

Diaspora Business Networks – Is this the coming Corporate Model? - 17.4.23 (V3)

- www.devonshirehousenetwork.co.uk/.

In association with www.WorkingFree.co.uk



By Charles M Russam – 17.4.23.

An Insights Paper from Devonshire House

An exercise by Devonshire House - in association with Working Free - to understand and define the huge changes in the workplace – and which are still continuing – albeit in different forms – over the past few years. And to point to ways in which individuals and organisations might best respond.

Diaspora Business Networks are exponentially expanding personal contact and community-building networking mechanisms. Their aim is to position the business at the heart of a growing number of networks to best achieve business objectives and plans through the myriad of relationships becoming available. (Community means any definable Group of relevant people.)

This Insights Paper was originally drafted on 2.5.21. It reflects major changes in the employment market. We interpret, define and explore this in this Insights Paper. One of the rarely mentioned features of the last three years is that the way one describes the situation at any point in time will have changed significantly within months.

Before 2.5.21, many changes had been taking place. After Covid began to lose steam as a pandemic, a new paradigm became obvious in the workplace – different and more very far-reaching than at any time within normal memory. Not as obvious is that major change is continuing – but it is different.

Please see **Hindsight Revisions – Diaspora Business Networks-** at the end of this Paper

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Approached through these sub-heads, this Paper makes the case that how a business succeeds depends on having instantly available on an interactive basis whatever is required. It needs to invest continuously in this community-development capability and maintain it.

Done well, answers become available before the questions are formulated and asked. This capability should also create and deliver opportunities – new ones and/or ahead of the competition.

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1 - Introducing Diaspora Business Networks

Diaspora Business Networks are exponentially expanding personal contact and community-building mechanisms reflecting the ESG aims of the innovative business and managed through modern technologies and underscored by discrete but firm commercial motives.

Diaspora Business Networks Corporate Model is a new interpretation of how all Individuals can now inter-relate more effectively and in greater numbers with the Business, its Management and with each other. It is both a Personal and a Corporate tool.

Within this Definition – and research will reveal different definitions – a Diaspora Business Network is a new idea and concept within a business but developed out of what existed before. Or will be. It is “new” in the same way that Marketing started as a new function within Sales and is now a separate and key Department – and in the same way that IT started as a new function within Finance and is now a key and separate function and Department within a business. Now, it looks like ESG is going the same way. Its impact is accelerating and will soon be represented formally at Board Level. Where it actual settles within corporate hierarchies needs to be determined but it does need to have strong influences and impacts over all departments and functions in the business.

Driven by a unique mix of Covid, Brexit, technology and human factors – and now driven by ESG – many see radical changes ahead for the role of people at the heart of these changes in the workplace. Some see it as a new Industrial Revolution – the Revolution of the Individual. What this will look like will be driven by a complex mix of these new circumstances – in the world, in the economy, in business and in the minds and hearts of people.

It is difficult to define the detail of what will now be happening but if you think about what has changed and also about what new tools and approaches are becoming available, you can see some shape developing. Read on.....

What we’ve got is a unique confluence of rising unemployment (April 2011) – a significant part of furloughed employees now back at work – others drifting back to the office amidst much debate and mixed emotions. All this changing thinking needs to be seen against the background of unquantified and tighter business conditions. There will be a mix of changed and changing business models.

May 2021 has seen a resurgence of positive media sentiment – which may well be transitory with many taking the view that Sept 2021 will be a testing time. Notwithstanding any further Covid incursion, the pent-up consumer cash will have come back into the system, and current Government support will be receding and we will be seeing what the real business conditions are. It’s difficult to suppose that the huge amount of damage that has been sustained by Government, business and people will simply evaporate.

(Please see Hindsight Revisions – Diaspora Business Networks)

2 - Major changes that have taken place – particularly over the past two years.

The aim of Diaspora Business Networks is to position the business at the heart of a growing number of networks in order to best achieve ambitious business objectives and plans whilst conforming with developing ESG best practice.

These are the major changes:

Impacts from Individuals' newly articulated aspirations, primarily arising out of WFH and including WFH – are extensive.

