



Association of
Career **Firms**
EUROPE

ACF EUROPE - Newsletter

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Dear readers,

“There is nothing more constant than change” – this seems as true as never before. Wherever we turn we encounter change and uncertainty: Brexit, free trade, labour markets and relevant new skills to name just a few areas.

We are observing that companies are more cautious about the investments they make or that companies are forced to restructure in the face of change. E-mobility is a serious challenge for our industry given that the success of outplacement providers depends ultimately on their ability to help employees find new positions. We also note that the work of outplacement consultants is changing radically through the increasing digitalization of HR processes. At the same time outplacement services as such are becoming more important for employees who do not fully meet the requirements of the new labour markets.

It is ACF's aim to support companies and employees in their endeavour to master the broad array of challenges. To make a real difference and provide valuable insights it is vital that ACF members inform about their experience, thoughts and observations. You are cordially invited to share your views with ACF! Please contact either Angelique Werner or myself (acf.europe.org@gmail.com). We look forward to hearing from you!

Warm regards,

Herbert Mühlenhoff
ACF Europe



Herbert Mühlenhoff
Managing Partner
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Steve Thompson-Martyn
Director Career Directed
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First Career Movers

My 23 year old daughter who was in her first role in HR recently took her first steps towards a first career move and somewhat dauntingly came to Dad for advice. Not feeling under any pressure at all reflected on the wisdom that I would impart.

It suddenly struck me that in recent years so much of the advice we, as career professionals provide is based so much on traditional corporate structures, career paths and development but the landscape for first generation career movers is changing at quite a rate. What had firstly become apparent is that even though my daughter was working in a structured HR function the room to move was limited and the pace at which she needed to change to take on board new experience could not be matched by the employer. The discussion we had was predicated on an onward career in HR and what that could look like but we started from two precedents, firstly that this was a focus on her first career and secondly we did not need to seek a perfect role just one that would add value for at least two years. The search then thankfully went well but led me to summarise a number of key elements:

- Pathways for first career movers are less structured, visible and therefore the need for Career Guidance has never been greater
- The competitive landscape amongst a group of well educated first career movers has never been greater
- Right first time is less important than before, mistakes are all part of the journey
- First career movers have to be equipped to take management of careers at a far earlier stage as employers increasingly are unable to provide the certainty of a next in house move.
- In an age of electronic communication the ability to show personality and verbal communication skills is an increasing need
- First career movers have to focus from a much earlier age on what they can deliver now irrespective of potential for the future.

As an industry we need to adapt fast to the changing needs of this group. This population are typically socially independent and so if we are to develop the relevance of our industry to this group it is critical that as an industry we focus on this group and develop a new age offer.

Uncertain Brexit, Uncertain Career, Uncertain Future

Research from the Institute of Directors shows a surge in UK companies seeking to move some part of the UK operations abroad due to Brexit.

Regardless of where you stand over the issue of the UK's place in Europe these are worrying figures with 29% of those organisations surveyed stating that they either had already, or were strongly considering, the move. This period of unprecedented change within UK plc is concerning enough at a macro-economic level, however as with any business change it is the impact on the organisations workforce where it is most strongly felt.

It's become increasingly difficult for an individual to focus on building a career over the last few years and any new challenges add additional and often unexpected, dimensions. Ongoing organisational restructures, the increasing fluidity of international operations, the ever increasing pace of technological change and a huge uptick of roles in the gig economy can appear to challenge conventional wisdom around career development strategies. With organisations continuing to state that a lack of talent availability and, as importantly, the ability to retain that talent, continue to hinder organisational growth plans there is an increasing disconnect in how 'careers' are being developed - it's an ever changing and increasingly complex picture. Add in the uncertainty associated with Brexit and its easy to see why workers in some parts of the economy don't know which way is up.

In many ways the challenges surrounding Brexit exemplify these issues. Employees in key sectors including finance, pharmaceuticals and manufacturing are exposed on a day-to-day basis with international challenges - and have to adapt accordingly. Currently, they do, with many employees well-able to develop and manage their careers and at the same time successfully incorporating any international dimension. However, should their employer choose to relocate some or all activities elsewhere, these employees are likely to face difficult choices.

