

# Talking Point

SUMMER 2005

THE LATEST HR NEWS FROM  
NEWCASTLE BUSINESS SCHOOL

## Welcome to Newcastle Business School



A warm welcome to the summer edition of *Talking Point*, Newcastle Business School's Organisational and Human Resource Management newsletter.

Since the last edition we've had our sixteenth annual academic awards ceremony (as Newcastle Business School) which saw over 2,200 students graduate at all levels from Bachelor degrees through to Doctorates and Masters degrees. We have seen a record number of students leave with PhDs this year, and we were delighted to learn that Northumbria University has been awarded the title of UK's Best New University by the highly respected *Times Good University Guide 2006*.

I hope you enjoy this edition of *Talking Point* and that it gives you the opportunity to discover more about our successes in HRM and Development regionally, nationally and internationally.

Paul Croney, Dean

## From Russia With...

### *The Similarities in HR Across the Globe*

As part of Northumbria University's continuing partnership with the industrial iron and steel conglomeration JSC Severstal – Russia's largest exporter – one of our senior lecturers, Lynne Powell, was invited to deliver a guest lecture at Severstal's headquarters in Cherepovets in June 2005. She addressed a group of the company's managers who were undertaking an in-house managerial development programme.

Lynne was asked to provide an insight into HR planning, recruitment and selection which would attract, secure and retain talent. She was also invited to deliver a session to the corporate university alumni group on 'motivating for high performance'.

A translator was on hand to help Lynne deliver her sessions but she also discovered the usefulness of gestures to overcome language barriers. Feedback from the managers was excellent.

Interestingly, during informal conversation with HR

professionals outside the classroom, Lynne noted a number of similarities between the UK and our Russian counterparts. She found:

- HR is constantly having to 'prove' how it adds value to the organisation
- Demographic changes pose the same challenges in Russia as the UK
- As in the UK, attracting good quality applicants to more 'rural' locations is difficult
- Money still retains an edge in terms of motivation, however, employers seeking to maximise competitive advantage accept the need to look beyond that
- Retirement age in Russia is 60 **BUT** life expectancy 59 (in this region at least!)

Lynne hopes that the contacts she made in Russia can be maintained so that students and practitioners both here in Newcastle and back in Cherepovets can benefit from their shared experiences.

## Simply the Best!

Northumbria University has been rated the UK's Best New University by the prestigious publication 'The Times Good University Guide 2006'.

The popular guide – the 2006 edition of which was published in May – is used by students, parents, business and academia alike. It uses nine measures of quality to rank universities including teaching, graduate prospects and good honours.

Individual subject areas, including Business, are ranked according to teaching, entrant A Level scores and post-degree destinations.

Paul Croney, Dean of Newcastle Business School said, "I am delighted with the result proving yet again that Northumbria University is one of the UK's leading establishments for higher education."

For more information on the tables visit [www.timesonline.co.uk/uniguide](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/uniguide)

## Part-time Open Evenings

Post-experience and Postgraduate courses available

September 1

September 8

September 15

Newcastle Business School Reception,  
Northumberland Road.

Call in on the day, or for more  
information phone: 0191 243 7226

[www.newcastlebusinessschool.co.uk](http://www.newcastlebusinessschool.co.uk)

## New Postgraduate Certificate in Coaching

Newcastle Business School is set to launch a Postgraduate Certificate in Coaching in January 2006.

This exciting new programme has been specifically designed for those wishing to expand their coaching knowledge, skills and experience. The programme content will focus on performance and leadership development coaching and is structured around relevant input, coaching skills training, reflection and coaching skills practice.

Between modules, students will coach and be coached by their peers, emphasising the practical nature of the qualification. The aim is for each student to acquire a greater understanding of 'self' and their identity as a coach whilst having access to a number of tools and techniques to enhance work-based performance.

Ultimately, students will be equipped to coach at all levels in organisations, influencing positive change with individuals. Participants are expected to collate a portfolio of coaching practice and submit a reflective piece. The course framework is delivered in blocks over a six-month period.

If you would like to find out more, please contact:

Jane Turner

Programme Director – Executive Development

Tel: 0191 243 7171

Email: [jane.turner@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:jane.turner@northumbria.ac.uk)

# Twins' Degree Success

Twins Laura and Helen Taylor have graduated from the same course with the same class of degree from the same university. The two 22-year-olds studied our BA (Hons) programme in Human Resource Management and both hope for future careers in this field.

