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Olympic Success

There were high hopes for Team GB at this year's Olympics and Paralympics in Beijing, and in true pessimistic style, many in the media thought they were too high. However, all the cynics and critics were silenced when we came 4th on the leader board in the Olympics and 2nd in the Paralympics, achieving our greatest medal haul ever.

This success was due in part to the fact we set a few clear, measurable and realistic goals; and also to the coaches who made a fundamental impact on individual and team performances. Credit is also due to the branding of 'Team GB' which helped to bring all the participants together to put in a truly team effort.

The remarkable performances at the Paralympics were due to people focusing on ability rather than disability, and this was true of those watching the games as well. Many a time we could not identify what impairment a contestant had but just enjoyed the sporting skill.

Not all of these impairments are obvious; not all disabled people use wheelchairs or have guide dogs. If you acknowledge disability as an issue, but focus on

removing barriers rather than applying labels, much can be achieved. Both teams shared the victory parade, but were also recognised separately. Hopefully this will encourage employers and service providers to look at the person not the disability.

Eastern Wisdom

China is fast becoming a key player in the global economy and many UK companies fear their rapid growth. They attribute China's success to low cost manufacturing thanks to poor legislation, working conditions and pay, but it has more to do with Chinese business strategy and their different view of what makes a good manager.

Western organisations tend to pick managers for their field-specific knowledge or experience, and leadership ability, and we don't tend to invest in further training. The Chinese value different characteristics for good managers; putting general knowledge, wisdom and the ability to learn at the top; followed by taking responsibility, team-working skills, leadership and control: knowing the business and its products, tend to come nearer the bottom.

They also put a greater emphasis on recognising weakness and finding ways to reduce these through in-house manager training than we tend to do.

If we are to compete with China in the global economy, we need to train our managers more, and better, and identify new managers on the basis of what they don't know but are willing to learn and their sense of responsibility, rather than on what they do know.

Survive the Credit Crunch

Here are a few tips to help you survive the credit crunch so that when things get better, you will still be there and ready to hit the ground running.

1. Keep overheads low.
2. Look for 0% credit options.
3. Learn from the Olympics – make sure you have a winning team with a strong leader and clear measurable goals.
4. Use selection testing to make sure you get the right person with the right skills and make sure you value and develop them so that they stay with you.
5. Invest in customer care training.
6. Keep in contact with customers so they know you are still there.
7. Be flexible and responsive by changing what you provide to meet people's needs.

Out-Sourcing

Many businesses are not in a position to have their own HR department. One way to overcome this is to out-source your HR function on a retainer basis so you can get that expertise when you need it.

Pet&r offers a retainer service for £50 an hour for a minimum of 3 hours a month. This means that for less than £5 a day you can have access to our HR advisory service covering recruitment services, hours of work and legislative issues, policy development and implementation, people problems etc. Extra time is available at £50 an hour, charged in 15 minute chunks.

For more information contact Lynne at lynne@petandr.co.uk.



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Case Study - Recruitment

Back in June, Claudius Cole, of Claudius Consulting, approached us to help him employ his first member of staff.

We worked with him to develop a Job Description and Person Specification that met his exact requirements and helped write and place the advertisement in the local press.

Applications were short-listed and successful candidates invited to an assessment centre in York to assess their personal qualities and competencies.

The practical tests were designed to assess knowledge and skills relating to event planning and use of software: Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.

These were followed by the Modern Occupational skill Tests - psychometric tools designed to assess the verbal and numerical reasoning, decision making, and technical checking competencies of candidates.

Finally group work was used to assess their problem solving, interpersonal, and decision making skills as well as their understanding of project management principles.

The results of these tests informed an interview where candidates had to give a presentation on a pre-determined topic.

Pet&r were involved in all stages of the recruitment process, and also helped Claudius write the Terms and Conditions of Employment and develop the necessary employment policies which were practical and relevant to his business.

Claudius gained a person with the skills he required, who could help him develop the business in the future. In his own words the successful candidate "exceeded my expectations – and I have very high expectations!"

If you would like to know more about our recruitment and selection testing services why not send us an e-mail.

Assertiveness is.....

..... about striking a balance between passive and aggressive behaviours.

It is about standing up for your rights while accepting that others have rights too. It's also about not being afraid to ask 'why' or say 'no'. It is something many people are uncomfortable with and some say that lack of assertiveness is one of the main reasons for poor customer service. If something isn't how we want it, we shouldn't be afraid to say so, but in the right way, as ranting and raving gets you nowhere.

Here are a few simple pointers to being more assertive.

Basic Assertive Techniques

- State the facts
"When you interrupt..."
- State your feelings
"I feel frustrated...."
- State requirements
"So, if you wait until I finish..."
- Give the benefits to others
"I may have covered your point and we will both save time...."

How to say No positively

- Give the answer
- Without using negative words such as 'can't' or 'won't'.
- Be clear and polite.
- Say what you CAN do instead

When they need to hear "NO"

- Just say "no",
- don't start with 'I'm sorry' or 'I would really like...'
- Give an explanation of your feelings 'I don't like to...'
- Give an explanation of your reasons 'because I don't have much time...'
- State what you can do instead.
- If appropriate thank the person.

For a practical, focused and cost effective approach to a wide range of HR issues leading to real and sustainable change in workplace culture.

If you would like to know more about our work, please visit the web-site or contact us.

Stop Press

The Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) has put forward a proposal for a Small Business Survival Package, asking government to re-write the rule book to save thousands of small businesses.

Measures include freeing up access to finance for small businesses through the creation of a £1billion Small Business Survival Fund and the ending of the culture of late payments by fully enforcing the Companies Act 1985.

They also want to increase access to Public Procurement by the introduction of a single Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ).

Pet&r have tried to help with this latter issue by producing the Practical Simplicity Guide to PQQ's and Tender Documentation Preparation as well as helping people develop documents and systems that help them fill the forms in, but a single PQQ would make this task a lot easier.

Courses and Services offered

HR Consultancy, Research, Advice & Guidance; Recruitment and Selection Testing; Policy & Strategy Development; Management Coaching & Mentoring; IIP Support & Corporate Action Planning.

Leadership, Management, & Supervisory Development; Customer Care & Interpersonal Skills; Equality & Diversity Training; Conflict Resolution, Harassment & Bullying.

Work Team Health Checks and Repair Clinics, Recruitment Training, Interviewing and Selection Testing, Mental Toughness.

Public Consultation, Social Research, & Event Management. Sustainable Development and Sustainable Lifestyle Training, Volunteer Development.