

Gloucestershire Branch Newsletter

October 2008



Hi - hope that you liked the changes last month? One of the things that you'll notice this month is that we have 'come clean' on who puts this newsletter together - me, John Hepworth. Of course, I am only the conductor. Hence, my thanks to all of you who have contributed this month. One day, could it be you writing a piece of copy? As ever, enjoy this issue.

John Hepworth
Editor

Next Events

Wednesday 8 October 2008

"Measuring and Evaluating Training"

Venue: Seasons Conference Centre, Quat Goose Lane,
Swindon Village, Cheltenham, GL51 9RX

Refreshments and buffet lunch from 12.30pm

Workshop 1.30pm-4.30pm

£11.75 inc. VAT for CIPD members
£17.63 inc. VAT for non-CIPD members

Speaker: Isobel Heaton,
DTC International and Assessing Success Ltd.

This event is aimed at those of you with a specific interest in and/or responsibility for training. Join us for an interactive experience where you will learn how to align learning interventions, their assessment and evaluation with the strategic objectives of your organisation. The workshop will also focus on measuring the financial and non-financial costs of training. Isobel Heaton is a consultant and trainer who has been working in Learning and Development Consultancy since 1986. She sits on the CIPD Professional Learning & Development Advisory Board offering advice and support to the Institute.

To book this event, book via the website at
www.cipd.co.uk/branch/gloucester

Diary Dates

Measuring and Evaluating Training

Wednesday 8 October

Leading Change

Thursday 16 October

Volunteering - what it could mean for you

Thursday 6 November

Develop Yourself as a Professional Coach

Tuesday 11 November

Living the Brand

Tuesday 25 November

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Thursday 16 October 2008

The Alan Murgatroyd Memorial Lecture presents:

"Leading change with Ian Mean"

(incorporating the Students Awards Evening)

Venue: Gloucester Rugby Club, Kingsholm, Gloucester, GL1 3AX

Refreshments and light buffet from 6.00pm

Presentations 6.30pm - 9.00pm

FREE EVENT #

This event is the opportunity for the Branch to congratulate all those students who have gained their professional qualifications this year. There will be prize winners too. For some, the qualification means a chance to make changes in their lives and work. As always with this event though, students - and their supporters!

Ian Mean will provide an exciting and lively presentation on 'Leading Change'. Ian is Editor in Chief of Gloucestershire Media and a former executive of the Daily Mail and Daily Mirror. He is especially interested in helping to grow business in Gloucestershire, demonstrated by his team's new business webpage - www.WestBusiness.co.uk - serving Gloucestershire, Bristol and Bath.

All are welcome to what promises to be an excellent celebration of success!

To book this event, book via the website at www.cipd.co.uk/branch/gloucester

Thursday 6 November 2008

"Volunteering - what it could mean for you"

Venue: Hatherley Manor Hotel, Down Hatherley Lane, Gloucester GL2 9QA

Presentation - 4.00pm until 6.00pm

FREE EVENT

Encouraging staff to volunteer to help them gain new skills and complement a company's Corporate Social Responsibility programme is gaining increasing popularity in the South West. Businesses and organisations such The Commission for Rural Communities, Zurich, Chelsea Building Society, Barclays Bank and the Midcounties Co-op all operate employer supported volunteering schemes, giving their staff time off during work to volunteer in the community.

Giving the gift of time can help reinforce new skills learnt in training and provide invaluable opportunities for staff to gain management and supervisory skills.

Join Tony Martin, Zurich Community Trust's Volunteer Development Manager and Sally Davies, Chelsea Building Society's Corporate Responsibility and Community Support Officer, to discover the benefits of introducing an employer supported volunteering programme in your organisation.

To book this event, book via the website at www.cipd.co.uk/branch/gloucester

Tuesday 11 November 2008

Gloucestershire Coaching Network

"Develop yourself as a professional coach"

Venue: The Forum, Lansdown Road, Cheltenham GL50 2JA

6.00pm for 6.30pm start - 8.30pm finish

£5 inc. VAT to include teas and coffees for CIPD members and Non-members

Speaker: To be advised

This session includes an update on how things are developing in the coaching industry and introducing the 'Book Club'

To book this event, book via the website at www.cipd.co.uk/branch/gloucester



Tuesday 25 November 2008



"Living the brand!"