Line of sight management is now being replaced by “trust” and the emphasis is now also shifting towards what is delivered rather than from time spent – outcomes preferred to process. Trust is moving towards becoming a matter of contractual arrangement.

Work/Life Balance has had a fairly rough ride at the hands of Covid – and, to a lesser extent Brexit. Working from home has blurred the dividing conventions; in practical terms, most people have spent more time working than hitherto, particularly when you include little bits of time – EG: finishing off a task; leisurely wind-down at the end of the day; more frequent looking at your mobile to see what's new; catching up on emails. Sharing equipment between work and home seems fairly natural; give and take has been finding its own levels and tolerances; families get to know more about parents' work activities; sharing parental and domestic duties tends to be less disruptive. But there are negatives. Proximity frictions within families; practical equipment difficulties; and, significantly, lack of personal interfacing work.

Individuals are still driven by money but also by broader elements – which will vary between generations – and seen as balanced packages which include aspects of “security” less than by corporate loyalty.

Concepts of loyalty are also moving towards becoming a matter of contractual obligation, but tending to differ between generations. Where loyalty is relevant is where it is generated around individuals – and tends to last as long as the individuals last. It is becoming much less of a corporate thing – due primarily by the increasing rates of overall change and uncertainties. Rhetoric can often be a bluff. But – try saying this to a member of the armed forces! Loyalty, here, would seem to be as strong as ever.

Corporate development action with an employee's skills are increasingly being seen more for their personal benefit than the employer's. In a sense, there has long been an element of this in Management Development Programmes. This may well be a further recognition that the most important attribute of any individual in the workplace is their skillset – their professional competence. This is what has a value and is what an employer/engager will pay for. Keeping that sharp and up to date is vital. Leaving for a new company for reasons of protecting one's core skillset is invariably a good reason. There are often hidden dangers for one's future in accepting internal offers of a broader exposure and/or retraining. Upmarket odd-job

men and women can be vulnerable. Being very good at something is invariably the best form of personal security.

Changing attitudes to “Security” become less about jobs, more about work. This is a crucial area. What does “Security “mean? Are we grown-up enough to be able to re-balance personal responsibility with the need for the state to look after its people? How incursive should Government be? See Warning Note 1 later in this Paper.

Extensive and fundamental IT and AI developments..... huge leaps forward have taken place over the past two years. What we have all learnt from Covid is higher levels of IT management and things that the company said could only be done in the office, can be done at home.

Changing thinking about face-to- face working. Will meetings come back to pre-Covid levels – with more being done through Zoom, Teams, etc? Continuous and mixed views here – but things will be different and sensible balances will be found. But the outcome will be less time spent in the office compared with pre-Covid.

There will be new and immediate needs to vary headcount levels – almost continuously – over and above pre-Covid infrequent exercises. Thinking of this as hiring and firing is old fashioned! Practice over the past few decades indicates that where the redundancy process has been used once, it will be easier to use it again. Another nudge away from employment towards engagement. What many say will happen here is that all will become inured to corporate reactions to peaks and troughs – given that enough money is involved and personal skill sets are up to date and relatively easily transferred. Making this easier is a current challenge and an ongoing task.

Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) ESG stands for Environment – Social – Governance. All well documented – and developing. All responding to separate needs, drivers and changing circumstances – but all interacting and with a cumulative impact which demands effective responses from all businesses.

Investopedia defines ESG as follows:

Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) criteria are a set of standards for a company's operations that socially conscious investors use to screen potential investments. Environmental criteria consider how a company performs as a steward of nature. Social criteria examine how it manages relationships with employees, suppliers, customers, and the communities where it operates. Governance deals with the company's leadership, executive pay, audits, internal controls and shareholders' rights. (Missing seem to be the positive bits about efficiency, better performance and making money.)

Originally, businesses may well have wondered why these three elements were being grouped together. They paid lip-service to it, seeing it as a distraction and with their loyalties clinging to the focus on profit. But, as soon as you get into it, you realise that it is all about resources and behaviours – and is interlinked.

