

Recruitment Perspectives

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A recruitment consultancy that understands retail IT



Retail IT Contracting
– ‘the view from the inside’



“A unique understanding of Retail IT”
Richard Dodd, CTO, BT Expedite



Recruitment is definitely not a dirty word - although you could forgive people that think it is



Recruitment consultants should have a mantra - listen, listen, listen.



We created PMC-R to fill the need for a retail-IT recruitment consultancy that understands retail



Paul Mason, CEO of PMC introduces PMC-Recruitment (PMC-R), the specialist retail IT recruitment consultancy dedicated to sourcing skilled retail IT people for retailers.

Welcome to the first issue of Recruitment Perspectives, the online e-zine from PMC-R. Over the coming months we will include comment and observation from the PMC-R team to assist both clients and candidates understand the recruitment industry. We will also offer some insight into the right way to tackle recruitment – whether you are an employer or a prospective employee.

We set up PMC-R to provide a retail-IT recruitment consultancy that understands recruitment and retail. PMC-R has a unique position within the UK retail recruitment market - a dedicated recruitment service combined with retail systems expertise. This creates a recruitment service that offers experienced, proactive, intuitive recruiters with immediate access to in-house retail and technical specialists.

PMC-R services include – providing contractors, finding interim personnel, database recruitment, search and headhunting, advertised recruitment, an outsourced recruitment and outplacement support. In short, the PMC-R team is passionate about recruitment, loyal to its clients and excited by retail.

Contractors, interim or permanent personnel – whatever your need it makes sense to come to a true one-stop solution. The brief outline below gives you a snapshot of our service – you will find much more at: www.pmc-r.co.uk

Contract: When you need retail IT contractors you usually need them immediately. You also need top quality people. Rather than sending dozens of CVs that might hold a gem or two, provided you don't mind digging them out yourself, PMC-R source the right people, right away. Individuals with the right skills and the right attitude ready to fit with your team. PMC-R's database includes some of the most skilled and qualified retail IT people available. The affinity with PMC means retail consultants assess their technical knowledge to ensure they have the industry experience to produce the results you need.

Interim: Companies often need interim roles for strategic roles such as an IT or financial director. These individuals can work with a company for longer periods to

maintain the core business, drive business change or relieve pressured management. The PMC-R advantage is finding the best interim retail people with the right retail skills. We know experienced hands-on managers with a track record of success operating at all levels and the management skills to really make a difference. PMC-R interim solutions enable companies to engage experienced people to replace a senior role or to fill a skill-deficiency, on a part-time, cost-effective basis.

Permanent: When you look for permanent people, combining the right recruitment skills with retail systems expertise is crucial to find the people you need. PMC-R consultants know the difference the right executive can make to your business they also know the damage the wrong person can do. Finding the right individual for a retail client demands a thorough understanding of recruitment – executive search, headhunting, recruitment advertising – and retail. At all levels, PMC-R consultants work to the highest ethical standards to provide their clients with a quality-driven service, which is methodical, discreet, confidential, and built on integrity.

To contact one of our senior recruitment consultants please call PMC-R on 01235 521900. Alternatively, to find out more about PMC-R please visit www.pmc-r.co.uk



Retail IT Contracting - 'the view from inside'

Richard Shore has recently experienced the PMC-R contract recruitment 'difference'. That makes him an ideal candidate to talk to Recruitment Perspectives. Richard has worked in programming and operations in scientific publishing, manufacturing and retail, with over 15 years' experience of working as a contractor on a range of projects.

RP: Why did you decide to take the contracting route?

"Working as a contractor can be one of the most fulfilling careers. You have the opportunity to work on varied projects in different organisations. Contract work also allows you a little more flexibility in that you can work when you want to."

RP: Any advice on finding a consultancy?

"A key issue is the placement experience. You want to feel like human being not a statistic. PMC-R never forget the person. And that's important. PMC-R has a proactive, positive approach. Their way of working just makes it easy. My first PMC-R placement was at House of Fraser and now they've placed me at Argos."

RP: What are the positives in contracting with PMC-R?