Venue: Stroud and Swindon Building Society, Head Office, Rowcroft, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL5 3BG

12.30 pm to 4.30 pm

£11.75 incl. VAT CIPD/CIM Members; £17.63 incl. VAT non-CIPD/CIM Members (incl. refreshments & light buffet)

'An interactive and informative presentation, introducing the concept of branding from the HR and Marketing perspectives.'

More about the presentation:

CIPD and CIM head-office representatives Sally and David will inform and provide updates on their organisations' view of branding, while local CIPD member Fiona and local CIM member Sandra look at the concept and practical applications of 'Living the Brand'. In addition, Stroud & Swindon Building Society, who is hosting the event, will present their journey in how they are learning to 'Live the Brand'. Sponsored by Business Link, this will be a fascinating insight into the latest take on branding and will be of interest to anybody involved in marketing, HR and good business practice.

To book this event, book via the website at www.cipd.co.uk/branch/gloucester



Stroud & Swindon

For any queries or further information about an event, please contact Yvonne Baxter, CIPD Branch Administrator, by telephone, 01242 671054, or email, yvonne.baxter@virgin.net. Joining instructions will be sent by email, along with a receipt for payment, a few days before the event. Regrettably invoices cannot be issued by the Branch.

Event Review - DIVERSITY CONFERENCE - HEREFORD AND WORCESTER CIPD

Ageism, Vulnerable Workers, Mental Health and a Diversity Law Update were the four elements of an interesting one-day Diversity Conference this summer, the third to be run by Hereford and Worcester CIPD Branch in recent years.



HR Manager Julia Glaudot of UCAS, based in Cheltenham, was invited to describe what difference the Equality Age Regulations had made to their employment practices. Julia outlined how they had prepared early for the 2006 changes, working closely with AGE Potential, HR consultants they had got to know through Gloucestershire CIPD. AGE Potential audited their existing policies and procedures suggesting where changes might be introduced; developing a series of workshops for their senior, middle and first line managers so they would understand the new legislation, be confident in their roles and become more aware of developing the company culture. They also reviewed the workforce age profile to identify aspects they should recognise or might want to change. Julia made an interesting presentation on their practical approach to establish age equality in

their company aim for best practice in equality and diversity.

Roger McKenzie, Regional Secretary of the Midlands TUC gave a vivid insight into areas of employment many are unaware of and the particular vulnerability of migrant workers in Britain today. Since 2004 Roger has been Regional Secretary of the Midlands Trades Union Congress and is the first black person to hold such a post. His perspective on migrant workers, the discrimination they face at both local and public policy levels was a startling insight into aspects of employment and workplace integration issues that go largely unnoticed by the majority. Sandy Bannister, Disability Equality Advisor for Worcestershire County Council, formerly Chief Officer for a Visual Impairment Charity and Solicitor, talked about the particular difficulties individuals and employers have in handling mental health issues in the workplace.

She highlighted the importance of helping people with any disability to identify reasonable adjustments to their working conditions to enable them to contribute to the best of their ability, and particularly those whose behaviour may be affected from time to time by their condition and is perhaps harder for others to accommodate or understand. Solicitor Veena Allison provided an overview of employment law and updates over the past year, focussing on discrimination law and an analysis of recent case law, with interactive discussion and advice for employers on the implications of the changes.

The day provided interesting information and practical advice on topical subjects, together with opportunities for networking between sessions, in attractive surroundings at The Pear tree Inn, Smite off the M5 Junction 6.

Jill Lang CFCIPD

Feature - IN THE FIRST OF AN IRREGULAR "FEATURE", YOUR EDITOR ASKED RAE WILLIAMS - "HOW DID YOU GET WHERE YOU ARE NOW?"

Was HR / Development your first choice as a career?

No - I was hoping to be a journalist. This wish had to be put aside when my father was ill at the time I was due to make some further education decisions and I found myself in an engineering company - placed into their typing school to enable them to get me into their Order and

Shipping department quickly! I have never regretted learning to type with plain, blank keys.

What was the best job you have had for bringing you down to earth?

