

Gravitate HR Newsletter

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Autumn 2016

‘Great Change Creates Great Opportunity’ The Business Journey

Uncertainty or Opportunity, Cameron breaks down the most talked about event in the UK for years – Brexit.

‘I recently attended the Business Journey networking event in Glasgow which considered why businesses need to stay flexible to take advantage of the opportunities and shifts in market conditions.

As we know, Brexit has already had significant implications and one that creates the most uncertainty is the UK’s relationship with the EU and how businesses in the UK will be affected.

Based on some of the discussions during the event, the general consensus was that although Brexit creates a large amount of uncertainty for businesses, nothing has immediately changed and there are still opportunities for business owners to plan ahead in order to ensure the long-term survival of their business or even to grow and flourish in a post-Brexit Britain. This is a point that Gravitate HR has made to businesses in relation to Brexit, in addition to offering our advice and expertise to help our clients prepare for what lies ahead’.

To read more about this, please [click here](#) for the full article.

*“Great things are done
by a series of small
things brought together.”*

- Vincent Van Gogh



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“Off the Record” Conversations

Introduced in 2013, Section 11A of the Employment Rights Act 1996 allows employers to have “off the record” conversations with employees that cannot be referred to in any later dismissal proceedings.

As an employer, you may want to have this type of open conversation when you are considering terminating an employee due to conduct and poor performance issues if; the employment relationship just simply isn't working, you want to avoid a lengthy and complex dismissal process or where you are concerned that there isn't enough evidence to support a “fair” dismissal.

When having an “off the record” conversation, employers are protected in that the conversation will not be valid in any future unfair dismissal proceedings provided that it is not related to any improper behaviour, it relates to the end of an employee's employment and a settlement offer has been made with the employee or there have been negotiations about the employment being terminated.

A recent interesting case, *Faithorn Farrell Timms LLP v Bailey* heard at an EAT, involving the claimant bringing a construction dismissal and indirect sex discrimination against her employer. This case highlights how the S11A privilege is more useful than the “without prejudice” rule when dealing with pre-termination conversations.

[Click here](#) to read more in Sara's blog.

OFF THE RECORD

Sexual Harassment: It's no Joke

We are sure many of our readers will have heard either through social media, radio or television about the recent TUC report: a collaborative publication with the Everyday Sexism Project into Sexual harassment in the workplace in 2016.

Based on a survey of 1,500 women, the report found that a shocking 52% of all women polled had experienced some sort of sexual harassment, while around 80% of these women did not report the sexual harassment to their employer. Furthermore, the report also found that 35% of women have heard comments of a sexual nature being made about other woman in the workplace; 32% of women have been subject to unwelcome jokes of a sexual nature; 28% of women have been subject to comments of a sexual nature about their body or clothes; and just under 25% of women have experienced unwanted touching (such as a hand on the knee or lower back).

[See here](#) to read more on Cameron's Blog.



Employment Law Updates

1. Gender Pay Gap reporting: Private & Charity organisation's with over 250 staff are required to provide the mean / median pay gaps and hourly pay rates will be assessed each year. Details must be published on the Company website and retained for 3 years. Regulations come into force on 1 October 2016, and reports should be published within a year of 30 April 2017.

2. The National Minimum Wage is likely to increase from October 2016 for those 24 years and under.

3. Contributions for pensions auto-enrolment: the planned increase in October 2017, to 5% minimum contribution (2% employer), will now take effect in April 2018, and the planned increase in October 2018, to 8% (3% employer), will take effect in April 2019. This is to align the increases with the beginning of the tax year.