"PMC-R treats you well. Simply, they put in the effort. With PMC-R it's never 'place and forget'. With short contracts you can't expect them to spend hours with each person but a little care goes a long way. For instance, where clients ask PMC-R to extend my contract, PMC-R does not pressure me to extend. They always ask me if I'm happy to continue and take my feelings into account."

RP: And some specific positives in contracting with PMC-R?

"PMC-R works with both client and contractor in the long-term. PMC-R ensures that both client and contractor are happy. PMC-R takes the time to find out the job requirements and sends you on contracts where you have the skills the client needs. I know that PMC-R will use my retail skills effectively."

RP: What's different about the PMC-R database?

"With PMC-R it's clear they know you, what you can do and where your expertise lies. They also have the advantage of understanding retail IT and real-world retail experience."

RP: Richard, thank you for taking the time to talk to Recruitment Perspectives.

A unique understanding of Retail IT

Richard Dodd is CTO of BT Expedite. Appointed in November 2007, previously he was International Operations Director at Tesco. Having been with Tesco for 15 years since joining as a trainee software engineer, Richard decided to consider his career choices and chose PMC-R to help him find the right position.



Richard Dodd, Operations Director, Tesco

Richard explains: "I'd reached a point in my career where the decision was remain with Tesco or look elsewhere. With such a crucial decision it's important to review all the choices and seek the best advice. A colleague suggested I talk to PMC-R about furthering my career."

"Without any reservation, I have to say the recruitment service PMC-R offers is significantly different from most other recruitment consultancies. Before calling PMC-R, I had some poor experiences, strange considering I was working for one of the larger retailers in the country and holding a senior position. Poor service makes me feel uneasy it's not a way of working that I'm used to."

Richard continues: "As soon as I contacted PMC-R I was comfortable with their approach. From our first conversation they paid attention to my needs. However, there is more to it than that, PMC-R went the extra mile. They advised me on composing my CV, went into great depth about what I wanted from my next move and helped me to rule out unsuitable opportunities. The senior consultant at PMC-R took the time to explore my interests and what my sales pitch should be. Simply, they put consistent effort into getting it right."

Skilled IT people for retail

Richard states: "PMC-R understands the retail IT environment. That's important for retail IT recruitment. Generalist recruitment consultancies may have a technical or a retail practice, however retail IT people like me don't necessarily fit into either. I'm a retailer and an IT specialist,

that's what I know and that's what I'm expert in - PMC-R understands that. I quickly realised they knew what I was talking about as we looked at various opportunities and discussed whether they were suitable for me."

Positive long-term client associations built on trust

Richard continues: "I've spoken to PMC-R since I accepted the role at BT Expedite. With PMC-R it's definitely not a 'one-off' relationship. I would happily work with them again and have recommended their services. PMC-R took the time to ensure everything was right even down to regard for my family and the work/ life balance."

"There's a strong human element within PMC-R. They realise that the recruitment process can take away or shake someone's foundations. Care takes time and that's the point - PMC-R takes time. They understand you and know what you're looking for. It's important that you trust the recruitment consultant. After all, they're dealing with your future. With PMC-R I experienced consistently high levels of concern, care and honesty and that creates trust."

Even the strongest minded person experiences some insecurity when they go through a change of career, especially as in Richard's case, after 15 years with the same company. Richard closes: "Career change can be a testing time and PMC-R made that time much easier for me. When someone invests time with you during that period you don't easily forget them."

Recruitment is definitely not a dirty word - although you could forgive people that think it is



Some companies see recruitment as a dirty word. That may be but there's one process you can use to keep it spotless and that's effective communication. It makes all the difference and it really isn't that hard.

It's not the word 'recruitment' that's dirty. It's failing to subscribe to its basic principles and that can harm to both clients and candidates that makes some people consider it rather grubby. The first way to clean up the word is communicate – with everyone involved.

When clients begin a recruitment process they need proactive, practical advice and assistance; it's the same for candidates. Clients are concerned they get the right person to work with their team candidates can feel their foundations are changing and need reassurance. Both experience change and doubt – emotions that most human beings do not respond to well, and these emotions often appear during recruitment. And poor communication just makes it worse. When they're facing change, clients and candidates need to feel reassured. They need to feel they're in good hands. They need to know what's going on and when. Talk to them.

