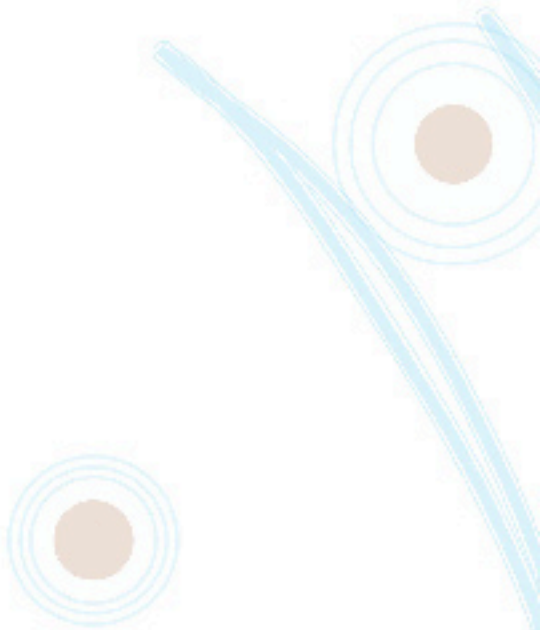


**Recruitment and
Retention Lessons
from Beyond the
Social Services Sector**



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SECTION I INTRODUCTION

Purpose of study - Learning from other sectors

The voluntary sector social services workforce is in the throes of a major transformation in terms of skills and knowledge development across a sector which itself is still expanding.

Effective recruitment and retention of a competent workforce is critical to developing and improving on the delivery of services that are increasingly funded through competitive public sector contracts.

While there are numerous examples of ways in which the sector has addressed recruitment and retention challenges, both among small as well as large players, this study aims to look at whether we can learn anything from looking beyond the social services sector. The case studies that have developed from this study set out a range of ways that other sectors have attempted to solve challenges such as competition for scarce skills, high turnover, career progression.

Questions the study addresses

There are a number of questions that were raised as the study progressed and that each of the case studies touches on in different ways. For example, the distinction is often made between recruitment and retention but is it sensible to plan recruitment in isolation from planning for retention?

- o Do the training, career options, conditions of service, image of the organisation etc. impact both on recruitment and retention outcomes?
- o Is turnover about built-in obsolescence, and does recruitment, like retention, require ongoing long term strategies?

Focusing on factors that impact on the potential pool of applicants: -

- o Is there a parallel with estate agencies which open up in the same street and benefit from shared exposure and visibility, i.e. does a partnership or consortium approach help to attract scarce skills into the sector?
- o Does the competition for new recruits vary in different countries and within different parts of the country, and for different types or levels of jobs, and do these variations require consideration of external risk factors resulting from the wider employment and skills markets?

Finally, focusing on factors that impact on retention: -

- o Are there types of jobs which are expected to have high turnover and where replacement is easy or investment in training limited and other jobs where high turnover is a major problem, replacement difficult, and investment in training considerable?
- o Does this require approaches that focus on specific levels within organisations or is an organisation-wide approach required?

Approach to identification of case studies

The aim of the study was to identify approximately ten case studies which demonstrated ways in which employers from the public, voluntary and private sectors addressed some of the above questions. The sampling was opportunistic and relied on accessing information on potential examples of practice by searching the websites of a number of sector skills councils¹ as well as following up recruitment agencies and private sector companies that promoted themselves on the web in relation to their recruitment or retention policies. In particular examples were sought of the following:

- o Industries known to have posts common to the social services sector such as supervisor positions or customer relations and operating in a competitive service employment market
- o Industries with posts very different from posts in social services such as in the manufacturing or commercial sectors
- o Companies or organisations known to have addressed diversity issues.

From the initial trawl of over thirty potential case studies sixteen interviews were carried out with:

- o three voluntary sector agencies, plus a voluntary sector project that provides a jobs portal for the voluntary sector in Scotland²
- o two public sector agencies³
- o seven private sector companies⁴

The case studies are snapshots and are only illustrative of a much broader range of recruitment and retention practices current within each agency. Each addresses particular challenges and is included because of the particular solutions developed. There is no intention to present them as best practice, and in some cases they may include examples of what not to do.

