

Looking ahead

By **Ruella Crouch**, Managing Director

Welcome to the launch issue of the Ruella James plc Recruitment Journal, which coincides very nicely with the company entering into its fifth year of trading. This is a new venture for us and we have partnered with The Recruitment Consultant magazine to give a further benefit to our existing and potential clients and candidates.

Despite the ups and downs of the last few years the forecast for 2004 looks promising and the indications are that it should be a better year than 2003. Although we have always been a busy company the market is now becoming increasingly more active for us and business has never been better.

As usual we at Ruella James plc are moving with the times and the company continues to provide a high standard of professional service. That's why after a successful 2003 we are delighted to announce the promotion of Dee Barclay-George to the position of Operations Director and Olivia Wilkinson has also been promoted to Managing Consultant for our London Team.

And the changes don't stop there: we recently welcomed two new Consultants into the fold. James Edwardson joins us to expand our regional coverage, especially in the Midlands and Thames Valley areas. In our Graduate Trainee Division, Emma Boland joins us as a Consultant.

With the opening of at least one new office this year and a move to a bigger head office in London, we are looking to expand by at least another five Consultants in the next twelve months. If you are interested in speaking to us further about these opportunities, please feel free to contact Dee Barclay-George on 020 7290 6555.

Best Regards

Ruella



An ethical approach



The Senior Management Team at Ruella James plc

Over the last four years we at Ruella James plc have worked hard to forge a reputation for providing a professional and ethical approach to placing candidates in the recruitment industry. As a company we have adopted a simple six-step policy that all our consultants must abide by, to ensure the best service delivery possible. This is how we work with all our candidates;

Step 1 – The Telephone Interview:

Will enable us to establish what you are looking for so we can best represent you to our clients. If we feel we can help you we will make an appointment for you to come and meet us. If you cannot come in to see us, we will arrange to do a more detailed telephone interview with you. Nothing is done with your CV without your express permission.

Step 2 – Candidate Registration Interview:

You then meet one of our consultants for the in-depth interview, which lasts on average about one hour. We will cover your experience, reasons for leaving, achievements and what you want now and in the future. Your consultant will then run through the proposed clients they would like to contact with your details.

Step 3 – Client

Registration: Your consultant will then contact the agreed range of clients with your details before sending your CV, which is re-formatted to a Ruella James plc standard. Interviews are then arranged according to your availability.

Step 4 – Interview

Preparation: Before attending an interview with our clients we invite you into the offices to prepare for the interview. If this is not possible we can complete this by phone or e-mail. A full briefing is given on the company, the interviewer, the role, as well as the style of the interview that will be adopted.

Step 5 – Feedback:

As we put a great deal of time into finding you the right opportunity we always provide honest feedback. In return we expect the same honest assessment from you as this helps us work even more effectively on your behalf.

Step 6 – Service Calls:

Once the interview process is complete and you have accepted an offer from a client, we will keep in touch with you until your start date - we even assist you with handing in your notice. With our clients blessing, we remain in touch with you after your start date, to ensure you are settling in properly and enjoying your new role.

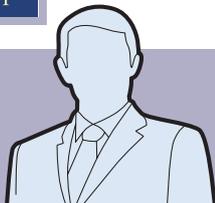
Finally, we are committed to ensuring a recruitment service that is both personalised and tailored to meet your specific needs. We always remember that each assignment is unique.



Benchmark - or be lucky and fly blind

The Recruitment Industry needs to recognise the value and importance of benchmarking

What our clients say...



Results Driven

"...according to our statistics, your candidates are twice as likely to be still working for us a year after they join than candidates from other R2R suppliers!"

Professional Recruitment Organisation, London

Quality Focus

"...you lead the market in Recruitment to Recruitment...the quality of service and level of professionalism is second to none."

Badenoch and Clark, London

Professional

"...very impressed with your understanding of our requirements, the diligence you have shown in preparing the candidates...and the way you have kept us informed."

Nicholas Andrews, Leicester



Romney Rawes

First, a definition of benchmarking: "The establishment of set criteria for valid measurement and comparison between various operations for the purpose of ranking, thus indicating areas of potential improvement."

In early 2002, having established that there was no industry-specific benchmarking mechanism available for our industry, I set about creating one. The Recruitment Industry Benchmarking ("RIB") Index is now up and running. RIB is a not-for-profit company and is closely linked with Cranfield University's School of Management to ensure the validity of the benchmarking processes. All the web-enabled input and output is secure and password protected, so no one knows another member's figures. We currently have 31 Criteria

(measurements), measured each month, giving each member a Report showing how they ranked on each Criteria against the rest of the Index.