But – now – strong compliance with all aspects is being seen as vital. ESG matters will need to be a visible part of Corporate Business Plans, budgets

and internal and external communications. The cumulative impact of the combined "E", "S" and "G" will be felt in all aspects of a company's operations.

3 - Tools and approaches now making Diaspora Business Networks desirable and possible.

These are:-

- **All the socio-economic changes** that are taking place and accelerating, including.....
-**social networking**
- **Major moves forward in technology.**
- **People – their attitudes, aspirations and feelings.** (EG: "I'm not coming back into the office because we've now got a dog"! However, it does look like blunt statement approaches are actually recognising trade-offs.) Why do people move jobs?
- **The recognition that resourcing needs to mirror speeded-up and changing markets, economic conditions and politics** – all leading to greater fluidity of labour, immediacy coupled with accuracy of profile.
- **What many are seeing as a new Industrial Revolution – is People**

If you don't develop and action these ESG philosophies, **you'll lose out to the competition – who will be reacting!**

4 - What would Diaspora Business Networks do? How would they work?

Facing outwards, the business would seek to create and build communities reaching from across the whole business and delivered through its three key activity areas – People – Products – Profile – see below.

The aim is that these communities would connect with one or more of the key activities of the business.

(You can argue that everything in a business can be grouped into **People – Products – Profile . (Profile being everything "Corporate" – Image and Branding; Reputation; Employer Branding.)**

The business would create plans and programmes continuously – to identify in-any-way suitable targets; to create suitable campaigns and to roll them out. Creating suitable campaigns requires some skill. Different parts of the business would have their own Plans which would be centrally co-ordinated.

The guiding philosophy is that the business should and – now – can – create and establish ongoing contacts with external parties which – importantly – are ahead of any specific need. When a need arises – much of the work has already been done and the method of approach will have suggested itself. Payback is when these networks actually get used – sometimes for other than the original purpose.

The contrary argument would be that the creation of an infrastructure of a type advocated here would be a waste of time and money and it would still be better to create a specific exercise for a specific need as and when needed.

Points to bear in mind:-

GDPR/ Privacy – Care needed to get this right. Many things have changed. Generally, GDPR is not a problem with Social Media. But security, integrity of data and Privacy are and good protections are important. Data breaches are so often toxic.

If you irritate or bore the networking targets, you're doing it wrongly! But it is important to develop engaging topics

Generally, "engaging topics" will derive from ESG areas, themselves part of the Business Plan of the organisation – including stories about relationships. (EG: Charity involvements.)

Collaboration with external/third parties is an integral part of Diaspora Business Networks. Specifically, for example, Talent Network Resourcing may well partner with recruitment businesses and it would be important to ensure good protections – including external partners using your data for their own purposes.

As regards IP, an interesting question arises around ownership. Generally, social media attaches to individuals but the business needs to have ownership. (With Talent Management Professionals, much of their value to a business relies on their personal networks – if they leave, so do their contacts and research material)

Probably for the first time ever, a business has a viable capability, the opportunity, the newly discovered mind-set, the need and the resources to create Diaspora Business Networks. The underlying principle is that, in an increasingly competitive business world, success relies more than ever on individuals.

Notwithstanding a perception that all the major changes that have taken place over the past three or so years dumb down the individual in preference to technology and immediacy the reality is that what really matters is what individuals do – what they want and how they make decisions.

What this means is that getting closer to as many relevant people as possible is the best way of getting the best people "engaged" in the business (and doing the right things at the right time and in the right way). It is the best way of building a happy customer base and it is the best way of mobilising support for intangibles – such as reputation, image, branding. In short, it is the best way of finding new answers to old and current challenges – including those coming next.

5 - What would a Diaspora Business Network look like?

It would look like a huge, complex and actively managed, supported and integrated CRM system – but applied beyond "Customers" – which it will now likely absorb. It would be developed beyond what is currently seen as

best practice – which is built around individuals. A Diaspora Business Network develops this to the interactive Community stage.

Here are the main features:-

Within an Organisation, there would be one overall Diaspora Business Network – consisting of inter-related and integrated Networks for People, Product and Profile.

People – Human Resourcing incl Internal Comms.