However, the enthusiasm that all the interviewees showed for sharing their experiences with voluntary sector social services, from directors of the smallest voluntary organisation to very senior managers within global companies, demonstrated that sharing learning on how best to invest in one's workforce is core to business success whatever the sector.

2 Path Scotland, Open House, The Wise Group, SCVO (Good Moves).

3 West Midlands Police, Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council.

4 IBM, Shell, B&Q, Red Carnation Hotels, The Essentia Group, Rentokil Initial, Corus (3 different perspectives).

SECTION 2 CASE STUDY THEMES

A synopsis of each of the case studies can be found at the end of this report. Individual case studies have also been produced which provide more in-depth information on the following:

- o Background to the agency or company
- o An example from each website of how the organisation markets itself to potential employees
- o The recruitment or retention challenges addressed
- o The approaches developed
- o Measures of success
- o Learning points in terms of what makes recruitment or retention effective, how this has been achieved and success indicators.

This section will attempt to summarise some of the specific recruitment or retention challenges that are being addressed, examples of approaches taken, and indicators used to measure success. It is split by sector - voluntary, public and private.

The Voluntary Sector

Good Moves is not a case study. It has been included in order to illustrate the differences in approaches to recruitment by the voluntary sector in Scotland. Established four years ago by SCVO in partnership with the Big Issue, and also initially SFHA, its aim was to become the recruitment agency for the Scottish voluntary sector. However, despite attempting to extend its coverage by advertising on the rural gateway in Scotland it remains very central belt and urban focused with the proportion from Edinburgh and the east increasing. Rural jobs in the main, except for Chief Executive-type posts, continue to be advertised in the local press. Large national voluntary organisations continue to outsource recruitment to agencies. Social services organisations in particular tend to include administrative jobs in the 'batch' of jobs advertised through recruitment agencies or the national press. These agencies in turn access the cheap advertising provided by Good Moves along with the more costly national press and specialist journals.

There are three case studies from the voluntary sector, two from Scotland and one from England. The first two – Open House and Path Scotland - are examples of positive action focusing on the black and minority ethnic (BME) communities within the housing sector, though each are now branching into other sectors including social services. The third – The Wise Group - is an example of an employment training agency targeting clients with chaotic lives, and which services a range of industries including the health, housing and child care sectors.

The challenges that all three address are ways of supporting under-represented sections of the community to compete on a level playingfield for jobs with other sections of the workforce. Their approaches involve carefully tailored qualifying training provision within niche employment markets. To recruit trainees they address their specific barriers and work with employers to adapt recruitment processes such as use of outreach marketing of job content, design of application forms, making interviews more applicant friendly, and providing ongoing mentoring and support to employees along with their employers. Path Scotland extended their positive action model to fast-track social work graduate training and to leadership training programmes targeting those in employment.

Two measures of success are the increase in applicants for traineeships, and numbers moving into mainstream employment. However Open House is also interested in measuring the impact on mainstream employers within both housing and other sectors and their recruitment and retention practices. The Wise Group is interested in distance moved by individuals as measured in terms of social development. It also promotes investment by funders in traineeships by calculating the social return on investment.

The Public Sector

There are two public sector case studies, both from England. They are interesting in terms of the volume of recruitment they are involved in on an ongoing basis. The first one – West Midlands Police - is having to constantly deal with natural wastage and turnover, and is very aware that it is in direct competition with other police forces. This is also the case with the second case study – Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council. But in this case the councils in the NW of England have formed a consortium to jointly publicise jobs on a common website called Now People.

The challenge for West Midlands Police is to continually attract a diverse workforce to replace officers and staff who leave and to respond to specific government requirements such as counter-terrorism. The length of time taken to recruit because of risks associated with recruiting the wrong staff means a long drawn out process. This means keeping applicants committed throughout using web-based updates.

Tameside Council is in competition with the retail sector for lower paid employees and with other sectors for managerial level posts. It has addressed this challenge through effective joint targeting of recruitment and through shared intelligence on the employment market with its local government competitors. They have found a net benefit from this approach.

