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ROUNDTABLE

LEADERSHIP
DEVELOPMENT JOURNEY -
HALF OF COMPANIES
WITH REVENUES OVER
£500 MILLION HAVE
NO FORMAL CEO
SUCCESSION

PAUL MITFORD, HR DIRECTOR - WHITBREAD RESTAURANTS

{ SEATS AT TABLES }

“HR’S ABOUT CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT,
AS WE ENGAGE EMPLOYEES IN VERY PERSONALISED WAYS”

ALSO FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION Prejudice is an ingrained tool for managing fear, we cannot expect to change it with logical argument alone

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS Maslow proposed the “Hierarchy of Needs”. Are benefits key to motivation or can remuneration satisfy this?

EXPLORING MINDFULNESS That chattering distraction in our minds which has been described as a ‘mad monkey bitten by a scorpion’

EMPLOYER BRAND Investing in an office slide may set the employer brand tone, but it's not a compelling reasons to stay



POLES APART

A critical friend said many years ago that as a disabled person, I was 'an inconvenient truth'. I was diagnosed with the muscle-wasting disease Muscular Dystrophy (MD) aged just 18yrs in 1984. Twenty years later, I was the first disabled person to lead expeditions to the North and South Poles. The journey gave rise to a new life plan, and the impetus to embark on a new career.



ARTICLE BY MICHAEL MCGRATH, CEO & FOUNDER - THE MUSCLE HELP FOUNDATION

Five kilometres out from reaching the South Pole in January 2004, I received the message below from my mother; "We have been made what we are. You are unique. There will never be another you. You were created for a purpose that only you can fulfil, so never give up for being who you are. Look at the opportunities before you, not the limitations." Today, these words continue to drive me forwards on my journey, words that I hope will resonate with you as you shape and implement diversity and inclusion strategies. In today's technologically-driven world, that is all about immediacy, driving an integrated D&I strategy is less about the business defining the individual and more about the individual defining the business - the opportunity gaps will continue to widen if business continues to ignore this message. Research conducted by Catalyst and McKinsey (published in 2007) indicates a clear correlation between diversity and core organisational outcomes being positively impacted.

A year on from life-saving surgery and after uttering the words 'I'm back' whilst in recovery at Addenbrookes Hospital in Cambridge, a key and very positive milestone has been reached: five months ago, I celebrated my 51st birthday. It's a life, that through a circumstance some thirty years ago, forced me to face substantial change - a diagnosis that I refer to as my 'Castaway moment'! For some, a 'Castaway moment' in their life stops them living and for others it energises them and starts them living. Educated by the Jesuits, my life credo - from my old school alma mater - Quant Je Puis, literally translated means "As Much As I Can". This credo is underpinned by my five guiding principles of self-belief, preparation, focus, personal accountability and authenticity, in other words showing people who you are.

How much is authenticity truly valued in your workplace? I don't think it's particularly appreciated in the context of diversity and inclusion. I often share for example the capricious recruitment methodologies I applied in attracting the right skills and competencies that I was looking for in pulling together my expedition teams. Whilst in some ways, I was looking for people that would fit in, I was also looking for people that would not only understand the physical limitations of muscular dystrophy (MD) but also people that I could trust with my life. In thinking about your own

experiences in the workplace, isn't it the case that the richest relationships you have are with people who are authentic, true to themselves and genuine? In other words, real people. For those that don't know, muscular dystrophy (MD) is a muscle wasting disease; it robs sufferers of their mobility, their independence and finally for those with the most severe form, predominantly children (boys), their lives. It's the single biggest genetic killer of children in our world today. There's currently no known treatment to delay or reverse the progression; it's a cruel and unforgiving disease. Whilst the word disability may well apply to me today, it will never ever define me.