In many cases how far an organisation is willing to 'help' depends upon an individual's willingness to relocate - particularly if an international move is on the cards. Moving from one part of the UK to another is often manageable, however moving from Manchester to Mainz or from Birmingham to Bologna creates a very different set of choices. Despite the fact that many organisations looking to relocate parts of their operations abroad will offer generous relocation packages to staff, for many this is simply not an option and, reluctantly, many individuals will have to accept that their career may stall or that their role will become redundant - it's difficult to influence things at 'Head Office' if you don't work there on a day to day basis. Those with niche skills or higher levels of seniority are not immune as, whilst they may be offered even greater incentives, they are likely to face similar practical and emotional ties to a current home location. With a workforce unwilling (or simply unable) to relocate and with key skills often unavailable at the destination location, organisations are forced to begin to plan for workforces split across different locations which throws up yet another series of difficulties. Opting to relocate due to improved access to markets, for tax planning purposes or simply as a result of changing regulatory environments - employers are having to manage disenfranchised and disenchanted workers at home.

INTOO UK & Ireland have found that demand is increasing for initiatives focussing on supporting both employers and employees through these challenging times. Whether that involves coaching or mentoring, to ensure leaders are clear about how to maintain engagement, highlighting future career-paths or simply being aware that individuals across organisations may be in need of unbiased and practical advice; sessions aimed at giving individuals the tools to better manage their own development or, in the case of those leaving organisations, support, advice and guidance around securing future roles or moving a career towards a different trajectory - all can help.

Whilst many would say that Brexit is simply the latest in a long line of challenges impacting British workers and that our workforce will adapt, prove resilient and innovative, and will bounce back accordingly (highly likely to be true) - we should acknowledge that, regardless of how Brexit plays out, people, like business, abhor uncertainty. Now might just be the time to offer a helping hand, to support all our futures.



Owen Morgan
Director INTOO UK & Ireland
Adviser to the board ACF
Europe

The increase number of Career Coaches in the Netherlands

From a donkey coach to an executive consultant, the number of coaches who assist you with problems at work is constantly growing in the Netherlands.

Based on an investigation of the organizational development at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, it seems that all these inexperienced coaches are not harmful, but very weak.

How many coaches there are in the Netherlands NOBCO, a professional association for coaches in the Netherlands, can say “no meaningful word” about. There are currently 2,600 registered with the NOBCO association, but this says nothing about the number of coaches working.

Coaching in career planning, outplacement, absence control, reintegration, mobility, start-up coaching, talent coaching: just a few of the registrations at the Chamber of Commerce last year. The Chamber of Commerce register now has more than 42,000 coaches. In the field of employment career support there are 9,456 branches active in 2018, according to the Chamber of Commerce in the Netherlands.

It's a good sign in itself. This means that more and more attention is being paid to personal and professional development. But for clients of coaching it is difficult to gain insight into the quality.

We want to develop ourselves and we work differently

Why is the supply growing? There is more and more room for self-development, we work differently, with more different people and the taboo on asking for help disappears. Moreover, the development of jobs is developing so fast that sustainable employability will play an increasingly important role, and that is where all those coaches come in.

Onboarding coaching is now very popular. A new employee is followed and coached during the first hundred days. The coach helps you not only to look at your work, but also, for example, to contact new colleagues and to let go of the old patterns you brought with you from your old job.

The proliferation of unregistered coaches is worrying

A registered coach puts more weight in the scale. There are several institutes where a coach can register. Not convenient, says the Registration Foundation (StiR), where a thousand coaches are registered. This foundation is concerned about the proliferation of coaches. This foundation is to set quality requirements. An unprotected, unregistered coach can be counterproductive,” is the opinion of StiR.

The profession of coach, unprotected or not, is clearly a popular career switch. These are usually people who have run into something themselves in their careers and have been helped. I want to do the same,’ such a person thinks. You build a site and you can start like that.

Employers often offer coaches themselves

LVSC is one of those other professional associations with 2,100 affiliated coaches and supervisors. They, too, are seeing increasing interest, partly thanks to employers.

Employers initiate this themselves and have an internal coaching pool for staff to use,” said a spokesperson.

There are also employers who provide a budget for this, and within collective agreements a budget is increasingly being set for the sustainable employability of staff.