Enlightened and successful companies are more likely to become involved in benchmarking. One in five of the winners of the 2003 "Recruiter" Industry Awards were companies already in RIB, which then had a membership of less than one half percent of the industry! So clearly the movers and shakers had immediately recognised the benefits.

At a recent RIB Meeting, members confirmed that they have already gained huge benefits by identifying how and where improved performance is available, so making their business more profitable and valuable. Also RIB members improved their Debtor Collections over the year, in many cases as a direct result of having the objective evidence available to show it could be done. Finally, RIB members achieved a definite favourable movement in reducing the proportion of Support Staff to Fee Earners (many because of the evidence available from their monthly reports indicating improvement was possible, so prompting action).

To find out more, how to join or to apply for places on the next New Members Meeting, see www.ribindex.com

By Romney Rawes - founder of the Recruitment Industry Benchmarking ("RIB") Index.

Industry Outlook 2004

In London, employer confidence has returned to pre-September 11th 2001 levels and shows a net figure of +15% of London employers expecting to take on staff in Q1 of this year. Undoubtedly London tends to lead employment growth throughout the country but many regions are predicting a positive outlook as well. Wales is the most positive with an outlook of +24%.

Most sectors display encouraging signs with construction showing a +15% outlook on the previous year, Transport and Communications now records a +13% outlook. Also the Hotel and Retail sectors show a markedly improved outlook of +8%, which is the best Q1 average in this sector for the last 12 years. Generally speaking the private sector is looking encouraging and the

demand for staff in this sector will improve throughout the year.

Marcia Roberts, Deputy Chief Executive of the REC, commented on the overall picture: "The recruitment market showed signs of a strong recovery in the latter part of 2003, with private sector recruitment in particular showing real signs of recovery. IT, manufacturing and the executive market all improved, and we think it will be the private sector that will see the greatest demand in 2004. Public sector recruitment is still likely to grow, but at a slower pace than in 2003. This year promises to be a much better year than 2003."

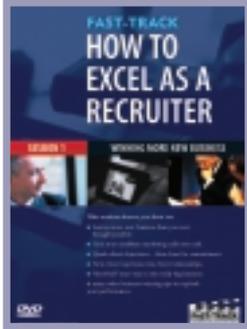
For further information visit www.rec.uk.com

The green shoots of recovery started to appear for the UK staffing industry last year, with the public sector leading the way. So, what does 2004 have in store for us and will the private sector catch up?

The recent Manpower Employment Outlook Survey, which forecasts employer hiring intentions, shows that the UK is holding up well both in Europe and the rest of the world.

How to excel as a recruiter - A review of Fast Track

By **Ruella Crouch**, Managing Director



It is very rare for one of the country's biggest billers to move into the training world, but Mike Walmsley, presenter of the ground-breaking recruitment training series, "FAST-TRACK: How to Excel as a Recruiter", has done exactly that.

FAST-TRACK is one of the best training tools I've seen, and Mike reveals the techniques used by recruitment's most exceptional performers in an easy to follow format, making it simple for everyone from rookies to big billers to explode their performance. The DVDs have been a major help here at Ruella James plc both for our internal training courses and assessment centres.

The 6 part series features footage from live training sessions, client and candidate role-plays, and regular summaries & analysis of key ideas. One of the great things about FAST-TRACK is that the ideas in the series can be used straight away, and there's always a buzz

in our office after a training session.

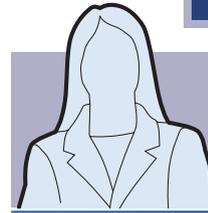
Business winning is one of the keys to success in recruitment and the first session, "Winning More New Business", tackles this subject head on. Session 5, "Turning Clients into Big Business," then takes these ideas to the next level, looking at overcoming client objections, winning PSLs and the secrets of client meetings.

Throughout the series Mike gives proven real life examples, and Session 2, "Candidate Power", is a great example of this approach, as Mike covers over 20 techniques for finding star candidates for free. This was probably my favourite session, as apart from allowing us to fill more difficult placements, it has also been a great sales tool when talking to potential clients.

Sessions 3 and 4, "Interview Secrets of the Big Billers" and "Make Your Vacancies Easier to Fill", are both packed with revenue-enhancing ideas and the final session, "Taking Control", shows how to maximise rates and margins, a subject close to every recruiter's heart.

All in all I'd thoroughly recommend FAST-TRACK to any recruitment consultant that is looking to move to the next level.

For more information contact **Mike Walmsley** on 0800 052 0003 or visit www.recvids.com



What our
candidates say...

Personalised Solutions

"It was refreshing to find an agency that took the time to get to know you, as an individual, before just trying to 'farm' you out to as many jobs as possible."