Laura and Helen did the same A Levels at school and, although they were in separate classes, always came out with the same grades. And, by coincidence, while at university they even ended up doing their placement year at the same time and in the same company – IBM in Portsmouth.

Course Leader Phil Wilding said: "Laura and Helen were part of an outstanding cohort of students that saw 11 of the students receive a First Class Honours Degree. Many students have commented that they could learn from each other and, being twins, Laura and Helen obviously had that additional motivation from each other too."

Being a twin can be a bonus when it comes to studying, says Laura. "I think having a twin gives you that little bit extra support; you can keep each other going," she said.



Their mum Colleen commented on how pleased and proud she was of her two daughters and how hard they had both worked. "I'm so glad that they both got the same award, which even began with a similar set of results at GCSE".

Despite the identical educational paths, the twins are now planning to go in different directions and to forge their own identities.

## New Age Discrimination Laws Will Affect HR Practices

On 14 July 2005 the Government published the *Coming of Age Consultation* documents and draft regulations with the aim of ending age discrimination in the workplace. The regulations (which will not affect the date that people can claim state pension) will:

- Ban age discrimination in terms of recruitment, promotion and training
- Ban all retirement below 65 except where objectively justified
- Remove the current upper age limit for unfair dismissal and redundancy rights

There will also be a duty for employers to consider an employee's request to continue working beyond retirement and a requirement for employers to give written notification to employees at least six months in advance of their intended retirement date. This will allow people to plan for their retirement.

The consultation period ends on 17 October 2005. Subject to the approval of Parliament the legislation will come into effect on 1 October 2006 and employers are urged to scrutinise the proposals and make any appropriate responses to the Government.

The CIPD have made five key suggestions when looking at your business:

1. Carry out an audit of your policies for age bias
2. Incorporate age discrimination training in your Diversity Awareness programmes for both management and staff
3. Liaise with staff representative bodies to consider age-related contacts and agreements
4. Ensure staff surveys and equality monitoring includes information on age related areas
5. Look at your pension schemes and retirement policies

Newcastle Business School will be sponsoring a CIPD event in November on the theme of equality and diversity. Meanwhile, further information on the implications of future legislative changes can be obtained from the Employers Forum on Age (EFA). Visit [www.efa.org.uk](http://www.efa.org.uk).

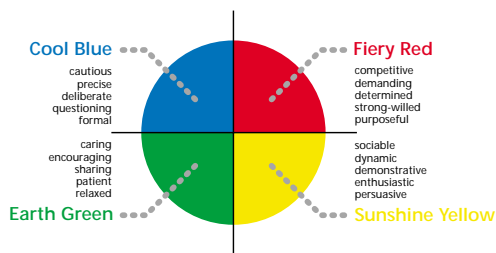
**For more information, email [sue.abbott@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:sue.abbott@northumbria.ac.uk)**

## Gaining Insights into Personality

Eight staff members within Newcastle Business School have become accredited in the 'Insights' personality profiling system.

Insights is a model based upon the pioneering work of Carl Jung, using colour as a common language for self understanding, effective interaction and organisational growth. The system illustrates how recognising and valuing individuals can empower people, teams and entire organisations.

Insights, identifies four quadrants, Fiery Red, Sunshine Yellow, Earth Green and Cool Blue. All of us will have one of these colour energies as our dominant preferred style of thinking, working and interacting with others but our personalities are influenced by all four colour energies.



We are amongst only three universities in the UK to introduce Insights into our portfolio. From September 2005, Insights will be introduced into many of the Postgraduate and MBA programmes as part of the personal development module, enabling students to gain an understanding of self and others.

Programme Directors from the Business School's Corporate Management Development Centre are already working with organisations to enhance individual, team and organisational performance, thereby creating commercial advantage.

Managing Director Steve Scrimshaw of Siemens Power Generation commented, "I recently received an Insights Profile. It took no more than 20 minutes and the multiple-choice format of the questionnaire was excellent for someone who has little time to spare. The resulting profile was very comprehensive and gives the individual the opportunity to reflect on how one

communicates, manages, makes decisions and interacts with others within the business.

