PrEA facilitate adaption to change

Government and trade unions in South Africa, and elsewhere in the world, are struggling to come to terms with the changing world of work and the increasing use of flexibility within the labour market.

Gone are the days that an individual was employed “for life” at a single employer with full benefits and a gold watch on retirement. Chronic skills shortages, increasing global competition and improving technology have created a labour market that favours flexible, project-based employment.

This more flexible labour model need not mean precarious work. “Flexicurity”, a concept coined in Europe, promotes the balance between flexibility and security for the employee through effective regulation and the availability of suitable social protection schemes.

Companies, in order to remain competitive, are choosing to outsource their non-core functions and to bring specific skills, for specific projects, in “just-in-time”. The nature of these employment relationships varies but is most often defined as “atypical”. To effectively manage the sourcing, recruiting, assessing and administering of flexible labour, businesses have turned to specialists, in the form of Private Employment Agencies (PrEA) including Temporary Employment Services (TES) companies. South Africa is no different.

PrEA facilitate adaption to change

In 2011, the International Confederation of Private Employment Agencies (CIETT) commissioned the Boston Consulting Group to undertake global research on the impact of the Private Employment Agency (PrEA) sector and their role in facilitating adaption to change, better labour markets and decent work.

The results were overwhelmingly clear. PrEA enable adaption – for both businesses and workers – in increasingly volatile and complex labour markets. The research clearly indicated the need for appropriate regulatory frameworks to govern the PrEA sector, so as to ensure that they continue to provide services that enable an efficient labour market, drive skills development and the Decent Work Agenda.

A presentation of the major findings of this research will be made by CIETT’s James Gribben, Communications & Economics Advisor, who will be in South Africa in late March 2012. James will join Johnny Goldberg in sessions aimed at providing members with the latest update on local NEDLAC negotiations and the international bigger picture. For more info, go to page 8.

Mission Critical: Reduce Unemployment

At the heart of South Africa’s many problems lies the ever-increasing scourge of unemployment. All of Government’s plans, most especially the National Development Plan, released in mid 2011, focus on the need to create millions of jobs in the next decade.

This will not be possible if the proposed labour legislation amendments were to be passed. South Africa already struggles to compete favourably with our African neighbours and BRIC counterparts in respect to education standards, labour relations and productivity, and unless we create an environment that businesses – both local and International – believe is conducive to economic success, we will not stimulate the economy and attract the much-needed foreign direct investment required to have a real impact on job creation.

In fact, the National Development Plan and Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan both indicate the need to relax labour legislation in order to stimulate the economy and create real jobs. This is now more critical than ever as the world hobbles through the largest economic downturn since the 1929 Great Depression and companies operate in highly unstable and uncertain times.

Enforcement is the real issue

Extensive research, conducted globally by the Boston Consulting Group, proves that over-regulation of any labour market – established or emerging - leads to a direct increase in the number of noncompliant “black market” operators and a decrease in employment in the formal sector where the highest levels of compliance exist.

Business is highly concerned that attempts to further regulate the South African labour market, resulting in over-regulation, will only serve to increase the cost burden on the already compliant and drive more businesses underground, thereby increasing the non-compliant element.

This will have a severe impact on the number and quality of the jobs in South Africa. As costs increase, compliant businesses will seek opportunities to reduce the number of people employed through automation and mechanisation, thereby resulting in the loss of decent jobs.

PrEA is a significant contributor to the South African economy

The Private Employment Agency Sector, including Temporary Employment Services (TES), is a significant contributor to the South African economy. In addition to facilitating smooth transitions for workers between jobs, assisting employer companies to remain competitive in tough economic times, it is also one of the largest contributors to skills development in the country.

A snapshot of the South African PrEA sector:

- Introduced 5.4 million people to the world of work since 2000
- Gateway to the world of work: Profile of work seekers/candidates: Never previously employed: 57% Youth aged 18-35: 83% Previously disadvantaged: 93% 994 000 people deployed (via TES) on a daily basis Of those initially employed as a temp, each year significant numbers are permanently deployed: 30% within 1 year 42% within 3 years One of the largest contributors to skills development – R415 million paid over in skills levies 17,400 registered learnerships facilitated (30% of SETA total)
Great exposure for your jobs comes standard on CareerJunction. As SA’s largest* job portal, we host over 2 Million registered CareerSeekers (with 1,000 new registrations each day) and offer over 1 Million quality searchable Resumes to Recruiters. Just more ways we make sure you place better candidates, more often.

As South Africa’s #1 ranked recruitment website** and leader in providing quality candidates, we invite you to speak to one of our sales consultants about our flexible solutions to suit your needs and budget.

* As rated by world leading online Audience Measurement solution, Effective Measure (www.effectivemeasure.com).
** As rated by The Digital Media and Marketing Association of South Africa (www.dmma.co.za).

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Learn more at www.onejunction.co.za.
“Quality in a service or product is not what you put into it. It is what the client or customer gets out of it.”

Peter Drucker

Peter Drucker is famous for his work on salesmanship and this quote is for me, the most pertinent. APSO has, for a long time, been hard at work protecting the industry and crafting the profession, but we are often accused of not doing enough.

The transformation research undertaken by APSO in 2011 clearly illustrates that one of the biggest hurdles that APSO has to overcome, in order to achieve our goal to be the premier staffing organisation in the country – and on the continent - is communication. In particular, effectively communicating to members what we’re doing and how this is beneficial to them.

I can personally attest to the many hours of effort put into APSO by the dedicated staff at Head Office and by the volunteers who serve on our committees. Sadly, much of this effort is lost in translation because members can’t see the tangible value that it is bringing to their businesses.

We realise that we need to up the ante and have appointed a full-time Communications Officer to manage a more streamlined and effective communication strategy – both internally (with members) and externally (with stakeholders). We are thrilled to see the early rewards of this by the compliments we have received about the newly established weekly Labour Law Bulletin and our increased activity via our social media channels.

Communication is a dual responsibility and so we remind our members to ensure that we always have your up-to-date contact information. We recently migrated to a new CRM system, Your Membership, and only have a single point of contact per company currently. There is no limit to the number of individuals that can be linked to your company’s membership record and we encourage you to add all of your consultants. This way, they will always be on top of the latest news in the industry and activities within APSO.

APSO is actively considering a range of additional products and services that we believe would be beneficial to our members, primarily those who operate SME agencies. We will be launching our Business Partner Programme later this month and look forward to cementing relationships with key suppliers to the industry for the benefit of our members.

The quote above can also equally be applied to your recruitment business. Too often we get queries from client companies questioning the value that they are receiving from their recruitment providers. Perhaps it’s time to reflect internally on the work that is being done in your company and how this is being communicated to your clients. Perhaps the lack of reporting and clear communication is perpetuating the myth that recruitment is easy because we simply place an advert online, grab a CV, send it to the client and then charge what appears to be an exorbitant fee?

There are many changes underway within APSO, all focused on improving our service offering to members. Part of this includes a revamp of the magazine and so I sign off here in the last edition of the APSOgram as it stands. Next quarter will see the introduction of our new & improved magazine, so watch this space!
Notice board - Meet the team at APSO Head Office

We have a few new faces at Head Office and would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to the team. We are all here to assist members and to ensure customer service excellence so please don’t hesitate to contact us!

Natalie Singer - Chief Operating Officer
Natalie holds a BA Communications & English degree and began her career as a journalist. She first joined the recruitment industry in mid 2002 after returning from two years working in the UK. She ran a successful financial/management desk for a small boutique agency in Durban before leaving to start her own recruitment business in 2004.
Natalie first joined the APSO KZN Committee in 2003 and was elected as KZN Regional Chairperson in 2004, holding this role until 2007. In April 2007 Natalie joined APSO full-time and holds the role of Chief Operating Officer based at the Head Office in Johannesburg. She has been responsible for a variety of functions within the organisation including PR/Marketing and is the editor of the APSOgram.
Natalie is passionate about the industry and in particular raising the standards to achieve true professionalism in the sector and is a true advocate for APSO. nataliesinger@apso.co.za

Advocate Janet Early - Ethics & Legal Officer
Janet holds the following qualifications: BA (Psychology and Communications); BA Honours (Psychology); LLB (all from UNISA) and a MSC Med (Bioethics and Health Law) from the University of the Witwatersrand.
She is currently completing her LLM with the focus being on the regulatory environment governing Umbilical Blood Cord Banking. Janet is the Advocate of the High Court of South Africa in 2008, is completing her pupillage with the Independent Association of Advocates of South Africa and successfully passed her Bar exam in November 2011.
Janet’s varied career includes six years in the Press and Public Affairs Department of the British Consulate-General and eight years with the Mine Pension Fund dealing with Forensic Investigations, Legal Consulting, Corporate Governance and Compliance Management.
Janet joined the APSO team in July 2011 and is responsible for managing all ethics, compliance and legal issues for APSO. She is available to members who require advice or guidance in these areas. janetearly@apso.co.za

Gloria Clegg - Training & Continuous Professional Development Officer
Gloria began her career in the banking sector but had her first exposure to recruitment when she worked as an accounts clerk for a Benoni-based agency in the mid 1990s. She started temping for APSO in 2004 and became a full-time member of staff, as the Training Coordinator, in 2007.
Gloria is responsible for all training and professional development activities within APSO including monitoring and administering the APSO Entrance Exam. gloriaclegg@apso.co.za

Violet Dlamini - Bookkeeper
Violet joined APSO in 2008 as the bookkeeper and is responsible for handling all things financial within Head Office. She has a payroll certificate and is currently enrolled in her 2nd year BCom: Financial Management with UNISA. Violet has more than 12 years experience within accounts departments. accounts@apso.co.za

Pradeen Chetty - Office Administrator / PA to COO
Pradeen joined APSO in January 2012, having worked as an Assessment Clerk for the Metal & Engineering Industry Bargaining Council (MEIBC) for the past several years. Pradeen is well versed in the issues of compliance and administration. She also has experience working within a small recruitment agency and therefore understands the challenges that APSO members experience.
Pradeen is responsible for keeping the Head Office ticking and providing support to the team, including as PA to Natalie. pradeenchetty@apso.co.za