While West Midlands Police measures its success by competition for jobs, low drop out rates during recruitment, and take-up of opportunities to work on post-retirement, Tameside Council measures its success by financial savings on recruitment and development of new recruitment approaches by its consortium.

The Private Sector

There are seven case studies taken from various sizes of companies. The smallest is the Essentia Group with its 450 'associates' made up of permanent employees plus sessional agency staff spread over three sites in the UK. Red Carnation Hotels has 660 employees in the UK and 900 employees world wide. Corus International has 672 spread across 69 offices in 48 countries, although this is one business within the massive global company Corus⁵. These are tiny in comparison to the companies such as Shell (108,000) Rentokil Initial (70,000), B&Q (39,000) and IBM.

Case studies focus on different levels of jobs – in the case of Corus Colours it is apprentices; Red Carnation Hotels, Rentokil Initial, B&Q and The Essentia Group it is on first level supervisors; and Shell and Corus International it is on senior managers. IBM focuses on continuity from initial selection of staff to professional development at all levels, with priority being given to diversity – a priority also shared with B&Q.

For some companies like The Essentia Group and B&Q recruitment is not a problem as they have good responses to job adverts. The Essentia Group has the advantage of being able to recruit from a pool of sessional agency workers. However where specific skills are required such as languages it has to proactively recruit on an outreach basis. B&Q can draw from a bank of applicants who have registered and been screened on-line. To fill posts which are more difficult to recruit such as those involving cash handling they turn to existing employees and focus on growing their own talent. They like Red Carnation Hotels and Rentokil Initial see first level supervisors, along with managers, as critical to retention of staff and invest in their selection and training as well as performance appraisal. The Essentia Group HR Director trains its managers to undertake the full range of management duties including HR functions. B&Q believes in incentivising best practice at all levels of management and in fast tracking the most able through accelerated management programmes. Recruiting the right kind of attitudes is critical to the business success of Red Carnation Hotels. They grow their managers by provision of internally delivered but externally accredited management training.

For companies like Rentokil Initial turnover is the challenge, as particularly in London many of their employees are from Eastern Europe, and a five pence difference in hourly rates can mean losing a cleaner. They encourage their employees to stay on by providing accredited training which lasts up to 12 months. This has been found to be effective in reducing turnover. Corus Colours attempts to 'get

5 The parent company Corus employs 41,000 world wide.

in before its competitors' by offering work experience opportunities for school pupils, management and leadership training for teachers, apprenticeships and traineeships to school leavers, and student placements and sponsorship to undergraduate and postgraduate students.

For Shell, Corus International and IBM the main challenge is both recruitment and retention of scarce skills. Shell is facing a global shortage of skilled engineers. One solution has been to accelerate its recruitment process and to appoint more quickly than its competitors. They, like Corus International, train their managers in coaching skills which empower employees. IBM, like Shell, utilises on-line supported learning, employee feedback on morale, and invests in and audits progress by its various diversity programmes.

Success is measured in many ways:

- o Increased financial turnover, product sales, reduced recruitment costs, reduced employee turnover rates (all companies)
- o Reputation and not having to recruit as family and friends recommend the company to prospective employees (The Essentia Group)
- o Employee satisfaction (B&Q, IBM, Shell, Corus)
- o Extent of movement from temporary/sessional into permanent jobs, supervisory or managerial jobs (B&Q, The Essentia Group, IBM, Rentokil Initial, Red Carnation Hotels)
- o Evidence of workforce diversity (IBM, B&Q).

All the case studies included in this study share one thing in common - the need to keep on top of the game, to ensure that approaches to recruitment and retention are effective, and to reduce any risks arising from changes in the jobs market or from the actions of competitors.

SECTION 3 LESSONS FROM OTHER SECTORS

This section identifies some of the main findings and highlights some lessons with possible ways that these approaches to recruitment and retention might be applied within the voluntary social services sector in Scotland.

Main Findings

Some turnover can be healthy

There is no suggestion as such that turnover is unhealthy as it can revitalise and refresh an organisation. Though there is of course an optimum level to preserve continuity and know-how it's not just about numbers. Organisations need also to consider what are the skills mix and qualities of workers that they are keen to retain. Companies like The Essentia Group see themselves as providing a step onto the career ladder. There may be only a minority of temporary sessional workers who they are keen to attract into permanent employment. While Shell and West Midlands Police plan for people taking time out and possibly returning at a later date. The trick seems to be to recruit and retain committed and experienced workers with the mix required to meet organisational requirements in a constantly changing external environment.