"I found the experience quite inspirational and would strongly recommend it as a means of taking stock to identify strengths and development areas on an individual basis. There is huge potential for organisational development."

The Insights process is respectful, highly interactive, fun and creates individual, team and organisational impact. There are many elements to the portfolio, including:

### Insights Discovery Personal Profile

This assists individuals in their search for understanding – both in terms of their personal style and in terms of managing their relationships with others at work.

### Insights Discovery 360° Profile

Discovery 360° is a perfect tool for use within personal development, team building or leadership programmes and/or one-to-one coaching interventions.

### Insights Team Effectiveness Navigator

This profile enables team members to measure the performance of the team against core capabilities, including *Vision, Creativity, Trust* and *Problem-Solving*.

If you would like to find out more about Insights and discuss the impact it can create within your organisation, please contact:

**Jane Turner**  
Programme Director - Executive Development

**Tel:** 0191 243 7171

**Email:** [jane.turner@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:jane.turner@northumbria.ac.uk)

## News in Brief

**Academic staff from the Newcastle Business School have been carrying out some interesting new research within the local government environment.**

The research has been led by Dr. John Fenwick, Programme Director, with support from Professor Howard Elcock and Dr. Janice McMillan. The study has focused on the strategic issues of change in local leadership, the exercise of executive authority and the implications for local accountability within local government. Arising from changes brought about by the Local Government Act 2000, the research has focused upon the changing role of local elected representatives and the managerial implications of introducing directly elected mayors with specific executive responsibilities. A majority of the mayors elected in the first round of mayoral contests were interviewed, and a series of published articles have already been included in leading journals including *Local Government Studies*, *Public Money and Management and Public Policy* and *Administration*. A final paper which comprehensively analyses the research findings is currently being completed.

# Graduation Achievements

Graduation 2005, held on July 21, turned out to be our best ever and saw over 2,200 students graduate from a vast range of NBS programmes, from Diplomas and Bachelors degrees through to postgraduate degrees, MBAs and PhDs. We were also pleased to welcome students who were also graduating from our programmes that are delivered overseas via our partner institutions.



Celebrating the success of our CIPD approved Human Resource Management and Development programme, the NBS graduation ceremony saw 40 of our part-time students receive their Postgraduate Diplomas in Human Resource Management and Development (PG Dip HRM & D). One Diploma with Distinction was awarded, along with a further 14 Diplomas with Commendation.

The achievement of the award means that students gain Graduate Membership of CIPD. However, the unique position of the NBS course in being able to offer upgrading support to students with the appropriate HR management experience means that 18 students will automatically become Chartered Members of CIPD.

A further three students, who completed their Diploma last year and spent this year completing their 15,000 word dissertation, were awarded Masters Degrees.

Geoff Tame, Course Leader for the PG Dip HRM & D programme said, "Our part-time students have all

worked hard for their awards and I would like to offer my congratulations to them all on their success and wish them well in their future careers."

## Top Marks for Lynn

Our top student this year was Lynn Bassett, who works for NIKE UK Ltd. Her company asked her to complete her 7,000 word Management Research Report – a key element in the course – on the subject of Talent Management which they regard as strategically important to the success of their business. Lynn's report provided a valuable insight to the company and her recommendations have been taken up enthusiastically by senior managers.



Lynn Bassett

## Long Road to Success

Heather Jackson, who works for Blyth Harbour Commission, achieved her Diploma after a marathon effort. Heather returned to academic study seven years ago, and after four years of part-time study at NBS, gained her BA Business and Finance, during which time she gave birth to her daughter, Anya. Her employer asked her to become more involved in the management of the Human Resources function within the Commission and so Heather decided to continue her studies and join our course. After two further years of part-time study, she has achieved her goal.



Heather Jackson

## Research Success: Five New Doctors Graduate from NBS

Newcastle Business School saw a record five research students receive their PhDs at the Congregation on 21 July.

The varied research topics emphasise the school's international focus and breadth of approach to business. Three of the new doctors researched areas with Libyan connections and Dr Prasert Sitthijirapat's comparison of *The Roles and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour of Thai and UK University Lecturers* adds to our understanding of how cultural differences may affect the ways in which specialist employees go beyond the confines of their formal contracts in their work. Dr. Nigel van Zwabenberg, OHRM divisional research coordinator, was responsible for the supervision of Dr Sitthijirapat's thesis.



