

December 2009

**"Catch a wave and you'll be sittin' on top of the world...."**

In November we said that as the economic recovery gathers momentum, organisations will need to renew their focus on talent retention. We flagged our belief in career navigation and mobility as key retention drivers and we feel this so strongly that we are continuing the conversation in this, our final newsletter for the year. Our aim is to give you some broad brushstrokes which may add a further dimension to your planning canvas for 2010.

We forecast a trend towards job surfing among the survivors of organisational restructurings. Other drivers for change management and employee engagement, will be the changes wrought by greater competition, further restructurings, mergers & acquisitions, outsourcings and offshorings, along with the relentless pressure to reduce costs, increase productivity, and deliver results – and all this with fewer resources.

Associated organisational challenges will be the need to address wide ranging differences in managers' abilities to connect with employees and communicate change; to manage "change fatigue" and address issues related to flagging morale; and to establish standardised processes and practices that enable managers to navigate and lead change both for themselves and for others.

Our experience of working with organisations around the world, standing shoulder-to-shoulder with leaders and managers to understand their individual challenges, find ways of preparing for the unpredictable, and navigate unfamiliar terrain in inclement weather, has been invaluable. From this has evolved **ChangeMap**, an LHH program to support managers and employees. ChangeMap helps managers by reducing productivity dips while refocussing, reengaging and retaining employees and teams. Employees are helped to reflect on their skills and capabilities, current and potential roles and responsibilities, and act to influence their own career development.

ChangeMap uses a behavioural change model to coach leaders in what to ask, what to do, and what to avoid, providing action learning opportunities for individuals and small groups. The program is practical rather than theoretical in its approach and can be customised to suit individual organisational models, frameworks and real-time business needs. Key elements are:

**Behaviour-Based Model** - Understanding the five stages of change and identifying feelings and behaviours associated with each. Determining what change stage individuals (self and others) are in, based on the feelings and behaviours observed, considering changes and challenges facing the organisation, asking what is needed by individuals and teams, and creating a personal action plan.

**Dual Roles** - Providing a clear process for managing change as an individual and as a leader. Leaders assess what is likely to present the biggest challenge and opportunity for them personally, for their team, and for them as a leader. In addition to mapping their own path, they are coached in how best to support employees with prioritising their tasks and developing short-term goals and establishing deadlines. Interim processes are agreed and established, obstacles and barriers identified and opportunities provided for individuals to experience success in the now and along the way.

**Engagement** - Engaging individuals and teams in order to achieve results. Managers are encouraged to notice those who are doing something right, recognise positive contributions and reward and reinforce positive behaviour. Also to ask employees what opportunities for learning and success might come with this change and solicit their suggestions for implementation. Managers need also to be aware of emotions that indicate regression to a previous change stage in order to reengage these employees.

**Coaching** - Being prepared to hold one-on-one conversations with employees and recruit early adopters as change agents. Employees are encouraged to become the subject matter experts and early adopters are partnered with those who still feel challenged by the changes.

**Relevant Scenarios** - A range of real-world scenarios are outlined and managers are encouraged to apply the program models, frameworks, and tools to these scenarios to solve company specific challenges.

**Sustainability** - Actionable, relevant, and practical tools are provided for back-on-the-job use and are supported by individual and group coaching sessions.

**Some extracts from About.com's "Basic Surf Tips for Beginners"**

- *Paddle using alternate arm strokes and keep a constant speed.*
- *Learn how to sit on the board – the key is being calm, trying to be still.*
- *As you begin to stand up, make sure you're centered and in balance.*
- *When you come up, keep low but always look up or you will fall down.*
- *Get lots of practice before trying to catch a wave.*
- *Have someone observe, and give you feedback.*
- *Never have a board between yourself and the coming waves.*
- *Beginners should always surf with a buddy for safety, and it is cool to share your experiences.*



LHH helps organisations manage, develop and grow their most important resource — talent. We offer talent solutions throughout the entire employee lifecycle — from assimilation, through development, engagement and retention, to redeployment and transition — all to help organisations maximise performance and results.

Talk to the person who sent you this newsletter to find out more.

## **A Traveller's Tale: How I lost my job and found another one** Shifting gears: from introspection to mobilisation

Hello fellow bloggers, tweeters, and career constructivists!

As you will notice, the gap between postings hasn't been that long this time around. I said I was taking the time to get my bearings, map out my journey, and get myself into gear. Well, you should know that I am now actively engaged in job search.

My practice runs were so helpful... thanks heaps for your feedback and all the new people you've either connected me to, or suggested I get in touch with. I couldn't ask for a more supportive group of travellers, albeit in cyberspace.

My consultant Jane suggested that since I had a new "you beaut" resume and was sounding fluent (and so much more comfortable) in articulating my career achievements and aspirations, it was time to begin proactively researching and developing profiles of industries and organisations that might be a good fit.

So I started out by doing some browsing on the usual job search websites – mainly just to expand my thinking and keep up-to-date with job descriptions and titles, key competencies, and terminology in use. While doing this I came across some ads for roles I'd been keen to apply for and was really glad I'd held off as I am so much clearer about what I want now and those jobs just didn't cut it.

I'm booked in to do a research skills seminar next Tuesday which will introduce me to the business databases we have access to, so I can generate lists of companies to target and find out more about the organisations and industries. The training also covers advanced Internet search techniques, which means I can be more efficient and effective when using other publicly available info sources.

Last week, I did a couple of other workshops on Interview Skills and Networking and they were super useful. The consultant who ran them was pretty savvy and gave us some great hints and tips. We actually got to practice on each other - both as interviewer and interviewee, which was a lot of fun. Jane said we can even do a mock interview and video record it to get a sense of how I come across. The seminar on networking was pretty "hands on" and they made it really clear that this is not about asking for favours or a job, but about making connections and exchanging information – something that can benefit most people.

That's it from me till next year guys. Soon it will be Christmas and I've been told it's almost time to switch off and take a break from job search. The job market may hibernate for a month or so, and while I'll keep an eye open and an ear tuned in, I can relax and enjoy the holidays cos I'll have done all my preparation and am fired up and ready to go when the action begins.

I wish us all a Merry Christmas and a brilliant New Year.