I was Sales Promotion Manager for a seven-floor department store - you knew at the end of the day that you had been challenged! If it rained you



moved the umbrellas to the front door - if the sun came out you changed any one of the 27 windows to put summer dresses in and at that time - if the General Manager wanted you to meet him on the ground floor in 2 minutes you knew the quickest set of stairs to get down the seven floors from your office to meet him!

On Boxing Day when the sale started you knew the best place to run to - that avoided you being squashed in the rush when you opened the doors to thousands of Midlands women who knew the bargain they were going for! I changed my wedding day to avoid the first day of the Summer Sale. I think the day-to-day change mentality and quick reaction to change has helped me throughout my career. When I left the retail business it was amazing to find that there were more Bank Holidays than Christmas Day and Easter Sunday.

What have been the three main changes in HR / Development during your career?

One would be Employment Law - I do not feel we can go backwards and there are many things that are better but I do miss being able to have a private chat with someone that just tells them where the business feels they are going wrong and what we want from them - without writing a letter first - having a note taker with me and a representative with them and then having to decide what type of warning we will or will not be giving.

Communication - People are still the key element to any business and it is my opinion that they respond to being treated fairly, discussing things clearly and setting them back on track if they slip from time to time - or praising the good things.

Overuse of email - I think email has stopped the art of conversation and made us forget the power of good communication.

Public sector or Private sector - what do you prefer?

Private sector has given me some of the best roles and challenges. It is difficult for me to comment further about Public sector, as I don't believe I have spent enough time working for Public sector businesses.

What are the attributes that you need to be successful?

I am glad I am a good influencer and that I am a pragmatist. I understand the need to be calm under pressure and I feel anyone who puts themselves in the forefront of a large HR department in any organisation must understand themselves and what their own pressure and stress points are. They then need to have strategies in place to deal with those pressure points.

I have yet to find an organisation or a management team that has any empathy towards a stressed HR person so we must be able to deal with our own stresses. Another attribute for me is the need to be a good negotiator. The obvious union involvement is one area but negotiation is also tested within the management team itself.

Generalist or Specialist - what do you prefer?

Generalist works for me, I am keen to understand some specialised areas but I do believe that the companies I have been involved with are looking for a generalist to give them the opportunity to involve HR in many flexible projects so just specialising in one area would not work for them.

This does not mean that I like to "dabble" - I know where I am good enough to give sensible and informed opinion on HR areas and also know where I need to call upon a specialist.

The best advice you have been given in your career was...?

"Get yourself fully qualified" - I have not given this answer because this publication expects to see it. At the time I had 25 years experience working in HR and Training and Development roles. It came to the point where I wanted to prove to myself I could get the qualification and I took on the learning at a late age to challenge myself too.

I went to my local University at that time and it took some persuasion to get them to accept me. When I started I looked around the room at the "20 something's" and I wanted to run away. I then found three other "ladies" who proved to me that you do need a set of people to work through the course with and we provided each other with a much needed support group - it worked and I am glad I took that advice. I upgraded and have been a chartered fellow for two years.

Who is your hero in your profession?

I move from hero to hero really. I read something motivational and exceptional and that writer inspires me - but I do really respect the Head of HR that told me to get qualified but also made me think about how I would find the extra hours in my already busy week to devote to getting through the qualification. As a positive person who thinks they can do just about anything I needed that grounding at the time.

I am a great lover of motivational speakers and I do love to read Tom Peters when I am in need of a motivational hit; so I suppose my heroes are people who can stand in front of 2,000 people - talk for a couple of hours and never lose the engagement of the audience. I suppose that is why I enjoy seeing Victoria Wood too!

Feature - WITNESSES IN THE DISCIPLINARY PROCESS

HR Professionals often have to deal with questions about witnesses in disciplinary proceedings such as: Do witnesses have to attend? Do they have to give statements? Can they be cross-examined? What happens if the witnesses want to remain anonymous? In an article for the Newsletter, Rupert Scrase provides answers to some of these questions

Attendance of witnesses at hearing

There is no legal requirement for employers to require their witnesses to attend disciplinary meetings in person unless the employer's own disciplinary procedure states otherwise.

Witness statements

Written witness statements should be provided to the employee before the disciplinary meeting. The employee must be given enough time to consider the written witness statements; a safe 'rule of thumb' is to send them to the employee three days before the meeting with the Step 1 letter. Witness statements should be typed and the name of the witness should be at the top of the page. They should be signed and dated. It is helpful to number paragraphs and pages.