Left to right: Dr Prasert Sitthijirapat, Dr Abdulkarim Amara, Dr Amanda Miller.

## Fast Track Membership to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development

As part of our continued relationship with the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, five members of staff from the Organisational and Human Resource Management division of the Business School, along with our CIPD Professional Advisor, Bill Wilson, have been licensed to upgrade suitable graduates to chartered status.

Full chartered membership of the CIPD provides significant benefits to practitioners including confirmation that they have the relevant professional knowledge and skills, understand the wider business context in which they operate and are able to translate their knowledge into practice.

Panel to consider eligibility for chartered membership will be held on a regular basis and further information on this can be obtained from Dorothy Fellows, Senior Lecturer on 0191 243 7153 or email: [dorothy.fellows@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:dorothy.fellows@northumbria.ac.uk)

*Congratulations to the following graduates from this year's PG Diploma in Human Resource Management who met the CIPD's strict membership criteria and have been recommended for Chartered status:*

Rebecca Abdelnoor, Claire Gospell, Paul Campbell, Cheryl Durkin, Lisa Clark, Winifred Earl, Andrea French, Molly Bridge, Stella Keveney, Kim Southeran, Michelle Kirkby, Lindsay Marshall, Martin Palmer, Sarah Setchell and Tracey Gray.

## Working Up Industry Experience

It has long been acknowledged that students gain from working in industry during their time at university, seeing work in reality and being able to evaluate how it links with theory that they learn. It also gives the student an edge when applying for graduate employment.

NBS is the biggest provider of one-year placement students in the region, placing approximately 300 students each year, across all business disciplines. A dedicated Placements Office, ensures all undergraduate students are given the opportunity of securing a placement; helping with preparation at Pre-Placement stage, as well as supporting them while they are out on their placement. The Placements Office is managed by Christine Hopper, who has over fifteen years' experience in placing students in appropriate industry settings.

For students on the BA (Hons) Human Resource Management degree, work placements also offer the opportunity to network and conduct research to help them prepare for the Management Report, which is undertaken in the final year. This is an important piece of work, enabling students to get their CIPD

qualification and counts significantly towards their degree classification.

In addition, students from NBS who undertake a placement can also submit an application for an external qualification – the City and Guilds Licentiate (LCGI). This is a Senior Award and a national qualification recognised by employers such as Waitrose and LloydsTSB.

A student can bring a fresh pair of eyes to an organisation, as well as having knowledge of up-to-date theories in areas like recruitment, absence monitoring, succession planning, and training and development. NBS place students in a range of environments, from global blue chip companies to local SMEs, NHS Trusts and FE Colleges. The majority of our contacts return for another student each year. Placements generally start in June or July and take place in the third year of the four-year sandwich course. Salaries vary depending on region and industry and are negotiable between student and employer.

If you would like to know more, please contact the Placements Office on 0191 227 4021 or email [christine.hopper@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:christine.hopper@northumbria.ac.uk)

# Staff Development is Crucial to Success

by Ceridwyn Bessant, Associate Dean, Corporate and Management Development

The ability to anticipate and respond to change is crucial to any business wishing to succeed in an increasingly turbulent and demanding environment. And that ability is dependent on the quality of the people in your organisations. Your people are your greatest asset and can therefore be the difference between failure, mediocrity and excellence.

That is why people development in its wider sense, at all levels in the organisation, has never been more important to the success of our businesses. However, we also need to be aware of the impact and value that organisational success, through high quality people development, has beyond the organisation.

The One NorthEast Regional Economic Strategy, currently out for consultation, recognises this explicitly in setting out the development agenda for our region to 2016. Among the eight regional priorities are four that are particularly relevant to the people development agenda:

1. **Leadership** – to encourage strong, open and effective leaders who are committed to the future direction of the region.
2. **Skills** – to develop a skilled, adaptable healthy and motivated workforce that meets the present and future needs.
3. **Innovation and Creativity** – to establish an innovative, creative environment through collaboration and competition.
4. **Enterprise and Business Support** – to create an enterprising, risk-taking culture across all sectors, under pinned by a fit-for-purpose support network.