Zina Girald - Communications Officer
Zina joined APSO in January 2012 after having spent the past 11 years working for the South African Institute of Consulting Engineers (SAICE) in a similar role. Zina holds numerous qualifications all associated with PR, design and communications and is an Associate member of PRISA.
Zina is responsible for managing all communications and PR functions for APSO including production of the APSO magazine, handling website and social media and liaising with the media. zinagiral@apso.co.za

Brenda Kganyago - Business Development Officer
Brenda joined APSO in November 2011 focusing on membership and business development, having previously engaged with APSO as a member. Brenda ran her own generalist recruitment agency for three years and therefore understands the myriad of challenges facing SME business owners today.
She holds a HR Management & Training Diploma from Varsity College and prior to joining the recruitment industry in 2006 had more than ten years sales and marketing experience primarily in the motor and motor finance sector. brendakganyago@apso.co.za

Kesa Mokoena - Receptionist
Kesa manages APSO’s reception and is the cheery voice you hear when you call in to Head Office. She speaks English, Zulu and Sotho and enjoys interacting with people. She has completed a Business Administration certificate and is currently in her 2nd year studying BA Communication Science through UNISA. Kesa worked at Boston City Campus as an administrator before joining APSO in August 2010. kesamokoena@apso.co.za

Carol Goslin - Western Cape Regional Representative
Carol joined APSO as the Western Cape Regional Coordinator in September 2009. She is responsible for supporting the regional committee and ensuring that members in the region are satisfied. She handles various administrative and function coordination duties.
Carol started her career in Human Resources while working at i&J for 6 years as a Personnel Officer. She left there to join Cozens Recruitment and thereafter Talent Network Recruitment where she worked as a Recruitment Consultant.
Carol is available: Monday – Friday, 08h30 – 13h30 on 0861 42 62 82. carol@apsocape.co.za
Message from the PRESIDENT

Change!
Time for Change!

April 2011 will go down in APSO’s history as the turning point of APSO. It is a time when the leadership of APSO took a close look at what was happening inside – and outside - the organisation and recognised that if they did not steer the organisation in a different direction, then the “end would be nigh”! Out of the mid-term EXCO review session came some exciting initiatives and we can now say – “things will never be the same again”.

Let me briefly share some of the realities that were apparent at that time:

- The industry has for a long time been plagued with rogue operators who do not recognise the need for professionally driven procedures and processes. Up to now, anyone could become a recruitment consultant and open an outfit without understanding the prescripts of the laws that govern our industry as well as what is considered best practice. Such individual organisations have continued to operate under the radar but their impact has been felt deep and wide, resulting in a major outcry in business circles around issues of ethics and of course the continued call for “ban the labour brokers” from some trade unions. We have therefore resolved that we need to drive professionalisation to raise barriers to entry, improve ethics and best practice.

- New technologies & methods of business have also demanded that as an organisation, we think creatively on how we offer our service and remain relevant to our members and their needs. We need to find innovative structures and services to improve our value proposition.

- Our members have communicated that they need more support from APSO. And because APSO wants to remain the organisation of choice, we recognise the need to respond positively and timeously to this demand. We are especially cognisant of the fact that more than 75% of our membership is SME and that support is crucial for these members.

- Changing legislative frameworks demand greater compliance. The reality is that the proposed changes from a legislative perspective require APSO to re-position itself in such a way that its members can continue to be compliant to all requirements. APSO therefore needs to move swiftly to create an enabling environment for members to adapt to these new realities. This means identifying suitable standards that will ensure such compliance, while simultaneously providing the necessary support and resources to our members to enable them to make the necessary changes in their businesses.

- Finally we also recognised that to meet the imminent requirements of operating in a global environment we have to align ourselves to global best practices. Whether any of us like it or not, we are part of a global village and we have to remain suitably equipped to operate in this space as a competitive organisation.

After much debate and discussion we emerged from the session with three over-arching strategic imperatives that we believe will respond to the realities outlined above.

Rebranding and repositioning APSO.

In keeping with international trends, we are gearing APSO up to become a leader not only within our country's borders, but on the continent. As a proud member of the International Confederation of Private Employment Agencies (CIETT), APSO holds the council seat for Africa and the Near East and we would like to action the imperative to professionalise the sector across the continent. We realise that this is a big ask and so we will ensure that before we begin to expand our operations to other countries, we first ensure that our systems, structures, skills, staff and services are well aligned to deliver effectively and efficiently to our existing South African members.

Some of the changes under this initiative include changing the logo and changing our name.

Inspectorate

APSO is committed to remaining a leading player in shaping workable regulation and to creating a platform for effective implementation of the decent work agenda as clearly spelt out by the International Labour Organisation. We need an Inspectorate model that will ensure compliance to the regulations within our country while simultaneously driving alignment to international standards. Our activities are therefore geared towards influencing thinking and being ready to participate in the formation of such an Inspectorate.

The Institute of Staffing Professionals (ISP)

In response to the need for the professionalisation of our industry, APSO is driving the establishment of the Institute of Staffing Professionals. We recognise that to remain competitive, the individual employees within our member organisations need continuous up-skilling to remain responsive to the needs of the business environment.

This calls for change! To achieve these ambitious objectives, we need to change the way we do things.

According to Materlink, “At every crossroads on the path that leads into the future, tradition has placed 10 000 men to guard the past”.

We therefore need to ensure that none of us can be accused of being part of the 10 000 men that guard the past so closely, and refuse to let it go in order to usher in the new. We cannot as APSO – or the industry for that matter - continue with “business as usual”. We have to move to what President Thabo Mbeki called “Business Unusual”.

We have thus embarked on Change Management processes. As an EXCO, we have successfully gone through two Change Management Workshops: one for the Coastal Regions and one for the Inland regions.

To put it simply, Change Management is an organisational process aimed at helping the individuals, at all levels, within the organisation to accept and embrace changes in their current business environment, and to gear up towards meeting the demands of such change. It requires paradigm shifts and a willingness to give up the old in order to work towards achieving the new. Often, academics talk about “unlearning the old and learning the new”. You will recognise that this begins to talk directly to the transformation agenda of any organisation. Our team is therefore ready to take the organisation to the next level.

For me what is also exciting is that these initiatives come at a time when APSO turns 35 years of age. This organisation is no longer a baby or a teenager. It is transitioning from Youth to Adult and must therefore be ready to succeed within the adult world.

We have heard it being said that “change is the only constant”. As an organisation we embrace the challenge of change and invite you, our valued members, to join us – the team of dedicated staff and volunteers - on this exciting journey.
You spoke, We listened

In 2011, APSO undertook a series of interventions, including a formal research project and nationwide “Have your Say” forums, to understand what our members want. This was a critically important step in APSO’s journey towards becoming recognised as the professional body for the staffing sector.

The key objectives of the study were to:

- Gauge members’ common understanding of the definition of “transformation”;
- Identify features or key developments that show whether APSO is transforming;
- Evaluate APSO’s transformation progress in terms of leadership, strategy and structure;
- Assess the current channels of communication; and
- Establish what barriers exist that reduces membership’s participation in APSO activities.

The research methodology encompassed a 3-prong process including questionnaires, circulated to members electronically and at conferences and events, face-to-face engagement at the regional Have Your Say forums, and in-depth interviews with selected members who had previously raised concerns.

A tale of positive growth

The research confirmed that the membership of APSO has drastically increased in the past 10 years with almost 50% of those surveyed having joined in the past five years. Nearly 60% of the participants have been operating their companies for up to 15 years indicating that the membership of APSO is primarily made up of experienced and established businesses. 74% of the companies employ less than 20 people with a quarter employing less than 10. This confirms the fact that nearly 80% of the current members are SME organisations.

What you love about APSO

1. Easy access to industry information including quality of APSOgram;
2. Industry representation;
3. Ethics Code and legal advice;
4. Training & Conferences, and
5. Level of professionalism offered by Head Office

Areas for improvement

1. Increased visibility in regions, particularly smaller areas;
2. Absence in the media;
3. Poor communication;
4. Failure to enforce ethics; and
5. Lack of industry statistics

Suggestions

1. Extending membership of APSO to individual consultants;
2. Increasing visibility of APSO through use of social media etc;
3. Appoint full-time staff members, including regional coordinators;
4. Creating an induction/information file for new members; and
5. Re-invigorating APSO’s brand including a pay-off line

Implementing the Change

We have taken careful consideration of the research findings and have used this in planning our organisational strategic imperatives. We believe that the three imperatives address many of the issues raised by members.

Re-branding

We heard you, and we agree. The APSO branding needs a facelift. In addition to refreshing the logo and associated taglines, we’ve gone one step further and propose a new name that reflects our transformation from the origins of APSO in 1977. We look forward to ratifying, at the Extraordinary General Meeting to be held in March 2012, the new name: Federation of Africa Professional Staffing Organisations, retaining the well-known acronym “APSO”.

Inspectorate

Effective enforcement of compliance and best practice standards is one of our passions and we look forward to the day when it becomes a condition of operation that businesses in the sector belong to a professional body, like APSO, and subscribe to a code of conduct. We have worked hard, together with our colleagues at CAPES, to develop an inspectorate model that we believe could work in the broader industry. We intend to roll-out this process, including compulsory annual self-assessments for all members, and audit processes – some random, and others as a result of ethics complaints. A pilot project is underway and feedback from this will inform both the NELDAC negotiations on industry regulatory frameworks, but also the way forward for APSO internal implementation.

We have also embarked on the process to review the current Code to ensure that it is “fit for purpose” and clearly separates out elements of ethics, best practice and compliance. In addition, the complaints mechanisms and ethics review processes are being considered and, with guidance from the Ethics Institute of South Africa, we will revise these to meet international standards. It is clear that the addition of a full-time subject-matter expert, Advocate Janet Early, has made a big difference to our ability to effectively and efficiently engage with members and clients and to provide guidance and resolution for matters in the realm of law and ethics.

