



NEWSLETTER

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RECRUITMENT

K2 MOVES ACCOUNTS IN-HOUSE

Due to our substantial growth and exciting expansion plans, a decision was made in the summer to move the accounts function of K2 'in-house'. We have implemented a new Payroll and Sage Accounting system to ensure the process is as efficient as possible, and hope that any initial teething problems have been ironed out and you are happy with the results. ■

WINNERS OF THE 2004 CHRISTMAS TEMPS RAFFLE

Warm congratulations to the winners of the Christmas raffle for our temps which proved to be a resounding success! Every week in December, each candidate working in a temporary assignment was issued with a raffle ticket. The draws took place in each branch on Wednesday 22nd December and with over 40 prizes, there were a lot of happy temps!



One lucky winner, Pam Golding, is presented with a bottle Moët!

INDUSTRY QUALIFIED

K2 are proud to announce that **DEBBIE MITCHELL** and **JODY PATRICK**, have been awarded the prestigious Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC) Certificate in Recruitment Practice after a year of hard study.

The Certificate in Recruitment Practice is a nationally recognised qualification for senior recruitment consultants and is studied over an academic year. The course provides a comprehensive knowledge of recruitment processes from start to finish.

During the course Debbie and Jody learned about manpower planning, job analysis, candidate attraction, selection techniques, interviewing and general recruitment law. Students are required to demonstrate their practical interviewing techniques in a face-to-face examination, in addition to undertaking four hours of written examinations and a business project.

Employers and candidates using a qualified recruitment consultant are there-fore assured of a professional and competent service from a consultant who is not only qualified but who also abides by the REC's Code of Good Recruitment Practice.

Zoë has now embarked on the qualification and will be sitting her exams in June. We wish her the very best of luck! ■



FLU

Flu vaccinations cost an average of £16 per person, but have been reported to have a phenomenal effect in the work place. Health specialist Sona, found that firms which invested in vaccinations for their staff reported up to 43% fewer sick days, 44% fewer visits to the doctors and 18% fewer days where workers were not working to their full effectiveness.

SICK OR SICKIE?

The traditional "sickie" is still alive and well, according to a global survey. Whether it's a day at the cricket, job pressures or recovering from a drink too many, the old art of feigning illness down the telephone to skip work is still in rude health.

An Internet poll by international consultancy group Robert Walters surveyed responses from more than 3,200 people in 12 countries. Asian workers seem to be the best phone actors. In Singapore, 23.8% of voters admitted that none of their sick days were genuine. Japan was not far behind with 16.2% of workers using a sick day as an excuse to bunk off.

UK workers appear to be fairly honest. The survey showed that 70.7% of staff here said that all of their sick days were genuine, while only 6.9% said none of them were true. The Confederation of British Industry published a report in May estimating that an average employee took 7.2 days off last year and that the problem cost firms £11.6 billion a year!

Overselling a job that doesn't live up to expectations in the early stages will drive attrition. It is better to give a 'warts-and-all' impression of the role by highlighting the difficulties of the job as well as the good points.

ARE YOU BREACHING THE LAW?

According to a recent study, almost one in three employers is contravening employment rules by not issuing staff with a written contract – a basic requirement of the Employment Rights Act 1996. It also showed that almost 40% do not give staff notes on disciplinary procedures. Failure to comply with new dispute and resolution regulations that came into force in October (which stipulate that every employee must have a note in writing about the firm's disciplinary procedures) could lead to a hefty compensation payout!

"Nobody can make you feel inferior without your permission" ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

SKILLS SHORTAGE

A dire shortage of skilled workers has led to one of the tightest labour markets the UK has ever experienced, according to the Recruitment and Employment Confederation's Report on Jobs for November, growth in the labour market has slowed because firms cannot find skilled workers!

Worst hit by the skills crisis is the retail sector, which is struggling to find staff to cope with seasonal peaks in demand. The REC said "The employment market continues to be characterised by a tightening in supply with severe skills shortages emerging as one of the biggest threats to continuing growth in the economy."

These findings were reiterated by Digby Jones, Director General of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) in his speech at their annual conference in November. Jones stated that unskilled people will be unable to find work in the UK within the next 10 years. He also argued that globalisation and outsourcing boosted productivity and profits and allowed UK companies to create better-paid highly skilled jobs. Despite many unskilled and semi-skilled jobs moving to Asia and Eastern Europe, around 500,000 new UK jobs have been created in the past two years. "The challenge is to create more jobs than we lose – which we are doing – and to ensure people

have the skills to take advantage of them" he said.

DID YOU KNOW

...There are over 1.5M temporary workers on the payroll each week in the UK! Temporary workers are a great resource during times of holiday, sickness, or when extra manpower is needed for a limited period.

...In 2003 Britain wasted over £12 billion on bad recruitment practices – according to Daily Telegraph report 26.06.04

INCREDIBLE STRESS OF COMMUTING

Mr Incredible, star of Christmas blockbuster *The Incredibles*, knows only too well how commuting to work can affect stress levels. After one particularly frustrating journey home from his day job as an Insurance Claims Clerk, he takes violent revenge on his car.

Research now suggests Mr Incredible may not be over-reacting. According to a study by technology company Hewlett-Packard, commuters on roads and railways in the UK suffer greater anxiety than fighter pilots or riot police.

Peak hour travellers can experience heart rates as high as 145 beats per minute, compared with an average 'at rest' rate of 65. They also undergo a surge in the stress hormone cortisol, and tend to 'shut down' to the outside world.

So the next time you're stuck on the M40, remember that even superheroes get stressed!!!

RISE IN RETIREMENT AGE WILL MEAN MORE RED TAPE FOR EMPLOYERS

Raising the retirement age could wrap employers up in costly red tape when it comes to hiring and firing older workers, according to *Croner*, providers of business information and advice.

The company is highlighting the potential legal pitfalls employers could face in response to the recent recommendation by the Pensions Commission with regard to raising the retirement age as a solution to the UK's pension shortfall.

Employers could be risking claims of unfair dismissal, disability discrimination and age discrimination if they dismiss an employee, or refuse to employ someone for reasons relating to their age.

Richard Smith, HR expert at Croner, be-

lieves that the problem of the pension deficit should not be dumped on employers and says that if the retirement age was raised it could end up costing businesses who feel they have no option but to hold on to older workers for fear of employment tribunal claims.

Commenting, Smith said: "Raising the retirement age by compulsion does not make economic sense for most businesses and should not be used as a solution to pension problems."

"Employers have enough red tape to deal with already," he continued. "Raising the retirement age opens a minefield of litigation over the treatment of ageing workers."

EURO DEBATE CONTINTUES

The debate over whether the UK should join the single currency has failed to teach most Britons what the euro is actually worth, according to a new survey.

Eight out of ten people did not know the value of the currency, with the average person guessing that £1 bought four euros.

Some people thought £1 was worth 10 euros and in Scotland – recently shown to be most in favour of joining the single currency – the average person thought they would get seven euros.

Despite the poor results – from a survey of 2,000 people carried out for a foreign exchange company – the estimates were better than when a similar study was carried out last August.

Six months ago only 12% of people knew the value of the euro, compared to 20% now.



RECRUITMENT

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