That is why as part of our duty of care PMC-R focuses on ensuring clients and candidates know what's happening. It involves keeping everyone informed and

treating them with care and respect. It is important to maintain regular communication with clients so they know how the process is going. It's equally important to communicate with candidates to help with the 'change and doubt' issues. And communication is not only for positive or negative updates, it means ensuring clients and candidates are kept up to date. Nothing is more unsettling that wondering in silence.

The basic rule is treat everyone as a human being not a number. Dealing with people and that involves polite, considered communication. For example, every time a candidate attends an interview, whether first or second round,



talk to the client and find out what they thought. Then talk to the candidate to tell them how they have done. If the candidate gets through to the next stage or is successful tell them why they were accepted and the client's key interest points. That also applies if the candidate is unsuccessful. Give honest assessment of the client's reactions or tell them: 'unfortunately you weren't successful' and explain why.

The client needs to know how the candidate felt about the interview. Only then can the client understand any issues and take any necessary action. Is the candidate still interested? Do they want to continue with the process? Did they find out anything about the company or the job that gave them cause for concern or are they as eager as ever? Tell the client all these points.

Communication is a channel between client, consultancy and candidate – and the consultancy is the conduit that keeps the channel open. Experienced effectively recruitment is definitely not a dirty word. It's a powerful skill based on considerable experience that demands a great deal for its practitioners. And a crucial tool is effective communication.

Estate agents have a mantra – location, location, location.

Recruitment consultants also have a mantra - listen, listen, listen.



Providing a focused recruitment service demands a range of expertise, knowledge and skills - and the most important is the art of listening.

Recruitment consultants are often asked which is the most useful recruitment tool. From PMC-R's perspective there are many, but one is vital, the need to be a good communicator. Implicit within that is the ability to listen effectively – hence the mantra.

Many prospective recruiters say they are good communicators. They list their communication skills and always include their ability to talk to people. That is only half the story. To be a good communicator you must listen. Communication travels both ways, or at least it's supposed to. And the most important direction for a recruitment consultant is receiving messages from both clients and candidates.

If you decided to list a recruitment consultant's skill set you should begin with the ability to listen. However, that doesn't just mean hearing – it means listening. Intriguingly, that skill goes way beyond recruitment it pervades every facet of life, and that includes business life.

We feel better when we feel someone's listening, we feel even better when we feel understood and to understand, you must be listen. Often it's more important to be

listened to than to get what we want - feeling unheard, ignored and misunderstood is painful whether we are six or sixty.

Here's an interesting fact about listening: 90% of young people with behavioural problems state that what they want most is for adults to listen to them. That's because if no one listens they cannot communicate their needs and feel frustrated or worse. It's not enough to be heard. The American writer, publisher, artist, and philosopher, Elbert G. Hubbard put it succinctly: *"Hearing is perception of sound, listening is adding meaning to sound and understanding what the message means."*

Most of us speak at 100 to 175 words per minute. By contrast, most people can listen at 600 to 800 words per minute. So unless we concentrate on refining the art of listening most of the time only part of our mind pays attention, the rest is often somewhere else. So if you believe that you're a good communicator, ensure you put listening at the front of your skill set, and concentrate 100%.

Some rules for listening:

- Listen don't show disapproval
- Listen to each point don't spend your time preparing your response
- Don't interrupt, evaluate or jump to conclusions
- Use eye contact – a look lets someone know you're listening
- Show interest – really show that you're interested, give your full attention
- Be patient
- Allow long pauses before asking questions
- Stop all other tasks
- Listen before you advise
- Don't interrogate, correct or debate

There is so much more to listening than most people think, and when we listen we learn much more.

The point is summarised by a quotation made by Sir Jackie Stewart who competed in Formula One motor racing between 1965 and 1973, winning three World Drivers' Championships on the way: *"Most people truly believe they communicate well, that's not true, nearly everyone thinks they are an excellent driver - that's not true either."*

Recruitment Perspectives



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