Product – Customers, Sales, Marketing and Product Creation (Manufacturing, Processing, Delivery including Branding –

Profile – Corporate - and which includes Governance, ESG, Vision, Values, Reputation, external Comms, PR and Shareholder Relations.

..... and more information here

People – Human Resourcing incl Internal Comms.

HR recruit people either for their own Department or for other Departments. Their need will be for filling vacancies – either replacements or new roles. Identifying attractive hires ahead of the need can often deliver significant benefits. Increasing recognition of alternatives to full time permanent needs will become more frequent, more commercially appropriate and more widely acceptable – with the word “collaborative” being apt. It’s a bit like getting nearer to traditional outsourcing - but getting nearer to relevant people.

When you are running a business in a radically changed and changing business landscape, **it has to be good practice to seek to use ALL the talents available** – whoever they are; whatever they are; wherever they come from and when you want/need them – and, maybe, in much changed and different practical ways and within radically changed contractual arrangements than hitherto.

Organisational Design and Development professionals need to find balanced solutions involving these new options. **Not far behind are Talent Management teams** waiting to find out what their new remits are.

Employment will give some way to Engagement – it started some time ago – and “Feel Good” means being valued, attractively rewarded in overall terms and not feeling insecure.

Collaboration with external Search & Selection/ Recruitment firms should be explored. Terms of engagement should be carefully constructed. The payback would be NOT paying 30% for individual hires – but paying a monthly retainer which would be based on sharing database material from both parties and with joint ownership and suitable restrictions.

Product – Customers – Sales, Marketing and Product Creation, Manufacturing, Processing, Delivery incl Branding and Advertising..

Profile – Corporate includes Governance, ESG, Vision, Values, Reputation, external Comms, PR and Shareholder Relations.

Examples:

- Many large organisations have and develop customer lists beyond their own business use. (Legislation duly acknowledged.) Clearly, GDPR rules need to be observed – but, once an organisation has effectively established these, creating communities is a natural progression.
- Major businesses maintain Alumni lists and are active in leveraging these relationships. They are looking for market information, business referral opportunities and expect access to some inside tracks including those they are not supposed to be privy to.
- Keeping in touch with good leavers – generally, as part of an Alumni function – often pays good dividends to all parties.
- Also in play in these and other types of organisations are systems that can allocate staff to client assignment teams and – conversely – use those systems to plan the technical and career development needs of individual employees.

It can be seen from the above limited number of examples that these applications are generated in and (probably) by different Departments in an organisation and should, ideally, be integrated into a master application.....

Diaspora Business Networking is mostly about going outside the organisation. It seems like a sensible and logical next step to use all this in creating an ESG Department! Done well, this process could yield many commercial benefits. This is all about the “S”. The “E” and the “G” would make this a large and powerful force.

6 - Why start with HR? Might this be a new Resourcing Paradigm?

Diaspora Business Networks need to start within HR as current structures and practices are better developed here than in other areas of the business. It exists there already – primarily through staff record keeping, efficient and up-to-date software and Talent Management activity.

The core aim of HR is accuracy and immediacy in getting the right people in the right roles at the right time and achieving the right outcomes and for as long as needed – with all parties *feeling good* about it. HR is also the repository of best practice in all HR matters – sometimes acting as Principal and sometimes as Agent.

(“Feel good” means being valued, attractively rewarded in overall terms and not feeling insecure.)

This new business climate will drive new thinking about people and approaches to changing employment and engagement models. How to respond to these changes is the challenge.

Creating differing engagement arrangements are becoming more viable and more frequent – and also more complex. Not sure HR Departments are happy with this!

Businesses need to inter-relate with people for three primary reasons – to employ/engage them; to sell to them and to create outward-facing corporate support mechanisms.

It is a nonsense to suppose that those working in the company have no responsibility to sell – as it also is for sales, marketing and general management to have no interest in what makes the company tick. Everyone is an ambassador. Everyone is a guardian of its reputation.