Valuing people

One thing that is striking from these case studies is the extent to which many of the considerations that the largest global companies highlight are so similar to what we might expect to be discussed by the smallest social services organisation in Scotland. Despite the emphasis on the financial bottom line for private, public, and also for voluntary organisations attempting to achieve long-term financial sustainability, organisational values and in particular respect for the individual member of the workforce is the number one priority for all interviewees. This they say makes sound business sense as a valued workforce is an effective competitive workforce. Extracts from websites (included in the full case studies) demonstrate this underlying principle. This also suggests that mission statements of the voluntary charitable sector, when translated into organisational values, are one of its greatest strengths, provided that these are implemented both internally as well as externally in relation to clients and funders. No matter how large a global company is, attention to the developmental needs and the unique selling points of individual members of the workforce is all important. It sells the company to prospective employees. This commitment of employers to employees is seen as a shared duty, with career opportunities dependent on employees embracing this ethos in terms of their attitudes to other employees.

The holistic approach to recruitment and retention

Many of the approaches highlighted by interviewees are common practice within different parts of the voluntary sector and in fact few of the ideas are completely new. What is different perhaps is the extent to which there appears to be joined up thinking. A cursory look at the 'Our People' sections of most of their websites identified that the specific initiatives that interviewees describe are examples from a range of programmes starting at pre-recruitment, the selection process, and once in employment continuing through personal and skills development, accredited training, career planning etc. Anyone interested in considering applying for jobs can search their websites to find out what is on offer as well as information on the overall employment ethos. This is not the case with most voluntary organisations and therefore, except for some of the large national voluntary organisations, it is difficult to make comparisons between employers when applying for jobs.

Developing supervisors and managers

Management style appears to be critical to employee retention, and this means looking at first level supervisory staff, middle management, as well as at director level. The first level manager in a way binds the new recruit to the organisation as they 'puppy walk' (Red Carnation Hotels) and induct staff into the organisation's standards, ways of doing things and values. The middle manager needs to be stretched and developed so they can learn coaching skills, particularly if managing highly skilled professional workers who have to be empowered to develop their own styles of working. The voluntary sector has emphasised the development of its management programmes but may have some way to go in terms of developing coaching skills suitable to achieving a highly skilled workforce capable of operating in an extremely competitive environment.

What diversity offers the employer

The final conclusion is that diversity is fundamental to businesses operating in challenging environments where they need to access a broad range of backgrounds, experiences, skills and abilities. It is not merely a corporate social responsibility but is fundamental to how these companies see themselves achieving competitive advantage. The voluntary sector has still some way to go in terms of mainstreaming diversity, and moving from the current position where so many members of underrepresented sections of the community are concentrated in poorly funded projects.

Key Lessons and areas for possible implementation

Some of the lessons that have been drawn from this quick sampling of experiences from other industries have been presented below.

What makes recruitment effective?	Examples of possible areas for action
Preparation prior to recruitment – researching the workforce employment market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Sharing information and intelligence on the target workforce – the location of skill shortages, current trends, and the factors that might influence future employment markets o Information on competitors and what might enable effective competitive edge in attracting new recruits
Preparation prior to recruitment – refocusing if necessary elements of job spec; clarifying essential knowledge, skills and attitudes; use of plain English in job adverts (understandable also to non-English speakers);	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Identifying where to target recruitment to attract the potential labour force with relevant knowledge and skills and experience o Checking that job specs. spell out what skills, experience etc. might be relevant o Recruitment systems developed for recognising transferable learning including life experiences
Advertising vacancies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Advertising as part of a consortium on linked or shared websites
Pre-recruitment support; and promoting consistent image of organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Promotional events including face to face contact with potential applicants o Developing background information/packs for mailing or publishing on the website o Use of the website – interactive tools o Being up front about values and attitudes interested in recruiting
Screening procedures prior to interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o In-house or using external partner/temp. agency o Screening for attitudes as well as skills o Accelerated recruitment using telephone interviews and quick offers of appointment o Ensuring that applicants are kept up to date with how their application is progressing o Getting buy-in to the organisation and its values e.g. diversity, scope for tailoring jobs to individual style; priority given to customers etc.
Interview process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Speed-dating with other partners o Scenario testing and in situ observational interviews

