of business environments. Proactive, flexible and a highly motivated organiser, welcoming new challenges and directions. Comfortable and competent in dealing with all levels of management; accustomed to handling complex and fast moving scenarios. Fluent French speaker and writer, knowledge of Italian, German and Spanish. Salary c£25k.

(Ref DS04)

► Marketing Executive

Superb candidate who has a wealth of experience covering all elements of marketing including on-line marketing. A focused candidate who is confident, has a professional manner and is looking to progress. Already achieved a marketing certificate and is now keen to carry out the CIM in next role. Salary c£27k.

(Ref CB01)

► Senior Support/PA/Office Manager

A strong candidate with excellent experience across customer services, training and development and various high level support roles. A lively and determined candidate who

enjoys managing a demanding workload - often working within tight deadlines. Available through redundancy. Salary c£23k.

(Ref CB02)

► HR Advisor

A professional candidate dedicated to developing a successful career within a generalist HR Function for a high profile corporate. Completed full CIPD qualifications and has over 2 years experience as a HR Administrator/Advisor. Seeking a progressive environment. Salary c£23k.

(Ref CB03)

► HR Manager

An enthusiastic HR Professional whose experience comprises of both internal HR work and HR consultancy for a variety of public/private organisations. Fully CIPD qualified and now looking for a role where she can continue to develop her successful career and also become involved at a strategic level. Salary c£40k.

(Ref CB04)

► IT Support

An impressive candidate with great experience providing 1st, 2nd and 3rd line IT support, covering all hardware and software as well as networking and systems admin issues. Very personable and competent. This candidate will have no problem in getting on with and earning the respect of his peers and the users that he supports. Technically very competent and very happy to learn new skills as required to ensure his competency in supporting the needs of the users and the company. Also keen to get involved with project work. Currently available with a month's notice. Salary £25k +.

(Ref JB01)

► Sales/Marketing Manager

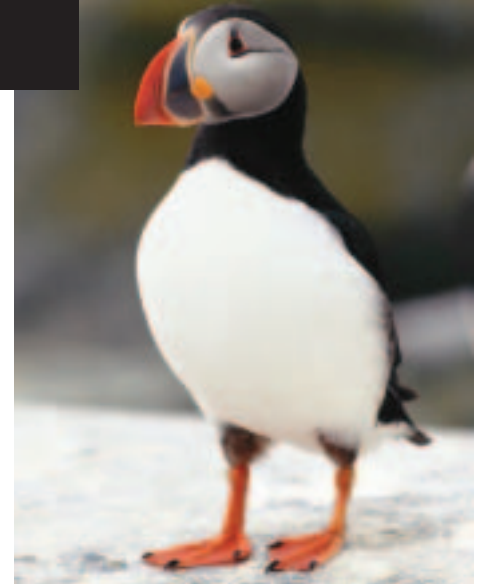
A dynamic and highly capable candidate with an impressive track record of success, primarily in the foodservice industry operating as a National Account Manager. This candidate possesses energy and drive and has experience of managing staff as well as managing and developing accounts, including full budgetary control and bringing new products to market. This candidate is now looking to manage a sales team and is available with immediate effect.

Salary £30k - £35k +.

(Ref JB02)

► Graduate seeking Finance/Accounts role

Intelligent and capable young graduate seeking a first role in a finance/accounts environment although his degree is in Chemical Engineering. This young man has a great attitude, is highly PC literate and comes across as personable, motivated and professional with a real desire to



learn. With around 9 months of commercial work experience already under his belt, this candidate is keen to develop a fulfilling career and would be available with immediate effect. Great potential. Salary c£15k.

(Ref JB03)

► P/T Administrator

Delightful lady with excellent admin and customer facing skills. Seeking 3 full days per week or as one half of a job share in a varied administrative position. A broad-skilled background combines with personality, great communication and organisation/co-ordination skills to produce a competent all-rounder able to turn her hand to most things. This candidate also speaks fluent Spanish and would be particularly keen if her language ability was of use to her future employer. Available immediately for interview and to start. Salary open to negotiation for the right role - pro rata c£15,000

(Ref JB04)

► Database Marketing Manager

Commercially aware with significant knowledge of all facets of the marketing mix. Planned, managed and supported successful campaigns through the introduction and application of efficient marketing databases, web, e-mail, telemarketing and print management services, on time and on budget. Performs well in a senior managerial and/or consultant role within a marketing and/or IT environment. Open to permanent or interim management opportunities. Salary c£50k

(Ref CJ01)

► P/T Accounts Clerk

A personable, flexible and capable individual with many years experience in accounts administration, graduating from manual accounts to computerised systems - most recently using Sage Line 50. Sound payroll and extensive credit control experience as well as supervisory skills. Salary c£10 ph

(Ref CJ02)

If you would like to receive our regular Candidates list please contact us



Catherine Johnstone Recruitment

Saffron House, 15 Park Street, Croydon CRO 1YD

Telephone: 020 8680 5777 Facsimile: 020 8681 0292

E-mail: cjr@cjrrecruitment.co.uk www.cjrrecruitment.co.uk



Any questions?
020 8680 5777