

Summer 2013

Update



Three years and counting...

It's difficult to know where the time has gone since we established the company on 26th August 2010, but suffice to say, time flies when you're having fun! The business continues to develop despite the challenging economic environment and it has been a pleasure to work with so many of you, whether you've been a client, candidate or simply needing our advice on the market. The results of our on-going Quality Assurance Programme of Post Assignment Audits continue to generate plenty of positive feedback and we've been delighted to see our appointed candidates making their mark in their new organisations and driving performance across so many diverse sectors.

Selected highlights of the last 12 months include:

- **Not-For-Profit Practice:** another successful year with appointments including CEOs and Directors/Heads of Finance, HR, Operations, Regulation, Policy and Standards, as well as 19 Fitness to Practise Panellists for a regulatory body.
- **Commercial Practice:** equally busy with assignments across General Management, Finance, Consumer Insight, Corporate Communications, Government Affairs and Engineering in Brazil, China, Germany, Switzerland and of course the UK.
- **Education Practice:** successful recruitment of the Girls' Schools Association Executive Director and a school Principal.
- **Relocation to Portland House** affording stunning views across South West London from the 18th floor and first-hand experience of the greenhouse effect on the occasional sunny day!
- **'Goodbye/Hello' Michelle Chapman**, a founder member of the team returns as the new 'Saturday Girl' whilst working on a 2 year full time Physician Assistant Studies Postgraduate Diploma at St George's, University of London.
- **'Welcome' Judith Matthews**, the most recent recruit to Thewlis Graham Associates, who as the first point of contact, is the name and voice clients and candidates come to know well.

By way of introduction, we asked Edwina to interview Judith:

What do you consider to be the most important element of your role?

Being a friendly, approachable, organised person at the end of the phone line or responding to emails. "People not processes" is a core part of our ethos and so I think it is important that clients and candidates can be confident that we have an idea of who they are and why they are contacting us.

You worked with Sarah twenty years ago. How did you come to work with Sarah again?

Having spent the last ten years teaching English and Citizenship to adults, I felt it was time for a change. Whilst reflecting on my previous jobs, it struck me that the best working relationship I ever had was with Sarah, first at the Royal College of Physicians (RCP) and subsequently the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP). We stayed in touch over the years and when I heard that she had started up her own company, I approached her initially to work on a project basis and when a permanent vacancy opened up, I jumped at the opportunity.

What do you find attractive about working for Thewlis Graham Associates?

I need to believe in what I am doing and I genuinely feel that we are finding leaders who will help shape the future of this country. As a people-person, the personalised approach of TGA and focus on the individual is also a good fit with my approach to life. Another thing we have in common at TGA is that we have all lived in other countries, which gives a breadth of vision and an openness to new ideas and experiences.

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We are all professional and committed to delivering excellent results, but we also have a firm grasp on the balance of work and play. Sarah and Robert are very good at ensuring we acknowledge achievements as a team; for instance we celebrated a recent success with a trip up The Shard followed by a delicious dinner in Borough Market. On a lighter note, the views from our office on the 18th floor of Portland House are stunning, assuming that is, you can ignore the current road and building works surrounding Victoria!!

What have you done up until now?

I have lived in the UK for 23 years, although I still have my Kiwi accent which is very identifiable over the phone. In New Zealand, I graduated with a BA in Sociology at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch and joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Wellington; after two years in HO I was posted to the Embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia as the Administrative Attaché. On completion of that two year assignment I decided the Diplomatic Service was not for me and flew to London to seek my fortune.

On arrival, I worked in various temporary secretarial roles, latterly as a Word Processing trainer which is how I met Sarah at the RCP. When she moved to the RCGP as Chief Executive, I joined Sarah to establish the office and during that two and a half years I also completed a Diploma in Management Studies. My husband Lincoln and I then moved to the Isle of Wight for a couple of years, produced our daughter Lauren and then returned to the "Mainland" to live in Woking. I re-trained as an ESOL teacher (English for Speakers of Other Languages) and have taught adults from all over the world at Guildford and Woking Colleges for the past ten years.

What do you think makes TGA unique?

- People not processes;
- The personal touch;
- Committed and passionate about what we do;
- Flexible, innovative and willing to adapt our processes to suit the requirements of the client.