In summary there may be scope for developing further within the voluntary social services sector the following ideas on recruitment :

- o Forming a consortium with direct competitors in order to jointly recruit - linked websites.
- o Recruitment materials giving applicant-friendly information - job design, attitude requirements, relevant transferable experience; pre-recruitment support; on-line interactive tools for applicants.
- o Screening procedures; accelerated recruitment.
- o Partnership approach to interviews with a similar range of jobs.

What makes retention effective?	Examples of possible areas for action
Probationary period replaced by 'puppy walking'	o Tailored support by line manager
Fast track recruitment and promotion of talent	o Talent scouting role of management o Accelerated training programmes
Terms of employment packages	o Fair and flexible with clarity about what commitment the organisation is making to its employees and what in return is expected in terms of commitment by employees
Management style	o Devolved with emphasis on coaching and mentoring o Managers open to appraised by staff
Tailored individual career promotion	o Individuals supported in taking responsibility for personal development o Flexible career opportunities for temp staff to move into permanent positions based on evidence of commitment
Welcome back	o Keeping in contact with ex-employees o Opportunity to take time out and to return when circumstance change

In summary there may be scope for developing further within the voluntary social services sector the following ideas on retention :-

- o Effective induction replaces need for probationary period.
- o Fast track promotion of employees who show the right attributes.
- o 'Retention bonuses' offered on the basis of service and rising value of employees, combined with option to negotiate flexible contracts.
- o Coaching management in coaching skills.
- o Personal development opportunities extended to volunteers as well as to contract staff.
- o Welcoming back ex-employees and offering 'time out' or sabbatical opportunities.

Taking forward some of the lessons

In conclusion, the following are some ideas for consideration by the Voluntary Sector Social Services Workforce Unit on how some of these ideas might be implemented.

1. Firstly, there may be scope for considering a consortium approach to advertising jobs either involving public sector partners or between groups of social service organisations with similar types of posts, or operating within a common geographical employment market. The Good Moves website may be one channel that could be better exploited for this purpose.
2. Secondly, there may be scope for developing the equivalent of a talent bank where applicants can register their CVs and where employers can search and match skills with job specifications. This also has the option that unsuccessful applicants in one interview can be considered for other jobs that come up later (as suggested by the Tameside Council). The main benefit of this is to keep skills within the sector and to prevent movement out of the sector. Again this is a function that Good Moves could provide.

3. Thirdly, there may be opportunities to share examples of indicators and measures that promote success stories. The use of personnel case studies on websites is exploited by most of the companies as it is free publicity. The Voluntary Sector Social Services Workforce Unit Work may choose to promote such success stories.

This study has only scratched the surface in terms of what can be learned from other industries. Perhaps the most important lesson is to apply the values of the sector consistently to recruitment and retention of its workforce.

CASE STUDY SYNOPSES

THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

GOOD MOVES

<p>The Challenge</p> <p>It is attempting to be the recruitment agency for the Scottish voluntary sector.</p>	<p>The Approach</p> <p>It provides affordable extensive and sustained recruitment coverage including the Big Issue combined with exposure on other websites such as the Rural Gateway and electronic mailings¹. The main posts advertised are coordinators, development officers and middle management. Most are located in the central belt. Except for Chief Executive posts, rural jobs tend to be advertised only in the local press.</p>	<p>Indicators of Success</p> <p>The site gets 20,000 unique user hits per month, 5,000 registered job seekers on its e-jobs mailings, and there are 150 jobs advertised at any one time. Market research has found that, though the number of applicants recruited through Good Moves may not be as high as through the national press, the proportion of applicants who are of a quality to appoint is higher. This has the advantage of savings on the time involved in short listing.</p>
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OPEN HOUSE