The employee's own witnesses

The employee should always be allowed to suggest their own witnesses. This will allow the employee to have a fair hearing since the employee's witnesses may give evidence that puts the employer's case in doubt.

Cross-examination of witnesses

Normally witnesses would not be expected to attend a disciplinary meeting and the issue of cross-examination does not arise. Difficulties can arise if an employee wishes to cross-examine a witness at a disciplinary meeting. A disciplinary meeting is not a quasi-judicial hearing. Whether the employer has acted fairly will turn on the facts.



If there was a particular case that turned on a crucial contested fact, then the employer could be found to have acted unfairly if it refused the right to cross examine. However an employer that refused an employee the right to cross-examine the victim when the employee was accused of harassment is more likely to be found to have acted fairly. Whether cross examination is allowed or not, the employer should always ensure the employee has had a full opportunity to present their side of events.

Anonymous witnesses

All investigations need to fall within the band of reasonable responses. Normally it will be unreasonable to use anonymous witness statements. In exceptional circumstances, such as if a witness is genuinely fearful of physical violence, it may be reasonable to use anonymous witness statements. It is necessary to balance the employee's need to know details of the case against him against the informant's need for anonymity. *Linford Cash & Carry Limited -v- Thompson [1989]* gives helpful guidelines to try and reach a balance. It will be interesting to see if new case law develops in this area particularly in light of the House of Lords ruling this summer that anonymous witness statements should not be used in Criminal trials.

*Rupert Scrase, Scrase Employment Solicitors
0117 985 1026*



- *Are you, or do you know anyone wanting financial help for their HR/Training studies?*
- *Do you want to study more but are struggling to find funding?*
- *Is your company unable to provide financial assistance for CIPD qualifications?*
- *Do you have a friend/colleague who would like to study but can't find funding?*

CIPD Gloucestershire Branch may be able to help!

We can provide bursaries up to £300 to help Gloucestershire students wanting to study for a CIPD qualification (at any level). For more information and details of how to apply; e-mail wshaigh@yahoo.com Centre Co-ordinator for Glos CIPD Branch

A fresh approach to your company's well-being ...

Managing Redundancies & Restructuring

With the current economic climate, it is an unfortunate reality that businesses may find it necessary to consider a rationalisation programme that could result in redundancies and downsizing of the workforce. With so many legal pitfalls it is critical that organisations follow the right process. We are experts in helping you through these difficult times.

Advice & Guidance

Our experienced HR Consultants will provide confidential advice and guidance that is practical and business focused. We will help to ensure that you stay on the right side of the complex employment legislation that covers the redundancy process, by providing a straight forward approach to managing redundancies.

Interim Support

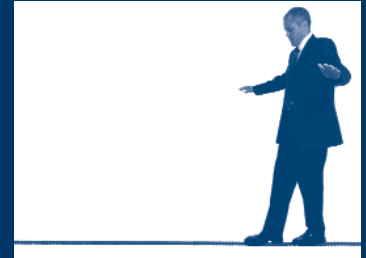
We appreciate that your HR staffing requirements may increase during a redundancy programme. To meet this need our Interim HR Support Service allows you to temporarily increase your HR resources during busy periods. Our skilled and experienced HR Interims operate at all levels, from project managing a redundancy programme through to providing additional support to your HR team, all at competitive rates.

Training Courses

We offer highly focused, practical training courses on Dealing with Redundancies for Line Managers and those with responsibility for dealing with people. This excellent half day course focuses on the legislative framework and the practical skills for effectively managing redundancies. Courses may be run in house or from our Twigworth offices.

For more information on how we can support your organisation contact Julie Heather on 01452 739000 email julieheather@hrml.co.uk or visit our website at www.hrml.co.uk





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DEADLINES

Information, articles, details of future meetings / events and news items for upcoming issues of newsletter need to be sent in by the dates below at the latest:

15 October

15 November

15 December

Please use e-mail for your copy.

ADVERTISING

This newsletter is sent to approximately 1,400 CIPD members in the Gloucestershire Area.

Advertising is now available at the following rates:

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Half Page	£250.00 + VAT
Quarter Page	£125.00 + VAT
Eighth Page	£65.00 + VAT

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