7- Tomorrow's Organisations & People – Perspectives

- Paradoxically, the value of relationships seems for many to be at a crossroads.
- More tech and IT – and also AI.
- More flexibility – variations to suit changing needs – sometimes at short notice.
- WFH - in its various forms - becomes a permanent feature
- Employment – less F/T.
- More Independent Working - Engagement not employment basis.
- Some moving away from Employer mentality to Client mentality. Hightening sense of Collaboration – less authority.
- Some switching away from Employment legislation and towards bespoke Contractual arrangements.

In spite of all this, Face to Face **MUST** be seen as vital - still vital. Teams need mutual trust to generate and maintain progress. The Diaspora view is that real trust comes from personal relationships – the sort that translate into Alumni arrangements – and long-lasting personal associations.

Otherwise, very difficult to say!

8- Hindsight Revisions – Diaspora Business Networks

- **Where we are at - 28.3.23**

Not much change from 9.12.22 – except

..... ESG seems to be seeing more firmness of thought and serious planning based on fairly obvious changes particularly in weather conditions.

The post-covid non-returners to the working population identified as male and female, generally in their 50s and predominantly quoting various forms of illness, are still missing. (*Diaspora Business Networks is much at the heart of what www.WorkingFree.co.uk does*). The Government is now taking greater interest in this. It would seem that not much progress is being made in this context. Several reasons.

What seems to be emerging is a tacit acceptance of a new national business mood where poor performance of various kinds is being accepted without much comment. Quoting Covid, staff shortages. and the quirky inflation disruptions, so many things are not yet happening in the ways they used to happen – and pricing has gone up probably more than necessary - Mostly without any effective customer resistance. Maybe no-one complains because no-one listens. Words like quality - excellence – customer satisfaction – efficiency – seem to have disappeared.

- **Where we were at - 9.12.22**

Around 9.12.22, we took another look at it. We contend that we got it spot-on right. Except – perhaps – for.....

We focussed much on ESG at 2.5.21. Much less talk about that since but now it looks like it's catching up – due to Putin's war shifting our attention to energy and defence. COP27 is still battling for the same goals. Let's hope they succeed.

Most observers thought that post Covid unemployment would surge – and it didn't.

Most did not anticipate the high volume of no-shows back at work.

No-one seems to know what the exact absentee number is – and go for various numbers between 400k and 1mn. No-one seems to know exactly how this is segmented..... nor exactly what ill-health means nor what inactive means..... nor what is going to happen next nor what the timing is going to be.

When this dust settles a bit, what we will have is a growing number of “workers” who fall back – willingly and/or advisedly – partly or not at all – on their own personal resources – which might be money – but not when it runs out – and leaves them to their own personal abilities, ingenuity and drive to find solutions. Read onand more information from www.WorkingFree.co.uk

- **Where we started - 2.5.21**

This Insights Paper is all about this!

9- **About Devonshire House and Working Free**



Devonshire House Network is a people-focussed Membership Club for Director-level Professionals in leadership roles who have an instinctive focus on the human side of enterprise.

At the heart of Devonshire House are senior decision makers keen to discover and explore original thinking and information generated from all the Events we promote.

In addition to our Mainstream Events – which may be online or at a venue - we run more functional Events focussed on information exchange, relationship building and Networking.

Our purpose, at Devonshire House, is to create for our members thinking time and space for key business issues, and where people make the difference.

www.DevonshireHouseNetwork.co.uk



Working Free supports the Senior Executive considering or embarking on a new career as an independent professional.

Working Free works with Individuals personally and with Organisations as part of restructuring, redundancy, outplacement, career development or other mid-career transitioning arrangements and where independent working at senior levels is seen as an attractive way forward.

www.WorkingFree.co.uk

10 - **Next Steps**

IT Technology suitable as a base is likely to exist in the HR department and a CRM system in the Sales/ Marketing area. Additionally, Finance will have its own systems and various individuals will compile their own – some known about and some not.

Many organisations look at moving these silo arrangements into a centralised set-up – and software does exist for this. This Paper sees this as important. Within an Organisation, there would be one overall Diaspora

Business Network – consisting of three inter-related and integrated Networks

People, Products and Profile. These may be developed in sequence – and as set out but not necessarily – and in this order –

Write an overall Development Plan – call it a Diaspora Schematic

This would comprise:-

- **HR – including Internal Comms and Talent.**
- **Product, Sales and Marketing incl Branding**
- **Corporate incl Reputation, external Comms, PR and Corporate**

Call them all Diaspora Business Networks!