FIVE YEARS AGO, I WAS CHARACTERISED AS A 'TECHNICAL FAULT' BY AN EAST COAST TRAINS ANNOUNCER, AS THE TRAIN PULLED OUT OF DONCASTER, HAVING MADE AN UNSCHEDULED 'CALL-OF-NATURE' STOP

The reality is that it's become a passport to enabling me to drive change - and I do that in a number of ways: By influencing the behaviours of others; demystifying the ignorance that still pervades and inspiring and educating young people as a role model. And speaking of leadership, it's my belief that leading is a part of the essence of humanity, as much coming from innate character as gained through knowledge acquisition. In other words 'learning' but also acquired through the experience of living life 'differently'. From many years of observation and engagement, this is where I feel there is a disconnect in establishing D&I strategies that seek to embrace the many positives that come from having a diverse workforce. Those that do this well will not only 'lead' the way in overcoming often challenging barriers by shaping future workplace attitudes but they will also reap the rewards.

Taking the strand of disability for a moment, I recently read a report published by the Recruitment & Employment Confederation (REC) titled: "Companies still 'fearful' of hiring disabled people". The REC report was sadly a disappointing read. It continues to be my hope that the 'narrative' (some might prefer the word 'propaganda') by various governmental ministers over the past few

months around 'improving life chances' and 'backing aspirations', starts to have much more of a positive impact on disabled people. Current Government data indicates that there are approximately 11 million people in the UK living with a limiting, long term illness, impairment or disability, and that there are now some 365,000 more disabled people in work in the UK than there were in 2014. Whilst I applaud the efforts of those organisations who have made it their mission to move away from traditional recruitment methodologies, taking a bold step in enhancing diversity takes organisational courage. You only need look more closely at the likes of

Sainsbury's, a previous Recruitment Industry Disability Initiative (RIDI) winner, to see that progress is being made.

I'd like to see more of that positive impact especially for those most vulnerable. The work of The Muscle Help Foundation, a small family charity with national reach based in Hertfordshire, is currently developing an innovative 'person-centred' pilot programme called *'Inspiring Hearts, Engaging Minds'*, funded by a BIG Lottery grant. Support is coming from the likes of; Airbus, gsk, the Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce and the University of Hertfordshire (clinical psychology doctoral team) to name a few. The tailored programme (being delivered by April 2017) aims to help creatively explore work-based aspirations for young adults specifically with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD), the group representing over 95 percent of the charity's beneficiaries ie. those furthest away from the world of work. As a role model for disabled people, I feel a real sense of responsibility in leading by example, by encouraging those with disabilities to share positive, good news stories with the aim to provide some optimism to help uplift, inspire and boost confidence. Tim Hollingsworth, the Chief Executive of the British Paralympic Association delivered on his promise that Team GB would win more

medals than in London and Allianz's support of the British Paralympic Team has undoubtedly achieved greater brand engagement for their UK customer base whilst reinforcing their D&I commitment in the workplace and in the world of sport. Having been selected as a Torchbearer, I will always remember the evening of Tuesday 28th August 2012 when I carried the Paralympic Flame in advance of my charity's flagship 2012 *Games Inspired Muscle Dream* Programme that saw 75 muscular dystrophy beneficiaries and their families from across the country be inspired by the power of sport.

On the subject of sport, I think it's terribly disappointing not to see at least one Premier League club blaze a D&I trail - after all, "we have the richest, most profitable league on the planet. It has to be the most inclusive league as well, otherwise it is morally bankrupt", that's according to a special report written by Jeremy Wilson in *The Daily Telegraph* (Friday 16 September 2016) entitled: "Top clubs in 'disgraceful' betrayal of disabled fans" which found that one third of Premier League clubs are failing to meet their promise to provide minimum recommended wheelchair access - this has resulted in the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) renewing its recent threat of legal action where clubs would be in breach of the 2010 Equality Act. Perhaps the EHRC's Castaway moment has finally arrived.

The words of my hero Sir Ernest Shackleton ring true: "Optimism is true moral courage". That said, my wife and I and colleagues that work closely with us still come across prejudice, discriminatory behaviour and ignorance. Five years ago, I was characterised as a 'technical fault' by an East Coast Trains announcer as the train pulled out of Doncaster having made an unscheduled 'call-of-nature' stop. In engaging hearts and minds, I try to encourage organisations and individuals to be a little more courageous by supporting their uniqueness and their diverse backgrounds. Accepted wisdom states that nothing focuses the mind more than fear, but I know that nothing focuses the mind more than a lack of time. ●

FOR FURTHER INFO
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