Institute of Staffing Professionals

We believe that professionalisation starts with the individual and that’s why we’re excited about the launch of the Institute. Individual recruiters will be able to take ownership of their careers and join the Institute to achieve recognition through qualifications and professional designations. In addition, they will be able to leverage greater success in their jobs through continuous professional development (CPD). APSO is currently engaging with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) to register as a professional body and to formalise the industry standards in respect to qualifications and designations. We look forward to launching this formally before the end of 2012.

Ramping up the communication

Throughout the research process it became clear that one of APSO’s biggest failings is our inability to effectively communicate the great work that is being done. In direct response to the complaints raised by members, APSO has employed a full-time Communications Officer, Zina Girald. In addition, we have reviewed our communication strategy and have embarked on a concentrated effort to streamline communications and make use of all available platforms including print media, website, social media and email. Our social media groups are growing daily and we encourage you all to join us in the Twitteverse, on LinkedIn and FaceBook. View the contents page for details of these groups.

The newly implemented membership platform, “myAPSO” allows you to customise your relationship with us. The system integrates the backend (membership database) with our website and provides a myriad of exciting, free tools to you and your consultants. These tools include website, blog, social media consolidation and the ability to customise the communication you receive from APSO. We request that all members go online to update their records and establish your personal settings to ensure that you get the most from your membership. If you’re unsure on what to do, please call Brenda Kganyago on 011 615 9417 or brendakganyago@apso.co.za.
Research & Trends

APSO recognises the need to improve on our research capability but is also cognisant of the costs involved in producing quality research. We will continue to seek opportunities to partner with stakeholders, like SSETA and CIETT, to provide industry-relevant facts to members.

In 2011 APSO was involved in the TES research commissioned by the SSETA and will ensure that a full report is available soon. We are also extremely proud to host James Gribben of CIETT, who will present the findings of the Adapting to Change research on the global impact of the private employment agency sector. James will be in South Africa in the last week in March and will key note at the TES breakfasts. For more information please go to page 8.

We regularly get asked for salary survey information for the industry and we’re proud to announce that we have just finished developing an extremely detailed remuneration survey specific to the staffing sector. You can expect to receive a request for your participation in the survey and we encourage your support. APSO has partnered with HR specialists, Emergence Growth, who will facilitate the survey and so members can rest assured that their information will be handled in confidence with only consolidated information being published. For more information on the survey please contact Zina Girald – zingirald@apso.co.za

So, is APSO transforming?

According to the survey, more than half of the respondents believe that APSO is transforming. They highlighted as key developments, the recent staff appointments, rise in membership and production of the APSOgram magazine. The introduction of the “Have your Say” forums were received very positively and participants believe that this is a long-awaited mechanism that can connect APSO (EXCO) to its members.

We (APSO) believe that the strategic imperatives and other projects currently being actioned will go a long way to addressing the areas for improvement highlighted by the research as well as actioning some of the suggestions made by members. Change is a journey, not a destination, and we recognise that we need to take things one step at a time. We look forward to continuing to provide innovations that will assist APSO in becoming the premier staffing body on the African continent and a valuable partner for members.

The Challenge of Change

13 & 14 June 2012
Gauteng

Today’s business environment is best characterised by continual change and it can be difficult to know what to do, when, to adapt.

This year’s conference will specifically cater for owner-managers and cover all of the most pertinent issues facing your recruitment business today.

Winner of the Transformation lucky draw – Bev Campling, Bion Search & Selection

Bion Search & Selection specialises in the placement of skilled and qualified IT and accounting / finance staff. At Bion both the candidate and client are of equal importance. To us recruitment is not sales, it is a consulting service that offers value to all parties.

With over fifteen years of experience in staff recruitment, we have learned that methods and trends that used to work in the past, and are still widely used today, have become somewhat jaded and no longer meet the requirements of the current, progressive market.

That is why we offer a number of innovative, flexible service options with variable fee structures. In addition, we offer psychometric assessments and benchmarking as well as criminal record clearances that can be utilised by clients as part of the recruitment process, or for existing staff to verify information and improve productivity.

A full programme will be available shortly but save the date as seats will be limited.
Adapting to Change campaign

South African launch of International “Adapting to Change” campaign

APSO is embarking on a journey to enable private employment agencies in South Africa to fulfil their potential as change enablers, challenging out-dated perceptions of the industry and inadequate regulation.

The International Confederation of Private Employment Agencies (CIETT), to which APSO is a member, has partnered with the Boston Consulting Group to produce a report, entitled Adapting to Change, which examines the contribution that the private employment services industry can make to the economy. The world has changed over the last few years – economic cycles are becoming more volatile and adapting to these new dynamics is one of the greatest challenges societies face today. The ever-changing economic landscape is revolutionising the way societies and labour markets operate, and as such it seemed an opportune time to examine the role that our industry can play in facilitating adapting to these shifts. The findings of the report, including the submissions made by South Africa, reveal that private employment agencies have a significant role to play – our industry has the potential to provide a bridge to social and economic progress by enabling adapting to change, ensuring better labour markets, and delivering decent work.

However, to realise this potential we still have barriers to overcome. As you will be well aware, the trade unions and even some government officials, are still hell-bent on banning our sector altogether. The image of our industry has taken a serious blow over the past two years with all the negative, and often untrue, statements made. To tackle these challenges, we need to raise awareness of this potential and engage with trade unionists, policy makers and employers. To do this, we are hosting a series of events – and your clients – to better understand the role that our sector will have to play in assisting employers in managing the flexibility required to be globally competitive and in enabling individuals to productively participate in the labour market. In addition, CIETT’s Communications & Economic Affairs Advisor, James Gribben, will join us from Brussels to present the findings of the Adapting to Change report and to answer questions and provide insight into the ways our compatriots globally are managing this shift.

Speaking on the project, James said “Adapting to Change brings together research from over 40 countries and sets out how private employment services facilitate adaptation to structural, cyclical and seasonal changes in the labour markets. It was the result of 9 months of close collaboration with the team at the Boston Consulting Group and experts from CIETT’s membership.

Adapting to Change makes the positive case for appropriately regulated private employment services and unites the industry across the globe in its vision for the new reality of work. The report is only the first step of a global journey and I am delighted that its findings are being received so well in very diverse markets”.

However, this road show is only one step on a much bigger journey to change the perception, and ultimately regulation, of the private employment services industry across the world. Following the global launch at a debate session in Geneva in October, a range of regional and national events will take place, examining the specific environment and challenges their own labour markets face and considering how they can collaborate to develop effective solutions. Insights and resolutions achieved through these sessions will be aggregated to form a global action plan for the industry, providing tailored recommendations to challenges and proposing solutions to help us in our journey to become change enablers in every country and region where we operate.

This is an exciting time for our industry. This is only the beginning of a wider campaign and we hope that all members will join us on this journey. Places are limited so please contact Gloria Clegg on 011 615 9417 or gloriaclegg@apso.co.za for more information and to book.

Adapting to Change makes the positive case for appropriately regulated private employment services and unites the industry across the globe in its vision for the new reality of work.

Since May 2010 James Gribben has acted as Communications and Economic Affairs Advisor at CIETT, the international confederation of private employment agencies, and Eurociett, the representative body for the industry in Europe. In this role James has worked on a number of research publications for CIETT including the recent Adapting to Change project. James coordinates the activities of Eurociett’s research committee and is the primary contact point for press and the academic community within CIETT.

Prior to joining CIETT, James worked in the press department of the European Chambers of Commerce and in the Brussels office of the Confederation of British Industry. He is a graduate of the University of Edinburgh with a Masters in Political Science.
Adapting to Change launch in SA

Currently there is much debate around the future of the temporary employment services (TES) industry what with COSTU’s call for ban resulting in a national strike on 7 March 2012, the ongoing NEDLAC debates, and confusing rhetoric in the market place that is causing clients to panic.

Although not entirely calming, it is at least comforting to note that these issues are not only being faced here, but across the world as the economy struggles to get back on its feet and companies increasingly choose to outsource non-core functions and make use of atypical employees.

To provide some clarity on the local situation, and insight into the growing trend of flexibility, APSO and CAPES are proud to host a series of nationwide events in March/April 2012.

Johnny Goldberg, chief negotiator will be presenting the latest from NEDLAC including the probable impact on flexibility in South Africa and James Gribben, CIETT Communications & Economic Affairs Advisor, will present the findings of the Adapting to Change global research undertaken in 2011.

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<td>Luncheon 12h00 – 14h30</td>
<td>The Square Hotel, Umhlanga, Durban</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues 27 March 2012</td>
<td>Breakfast 08h00 – 10h30</td>
<td>Deja Vu Riveria Guesthouse, Pretoria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 28 March 2012</td>
<td>Breakfast 08h00 – 10h30</td>
<td>Sinosteel Plaza Conference Centre, Sandton (JHB)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thur 29 March 2012</td>
<td>Breakfast 08h00 – 10h30</td>
<td>Cape Sun, Cape Town</td>
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<td>Mon 02 April 2012</td>
<td>Breakfast 08h00 – 10h30</td>
<td>Blue Lagoon Hotel, Nahoon, East London</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 04 April 2012</td>
<td>Breakfast 08h00 – 10h30</td>
<td>Radisson Blu Hotel, Port Elizabeth</td>
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This is the ideal opportunity to educate yourself, your team and your clients but book early as seats are limited! Go to www.apso.co.za to book your tickets today!
Countering client price squeeze

Times have certainly been tough and most companies are looking at ways to decrease their costs. Recruitment is often seen as a grudge purchase and has been at the top of many clients’ price-cut hit lists.

It is tempting, especially when under threat of losing the business, to simply capitulate and agree to cut your fees without considering the long-term implications. However, it should always be remembered that once you reduce your fees it’s near impossible to return to the original price, even when the economic situation improves.

Let’s face it. All businesses’ ultimate goal is to make a profit so that they can stay in business. Equally, sales people including recruiters, are driven to meet (and exceed) their targets to secure the commission to pay their bills and support their families. You can’t therefore negotiate away every cent of commission you might have earned just to keep a prospective client happy. Think about it, if they’re not prepared to pay for your services at the beginning of the relationship, they not likely to be a reliable client in the future.