Warning Note 1

Are we grown-up enough to be able to re-balance personal responsibility with the need for the state to look after its people? How incursive should Government be?

The UK Government seems to want - as indeed, the EU does – all its people to be on a payroll – so they can be controlled, measured and taxed. This creates elements of dependency – such as has been seen throughout the Covid and Putin years. Genuinely self employed people and virtually all people working independently don't think like this. They want work not jobs and work comes through an active and progressive economy, their commitment to purpose, innovative mind-sets and Government recognition - at all levels.

In this respect, Government rhetoric falls short of Government action.

Dependency is the opposite of Independency. It starts as something exceptional; it shifts to being the norm; then moves on to be an entitlement and finishes up as ?

How hard do we need to try, as Individuals?

Do we focus on our personal skills – and are grateful to employers for supporting that process through retraining and management development programmes? Do we get twitchy when we are offered “promotion “ by broadening our skills into roles such as – Directors of Special Projects – or Client Liaison – or aspects of Business Development?

At the heart of this a question are the ONS Employment statistics (Google **ONS Employment Statistics**. Go to **Sch EMP01** .

You'll see (Oct 22) a total UK working population of about 33m and a figure of about 19m (See below) being adjusted FTEs (Full time Employees) – this equals 57%. This means that everything other than FTEs equals 43%. There are different ways of defining this 43%. Economists use the expression – **“atypical workers”** – implying differing ways of earning a living. Others use a variety of expressions – including “Gigworkers”. (A clumsy description!)

You can read more about this here.....

<https://workingfree.co.uk/the-commission-on-the-future-of-employment-support-a-call-for-evidence/>

– and also - - <https://workingfree.co.uk/self-drive-worker/>

To answer the question **How hard do we need to try, as Individuals?..... it is this part of the UK's working population that needs to try very hard.**

Warning Note 2

Care needs to be taken when establishing Networking contacts.

Mostly, these are person to person. This mostly relates to HR and talent management activity and also in sales. Virtually all connections are personal as opposed to corporate. Care needs to be taken with all aspects of ownership. The risk is that the business misses out when the named business contact leaves – and their contacts leave with them – and may finish up being used for the benefit of competitors. One of the dangers in protecting against this eventuality is the irritation in finding that there is no way of responding to incoming communications – no internal person to talk to..... in fact, all the deficits inherent in Call Centre methodologies. No-one likes sifting through weird online questions. In the end, nothing beats personal contact!

Warning Note 3

Is this just another Management Fad?

The answer is no – as Diaspora will be mostly driven by ESG – and no-one would dare describe ESG as a Management Fad. But read on ... if you wish as found on Wikipedia.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Management_fad

This is not to say that management fads are grounds for dismissal of the thinking. They are grounds for taking the concept of Diaspora Business Networks seriously. Both Devonshire House and Working Free would stress that Diaspora Business Networks are a direct outcome from what is actually happening in the market.

Warning Note 4

Watch out for the long and unexpected tentacles of legislation – from GDPR through to and including Bribery - and similar risks.

No-one wants to fall foul of any legislation. But no-one wants to fail to promote their business, their people and their products in the best possible ways. And in ways that are about getting closer to external parties. Using the word “Corruption” alongside “Bribery” is very scary. “Inside tracks” used

to be normal – but interpretations of words like “fairness” and “level playing fields” are becoming major issues. The same applies to aspects of “price-fixing”.

However, downstream issues can take us all by surprise. Discrimination, for example – flavoured increasingly with political correctness – and, now, more of a problem. Securing supplier agreements, contracts and deals are becoming person-free processes – and needing to be seen externally as such.

“Cronyism” – whatever that is – seems to be getting closer to illegality. And Entertaining is not far behind.