This is a challenging but exciting regional agenda, to which we can all contribute. At Newcastle Business School, we have established the Corporate and Management Development Centre to meet the learning and development needs of individuals and organisations.

## Meeting the Needs of Busy Lives

We understand that busy people in busy organisations need educational and development solutions that derive explicitly from a combination of personal and organisational requirements and which are delivered in ways that suit these requirements.

Consequently our portfolio of executive, senior, middle and junior management programmes and interventions are available in a variety of forms and delivery modes. As well as our 'open' regionally based programmes, increasingly we work collaboratively with our clients to develop bespoke organisationally-based flexible programmes of learning and development, tailored to specific organisational requirements. These can be, if required, credit bearing and take account of previous learning and development.

We also offer a range of diagnostic services, coaching, evaluation, consultancy and applied research. Our experience of working with our clients has taught us that trust, honesty and partnership working are key values and principles underpinning effective learning relationships and effective learning.

Effective learning and development can make a significant difference to individual and organisational capability through which our businesses and our region can thrive and prosper.

Further information on the programmes and services available from the Corporate and Management Development Centre at Newcastle Business School can be obtained by ringing (0191) 243 7070.

# How do Senior Leaders in the North East establish and sustain strategic leadership? Perspectives from the top

With the One Northeast Regional Economic Strategy (currently out for consultation) identifying **Leadership** as a regional priority, Newcastle Business School has developed a Leadership research project focusing on senior leaders in Northeast organisations across sectors. NBS is currently developing a collaborative partnership with a management consultancy organisation in order to progress the research from different perspectives.

Dr. Sharon Mavin, Associate Dean Research and Jane Turner, Director of Executive Development have developed the research scope which aims to explore experiences and perceptions of senior leaders, focusing upon how they have established and sustained strategic leadership in Northeast organisations. The objectives of the research are to engage senior leaders in a mutually beneficial process, publish findings and ensure that the outcomes underpin future leadership development interventions from a management education and organisational point of view. In particular the outcomes of the project will support the regional priority of Leadership in Northeast Regional Economic Strategy.

If you are a senior leader in a Northeast organisation who is interested in developing leadership capacity in the region and are willing to become involved in the project please contact

Jane Turner

Programme Director – Executive Development

Tel: 0191 243 7171

Email: jane.turner@northumbria.ac.uk

## Congratulations to New CIPD Fellows

Four further academic staff from Newcastle Business School have been upgraded to Fellows of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

Sue Abbott, Gillian Forster, Jane Turner and Paul Leonard have been made Fellows on the basis of their significant human resources management experience. Their upgrading forms an integral part of the Business School's commitment to the continuing professional development of its academic and other staff.

# Analysing Organisational Culture and Identifying Innovation: The Importance of the Social Architecture

Members of the Organisation and HRM Division are currently engaged in an exciting research project with a Northeast Primary Care Trust analysing organisational culture and identifying innovation.

The aims of the project are to support progress across the organisation in terms of developing innovation and service improvement and identifying innovative behaviours. The team has taken a qualitative approach to the research engaging staff in the process from across the organisation. Underpinning the analysis is our philosophy that each organisation should understand its social architecture before engaging in organisational development interventions.

The Social Architecture is the uniqueness of any organisation through the integration of organisational culture, management style, approaches to learning and the management of human resources. This provides a unique social setting of the organisation. The maximisation of the Social Architecture is grounded in facilitating innovation, achieving a sector lead or reinventing

critical processes. It is this setting which influences, develops and provides a context for commitment, congruence, quality and individual and organisational learning: moving the organisation away from simply imitating benchmarked best practice, to leading on innovative service improvement.

More on the results of this research project will be published in a later edition of Talking Point. However if you are interested in finding out more about our philosophy or the Social Architecture please contact

Dr. Sharon Mavin on 0191 227 3221 or email Sharon.mavin@northumbria.ac.uk



Dr Sharon Mavin, Associate Dean, Research

## C O N T A C T S

Newcastle Business School can help develop and enhance your business through a range of courses, specialist programmes and networking opportunities. If you would like to know more about NBS, or any of the topics covered in this newsletter, or if you would simply like additional copies of this publication, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Please contact Mark Scott: mark.scott@northumbria.ac.uk or call Mark on +44 (0)191 227 4611

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