

The HR Factor – Do You Have What It Takes?

Celtic Manor, 27th April 2007 ... breathing exercises, singing, laughter and applause – one could quite easily be forgiven for thinking they were at the auditions for the X-Factor. In truth, they would not be far off. In fact, they were at the annual HPMA Welsh Branch Conference, appropriately titled ‘The HR Factor – Do You Have What It Takes?’.

So how does one get what it takes? If you were at the breakfast session with Dr Terry Stuart, Director TMPS Relax, then you will already be party to the secret. For those who struggle to get up in the mornings and thought an 8.30am session too early to attend, the secret will remain – unless:

- a) you speak to those who were splitting their sides with laughter whilst munching bacon butties
- b) you managed to pick the brains of the aforementioned guru, whilst attempting to squeeze more freebies into your *already bursting at the seams bags* than your colleagues.

Following an extremely professional opening address where Ms Karen Wright, Chair Welsh HPMA, quick to take Dr Stuart’s advice about being positive, asked “doesn’t my bum look great today?”, Mr. Ian Stead, HR Director NHS Wales, took to the stage for his take on HR Futures – an insightful perspective on the strategic future of HR. Next in the spotlight was Dr. Pat Oakley, Director Practices Made Perfect Ltd., who ‘wowed’ delegates with her strategic assessment of workforce planning.

Waiting in the wings was Tracy Myhill, Personnel Director for Gwent Healthcare NHS Trust, who conducted a colourful campaign (mostly black and red) about Driving Strategic Change and Efficiency. The second half of the Gwent double bill comprised of Jill Evans, Equality and Diversity Manager, who delivered a particularly engaging performance whilst simultaneously managing to project the serious message that equality and diversity is everyone’s business.

Taking her lead from X-factor contestants who share with the viewers what an earth-shaking experience competing on the programme has been, Judy Stafford, Velindre NHS Trust, shared her life changing experience in HR. Rachael Allsop, Director of HR for Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, made a real entrance and wasted no time in employing shock tactics to gain the delegates’ attention – yes, she really did cut the number of her HR team from 96 to 36, by empowering line managers to manager!

Before curtain down, the very entertaining Dr Terry Stuart imparted his wisdom on how to cope with change. Last, but by no means least, was Moira Morgan, Performance Coach, who really got the audience ‘in the groove’ with her show-stopping rendition of ‘They can’t take that away from me’ ... before teaching us all a thing or two about style.

All-in-all a fantastic conference, according to delegate feedback, which really did have the Wow! factor.