4. Salary thresholds for experienced Tier 2 migrants is set to rise from £20,800 to £25,000 in autumn 2016, rising to £30,000 in April 2017. The minimum salary required for 'new entrants' remains at £20,800, which includes employees under 26

Try our HR quiz

1. **When will the next National Minimum wage change come into effect and who will it apply to?**

- a) November 2016 for ages 23 and under
- b) September 2016 for ages 24 and under
- c) October 2016 for ages 24 and under

2. **Who is Craig Mathieson?**

- a) A polar employer
- b) An artist
- c) A polar explorer

3. **From the 1st of October 2016 Which organisations will be affected by the UK legislative requirement to publish a Gender Pay Gap Report?**

- a) Private and Charity organisations with 250 or more employees
- b) Only Private organisations with 100 or more employees
- c) Both Private and Charity organisations with 50 or more employees

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In November each year we hold an evening event for clients and contacts. Over the years we have done a variety of things to entertain, inspire and educate. It is a way of reaching out to our clients and contacts to express a bit about us here at Gravitare HR and the kind of values and principles that we adopt within the business.

The theme for this year's client event has been truly inspired by this Summer's sporting events including the Olympics and the Paralympics which has topped this off.

We have been so incredibly taken aback by the determination of the athletes - the drive and motivation to overcome both physical and mental challenges and barriers in order to achieve their goals.

The Olympics / Paralympics have proved how inspiring sport can be. Success in sport relies on the ability to continually move performance to higher levels. It is about hard work, determination, perseverance, not being afraid to fail and knowing how to harness your failures, to learn from them and recover positively.

This has so many parallels with our everyday personal and working lives. Of course we don't all go to work in Lycra, or take up extreme sports but we do face challenges every day and these challenges can affect us all differently.

On 10th November 2016, we are delighted to have Craig Mathieson from the [Polar Academy](#) attend our client event. Craig is an accomplished and respected explorer, having led the first dedicated Scottish expedition to the South Pole and many other expeditions to the North Pole and Arctic. In 2013, he was awarded the title of "Explorer in Residence", by the Royal Scottish Geographical Society. Each year the Polar Academy inspires and motivates thousands of young adults positively, demonstrating that by "Inspiration through Exploration" anybody can achieve their absolute potential despite the challenges we face.

Craig has shared his experiences with many schools and through his activities with young adults, identified that many have very little self-confidence and motivation and are of the general opinion that they will not be able to achieve anything significant in their lives. Passionate about inspiring the next generation, Craig decided to do something about addressing this; it was out of this experience that the concept of The Polar Academy was born.

If you would like to join us, look out for your invitation that we will be sending out soon....

News from Glasgow

In terms of Gravitare Glasgow, things are going well. Neil and Cameron have had the pleasure of meeting business leaders throughout the West of Scotland at various networking events and look forward to meeting more in the coming months.

Looking forward, the next few months promise to be exciting ones as we continue to grow the business in Glasgow. The issue of Brexit still seems to be the main talking point amongst business leaders in Glasgow so perhaps human resources has never been more significant as it is right now.

If you want to get in touch please do, you can contact me us email at cameron@gravitatehr.co.uk or Neil at neil@gravitatehr.co.uk. Otherwise, you can contact the Glasgow office on 0141 225 6288 and we certainly look forward to hearing from you.

Team Update

We are delighted to introduce Cameron McIver who recently joined us as HR Assistant in August 2016. Cameron will be mainly based at our Glasgow office with Neil.

In his first blog, Cameron tells you about his background in Human Resources as a Strathclyde University graduate as well as his time as on the Area Manager graduate scheme with Lidl UK.

[Follow the link](#) to Cameron's blog for more

Jess has returned from her Maternity leave and it is so lovely to have her back. Jess will be working Monday – Thursday, 9am – 5.30pm.



Upcoming Events

Free Lunchtime Seminar – 22 September 2016, 12:30 – 2.00pm

We will be holding a seminar here at Gravitare around 'Building a culture to improve productivity / employee engagement'.

This event would be ideal for anyone looking to gain some practical take-aways for their business but also for those looking to network and meet like-minded professionals.

A complementary lunch will be provided, to register for the seminar, [please click here](#).



Contact Us

Give us a call for more information about our services and support we can provide.

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