<p>The Challenge</p> <p>There is under-representation of both BME applicants and employees in the housing and other voluntary and public sectors in the north east of England.</p>	<p>The Approach</p> <p>This Equal-funded project² is delivering a positive action programme in partnership with housing associations in the Tees Valley along with the major employment and business networks in the north east. It involves provision of a fifty week temporary traineeship in housing management and customer relations combined with mentoring support linked to accredited training courses. Open House reconfigured the recruitment process in terms of redesigning application forms, provided one to one support with applications, and set up ‘speed-dating’ interviews which allowed applicants to speak on a one-to-one basis with potential employers. In turn employers were enabled to match skills to applicants preferences.</p>	<p>Indicators of Success</p> <p>As well as helping BME applicants to move into mainstream jobs in the housing sector and elsewhere, the organisation raised the profile of the housing sector among BME communities, knowledge about barriers to employment among housing associations and the mainstreaming of new approaches to recruitment. This has now led to a roll out of the approach within the Prison Service and the Environment Agency. It also raised the profile of BME businesses by producing a BME business directory for procurement services, as well as giving BME businesses an understanding of the procurement process within housing associations.</p>
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PATH SCOTLAND

PATH SCOTLAND		
The Challenge	The Approach	Indicators of Success
There is under-representation of the BME communities in the housing and social care sectors and in management level posts	This project has a well developed track record in delivery of a professional 30 month trainee housing placement programme linked to qualifying training through joint recruitment with housing providers and shared responsibility for mentoring and supporting trainees. This model has now been extended to positive action training support for the fast-track social work graduate programme, and to a University accredited leadership training programme delivered in-house for BME workers from the public and voluntary sectors.	The competition for the housing traineeships and over-subscription for the leadership course is an indication of the demand by members of BME communities for routes into mainstream employment and for positive action support for career development.

THE WISE GROUP

THE WISE GROUP		
The Challenge	The Approach	Indicators of Success
The Wise Group is an example of a training agency which is exploiting the growth areas in the economy, where clients (referred to as temporary employees) with chaotic lives, through work experience supported by mentoring, accredited training, and support by employment advisers, are assisted in competing in the labour market. The lessons in this case study are relevant to employers in the social services sector who seek to provide employment opportunities for client groups who have life skills but no qualifications. And there are also lessons for agencies keen to recruit from the Wise Group's client base and to assist clients to progress in their careers through skills development.	A fundamental element of the organisation's approach is working formally with partners in developing project specific recruitment tailored to target workforces, the design of job content and colourful promotional marketing information for the website and job centres, and the provision of one to one support to employers as well as to temporary employees. The case for investment in higher costs is made by calculating the social return on investment.	The numbers of temporary employees moving into employment, the extent of movement by individuals in terms of the jobs market as measured by social development measures, are all carefully monitored and promoted in marketing materials and funding applications. Recruitment into jobs within The Wise Group, and upward mobility within the organisation, are other indicators of success.

THE PUBLIC SECTOR

WEST MIDLANDS POLICE

<p>The Challenge</p> <p>The Force requires to recruit because of natural wastage among police officers, over 560 officers a year, on top of recruiting special constables, police community support wardens and other police staff and to respond to additional demands on recruitment in response to counter terrorism. They are also committed to attracting a diverse workforce. The challenge is to ensure that applicants are kept on board during an extensive selection process. Once recruited, the Force is keen to retain these staff by offering service conditions such as an option to leave and rejoin the service depending on personal circumstances.</p>	<p>The Approach</p> <p>The focus of recruitment is on promoting a positive image of jobs and the variety of jobs within the police force by being proactive in terms of outreach drop-in sessions, the marketing of jobs through web-based ‘podcasts’, and an emphasis on diversity at all levels. The organisation addresses the length of the screening process by varying the intensity of the process in terms of the relative risk associated with different levels of job, and by providing dedicated space on the website for on-line feedback on progress of applications. Career breaks are ways of retaining trained staff by allowing time out.</p>	<p>Indicators of Success</p> <p>West Midlands Police measures recruitment success in terms of the competition for jobs in the force, and the low drop out rates during the probation period. Measures of retention include the number of officers taking up career breaks, temporary jobs post retirement, or working past the minimum age for retirement.</p>
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TAMESIDE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