Case Study: Talent Management at Cisco

Excerpt from the chapter entitled "Talent Management: Function and Transformation at Cisco - The Demands of the Global Economy" by Annmarie Neal and Robert Kovach in Talent Management, edited by Larry Israelite.

Food for thought during a period when Talent is hard to attract and as difficult to retain. By way of context, Cisco's culture is fast-moving, and focused on growth and innovation. Over the past decade or so, revenues have grown from circa \$1 billion to more than \$40 billion and the goal is to achieve \$80 billion and a doubling of its global footprint. Innovative, top-tier leadership development is thus an imperative and Cisco leaders are expected to think holistically, work collaboratively and share responsibility for success. They are also expected to shed outdated ways of approaching the business and to be vigilant in the search for disruptive ideas meant to enable future success.

Lessons Learned

Talent management must commence with business strategy and, when executed well, become a key lever of strategy execution and organizational success. It requires starting with a strong definition of what our culture needs to be and then systematically hiring, developing, and rewarding the executive talent necessary to achieve what has been defined.

Actively Managing Change

The real strategy effort involves assessing the organization's readiness to embrace the work that the strategy demands and predicting the psychological and organizational resistance inherent in the process.

High impact talent management will both challenge and change the organization's culture; it will disrupt and even threaten the incumbent power infrastructure. We appreciate that by setting out to change Cisco's culture, we will threaten a group of incumbent leaders who may be insecure regarding their long-term position or who are more committed to the past than they are to the future. If your leaders are not ready to accept a new generation of talented, empowered leaders, then don't help develop them. You will only threaten those leaders in power today while frustrating those who are emerging. We pay as much attention to building organizational confidence in those who are at risk of acting out as we do to building organizational capability in the next generation of leaders.



You Can't Do It Alone

Talent management professionals, HR professionals, and business leaders must work together to identify needs and build strategies to address these needs.

"...work together to identify needs and build strategies..."



Be the Change You Want to See in Your Organization

As our businesses become more flat, global and complex, our talent management approaches must become more adaptive and relevant to an ever-changing business environment. Create collaborative relationships across your team, with HR and with your other business partners so that you can model the leadership traits you seek to develop in others.

Focus on Quality over Quantity

We constantly choose quality and business impact over breadth and numbers, and by being innovative in how we use technology, we've been able to increase our reach across our internal leadership market while reducing costs of delivery by approximately 33%.

Be a Practitioner First, Then an Administrator

We made the decision that we must be thought leaders and not order takers. To take this position, we had to be sure that we had a common point of view of what good work would look like vis-a-vis the business strategy.

It's Not about the Process

We view our work as being less about designing processes and programmes and more about assessing organization readiness and preparing leaders for change. Our best talent management work is strong organization development work.

Can You Really Measure What Matters?

A subtheme is the pressure to measure that which, in fact, may not be measurable and we suggest measuring return-on-expectations rather than return-on-investment. This perspective helps us collect data and tell our story in a way that is unique to each audience: our board of directors, our CEO, our executive team, and our HR partners. If we understand each group's expectations and then build our talent management strategy specifically on the goal of creating business impact, the pressure to produce incremental, less-productive measurement can be reduced.

Summing Up

Just because the business strategy demands it doesn't mean the organization will embrace, execute, or sustain good talent management. It is important to gain visible executive sponsorship and to continually position the talent management agenda at the forefront of the business planning process and the CEO/board agenda. Don't be distracted by ideals; focus on what is achievable. Assess your own skills as talent managers, and start with a plan for managing change - a focus on what you know your culture can absorb and on what is achievable. Don't ever believe that one size fits all or that a best practice will necessarily be the best one for your situation. Tools and processes must never take the place of human interaction, quality must never suffer for expediency, and measurement must always focus on business impact, not on activities.

The economic crisis reminds us that the future is unwritten and in some ways unknowable. In talent management, we are trying to predict winners in a race with no finish line. An old adage about business planning goes, "When times are good, have a simple plan; when times are complex, have a very simple plan." So our philosophy of talent management is simply stated: Know your business and what it's trying to achieve, know your leaders and what they want and need, and remember that you are affecting many people's lives and possibly their livelihoods with your talent consultation, tools and processes.

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Do come and see us in our new offices if you are ever in London, but in the meantime we hope you manage to have some rest, relaxation and perhaps even some sun during the summer!

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