It's true that the number of coaches is growing, described by a professor of organizational development at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and a part-time coach himself. There is nothing against inexperienced coaches. Of course, they have to learn it somewhere.

Coaches are often ex-managers who want to talk about themselves

If a coach does not supervise, does not keep his knowledge up-to-date and has not followed any training, the coaching usually represents little. These are often ex-managers with an extensive network, prestige and experience in mentoring younger employees.

These coaches give advice from their own experience and talk a lot about themselves and how they tackled problems themselves. Not directly harmful, but a weak form of intervention. Joining a growing professional group is simply an attractive choice.

In the past, a coach was hired as a last resort, if something had gone thoroughly wrong. Nowadays coaches start from the will of the client, who asks for it himself. Coaches were seen as the extended arm of management. That hasn't been the case for a long time.

Biography

Charel Jelles, Managing Partner & Executive consultant

Charel Jelles is the Managing Partner and Executive Consultant for Talent4Success in the BeNeLux.

He is responsible for securing and maintaining relationships with key customers and ensuring that client and customer expectations are achieved through operational and sales excellence in the BeNeLux countries.

Charel is also responsible for service proposition, pricing and ultimately responsible for the quality of delivery. At the start of each major project he will work with the Key Account Manager and the other (executive) Consultants to ensure service deliverables are clearly stipulated and a delivery plan is in place.

Since 1997 he has experience in the human capital and talent development marketplace. He received his degree in Management, Economics and Law and a he has also a degree in Business Administration with a labour market specialization. He is familiar with multiple branches and has a proven track record within the Legal branch in the BeNeLux. Charel is also familiar to multiple international operating law firms in the BeNeLux and the delivery of talent mobility solutions to the upper level of these organizations.



Charel Jelles
Managing Partner and
Executive Consultant for
Talent4Success in the Benelux
Board Member ACF Europe



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OUR MISSION

- ACF Membership embraces organisations who focus on helping individuals make an informed next career move, not just get a new job.
- Career Management and Transition comprises a range of services, which are designed to help organisations and their employees deal effectively with change so as to minimise the adverse effects of such change and to benefit from the new opportunities that are created.
- ACF members offer a range of supportive services including group and individual outplacement, change management, executive coaching, mentoring, assessment, development and career counselling related to employment and employability consulting.



ACTIVITIES

What we do:

- Offer a full range of career guidance including 1:1 coaching, workshops, online and virtual services.
- Have robust processes and methodologies that encompass all aspects of Career Management and Transition.
- Are specialists with Career Management and Transition representing a core or distinct part of their business.
- Provide discreet premises appropriate for Career Management and Transition.
- Services are a client driven process to obtain an outcome of choice e.g. career move, self-employment, consultancy, portfolio career or active retirement.

COMPANY OVERVIEW



The ASSOCIATION OF CAREER FIRMS (ACF) work is focused on three main areas:

- The INDUSTRY OF CAREER SERVICE PROVIDERS
Providing information to its members about developments in the industry and to promote quality.
- The EMPLOYING ORGANISATIONS
Promoting the services of the Outplacement & Career Management industries in order to support career growth against a changing employment background.
- The INDUSTRY OF CAREER SERVICE PROVIDERS
To raise the profile of both outplacement & career management alongside other employment related issues to as broad an audience as possible.

OUR VALUES



ACCREDITATION

ACF Member firms:

- Demonstrate a significant level of experience and competence in order to be admitted and will have longevity of operation of more than two years continuous trading in Career Management and Transition.
- Once admitted, members demonstrate standards which are monitored and maintained.
- All Consultant Coaches will be appropriately qualified and participate in ongoing continuing professional development (CPD).

ACCOUNTABILITY

ACF Member firms:

- Have a quality assurance policy which is regularly audited for compliance.
- Undertake regular service evaluation and procedures for handling corporate and client complaints.
- Have audited reports and accounts.
- Meet regularly to exchange and develop best practice in the profession.



LOCATIONS



The network of ACF Europe consists of more than 100 offices of ACF members situated in::

- Germany
- Switzerland
- Austria
- United Kingdom
- Finland
- Portugal
- Greece
- Belgium
- Luxemburg
- The Netherlands

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