If you follow these nine rules you’re guaranteed to make a more profitable sale:

1. **Always aim to get more from your customer than you might expect he might agree to.**
   You’ll be surprised at what people will agree to if they’re presented with the opportunity. Not presenting additional options, such as unbundled recruitment services, will only limit your chances of making the sale.

2. **Avoid price crumbling.**
   Don’t just lower your price because your prospect complains that it’s too high. You need to believe in the value of your service and if you’re too quick to reduce your fee your customer will wonder if your service was even worth paying for.

3. **Don’t give away your concessions.**
   If your client cannot afford your service, consider reducing the service in line with the requested reduced fee. Alternatively, increase value-add to the client by including additional benefits on condition of being paid the full fee.

4. **Don’t minimise the value of the concessions held by your prospective client.**
   Negotiation is a two-way process. Consider the concessions the client may offer, i.e. exclusivity, and determine whether these are worth reducing your fee.

5. **Be willing to negotiate the variables.**
   Ensure that you’ve researched the client and understand where you might add value or be able to offer alternative products and services.

6. **Be a bit miserly.**
   Don’t give away huge discounts immediately. You must believe in the value of your product. Avoid making price cuts as far as possible. If you do have to reduce the fee, ensure that you cut the products and services in proportion and that it is still worthwhile working the spec.

7. **Be conscious of timelines and make sure that you set deadlines.**
   Don’t let a prospective client drag the decision-making process. Set a deadline and let him know that the reduced fee/service offer won’t be available unless the decision is made within the agreed timeframe.

8. **Visualise the big picture in advance.**
   Can you see the sale successfully closing? Use that positive visualisation to encourage yourself as you negotiate the final agreement. If you can’t see a positive outcome then rather avoid wasting time and focus on more likely prospects.

9. **Be conscious of your own weaknesses.**
   Is there a part of the sales process you’re not very skilled at? Seek out the additional training you need or partner with someone who can help you out in the areas that you need it.

Remember don’t despair if the negotiation process doesn’t go as well as you think it should have. In some cases you’re actually better off moving on to another prospective client who cares enough about his business to pay for the services he needs.
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Empowering your consultants
to make more placements

Recruitment can be tough! Most people who become recruitment consultants come from a myriad of alternative careers. Just because they would have been identified as having the core skill set suitable for the role of a consultant, or because of their specific subject-matter expertise, doesn’t mean that they have the necessary embedded knowledge to be successful.

As a means to empowering consultants, and ensuring minimum standards and compliance, APSO introduced, in 1981, a compulsory entrance exam for all consultants working for an APSO member agency. This exam, previously known as the IPSC, was replaced – and drastically upgraded – in 2010 to become the APSO Entrance Exam.

Professional standards to combat negative impressions from stakeholders

Following the continued negative onslaughts on the industry, private employment services practitioners need to build credibility as professionals through the continuous enhancing of their skills as well as highlighting their accomplishments. The APSO Entrance Exam offers a concrete measure of embedded knowledge when performing private employment services activities.

The new professional standard determines the minimum knowledge and skills required by an individual wishing to enter or operate in the private employment services industry and the evaluation criteria were determined through consultation with the broader private employment services industry and industry associations to ensure that it is comprehensive and holistic.

Harnessing 21st century technology

APSO has harnessed technology to ensure access and affordability and the course and the exam is now delivered online in e-learning format. To add value to the learning experience participants have access to supplementary reading, websites and our other resources including subject-matter experts via discussion forums to contextualise the learning and share experiences with others.

The benefit of this e-learning platform is that learning can take place anywhere, anytime to suit the schedule of a busy recruiter. Each learner receives three (3) months access to the material and is encouraged to work through the modules systematically, taking the regular self-assessments to gauge their progress. Even the exam can be taken online at the most convenient time for the recruiter.

Quality embedded knowledge bases mitigates risk

The APSO Entrance Exam forms a solid induction course, particularly for those recruitment consultants working in an SME environment where they are expected to be revenue-generating almost from day one. The main aim of the exam is to ensure sufficient knowledge to promote ethical, compliant and professional recruitment services from all consultants working for an APSO member company, and to protect and promote the industry as a whole.

Members are reminded that, as per the APSO Constitution, all staff members, involved with clients or candidates, must write and pass the entrance exam within six months of joining.

For more information, please contact
Gloria Clegg on 011 615 9417 or gloriaclegg@apso.co.za

Module 1: The Recruitment Landscape
- Overview of the History of labour recruitment industry
- Changes in labour recruitment industry in South Africa over the years
- Roles of the stakeholders including ILO, CAPES, APSO etc
- Role of ISP and importance of professionalisation in the industry
- Global recruitment practices

Module 2: The Recruitment Puzzle
- Different aspects of recruitment
- Role and responsibility of a recruitment consultant
- Benefits of using a recruitment consultancy

Module 3: Ethics
- Importance of ethics in the business environment
- APSO Code of Ethical & Professional Practice
- Application of ethical practice within labour recruitment industry
- Managing ethical dilemmas

Module 4: Labour Legislation
- Constitution & Bill of Rights
- Labour Relations Act
- Basic Conditions of Employment Act
- Unemployment Insurance Act
- Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act
- Employment Equity Act
- Skills Development Act
- Immigration Act
- National Credit Act

Module 5: Applying the Law
- Effective advertisement within scope of current legislation
- Interview (legally) for success
- Fair assessment of applicant skills, aptitudes and personalities
- Reference and verification checks within the law
- Database management within scope of current legislation
- Candidate management

Module 6: The Perm Recruitment Process
- What is permanent recruitment?
- Benefits of utilizing a permanent recruitment agency
- Competencies of a permanent recruitment consultant
- Permanent recruitment process
- Managing terms and conditions of business with clients

Module 7: The Temp Recruitment Process
- What is temporary employment service (TES)?
- Benefits of utilizing a temporary employment services (TES) agency
- Competencies of a temporary employment services consultant
- Temporary employment services process

Module 8: Executive Search
- What is executive search?
- Benefits of utilizing an executive search consultancy
- Executive search process
- Executive search within the scope of the APSO Code

Module 9: Project Management
- Fundamentals of project management
- Project initiation, planning and control
- Project management tools and techniques
- Process of project scheduling

Module 10: Marketing & Sales
- Sales and marketing principles
- Role of sales and marketing in labour recruitment industry
- Sales and marketing planning
- Sales forecasting
- Basic principles of territory planning and marketing
- Sales and performance analysis

For those APSO members who operate within the Healthcare Sector, an additional module is available covering Healthcare and the TES.

Module 11: TES in Healthcare
- Why TES assist with recruitment of healthcare professionals
- Legal framework for practitioners
- Nursing regulations
- Regulations for healthcare profession
- Principles of professional conduct
- Scope of practice within healthcare profession
- Batho Pele principles and the rights of the patient
Effective marketing strategy critical to growing market share

The recruitment sector is highly competitive and since all recruiters seem, on the face of it, to be selling the same thing at roughly the same price, it can be difficult to differentiate your business with clients and candidates and to grow your market share.

Marketing a service business, like recruitment, is more complicated than marketing a product-driven business. As a result, it is important to consider seven components in the marketing mix, not just the traditional four “Ps”.

Since Neil H. Borden’s 1964 article “The Concept of the Marketing Mix” businesses have focused on the four “Ps” – product, price, place (distribution) and promotion – when designing their marketing plans. In the 21st century the economy has shifted and service-oriented businesses are now at the forefront. It has therefore become necessary to extend the marketing mix to include three additional elements – people, process and physical evidence.

People
The people component is pivotal because consumers perceive a service business based on the experiences with the employees of that business. Hiring staff with strong service experience, delivery orientation and documented credibility, such as certification and licensing is beneficial.

Have all of your consultants written the APSO Entrance Exam? This 10-module programme provides the embedded knowledge that will elevate your consultants in terms of their subject-matter expertise and ensure that they’re able to service your clients professionally from the outset. (For more information go to page 12)

Process
No matter how great the talent of your people, you cannot operate an effective business without systems and processes to optimise the customer’s service experience and ensure efficient delivery. Investing in the right tools, such as an information management system or access to the Internet, is imperative because without access to these resources, your people may not be able to deliver to clients’ expectations.

Physical evidence
This component is important in enabling your customers to see tangible proof of your service capabilities and is a real challenge because services are inherently intangible by nature. Your physical evidence is the proof that remains after the service has been performed. In recruitment, this would be the successful placement of the right candidate who is able to execute the role and meet the expectations of the business in terms of performance.

Marketing is often characterised as more of an art than a science because it can be difficult to know how to go about marketing your service in a logical way. It is important that when considering your marketing plan, you look at the three levels of marketing – core, actual and augmented.

Core Product Level Marketing
The core product is not, as you might think, the actual product itself but rather the key benefit that the product (or service) offers. In recruitment, the key benefit of using a recruitment company is the successful placement of the right candidate in the right role to achieve the desired goals of the client's business, and not the actual recruitment process.

Actual Product Level Marketing
The actual product is the physical product (or service) that the customer buys. Marketing at this level focuses on selling the design, style and quality of the product itself. At this level, you may wish to highlight the specific recruitment methodology you use and the reasons why this is different to that offered by your competition.

Augmented Product Level Marketing
The augmented product (or service) includes all the additional services that are added to the product in order to add value and differentiate it from the competition. In recruitment, these augmentations could include additional screening processes, psychometric testing, and extended guarantees or after-sales service. This level of marketing has the greatest potential to influence customers and clearly differentiate your business from competitors.

Although marketing occurs at these three distinct levels, it is critical that your marketing plan incorporates all three. Consider how you can leverage these elements across your marketing material to ensure that your clients – and potential clients – are able to differentiate your service from the rest and make the choice to buy.