Placed Candidate,
Recruit Media,
London

Flexible Service

"I was contacted when convenient for myself – on the odd occasion this did necessitate late evening calls these were obliged without problem."

Placed Candidate,
Sellick Partnership,
Newcastle - upon - Tyne

Service Levels

"I can only aspire to offer my own candidates the same faultless level of service."

Placed Candidate,
Badenoch and Clark,
London

Useful websites

Thinking of something to do or see to get rid of those post Christmas blues? Here are a few ideas to help you along:

Fancy a night at the cinema? Visit www.scoot.co.uk/cinemapfinder. A fast and simple site, which helps you locate the film and venue of your choice. It even takes you to the cinema chain you want to visit so you can book online.

Maybe you made a new year's resolution to be a bit more 'cultured', so why not consider a trip to the theatre? www.londontheatre.co.uk allows you to see what's on in the world of Musicals, Opera, Drama, and Comedy in London's Theatre Land.

Maybe you still want to go clubbing, despite the time of year. Why not take a look at www.theku.com? The site lists all UK clubs, music genres and festivals and takes you straight to their sites.

Why not make a real difference and sponsor a child in the third world? www.worldvision.org.uk not only explains how for as little as £2 a week you can feed and educate a child in the third world but how to donate as well.

Did you forget anyone at Christmas or need any ideas for presents? Take a look at www.ukgiftsguide.co.uk and let this site help you decide what to buy.



Maybe you said you would give up smoking at New Year! Still having difficulty? Visit www.quitsmokinguk.com for all the tips and support you could ask for.

Finally, if you decided you want to carry on partying, why not do so on an international basis? Visit www.worldsbestbars.com. The site features the best places to drink, from London to New York and Bangkok to Buenos Aires.

Employment law

Recent and forthcoming changes



The most noteworthy recent change took place in early December 2003 with the introduction of laws making it illegal to discriminate on the grounds of Sexual Orientation, Religion or Belief.

The purpose of the Regulations is to combat discrimination on the grounds of religion and belief or sexual orientation in the workplace. These Regulations apply to recruitment, promotion, training, transfer and dismissal.

Sexual Orientation is defined as being a sexual orientation towards persons of the same sex (gay men and lesbians); the opposite sex (straight men and women); or both sexes (bi-sexual men and women). Discrimination on the grounds of Sexual Orientation can take five forms through perception, direct discrimination, association, practice and harassment.

Religion and Belief are defined as 'any religion, religious belief or similar philosophical belief.' This does not however include any philosophical or political belief unless that belief is similar to a religious belief. Discrimination on the ground of Religion or Belief can be through perception, association and practice.

What to look out for this year:

New data protection act

friendly accident books have been required as from 1 January 2004.

The Conduct of Employment Agencies and Employment Business Regulations.

On 1 April the Employment Agency regulations are to come into force with the much written and talked about provisions restricting the ability of agencies to charge temp to perm fees. Either eight weeks after the temp having left an assignment or within 14 weeks of the temp starting one.

The new statutory disciplinary and grievance procedures.

These will be implemented in October 2004 once the consultation process has been completed and will result in all employment contracts having these minimum standards being imposed on the contracts.

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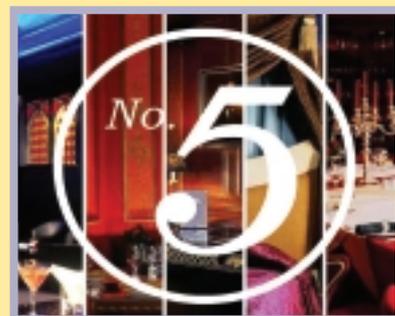
Ruella James plc Reader Competition

The start of the New Year is always a good time to reconsider your career. As a leading recruitment to recruitment company we have plenty of opportunities to help you make that vital move.

Why not register with us and, on top of the excellent service, we will enter your name into a draw and the lucky winner will receive a meal for two to the value of £100 at London's fantastic new European style restaurant, "No 5". Based in Cavendish Square, in London's West End, it has received rave reviews for its style, décor and excellent cuisine.

We will be running this competition once for January and February and again in March. Contact us on 020 7290 6555 and register now, provide us with your CV and quote TRC/RJ/No 5. Let us help your career as well as giving you a great night out!

Email: mail@ruellajames.com



Free Psychometric Test

Ruella James plc has partnered with Thomas International to provide you with a free psychometric test.

Thomas systems are a leading international managerial aid to recruiting, selecting, training, counselling, career planning, team bonding and team management.

All you have to do to get your free test is: Call: 020 7257 2800

or e-mail: London@thomas.co.uk and quote TRC/RJ/Thomas

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