

REPORTING, WHAT FOR?

Report writing is an unpleasant, time-consuming and unpopular obligation to most people. Doesn't it seem we have to write reports because of some bureaucratic regulation and wouldn't we rather do the "real work" like coaching and training candidates, organizing meetings with customers and clients, holding workshops, project work etc.

Why do we need reports? Needless to say, reports are a controlling instrument for management to monitor and assess a project and work in progress as well as the quality of the work, check results and / or step in and assist when required. At the same time, maintaining records of our work and communicating results is also useful and valuable for us, the candidates and our customers and even those who are not our customers (yet).

1. For ourselves:

We want to monitor the progress of each individual project, capture our own and the candidate's activities, successes / and potentially failures and obstacles, keep track of the desired results, in order to identify and recommend the right course of action and learn and further improve our expertise and our service

2. For the candidate:

Keeping records and communicating progress and successes help to motivate and encourage candidates throughout the coaching project and assist in planning and identifying appropriate goals and objectives for each individual in order to achieve the desired results

3. For the customer:

A progress report on a coaching project and an individual is an excellent piece of communication to the customer who provided the funds for the service in the first place. It can also serve as a regular reminder and proof of our quality service and achievements.

4. As a marketing tool

Reports can be used to let other people know what we do, how we do it and what we achieve.

It is vital that form, scope and frequency of reporting should always be agreed at the beginning of a project to ensure that all required data can be collated and recorded while the project is running. Requesting information at the end which has not been logged takes a lot of effort to research and investigate, and could even be lost.

What makes a quality report? Which criteria should be met?

- a. Reports should be of appropriate length / detail (KISS – keep it short + simple)
- b. Reasonable regularity (report on each meeting, monthly, quarterly, annually?)
- c. They should be meaningful and
- d. Maintain confidentiality

Reports are important for a number of reasons, and a necessary and integral part of our work with candidates and customers. You don't fatten the pig by weighing it but concise reports are vital because "rattling goes with the job" and we should be glad that we have something to rattle about.

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'REPORTING, WHAT FOR?'

The February ACF Europe Newsletter will feature an article by Mark Richter (CEO at OTP, Switzerland)

HOW COME IT IS SO DIFFICULT TO SELL CAREER MANAGEMENT?

(by Michael Moran)

It's a sad fact that for most employees the only time they get career management support is when they have been made redundant. We in the profession passionately believe in the importance of career management. We know there is a return on investment. Employees who receive help in their career planning are more engaged, more productive, generate higher levels of customer satisfaction and are loyal.

So why is it so difficult to sell? Corporate clients should be queuing at our doors and yet in my experience, for most providers only a small fraction of our work can be classed as career management working inside the organisation.

The purpose of the article is to explore the reasons why, and to put forward actions we can take in 2014 to change this situation.

1. We haven't made the business case. Business leaders don't believe us. Too many business leaders believe that investing in career management will only serve to hasten the exit of the employee. We, as a profession, have failed to come up with hard data substantiating the link between provision of career management support and improved business performance.
2. We are selling it too cheaply. We give too much of it away as a freebie. Consequently our clients don't value it.
3. We are selling it to the wrong person. We are marketing to our outplacement clients, the HR or L&D person, and all too often that person is junior, with no budget and even if they get it, they will have sell it on. Typically HR people are not good at sales. The point of purchase is the line manager. Our dilemma is: how can we engage with this audience without offending our core client and the key point of purchase in outplacement procurement?
4. The product isn't sufficiently differentiated from career transition. The client doesn't really understand what is to be delivered. They struggle to see the outcomes. It lacks tangibility.
5. Outplacement deliverers struggle to deliver outside their comfort zones of basic career diagnostics, CV production, and interview skills training. We have failed to keep pace with changing career patterns, learning styles and knowledge of what's happening with businesses today.
6. HR want to provide career management support themselves and without external help. We have failed to sustain the argument that career management provision requires specialist skills and is best delivered by those external to the organisation.
7. Our end client, the employee, spends more time planning his or her vacation than their career. It's in the "too difficult to do" box. It's like a healthy lifestyle, we all know it's highly desirable but creating the time to design and implement is always best left for tomorrow.

Continue next page



ACF EUROPE SURVEY

In case you have missed the results of the ACF Europe 2013 Survey, please go to the Members Only section of our website

www.acf-europe.org
and use the password:

MyACFEurope

ACF EUROPE CONFERENCE

ACF Europe will organise a conference in Paris from Thursday night 15 May to Friday afternoon 16 May.

Please put these dates in your diary. As soon as we have more details we will inform our members.

Please let us know if you have any topics you would like to discuss during the conference.



Association of
Career **Firms**
EUROPE

So, it's 2014. If we truly believe in the power of career management we need to do something about it. Remember that Einstein said "to continue to do the same thing and expect a different outcome is the definition of insanity". What can we do differently?

- A. We need to create a bandwagon. The Engage for Success campaign in the UK set up a Guru Group in order to examine the arguments around employee engagement and business success, the group produced "Nailing the evidence" under the authorship of Tanith Dodge, HRD M&S and Bath University. This was the stand-out HR publication of 2013 - we need to produce something similar. As an Association we need to collect business metrics that evidence the power of career management and we need to circulate to business leaders and HR professionals.
- B. We need to sell it differently. We need to use the social media to advertise. We need to incorporate career management in all leadership development programmes. We need to target the business leaders not HR. We need to make the end client, the employee, aware of the criticality of career management in career success, creating a groundswell of demand. Just imagine if that key hire demanded a career management programme in order to join a company! We must target Generation Y and millennials and urge them to demand career management as part of what exemplar employers do.
- C. We need to create an army of line managers who are highly skilled in career conversations. They have experienced and benefited from the product and, in turn, are role models to the next generation in helping them manage their careers.

I would very much welcome feedback from fellow members of the Association. Is career management a product whose time has come, or am I just talking up my own trading book? More importantly, what practical ideas do members have to make selling career management less difficult?

Happy New Year

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ACF EUROPE MISSION

ACF Europe is the representative body of the Outplacement Industry in Europe. Our mission is:

- To strengthen the positioning of the industry in the political circles
- To assist national chapters in their PR work
- To help possible customers to find the right provider
- To develop the outplacement industry in emerging markets
- To promote quality standards in the industry

Our target is to represent companies where outplacement is a major part of their business, to extend coverage to 6 countries with local chapters and 14 countries with individual company members.

To contribute to achieving these targets ACF Europe will provide:

- An up to date website
- 10 newsletters per year
- 4 webinars per year
- 1 conference every second year

To measure the progress we will set the following targets:

- To grow membership by 10% p.a.
- To gain the engagement of at least 2 members without board seats in contributing to newsletters
- To attract at least 12 participants in the webinars



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