

@Employment Focus

In association with
s1jobs.com

Employees look to purpose over profit



Comment

By Sandra Innes

HOW does your organisation's approach to environmental and social issues influence job candidates and employees?

A recent survey by GHD concludes a company's environmental credentials have a bearing not only on whether a candidate accepts a job, but also on how favourably employees perceive their current employer. A company's approach on social and environmental issues can include diversity, inclusion and charitable giving initiatives, as well as environmental volunteering days and so on.

Twenty-two per cent of workers thought a company's environmental credentials were "very or extremely influential" when deciding whether to accept a job, with 19% saying they would consider changing an employer on the grounds that another had a better record on environmental issues.

Organisations that value purpose as well as profit are highly sought after. The pandemic has accelerated this shift, particularly for younger workers. They want to work for organisations whose values are compatible with their own.

People have watched what's happened during the pandemic, including the Black Lives Matter movement and action on free school meals, and they want to do more. If their employers aren't willing to take action on these issues, it throws their relationship into question.

Sustainability and climate interest has been growing since 2016 but there's been a real shift in the last year. With renewables meeting 97% of Scotland's electricity demand in 2020, the desire to do what is right for the planet will only continue.

Research shows at least 130,000 green jobs could be created in Scotland in the next two years, enough to replace every job lost from Covid-19 and more. This will happen if the Government invests in key areas, including care work and renewable energy. The analysis by Green New Deal UK shows that thousands of jobs would be created in every region of Scotland, helping people who have lost their jobs due to the pandemic, rebuilding our communities and creating a greener Scotland.

Alongside areas such as renewable energy, public transport and digital infrastructure, the research includes jobs in the care sector as an example of low carbon employment. And with the Government's mission to create jobs, good jobs and green jobs – investing some £100 million in a Green Jobs Fund – this ethos should be well received by those considering which companies they would like to work for.

Communicating the organisation's purpose both internally and externally has never been more important, but what does that mean for the company and the employee? Whose responsibility is it to drive this agenda – senior leaders, HR or the employee? We believe it's a combination of all three.

Sandra Innes is chief relationship director with TMP UK.

Skills injection for small firms to kick-start Covid recovery



By Kristy Dorsey

A GLASGOW firm that has shunned the "management consultancy" label is gearing up for growth after securing a four-year contract to deliver its services to small businesses on behalf of Skills Development Scotland (SDS).

Colin Lamb, founder and owner of Connect Three, said learning new ways of working will be the key to the country's recovery from the coronavirus crisis. Currently working with six organisations through the SDS Skills for Growth programme, he expects those numbers to rise to hundreds per year.

"It is a substantial growth opportunity for us," he said. "It will probably increase our workload by 20 to 30 per cent."

Connect Three is one of four partners – along with The Leadership Factory, Pragmatique and Remarkable – delivering fully-funded training and support focused on improving innovation and productivity. Organisations with between five and 250 employees get their own specialist adviser to help identify skills gaps and guide them towards the right support, such as training and funding opportunities.

Since it was founded in 2014, Connect Three has worked with more than 800 businesses from across Scotland and further afield in North America, Europe and Asia. Big-name clients include Sky, Border Biscuits, Cala Homes and Scottish Enterprise.

Mr Lamb said one of the key themes his firm has identified in a landscape dramatically altered by the pandemic is the need to learn new ways of working. Owned-led organisations in particular need to be wary of falling into the trap of having all operations reliant on a single person.

"Few sectors of society have felt the impact of the coronavirus pandemic more in Scotland than SMEs," he said. "It has been a period of instability nobody thought possible, and recovery is absolutely attainable, but it takes leaders, teams and individuals equipped with the right skills, mindset and belief to achieve it."

"Upskilling, reskilling and skills development will be central to how businesses thrive again, and we are



Colin Lamb, of Connect Three, said the move from recovery to growth will require new ways of working

delighted SDS has recognised Connect Three's ability to deliver that change and help Scotland on its route to recovery."

Although the Skills for Growth programme has been running for six years, Mr Lamb said this was the first time SDS has contracted with multiple partners on the project. He regards the contract as a "major coup" for Connect Three, which has worked to set itself apart in the market through what it describes as a "holistic" approach focused on developing leadership skills while also establishing positive business cultures.