Market share n. The percentage of sales a company has in a specific market within a specific time

Growing market share is a fundamental goal for most businesses but there are only a few ways in which to do this:

- Steal it from your competitors;
- Grow faster than the overall market;
- Or access potential clients who’ve not previously bought this service

The process of growing market share requires extensive planning and research. You need to first understand how big the total market is and where there is potential for growth, and then understand what customers really want so that you can position your service accordingly. Finally you need to implement an effective marketing plan that promotes your service to the potential market.
Step 1: Segment your existing customers into groups based on their level of purchase. How often do they use your service? What type of service do they use?

Step 2: Contact your existing customers using a detailed survey to determine what needs, if any, are not currently being met by your company and how you could develop new services/products that will meet these needs. Note: It is always easier – and less expensive – to increase revenue from existing clients than to attract new clients.

Step 3: Use economic data (national survey information for example) to understand the total size of the market. Consider how much of this market you are currently servicing and set a realistic goal on how much additional market share you’d like to achieve.

Step 4: Conduct a consumer preferences survey with potential new customers. In this survey you should ask (1) if the consumer is currently using recruitment services, (2) if they are, who are they currently using, (3) whether or not they are happy with their current suppliers, (4) what sort of factors are most important to their buying decision – quality, service, price etc. and (5) what sort of factors would compel them to begin using recruitment, or switching service provider.

Step 5: Design a marketing campaign to target potential new customers. Use the information you gained during the surveys – existing and potential customers - to ensure that your value proposition meets the desired requirements highlighted.

Step 6: Develop an incentive scheme that will encourage your consultants to promote your service and bring in the new business. Note: The incentive scheme should focus on bringing in profitable clients, not just new business. You want to work with clients that are prepared to pay your fees and where it is relatively easy to make regular placements.

Accessing higher market share will translate into higher profits but gaining market share can be risky and expensive. It is therefore important that you first spend the time and resources in research to understand whether there is a realistic opportunity to wrest market share from your competitors by offering better performance or an innovative product/service.

Strategies to gain market share

Understand your competitive advantage. There are four primary types of competitive advantage:

- low cost
- customised products/services
- delivery (speed and reliability)
- quality

Determine which of these you believe is your competitive advantage and make sure your marketing material focuses on this.

What are your order winners? These are the characteristics of your service that compels the customer to choose you over the rest of the competition. Order winners usually comprise the competitive advantage of the company. If you have access to the best candidates then leverage this as your order winner and make sure that you’re marketing this to the clients who identified that quality is their primary buying motivator. Remember that order winners change over time so use a dipstick with your clients regularly to ensure that you’re selling the right motivator to the right target audience.

Clients might have a particular order winner in mind but they also have order qualifiers. These are the characteristics of the service the customers demand even though they are not the primary buying reason. The client may make a decision based on quality (of candidates) but they also expect efficient process and short delivery timeframe.

At the heart of the recruitment business is service. Customers will always consider the total service experience when making future buying decisions. It is critical in the recruitment process to ensure that the after-sale service is as good as the pre-sale service to secure repeat business.

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The Franchisor provides the training, operational expertise, the business model and systems you need to succeed, which allows you to focus on the fundamentals of your business.

Benefits to owning a staffing franchise include:

- Extensive pre-opening support
- Ongoing training
- Marketing and advertising support
- Increased brand awareness
- Consistent quality
- A network of fellow franchisees
- Payroll support
- National contracts

For franchise opportunities contact Carolyn Diaz at (012) 641 0100 or carolynd@expresssa.co.za

JOIN THE LARGEST FRANCHISED STAFFING FIRM IN SOUTH AFRICA AND INVEST IN YOUR SUCCESS WITH AN EXPRESS EMPLOYMENT PROFESSIONALS FRANCHISE.
It's that time of year that employees love and employers hate – the three month period where productivity takes a nosedive due to the generous sprinkling of public holidays and the opportunity these create to take extended periods of leave without tapping into one's annual leave allowance too heavily.

This year, the five public holidays all fall on working days so thankfully this avoids the uniquely South African scenario of creating additional public holidays in the event that the day falls on a Sunday.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Holiday</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 21 March 2012</td>
<td>Human Rights Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 6 April 2012</td>
<td>Easter Friday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 9 April 2012</td>
<td>Easter Monday</td>
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<td>Thurs 27 April 2012</td>
<td>Freedom Day</td>
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<td>Tues 1 May 2012</td>
<td>Workers Day</td>
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So who qualifies for paid Public Holidays?

All employees, no matter their contract type, are entitled to be paid for a public holiday if it is a day that they would have normally worked.

Public holidays are regulated in section 18 of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA). The conditions apply to all employees – namely permanent, temporary, fixed-term contract employees and employees earning commission only.

Under the BCEA an employee is entitled, by law, to have the day off on full pay and no consent by the employer is required for the employee to exercise this right. If the public holiday falls on a day on which the employee would ordinarily have worked then the employer is obliged to pay the employee his normal wage for the day even though the employee has the day off.

Employees are entitled to receive their public holiday pay on their next usual pay day.

De-mystifying the “day before, day after” rule of thumb

An oft quoted rule of thumb, “a temp is only entitled to be paid for a public holiday if he works the day before, and the day after” is in fact inaccurate. Employers should remember that employees are entitled to be paid for a public holiday if it is a day on which they would have ordinarily worked.

For example, a call centre consultant who is regularly shifted to work Monday, Wednesdays and Fridays would be eligible to be paid for the public holidays that fall on a Monday, Wednesday or Friday and not for any that fall on a Tuesday or Thursday. Although they worked the day before, and the day after, the day between, on which the public holiday falls, is not a day they would have ordinarily worked and they are therefore not entitled to be paid for this day.

However, it should be borne in mind that you may not alter someone’s shift schedule for a particular period, purely to avoid paying public holidays.

What happens if the employee works on a Public Holiday?

An employee may only work on a public holiday if he agrees to work it.

If an employee agrees to work on a public holiday then the employer must pay at least double his normal wage for that day, or if it is greater, the normal wage for the day plus the amount earned by the employee for the time worked on that day or give the employee the equivalent paid time off.

For example, an employee who works on a public holiday on which he would not ordinarily work, then the employer must pay the employee for the work performed on that day. This may be a full additional day’s wages, or it may be calculated by time in the case of hourly paid employees.

How to manage shifts that run between a Public Holiday and ordinary work day

It should be noted, particularly in regards to night shift workers, that if the shift worked by the employee falls on a public holiday and another day, then you need to determine where the greatest portion of the shift fell to determine what pay rate to use.

For example, if the night shift began on Easter Monday and continued into Tuesday, the bulk of the shift fell on the public holiday. The entire shift would therefore be deemed to be a public holiday and public holiday pay rates (i.e. double) will be applicable. However, if the shift began on Sunday evening and continued into Easter Monday, the bulk of the shift fell on a normal working day. Therefore the entire shift will be deemed to be an ordinary day and the usual pay rate will apply.

Exchanging Public Holidays

Although not included in the BCEA, the Public Holidays Act provides the opportunity for the employer and employee to agree to exchange a public holiday for another day.

For example, an employer and employee may agree to exchange Wednesday 21 March (Human Rights Day), for Monday 30 April 2012 to allow for an extended weekend and to avoid unnecessary disruption in the workplace. If agreed, this means that employees who work on Wednesday 21 March would be paid their normal daily wage but would receive a paid day off on Monday 30 April in lieu of the public holiday. This amounts to two days pay and there is therefore no loss to the employees and no financial gain to the employer.

Ensure that your SLA clearly outlines the payment of Public Holidays

It is not uncommon for clients to make use of temps during this time because some of their full-time staff members may opt to take extended leave. Temporary Employment Services (TES) should ensure that their service level agreements clearly explain how public holidays will be catered for in terms of payment by the client. Usually, public holiday accruals are made as part of the normal temp mark up, but at this time of the year, and particularly for short assignments, the usual percentage accrual will not cover the actual amount needed to pay the temps. Re-assess your calculations based on short-term assignments for this period and ensure that you are accruing correctly to avoid being out-of-pocket.
In his book, *Secrets of Great Rainmakers*, Jeffery J. Fox, explores the differences between ordinary sales people and those superstars, or “rainmakers” who seem to drown in success and wealth. The book is based on more than fifty interviews with industry leaders from a broad range of fields and explores the lessons to be learned on how sales people can outsmart their competition and set themselves apart from the rest.

Rainmaker n. Individual with the ability to produce extraordinary results, most especially in terms of increased revenue or business

Rainmakers are rare but can be found in all sales industries. In recruitment, they’d be the consultant who always seems to find the perfect candidate for the ultimate client. They exude confidence and have excellent relationships with clients and candidates and never seem to be tripped up by counter-offers or stalled client processes.

Although the book contains a myriad of lessons on how to become a rainmaker, the chapter focusing on the behaviours and competencies of rainmakers really stood out and recruiters could learn a thing or two to improve themselves and make more placements.

According to Fox, a rainmaker’s personality is pleasantly peppered with this pack of “Ps”:

- **Passionate.** Rainmaker’s love their jobs.
- **Paid.** Rainmakers make the most money.
- **Persevere.** Rainmakers are tougher than the tough times.
- **Persistent.** Rainmakers don’t quit!
- **Physically fit.** Rainmakers look after themselves – body and mind.
- **Play.** Rainmakers have fun.
- **Polished.** Rainmakers are always neatly presented. Polished shoes, nails and cars.
- **Polite.** Rainmakers are polite to everyone. Nice costs nothing.
- **Pre-call Planners.** Rainmakers pre-plan every sales call.
- **Prepared.** Rainmakers live by the Boy Scout motto, “always be prepared”
- **Purposeful.** Rainmakers work smart and execute all tasks with purpose.
- **Price to value.** Rainmakers sell the Rand value of what customers get, and price to that value.
- **Problem solvers.** Rainmakers make their customers happy.
- **Produce & perform.** Rainmakers make rain. They sell!
- **Professional.** Rainmakers are professional and pride themselves on being subject-matter experts.
- **Prompt.** Rainmakers are efficient and get the job done fast.
- **Proud.** Rainmakers are public patriots for their company, their customers, their product/service and their industry.
- **Punctual.** Rainmakers are always early, never late.

