



Cardinal Talent

Talent Newsletter July '09

As the summer temperatures climb we shall be able to relax a little, taking some time for reflection to see where we are and what progress has been made. For us, June has disappeared in a flash and so we decided to call this the July edition, letting the new month in, and bidding farewell to the energy of the old. Reflection is the thread running through this issue. With half-year results being announced and the signs of performance being less encouraging than hoped for, it's easy to experience feelings of panic and harder to take a few deep breaths, ushering in calmness and space for considering the wider aspects of life and work.

Last week I heard a programme on the car radio, which featured weaving. This universal skill, present in all cultures across the world, struck me as being a point of unity for the human being. Carried out by hand in and around the home or on high-speed machinery in factory settings, this craft has been practised down the ages, by all ages, with so many materials, applied in so many ways. What surprised me somewhat was the claim by the programme presenter, that a complete fabric can be created by one single thread. What a thought!! And then I wondered, if each of us can use the process of reflection, giving rise to one idea, then who knows what propositions and opportunities may be woven up into full size?

Our website www.cardinaltalent.com is designed to be a resource for both candidates and clients, so..

Candidates: do keep an eye on our website for new job opportunities and..

Clients: if you are looking to strengthen your organisation and are interested in any of this month's profiles or any on our website from previous months, please note the reference and call me on +44(0)1484 687 587 or +44(0)7831 476818, or drop me a line to mel@cardinaltalent.com

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "mel" with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

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Talent roundup

Crunch busting checklist for Hirers

An interim **procurement and supply chain professional** with proven negotiation skills and a track record of adding measurable value in various manufacturing sectors including construction, pharmaceuticals, commodity chemicals, food and white goods. Extensive experience of both indirect and direct procurement and in introducing strategic purchasing principles into businesses or areas of a business that are unfamiliar with or sceptical of such an approach and delivering significant measurable benefits. Committed to the delivery of increased profitability through purchase price and cash flow advantage, effective management of risk and process efficiency improvements.

Ref: PSCP0709

An **experienced**, motivated and enthusiastic **shift manager** who seeks a challenging and rewarding career within a manufacturing based environment. Proven track record in utilising lean and continuous improvement techniques together with a pragmatic and hands on approach. Excellent communication, interpersonal and leadership skills.

Ref: ESM0709

A successful and highly professional **operations and project manager** with a proven record of delivering change in a wide range of business environments. Experienced in the latest lean techniques, continuous

Sooner or later, employers who **survive & thrive** in these tough times will need to **hire**. (To prove the point, one called as the full stop at the end of the first line of this article was being typed!)

Just now there are thousands of **good-looking candidates** flooding into the recruitment market place. It's easy to get **swept along** by the higher quality of applicants and forget to check some of the **basics** before rushing headlong into a **recruitment drive**.

If you are hiring, what do you need to consider? How can you **guarantee success**? How will you know when you have succeeded?!

It's my belief that **clarity** and a **structured process** are key factors in achieving a successful appointment. Spending a few moments **reflecting** on what you want to **accomplish** out of hiring will **repay** the cost of the exercise many times over. In fact, planning the campaign from beginning to end, by applying sound **project management techniques** will turn costs into **investment**.

Whether you're carrying out the entire hiring activity or involving a recruiter makes no difference to the **reflection** and **planning** stages. Involving others is an excellent way helping the process of reflection all the way through the process, and you, as the instigator, need to be able to **communicate** your thoughts and wonderings clearly to colleagues. Here are some suggested **preparation questions** to ask of yourself:

1. Why is the **appointment** necessary?
2. What is to be **achieved** by making the appointment?
3. What is the **timescale** in which the appointment needs to be made?
4. Is there a hiring **budget**?
5. **Who else** will be involved in the hiring process?
6. What **other activities** need to be completed for the hiring to be achieved?
7. What levels of **confidentiality** are needed, if any?

Once you are comfortable in your mind about these aspects, it may be a valuable exercise to **prompt** those colleagues involved with some or all of these questions to help their **thinking** about the process.

You will have gathered that these questions are to do with the **framework** and **boundaries** through which the appointment will be supported. Now it's time to consider the aspects of the **role** and the **ideal candidate** you would like to attract through the hiring process, so here are

process improvements and implementation management. Recently project managed the start up of a new business. Excellent communication and inter-personal skills. Degree qualified in Mechanical Engineering and working towards a postgraduate Fellowship in Manufacturing Management.
Ref: OPM0709

Short term, high impact interventions from experienced professionals – without the financial outlay!

Are you interested or know of anyone who may be?

Then please don't hesitate to contact me on +44(0)1484 687 587 or +44(0)7831 467 818

Or drop me a line to mel@cardinaltalent.com

some suggested areas to explore:

How will the selection process be conducted, how many stages and who will be involved?

8. What **media** will be used to attract suitable applicants?
9. Does a **job description** exist? Has it been reviewed in the light of **current circumstances**?
10. Has a **skills profile** or **specification** been written?
11. What other **supporting documentation** needs to be prepared in support of the interview process and/or the candidates?
12. What **selection tools** will be deployed through the process?
13. What **questions** will be asked of the candidate, how, when, why and by whom?

A **quality-assured** hiring process will have assessment points built in for future reflection, learning and improvement. Through **observation** and **evidence gathering**, those involved in the process will be able to stay aware of the **effectiveness** and **authenticity** of the activities deployed, avoiding becoming sucked into merely the outcome. Areas for thought and **review** might include:

14. How the selection process will be reviewed to ensure **objectivity** and **fairness** across all participants, i.e. hirers and seekers alike?
15. Which **records** will be made, kept and reviewed?
16. How will hirer **skills gaps** be **assessed** and **trained** for?

Towards the end of the process you will need to make a **final offer** of some kind to the selected candidate. At the beginning of the process this point can seem a long way off and although there are elements of "**wait and see**" and negotiable aspects, these factors are no excuse for leaving such a vital and revealing (about you and your organisation) to a last minute scramble. "**Do not spoil the ship for a ha'porth of tar**", so ask yourself:

17. What are the **guidelines** for making a final offer?
18. What does the final offer need to **encompass**?
19. In which **form** will the offer will be **conveyed** to the candidate?
20. What is **expected** of the candidate in **response**?

Finally a couple of questions to complete your hiring process review with might be:

21. How likely is such an **appointment** to be achieved within the **parameters** set?
22. What **options** exist in the event that no appointment is made?

I'm confident you can think of other aspects of the hiring process not mentioned here and I hope that the **checklist** above will act as a **thought-provoking** tool at the very least. At a higher level, it can form the basis for **best practise** when hiring, whether that's inside or outside recessionary conditions.

Happy hunting!

Mel Armstrong is a coach & recruiter of business leaders. A degree qualified metallurgist and Chartered Engineer, with a post graduate Fellowship in Manufacturing Management, her main areas of interest are developing self awareness in business leaders and manufacturing and business improvement. She works closely with a number of private clients providing business support through recruitment, transition coaching, outplacement , psychometric assessment and career development. Mel has recently received the Fellow of the Year Award from the Association of Manufacturing Managers.