<p>The Challenge</p> <p>Nine metropolitan authorities from the NW of England who have formed the consortium Now People. They recruit from a number of different job markets and have to target accordingly. They are in competition with the retail sector for some jobs, and at different times different types of jobs are difficult or easy to recruit so they have to keep on top of changing employment contexts. Finding smart ways to reduce recruitment costs is imperative as well as building awareness and keeping people within ‘the local government family’.</p>	<p>The Approach</p> <p>Now People is the consortium website which is the public face of their joint recruitment advertising. It is funded through additional “Better Government” money. A new addition to the website which is about to be developed is a talent bank database, with has the potential in future to enable cross-consortium redeployment of ‘surplus’ staff. They advertise jointly at job fairs. However they are sceptical about the value of these events except possibly in terms of building awareness in the long-term.</p>	<p>Indicators of Success</p> <p>The main area of success, in addition to reductions in advertising costs, is the shared learning from the consortium discussions. One area they may explore in future is that of putting out to contract a consortium recruitment agency function to increase effectiveness of executive searches and to reduce overall costs, though they are very aware of the dangers of tying themselves to one contractor for this function.</p>
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THE PRIVATE SECTOR

RED CARNATION HOTEL COLLECTION (RCH)

<p>The Challenge</p> <p>The impact of 9/11, SARS, Foot and Mouth and high labour turnover characteristic of the hospitality industry, along with increasing competition from the growth in hotel accommodation, has meant that RCH, a luxury collection of hotels relies on the reputation of its service standards, and return visitors. It therefore is keen to recruit people with the right attitudes and has developed an imaginative and targeted approach to recruitment and to retention of its best staff.</p>	<p>The Approach</p> <p>RCH works closely with other partners to recruit new talent, along with creative marketing using their website. Delivery of induction training is undertaken within each department by specially trained 'specific skills trainers' who 'puppy-walk' new recruits. Although RCH offers generous staff benefits, the biggest selling point is the three-level supervisory training programme for carefully selected employees and the focus on 'home-growing' its own management.</p>	<p>Indicators of Success</p> <p>Increased revenue per average room, increased occupancy rates, reduced labour turnover and therefore reduced recruitment costs, are monitored on an ongoing basis. RCH also promotes on its website its track record in terms of internal promotion, and boasts the number of senior directors who have risen through the ranks of the company.</p>
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THE ESSENTIA GROUP

<p>The Challenge</p> <p>There is high turnover in the call centre industry but as The Essentia Group provides a specialist type of contact centre service which does not involve selling, turnover is lower than for the rest of the sector. The Group contracts with a recruitment agency to recruit seasonal helpline advisers, many of whom are undergraduates looking for shift working. These recruits provide a pool of trained workers who can be recruited into permanent supervisory and other roles within The Essentia Group. In order to meet client needs the organisation may also have to proactively recruit on an outreach basis, for example non-English speakers for a specific health contract.</p>	<p>The Approach</p> <p>There is only one full time HR Director so managers have to be trained to undertake the full range of their duties and to be regularly evaluated in terms of their performance. Flexible working and variation on contracts is attractive to employees. Fundamental to both recruitment and retention is promotion of the values of the company. They have found that reputation and word of mouth are the best forms of recruitment as well as making good business sense.</p>	<p>Indicators of Success</p> <p>The number of people who joined the company because their family or friends recommended the company to them is testament to the reputation of the company. This translates into lower turnover rates, reduced recruitment costs, and the level of interest in moving from temporary seasonal work into permanent supervisory and managerial roles.</p>
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RENTOKIL INITIAL

<p>The Challenge</p> <p>The industry is known to have very high turnover - 80% is the norm, and in months not years. The challenge therefore is to commit new recruits, many of them from Eastern Europe, to stay and complete their training rather than leave for a few pence extra a month with another company.</p>	<p>The Approach</p> <p>The focus is on training the first line supervisors, combined with providing accredited training which encourages employees to stay until completion of their training. By working closely with the sector skills council (Asset Skills) and publicly funded training providers, who deliver numeracy and literacy courses, Rentokil is raising the skills levels of its employees as well as learning from the experience of other employers operating in their sector and in health care.</p>	<p>Indicators of Success</p> <p>Turnover rates is the main barometer of success, along with career moves from operative into promoted posts.</p>
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B&Q