Mottos are rules to live by, and work by. Rainmakers love mottos because they remind them of what it takes to make it rain. Some have several, others just one, but be sure that rainmakers have words of wisdom to live by. Some of the mottos shared in the book, can easily be applied to the recruitment industry.

“If you don’t do business with me, we both lose.”

Rainmakers believe, without a shadow of doubt, that he/she always improves the client’s current situation. As a result, the rainmaker knows that if the client doesn’t buy then the client loses something and the rainmaker loses the sale.

Have you considered what the impact would be to your client if they didn’t use you to find their staff? What is the cost of not doing business with you? Consider how you could incorporate this into your sales pitch or client engagement meeting.

“Compete for inches.”

Like all professional athletes, Rainmakers compete for inches. They make more calls, do more research and planning and work harder than ordinary sales people. They pay attention to the little things. There are no typos in their correspondence. They are always prepared and professional. They understand that an inch short is a lost sale.

What measures are you taking, daily, to improve your knowledge and subject-matter expertise? Are you planning and spending your time wisely, focusing on doing that little bit extra to see improved results? Are you proud of the quality of your work?

“The future is now.”

Rainmakers understand that they should focus on keeping the business they have now and making the sales that can be made in this quarter, or financial year. That’s why they always strive for the one-call close; ask for something, if not the order, on every call. They understand that you cannot rely on long-term relationships for today’s sale. “Now” means now, today.

Do you assess the tasks that you need to do and focus on those that will reap immediate reward? Do you balance relationship building and sales activities to ensure that you’ll meet this month’s target? Don’t procrastinate, do something today.

The recruitment industry is highly competitive and whilst the market has been slower since the global downturn the recruitment rainmakers are still out there servicing their – and possibly your – clients. Why not take some of the lessons from Jeffery J. Fox and begin applying them in your life. Who knows, you may find that you may just need an umbrella!
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- 031 533 7645
4 Choice Leadership Acts For 2012

Written by: Shawn Murphy

2011 was a bully. It relentlessly beat up managers and employees equally.

Now with skinned knees and black eyes, we stand in a new year. We have a new start to positively influence and make where we work better.

So before you rush into the well-worn path of meeting marathons, I want you to consider these four choice leadership acts. Each one represents a counter-response to the toughness that dominated the workplace in 2011. Each one signals your intention to make 2012 better for your team and for you. Each one is born of action: your action.

Hope.
The invisible wounds inflicted by cut-backs, layoffs, slumps and meagre-to-no pay increases have depleted hope from the workplace.

You may not have the budget to give salary increases, but you have control over assigning work to employees. If you don’t know what inspires your employees to do great work, now is the time to find out. Create projects or get them on projects that allow your employees to show off their talents. Give them a reason to stay and do great work. Give them hope through meaningful work.

And you need to have and to act from hope. Hope that you can sustain or create workplace optimism.

Integrity.
In 2011, we watched too many news stories of politicians and executives avoiding responsibility for choices they made. Perhaps where you work, integrity was absent as executives gave themselves bonuses while cutting employee recognition programme and the holiday party.

Model integrity by doing what you say. Model integrity by having conversations with your team when disconnects like the ones above occur. We can no longer ignore obvious acts that lack integrity. Minimise the distracting chatter and replace it with honest conversation: What happened? What do we know? How do we keep doing great work?

Honesty.
Make 2012 a year where difficult or awkward conversations aren’t sacrificed to the status quo. Employees have great BS detectors these days. They can handle the truth.

Humility.
The nature of work requires a team of people to complete it. I’ll assert that no one person is more important than another, including you. Humility has a way of putting into perspective the importance of the team over the individual. It gives a perspective that reveals possibilities. It also reduces stress.

There you have it. Four leadership acts to guide you through 2012 — though they really are timeless. I urge you to take on improving the workplace for your employees. As the job market strengthens, be sure your employees know that things are getting better. You can choose to make that happen.

Shawn Murphy is president of Achieved Strategies, a learning and organisational development consultant.

Recruitment Re-ignited!

Technology | Skills shortages | Fee pressure | Drawn out processes

Are you feeling frustrated by the current state of recruitment?
Let APSO help you get your spark back!

2012 Year of the Dragon

The dragon, a symbol of power & wealth, has the courage to face challenges that stand in his way to success. During this one-day power conference we’ll show you how to harness your inner dragon.

The programme will be available shortly.

8 May - Cape Town | 9 May - Port Elizabeth | 10 May - Durban | 11 May - Johannesburg
The Consumer Protection Act (CPA) aims to promote a fair, accessible and sustainable marketplace for consumer products and services. The Act is relevant to recruitment practitioners as service providers and demands compliance to its provisions in the drawing up of Letters of Engagement.

A Letter of Engagement defines the legal relationship (or scope of engagement) between your agency (as a ‘service provider’) and your client(s) (as ‘consumers’). It is essentially a contract spelling out the terms and conditions and principally addresses the scope of the engagement and the terms of compensation.

In terms of the Act, a Letter of Engagement must meet the ‘plain and understandable language’ provisions of section 22. This requires that it must be easily understood by the ordinary consumer with average literacy skills in respect of content, significance, obligation and importance without undue effort. The use of overly formal legal terms or legalese would now fall foul of this Act.

Regard must still be had that when dealing with clients contractual safeguards must exist. This has a twofold function, firstly, to protect your engagement and secondly, to provide legal remedy and certainty should a dispute later result.

Basic contractual formalities in the Letter of Engagement must at least and in its most simple form address the following:

- Who you are contracting with, by name and whether any additional parties are required to be included, by law, for example subsidiaries that form part of a larger holding company;
- The process of dispute resolution must be detailed and clearly set out as must the process to follow when either party wishes to terminate the engagement or amend or vary any terms and conditions;
- Assurance must be obtained that the party who will sign the Letter of Engagement on behalf of your client has the necessary representation or mandate to contract or engage with you and to be bound by signature, agreement and scale of compensation. Ideally, you should request the client to provide you with a written resolution detailing the scope of this representation;
- Finally ensure that the Letter of Engagement is signed, dated and a copy kept for record purposes.

In compliance with the Act and with specific consideration to the content of the Letter of Engagement the following must be considered:

- What are your mutual expectations; what is the scope of the engagement; are you in agreement or do you still need to negotiate certain aspects like for example: the notification of CV acceptances by the client, processes to manage duplicates and job portal databases maintained separately by the client and due compliance with the APSO Code of Ethical and Professional Practice;
- Are your terms and conditions capable of more than one interpretation? Are you using language or terminology that is too formal? If so, use headings and definitions to indicate clearly what you mean and keep it simple;
- Could your terms and conditions be interpreted as unfair, unjust or unreasonable? Regard must be had of Part G of the Act which deals with ‘unfair, unreasonable and unjust terms’. Section 48(1)

is clear that a supplier must not offer, supply or agree to supply any service at a price or on terms that are unfair, unreasonable or unjust nor does it allow a consumer to waive any liability on terms that are unjust, unfair or unreasonable as a condition of engagement. For example, are your terms of compensation potentially unfair when matched against the actual services you intend to offer in respect of background checks or interview procedures?

- Have you imposed obligations on your clients to indemnify you in contravention of the Act? In terms of section 49 you may not impose an obligation on the consumer to indemnify you or any other person for gross negligence on your part;
- Can you deliver on the expectations or undertakings you have made within the time frames you have agreed to? Consumer rights now take precedence and Section 54(1) provides that when a supplier undertakes to perform any service for or on behalf of a consumer, a consumer has the right to:
  - Timely performance and completion of those services;
  - Timely notice of unavoidable delays;
  - The performance in a manner and quality that persons are generally entitled to expect.

If you fail to perform in terms of your Letter of Engagement then:

- Your client has a right to expect the defect in performance to be remedied; or
- A refund of a reasonable portion of the price paid for the services to have been performed having regard to the extent of your failure.

Your aim should be to ensure that your Letter of Engagement is short, concise and effective, without the need to resort to complex legal terminology or drafting. Start by developing a basic framework of expectations and then expand on this in simple terms to meet your individual requirements and those of your client.

You are welcome to contact me at APSO should you require any further clarity or assistance in this regard. janetearly@apso.co.za
Time to Get on the Blogging Bandwagon?

Written by: David Seams

Just a few years ago, blogging was the offbeat realm of political pundits and marketing mavens. But today, blogging has gone mainstream. From corporate communications professionals to Aunt Rose sharing her family updates, people everywhere are blogging. In fact, more than 346,000,000 people (or 77% of all Internet users) read blogs.

And the staffing industry is just starting to get onboard.

So what can a blog do for your staffing firm?

For starters, it can generate sales leads, improve your recruiting, and help you strengthen relationships with clients and candidates. It can get your company listed higher on the search engines, position you as an expert, and help you stand out from the competition.

Need some specific ideas? Here are nine ways blogging can benefit your business:

1. Attract clients.
   
   Right now, your clients are online searching for information that will help them do their jobs. Through your blog, you can provide the answers they seek. By blogging about hot topics in HR, hiring trends, salary data, staffing issues and other topics of interest to the people you serve, you will attract more visitors to your website—and position yourself as an expert and a solution provider!

2. Attract candidates.
   
   It’s no secret that a lot of people are looking for work. Your challenge is to attract the right ones to your firm. To improve recruiting, you can blog about specific jobs you fill, employers you serve, salary information, and other tips and advice for job seekers. To qualify candidates, your blog can include information on the specific skills you are seeking, how your hiring process works, and most importantly, the requirements of working with your firm. Your blog can also drive people to application forms and online screening tools on your website.

3. Improve your search engine rankings.
   
   Blogs may be the single best tool for Search Engine Optimisation (SEO). Every time you create a new post, you are creating a unique web page with its own URL and links back to your website. The more posts you add, the more new pages you create, and the higher your website will rank. The trick to blogging for SEO purposes is to write posts that provide useful content while being filled with relevant key words. Not only will the search engines see and index your posts, but other bloggers (and blog readers) will post links to your content on their blogs and on social media sites like LinkedIn, Twitter and Digg.