Part of the answer is to understand the legislation and actively have responses ready. This should be achievable through the Profile part of Diaspora Business Networks

It is worth noting the six principles for bribery prevention:-

- 1 – Proportionate procedures
- 2 – Top level commitment
- 3 – Risk assessment.
- 4 – Due diligence
- 5 – Communication
- 6 – Monitoring and review

Appendices - More about Diaspora Business Networking

- 1 The Diaspora Business Network Concept relies on appropriate advanced technology. Big Data! AI !
- 2 ESG – Environmental, Social and Governance.
- 3 Talent Acquisition and Management.
- 4 What other Digital Innovation is going on in the Human Capital?

1 - The Diaspora Business Network Concept relies on appropriate advanced technology.

The Diaspora Business Network Concept relies on appropriate advanced technology to drive an organisation’s HR Management processes and overall networking activities and effectiveness. Virtually all organisations have differing levels of capability in this area. Analysing this and deciding, strategically, what more should be done is essential. Organisations need to consider and define their own positioning towards the broader concept of networking, ensuring that current and future ESG issues and the needs of the business are appropriately covered. It should be very possible to harness

existing technologies without resorting to major external expense. But there does need to be central co-ordination. Avoiding silos is important.

2 - ESG – Environmental, Social and Governance.

ESG is going to be the driving force behind Business Planning. Expert views and commentaries abound. KPMG, for example, offer much authoritative material about ESG on their website – as indeed do the other leading Consultancy Practices and many others in the UK and wider afield.

<https://home.kpmg/uk/en/home/services/environmental-social-governance.html>

KPMG say:-

“ESG must be embedded in your strategy and form the overall narrative and purpose of your organisation. Every aspect of your business is in the spotlight from how you treat employees, your supply chain, how you use and manage data, right through to your environmental credentials. It’s now clear, that having a clear purpose and positive impact on the planet and its people matters like never before.”

3 - Talent Acquisition and Management.

Those involved in Talent Acquisition and Management are ahead of the Diaspora game – as we describe it in this Insights Paper.

They are driven by the ever-growing needs of the business – now and in the future. Not only are they searching for the “best” for their organisations, but they are establishing processes and ranges of connections that will make it easier in the future.

This is how Wikipedia defines Talent Acquisition and Management.

Talent management (TM) refers to the anticipation of required human capital for an organization and the planning to meet those needs. The field has been growing in significance and gaining interest among practitioners as well as in the scholarly debate over the past 10 years, particularly after McKinsey’s 1997 research and the 2001 book on The War for Talent.

Talent management is the science of using strategic human resource planning to improve business value and to make it possible for companies and organizations to reach their goals. Everything done to recruit, retain, develop, reward and make people perform forms a part of talent management as well as strategic workforce planning. A talent-management strategy should link to business strategy and to local context to function more appropriately.

Some observers comment that HR Practice is being driven by technology. HR specialists develop their own techniques – get them computerised – resulting in IT Providers enhancing their offerings – resulting in (some) HR Practitioners heightening their game – often incorporating ideas that did not or would not have been thought of.

Here’s what IBM have to say about Talent Management:-

<https://www.ibm.com/uk-en/services/talent-management>

It is difficult to think of a better way of recruiting the very best top corporate managers than through the very best of current Talent Acquisition teams.

By way of research, one could look at all top management hires over the past few years and determine levels of success and/or longevity and, perhaps, correlate it with sometimes eye-watering reward.

Given that the tenure of office of a FTSE100 CEO is still only five years, one could challenge its effectiveness – and ask if the expectations of them are too ambitious; or are they been given too much authority or tasked to deliver too much too quickly.

So, probably, what we have at the moment in Talent Acquisition practice is the best there is. For the immediate future, the answer may well be doing it better, cheaper and quicker.

Diaspora Business Networks encourages that sort of thinking!

4 - The Commission on the Future of Employment Support

(Submission to HMG from Working Free – 21.1.23)

This Commission was set up to develop evidence-led proposals for reform of our system of employment support and services, so that it can better meet the needs of individuals, employers and our economy. 10 Nov 2022.

Please see Working Free's Submission here-

<https://workingfree.co.uk/the-commission-on-the-future-of-employment-support-a-call-for-evidence/>

Charles Russam, Managing Director – Devonshire House Network Ltd. – 17.4.23

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