<p>The Challenge</p> <p>In a competitive retail environment some posts can be difficult to fill including posts requiring cash handling or liaising with installers. Growing the talent within the organisation of people who know the systems and can be trusted reduces the risk of wasting resources on training new staff, as also does investing in retaining managerial skills within the company.</p>	<p>The Approach</p> <p>There is a strong emphasis on diversity within the recruitment process and selection procedures that ensure that candidates are selected only on the basis of appropriate skills and how they perform in situ. The accelerated management programme aims to retain experienced workers who know the systems, and who balance the managers coming in from other industries with 'fresh ideas'. The use of externally managed staff feedback is used to incentivise best practice among supervisors and managers.</p>	<p>Indicators of Success</p> <p>Hitting company targets is important but so also are individual unit scores for employee satisfaction, evidence of diversity and career moves up the organisation.</p>
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CORUS

<p style="text-align: center;">The Challenge</p> <p>As a highly competitive global company it is essential to recruit scarce professional skills such as electrical engineers within manufacturing, and steel experts in the commercial sector.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The Approach</p> <p>Corus has developed a number of recruitment strategies 'to get in early' ahead of its competitors - by maintaining links with schools and offering educational staff bursaries for management and leadership training, working with school leavers and students, offering traineeships, apprenticeships, student placements and sponsorship, graduate and post graduate programmes. It is also committed to ensuring that once employees with scarce skills are successfully recruited a key role of management is coaching and ensuring that they are 'empowered' as individuals to develop their 'individual style' of service delivery within the parameters set by organisational risk.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Indicators of Success</p> <p>Hard commercial indicators are used combined with employment costs and the impact on expansion of turnover</p>
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SHELL

<p style="text-align: center;">The Challenge</p> <p>Like all companies in this sector, Shell is faced with a global shortage of skilled engineers. In order to achieve competitive advantage over its competitors it has had to accelerate its recruitment process and to address ways of attracting back talented and skilled employees.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The Approach</p> <p>As well as effective and speedy vetting and selection processes, Shell is committed to employee-led individualised personal development and training which fits with the operating culture of the company, and an emphasis on autonomy - "You are in charge of your own destiny". Ongoing auditing of morale and diversity, along with maintaining contact with ex-employees and their networks is seen as an important investment.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Indicators of Success</p> <p>The competitive edge in terms of recruitment of scarce talent, feedback from staff surveys on morale and the promotion of Shell jobs by current employees are some examples of indicators that can be used.</p>
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IBM

<h3>The Challenge</h3>	<h3>The Approach</h3>	<h3>Indicators of Success</h3>
<p>IBM has moved from physical manufacturing into the higher value service sector. In order to compete effectively it requires a flexible highly skilled workforce to meet the demands of its global customer base through tailored business solution consultancies along with technical call centre support. It employs its own regular staff in the high value consultancy type roles. And 'contractors' are recruited and employed by external recruitment agencies to execute the business on behalf of IBM. In Greenock these include foreign nationals employed on the basis of their language skills.</p>	<p>Recruitment is dictated by contract requirements but this also provides career opportunities both for new employees coming through the graduate and other programmes, internally for current employees, and in some cases for workers on temporary contracts with recruitment agencies. In-house and on-line supported training, along with mentoring and coaching, and personal development plans, are ways of encouraging self-motivated ongoing enhancement of skills. Employee feedback tools and the emphasis on diversity programmes promote the company as an employer to external recruits as well as getting buy-in from employees. Another tool is promoting the individual's commitment to charitable voluntary activities in their own an in the firm's time as an element of the company's commitment to corporate citizenship.</p>	<p>Attrition rates by type of job, employee survey results, and career moves into and within the company, along with diversity measures are used as indicators of recruitment and retention targets.</p>



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(Footnotes)

1 TFe, eCVS, rural gateway, workwithus.org

2 Equal Community Initiative Programme funding from the European Commission requires matched funding, which in this case from the housing providers and employment and training partners.