4. Build deeper relationships with clients and prospects.
   
   Blogging is a simple way to interact with your clients and candidates on a more personal and frequent basis. Most blogs allow people to submit comments, ask questions and provide feedback. A blog gives you an effective and inexpensive way to get to know your clients and candidates better and forge deeper relationships (which will improve customer satisfaction and lead to more referrals!).

5. Strengthen your brand.
   
   A blog is a great tool for showing off your company’s expertise, innovative thinking, as well as your style and corporate culture. Your posts should convey useful, interesting and timely information. They should demonstrate your values and beliefs, and offer insightful opinion and analysis. And just as importantly as the content, blog posts can—and should—be written with a casual, personal tone. They should show off your personality and humanise your organisation.

   
   In addition to allowing you to post information to your website, most blogs also feature an RSS feed. This feed allows people to subscribe to receive updates every time a new entry is posted to your blog—and unlike email, content delivered by RSS feed doesn’t have to pass through the corporate spam filter!

7. Accelerate your social media marketing efforts.
   
   Blog posts make great content for social media sites like LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter. In fact, you can automatically feed your posts (using the RSS feed) to all three of these sites, so that every new blog post creates more buzz and drives people back to your website.

8. Improve morale at your organisation.
   
   One word of advice that we often give to our clients is to get your entire organisation involved at writing and posting content. While some people may initially be apprehensive, over time, everyone will find that contributing to the blog is a great way to be a more integral part of the organisation and to have your opinions heard. At Haley Marketing, our entire company, from our designers to our project managers and technical staff contributes to our blog content. We’ve found that everyone has something unique to share, and of course, the more content you have the better!

9. Position your organisation as a thought leader.
   
   Blogs allow you to share your knowledge and showcase organisation’s savvy and expertise. By blogging about current trends in your industry, issues affecting your local market, or just best practices in HR and staffing, you position yourself as an expert and a source for innovative thinking.

Four Steps to Blogging Success

Deciding to implement a blog is easy. Actually implementing it can be a lot tougher. Here’s a quick overview of the process we follow to ensure our clients’ success:

Step 1: Decide who your target audiences are. Will you be targeting prospects, current clients, candidates or all
of the above? While the best blogs are focused on very specific audiences and/or topics, you can effectively serve multiple audience by breaking your content into categories with each category focusing on a specific reader or type of information.

**Step 2: Do your homework.**
- Check out your competition. Do they have a blog? What type of information are they posting? How could you make it better?
- Ask your clients, prospects and candidates what type of challenges the face, interest they have, and information they would value.

**Step 3: Plan your content.**
As you might guess great blogs are filled with great content. To determine the best content for your blog, brainstorm a list of categories to include.

For job seekers, consider content such as:
- Job hunting tips
- Personal success tips
- Hot jobs
- Employer profiles
- Salary trends
- Local events for job seekers

For clients and prospects, consider content such as:
- Staffing best practices
- Employment law
- Leadership
- Case studies in staffing
- Candidate profiles
- Salary trends
- Local market news

**Step 4: Plan your calendar.**
The biggest challenge with blogging is to keep up the momentum – to continually add fresh, relevant content over the long-term. We recommend:
- Set a goal to add one or two new posts each week.
- Get your team involved—require everyone to write at least one post per month or quarter.
- Assign specific people to contribute each month.
- If you’re short on time (or writing talent), outsource some or all of the content writing.

**Step 5: Get blogging!**
Once you’ve done the set-up (and you might need some professional help with the initial blog software installation and template design), blogging is really easy and even fun. Posts do not have to be long… just useful…but timely…but simply interesting to read.

To minimise the stress, be sure to train everyone who will be doing posting on the tools for writing and editing (generally speaking, they are REALLY easy to use and require almost zero technical skill). Also, get a little training on how to use special features like SEO plug-ins to make sure your blog posts give you the maximum impact with the search engines.

Now is the time for your staffing blog. As this article has highlighted, a blog can have a big, positive impact on your business. It can create sales leads, improve recruiting, and strengthen your position in the market. And NOW is the best time to get started.

Right now, there are very few staffing firms that are blogging. By getting started now, you get a jump on the competition and the opportunity to clearly carve out a niche for yourself in your market.

So don’t wait, get blogging today!

David Searns is president of Haley Marketing Group.
Recruiters are notorious for going in streaks and slumps, highs and lows. Over time this tends to even out but for many it is a repeating pattern that causes a lot of stress, agony and wasted energy. Being a recruiter can feel like being an addict at times because you experience the thrill of elation when you close a big deal and the agony of self-doubt when you lose one. This up and down cycle is not unique to recruiters— all salespeople can relate to the pattern. Staying motivated after you close some big deals is also a problem for many in our business. So, how do you increase your chances for more predictable results and fewer bottles of Tums?

First, understand that a certain amount of variance is to be expected. Don’t freak out if you are not making the progress that you think you should be. If you have been doing this for any length of time you will have had good periods and bad periods. If you are in a slump at the moment don’t globalise it and make gloomy future predictions. Take the emotion out of it and stick to the activity that you know will lead to placements. Ask yourself, “How did I get out of the last slump I was in? What activities and methods helped me to get back on track”? Focus on doing money-generating activities without being attached to the placement results. Have a simple system that makes it easy for you to track and evaluate your key numbers and ratios. A consistent focus on generating quality activity (marketing calls, recruiting calls, new search assignments etc.) and constant refinement of your methods will help you to improve your performance with less stress.

In order to keep your paycheck balanced, you must keep your desks’ activity balanced. And, in order to keep your desks’ activity balanced, you must do a little bit of each part of the business everyday.

In terms of daily discipline, if there is a part of your day that you tend to dread, such as marketing calls, then do this first. Find several methods for introducing yourself to a company that feel authentic and that you will not dread executing. Then you can relax a bit and move on to less difficult tasks such as sourcing and recruiting.

Another thing to keep in mind is having a balance in the activities that you focus on. Peter Leffkowitz says, “In order to keep your paycheck balanced, you must keep your desks’ activity balanced. And, in order to keep your desks’ activity balanced, you must do a little bit of each part of the business everyday”. When you have a hot deal in progress it is easy to go into a “placement coma” and not do the other activities that will keep your plate full after you make (or don’t make) that hot deal. If you can resist this urge and continue to market and follow up during - and after - the placement process you will make business development easier on yourself.

Planning is a biggie when it comes to consistency. When most recruiters hear about spending 30-45 minutes at the end of each day planning the next day’s calls they generally hit the snooze button but it is one of the key defining differences between big billers and marginal ones. It also helps to even out your emotions and to stay on course with the right activities when more urgent, but less important, items come up during the day (as they always will). If you can’t stand planning then see if you can plan your first 20 calls or plan from 8 AM to 12 PM. A little planning done consistently is better than a lot of planning done sporadically.

It has been said that, “confusion is the chief cause of worry” and this is generally the case when a recruiter shoots from the hip and works reactively. Having a plan takes much of the stress out of the execution of your day. When I coach recruiters and owners on evening out their placement activity it often has more to do with working smarter rather than harder and staying focused on the small steps that lead to their goals.

Gary Stauble is a US-based professional coach who specialises in assisting Recruitment Owners and Recruiters in making more placements with fewer struggles.
There are many reasons why agencies choose to join APSO - credibility, tender requirements, access to information and training or a sense of community- but, whatever your initial reason we hope that you will continue your membership based on the value that you receive.

According to Natalie Singer, APSO’s Chief Operating Officer, “Membership of APSO can be likened to that of a gym. You can sign up, pay the subscriptions and carry the card, but unless you actually take the time to visit the gym and use the equipment, you aren’t going to see the benefits.”

There is a multitude of benefits to being an APSO member including:

**Lobbying & Advocacy**
- Representation at CAPES, BUSA & NEDLAC
- Protection of the industry
- Promotion of the industry to clients, candidates & stakeholders

**Ethics & Best Practice**
- Credibility through standards espoused within the APSO Code of Ethics
- Access to free dispute resolution, including fee disputes
- Advice including FREE access to LabourNet helpdesk (0861 522 638)

**Education & Training**
- High quality embedded knowledge/entrance programme
- Affordable industry-specific training
- Exceptional conferences, indabas and business-critical events

**Information & Networking**
- Latest information affecting your business
- High quality APSOgram and other regular communication
- Opportunity to network with other like-minded professionals

If you have any questions on how you can leverage your membership to get **MORE value** for your business, please contact **Brenda Kganyago** on 011 615 9417 or brendakganyago@apso.co.za
Recruiters often complain about the fickleness of clients. Clients don’t return our calls, they don’t give commitment, and they don’t follow through. Often true.

But, is it always the client’s fault? Does the relationship flounder because you don’t put in the effort you should? Indeed, do you commit the cardinal sin of slipping into ‘chronic client complacency’? Honestly, I have done it myself, and paid the price. I see it happening all around me too. Bet you see, and hear, it too.

• “That’s my client”
• “Oh don’t worry about that client, she only uses me”
• “I get all their work”
• “I don’t need to take this job in person, I know this client so well and he is 100% loyal to me”

Sound familiar? And what’s more, it’s often the very best clients we take for granted, lose focus on, and spend less time nurturing. Which is mega-crazy when you realise how much time we spend on new business development, lose focus on, and spend less time nurturing. Which is mega-crazy when you realise how much time we spend on new business development, with prospects who have never spent a single $ with us!

2012 is the time to get ‘client fit’.

That means honing up every aspect of the client relationship. Keeping it oiled and supple and vigorous and healthy. Take this little quiz to check your ‘client fitness’ (Good, regular clients I am talking about, not one-hit wonders or prospects).