"We are not a traditional consultancy, in fact, we have been known to take offence when described as a 'management consultancy,'" he said.

"What we do is more than training. We believe in business cultures without

hierarchy that actively encourage contribution and independent thinking."

SDS is Scotland's national skills agency with more than 1,400 people working in schools, career centres and partner locations to support both individuals and businesses. It works with people at all stages in their careers, and administers the Employability Fund on behalf of the Scottish Government.

"Scotland's employers are adapting to a new economic environment – including a greater focus on innovation and productivity – where having the right blend of skills in place is essential," said Skills for Growth manager Gary Gray.

The move by SDS to appoint multiple partners to the Skills for Growth programme follows a major report on the future of skills from the Scottish Council

for Development and Industry. In that report, the employers' lobby identified three key pillars for improving the country's economic performance – high-performing individuals, high-performing workplaces, and in-work development – which Mr Lamb said is core to Connect Three's approach.

"We practise what we preach, and by helping Scottish businesses move towards this model, we can provide the key to unlocking business potential and driving firms from recovery into growth," he added.

"The potential to achieve it exists within the people working in Scotland right now, they simply need the tools to realise their potential, embracing mistakes and using them as stepping stones towards their goals."

Conundrum of the mysteriously shrinking workforce

Analysis

By s1jobs

CRAZY though it may seem when unemployment is so high, research has suggested one of the biggest hurdles to economic recovery from the pandemic could well be a shortage of skilled workers.

A recent report produced in conjunction by KPMG and the Recruitment and Employment Confederation found the availability of labour has fallen at its fastest rate in four years, with the overall number of

candidates during the last quarter declining at its quickest since May 2017. Staff available for both permanent and temporary roles fell significantly.

The skills in short supply are wide-ranging, with businesses reporting difficulty in recruiting highly-qualified professionals like accountants and engineers, as well as lower-skilled retail and hospitality workers.

On the face of it, this appears a conundrum, but there are several factors at play.

The most significant is arguably the Brexit effect, which has triggered a reduction in the

number of workers coming to the UK from overseas. Approximately 1.3 million foreign nationals left the UK last year, many of whom would have been working in sectors such as hospitality, construction, food processing and produce picking, all of which are experiencing shortages.

They have not been replaced by a new influx of people because restrictions during the pandemic, the post-Brexit visa system and changing immigration policies have made it difficult for those considering making the UK their home.

Another factor affecting sectors that have suffered the strictest lockdown restrictions, hospitality in particular, is that many staff have moved on to find work in more secure occupations.

The stop-start nature of the past few lockdowns has meant employees in these industries have been unable to predict if they will be working from one week to the next. With the threat of being placed back on furlough or being made redundant hanging over their heads, it is hardly surprising many are jumping ship.

Add it all up and this improbable shrinking of the labour market could be the start of a welcome economic adjustment for some employees.

The potential good news from workers' perspectives is that with employers unable to rely on cheap labour from overseas, they could be forced into increasing wages to attract new candidates, while also investing more in training to develop their local workforce. For those with skills that are in demand, this could translate into better bargaining power when negotiating terms of employment.

COMMENT AT HERALDSCOTLAND.COM

Herald Appointments by s1jobs.com



Head of Finance
£65,000
Glasgow

The new Head of Finance will contribute to the wider corporate planning and management of the organisation, working with the executive team and CEO to ensure Thenue's values are upheld and its vision is realised. Experience of investment appraisals and working with lenders is essential for applicants. Search Thenue Housing Association at s1jobs.com.



Senior Project Manager
£44,045 - £51,034
Glasgow

You will support the University's strategic ambitions, managing the programmes which identify, innovate, and deliver initiatives that shape the future needs of the people and the environment around us, preparing our people, systems and processes to meet those needs. This post is offered on a full-time and open-ended basis. Search University of Glasgow at s1jobs.com.



Information Assurance Officer
£30,523
Glasgow

The purpose of this role is to assist the Information Management Lead as the primary contact for audit and compliance across the Scottish Police Authority's estate. You will have a background in audit and/or information security/data protection and be passionate about the importance of managing information appropriately. Search Police Scotland at s1jobs.com.