1. Have you seen your client contact, face to face, in the last 3 months?
2. Do you see that person at least 4 times a year?
3. Do you take every permanent or search order, in person, if at all possible?
4. Have you met every line manager in the client business who could potentially be a hiring manager for you?
5. Have you met your client’s boss?
6. If your client is a line manager, have you asked to meet the HR team, and gone to see them, and asked “What can I do to make your job easier”?
7. Have you studied your clients website, closely, recently?
8. Do you subscribe to your client’s blog, newsletters, Twitter feed and Facebook page?
9. Have you tried, and do you try to use, your client’s products and services?
10. Are you connected to your client on LinkedIn?
11. Do you massage you clients’ ‘social ego’ by re-tweeting his tweets, commenting on his blog and “Liking” his Facebook page?
12. Have you asked, “What is there about my service that I could do better, or what could I add”?
13. Have you found a good reason to get your client into your office? (A quick sandwich lunch in the Board Room, to meet your CEO… whatever!)
14. Have you followed up with every placement you have ever made at your client company, and do so every 6 months?
15. If you have temps on long-term contracts at your client’s site, do you ‘make yourself big’ by going to see them, handing out Easter Eggs, running on-site training, bringing in morning tea, and generally making sure you are ‘visible’?
16. Do you know who your clients’ clients are? And do you know lots about them?
17. Do you keep up to speed with your clients’ industry, and especially their competitors, and know what the key issues and trends are?
18. Have you done an annual or bi-annual ‘Business Review’ with your client which is like a mini performance review, where your work is summarised, assessed and communication both ways occurs to make the relationship better?
19. Do you know what the 3 biggest staffing/HR issues are for your client, and do you discuss them often, with a view to assist?
20. Do you keep up to date with your clients’ benefits structure, vacation allowance, their social media policy, and any other factors that could influence the interest of a future hire?
21. Do you regularly provide your clients with value-adds that you don’t charge for, like salary surveys and market updates?
22. Have you agreed ‘standing briefs’ with your client? Clearly mapped out skill-sets that your client is always interested in – even if they have no specific role for you?
23. Are your most current terms of business up to date and signed off by the client? Or are you still operating off the terms they signed in 1999?
24. Have you introduced your clients to another recruiter on your team, or your manager, so that client ‘feels the love’ and knows they can call on someone else if you are out or away?
25. Have you specifically thanked your client for their business, maybe over lunch or with a small gift, or even just a visit where thanking them was the sole purpose?

OK, feeling exhausted with your fitness test? Score yourself now;

0 -10: You are a slob. Totally out of shape and unworthy of keeping your clients. Commit to get fit! Or accept you will die a young recruiting death.
11-15: Come on mate! Lift your game. You have some things right, but a long way to go.
16-20: You are a ‘client-fit’ amateur athlete. Working hard, looking pretty good, but still carrying a bit of flab.
21-25: You are a superbly honed, ‘client fit’, Olympic-level superstar. Nice job!
The ultimate test
before hiring your next recruiter...

Peter Leffkowitz founded Morgan Consulting Group, Inc. in 1986 and is known for his unique brand of recruitment process management, “Morgan methodology” still used by recruiters in SA today. One of Pete’s free tips offered to all recruitment owners and managers is how to test drive a potential recruiter...

Before hiring your next recruiter, take them to lunch and ask them to drive.

1. The car will be disgusting or clean: so will their desk. The excuses will have the same degree of believability here as they will at work.

2. Give them lengthy (but reasonable) verbal directions early in the drive. Observe their retention or inability to process: use that to adjust expectations in their training.

3. Smooth transitions on the road (lane changes, adjusting to other drivers) means smooth transitions at work.

4. Test assertive, passive or aggressive orientation to other drivers. It’ll be the same on the phone, as well as to colleagues. You’ll also see risk orientation.

5. Change lanes first, then check mirror? She’ll call someone’s candidate and then ask, “anyone own him?”

6. Stop signs sneak up fast? Foresight on a deals ability to blow up will be weak too.

7. Rolls through intersections, checking cross traffic way before the stop sign? Probably good foresight and high risk orientation.

8. Scared to death of his driving? Checking traffic for him and giving him an ok to change lanes? You’ll never trust his deals either. Be ready for high maintenance.

9. Needs gas real bad before getting lunch? What do you think?

10. Can’t talk and park simultaneously? Single task focused and can’t be coached during a call.

Driving tests hardly ever fail!

POPUP gains a recruitment software partner

POPUP - the People Upliftment Program - a non-profit organisation based in Pretoria, has gained the support of Placement Partner online recruitment software to assist with the charitable work that they do.

POPUP is a ministry of the Doxa Deo Group that focus holistically on the restoration of unemployed people’s lives by providing education and skills training to the unemployed with no tertiary education, who are English literate and between 18 and 45 years of age.

POPUP helps underprivileged communities through a holistic approach by addressing their physical, emotional, mental and spiritual needs. This approach has received acclaim from government, welfare organisations, businesses and church groups. Irrespective of race, culture, gender or religion, POPUP helps the unemployed by offering 10 Seta Accredited Skills Programmes such as Computer/Office Administration, Home-based Care, Hospitality and Sewing.

POPUP trained 3 185 learners and placed 77% of them in employment over the past six and a half years and also invests in learners who want to start with their own business ventures. Together with the corporate world, learners develop during a year-long incubation phase taking place under the watchful eye of a facilitator who monitors quality and standards.

Placement Partner joined hands with POPUP by providing their job Placement Programme with the popular Placement Partner online recruitment system in order to assist with the paperless management of applicants and potential Employers alike. This leading online recruitment software system will assist them in their initiative to place the candidates who have been equipped by their skills programme into contract and permanent positions.

For more information on POPUP, visit their website www.popup.co.za

For more information on Placement Partner, visit their website www.placementpartner.co.za
Tom was in a rut: No hot jobs to work on, no brilliant candidates to run with—and no sympathy from his boss or co-workers.

“I wish I could help you,” said Ellen, Tom’s supervisor. “But until you pick up the phone and start making calls, nothing will change.”

“Been there, done that,” said Tom.

“Not according to our phone logs,” said Ellen. “From what I can see, you spend a lot of time staring at your Blackberry.”

“Guilty as charged,” admitted Tom. “I just don’t know what to say to people.”

“I’m sure you’ll think of something,” said Ellen. “But one thing’s for certain: unless you dramatically increase your phone output, you’ll continue to struggle.”

Pick-up Lines for Recruiters
Tom considered his options. He could either continue down the path of least resistance and suffer the consequences or get down to business and start burning up the phone.

So, Tom made a bold decision: Since he didn’t feel he had much to say—or to sell—to employers or candidates, he would let them do the talking. And the best way to get them talking would be to ask them a set of questions. By framing the questions as though he were conducting a survey, he could quickly present his credentials, get a conversation started and gather useful information.

Tom knew that if the situation presented itself, he might also be able to pick up a job lead or two, or even uncover a placeable candidate he might want to partner with. Tom’s questions were brief and to the point. And he made sure the responses could also be short. If the person wanted to elaborate or engage in a dialogue with Tom, well, that would be just fine.

To help break the ice, Tom wrote a little opening script: “Hi, my name is Tom, and I’m a recruiter who specialises in your industry. I have a one-minute survey I’d like you to take, and then I’ll on my way.”

Then he asked one of three questions.

To the employer he asked: “What skill sets or job functions are most in demand at your company (or in your group)? In other words, what types of critical openings are the hardest to fill?”

Since he didn’t feel he had much to say—or to sell—to employers or candidates, he would let them do the talking. And the best way to get them talking would be to ask them a set of questions.

To the candidate, he asked: “Which of these characteristics will be most important the next time you look for a job: (a) work/life balance; (b) technical challenge and acquisition of new skills; (c) compensation/benefits/job security; (d) corporate culture that’s consistent with your values; or (e) something else?”

Or, he designed this question to ask either the employer or a candidate: “Which websites, blogs, online magazines, print publications or trade shows do you use to stay current or that give you or your company a competitive advantage? And do you belong to any industry associations or professional development groups?”

Tom was amazed at how receptive most people were, and how much activity he was able to generate from his survey approach.

We’ve all walked—or will someday walk—in Tom’s shoes. We need to write jobs and arrange sendouts. And yet, how do we create activity out of thin air? Simple answer: By picking up the phone and starting a conversation.

Bill Radin is one of the most popular and highly regarded trainers in the recruiting industry
Most recruiters – and HR practitioners – have had experiences interviewing candidates that can best be described as “strange” but that are also funny. Here is a selection of some of the strangest stories from an Internet survey conducted a few years ago.

“...he said that he was so well-qualified that if he didn’t get the job, it would prove that the company’s management was incompetent.”

“Applicant challenged the interviewer to an arm wrestle.”

“...announced that, as she had travelled to the interview she hadn’t had time to eat lunch, and then proceeded to tuck into a hamburger and fries in the interviewer’s office.”

“She wore a walkman and assured me that she could listen to me and the music at the same time.”

“When I asked him about his hobbies, he stood up and started tap dancing around my office.”

“...said he wasn’t interested because the position paid too much.”

“During the interview, his alarm went off. He switched it off, apologised and said that he needed to leave for another interview.”

“When I took an important long-distance call, the applicant casually took out a copy of Penthouse and proceeded to flip through the pictures, only stopping longest at the centrefold.”

“Candidate admitted that he didn’t really want to get a job but that the unemployment office needed proof that he was looking for one.”

“...she threw up on my desk and immediately started asking questions about the job, like nothing had happened.”

“He came to the interview with a scooter and left it in the reception area. When questioned he admitted that he didn’t want it stolen and was surprised at the question since he had asked the receptionist about indoor parking.”

“Pointing to a black case he’d carried into my office, he said that if he was not hired, the bomb would go off. Disbelieving, I began to state why he’d never be hired and that I was going to call the police. He casually reached down to his case, flipped a switch and ran. No one was injured but I did need to get a new desk.”

“...asked to see the CV of the recruiter to see whether she was qualified to judge him as a candidate.”

“Without saying a word, the candidate stood up and walked out in the middle of the interview.”

“Candidate kept giggling through a serious panel interview.”

Have you had an experience like this? APSO would love to hear your stories. The recruitment rollercoaster can be emotionally draining and we think that an archive of interesting/funny stories on the website would provide some comic relief for those “tough days”. Please send your contribution to zinagirald@apso.co.za

Applicant challenged the interviewer to an arm wrestle.
Since 2001 Placement Partner has evolved into the leading database solution used by the most successful recruitment companies in the market.

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