



The odd couple?

Meet the people behind People

Why the entire profession could learn a lot from the minds that rewriting the recruitment rulebook...

Mike Jones (left) and Jonny Yurtsever have been affectionately dubbed the Hinge and Bracket of the recruitment world. Jonny the creative engine and Mike the driver. Different sides of the psychometric chart they may be, but this makes for a harmonious partnership to jointly captain this brand.

Sheer frustration was how it all started. Visionary entrepreneur, Jonny Yurtsever, had reached the point at which the financial risks of expanding his construction and property recruitment service to a worldwide scale were too great to take on alone. But it went far deeper than that. Jonny says with vehemence, "I was frankly depressed by the general state of the recruitment industry and its reputation was, and still is, grim. Unfortunately, public perception of recruiters has ranked them alongside estate agents and used car salesmen – callow youngsters after a fast buck. Everything's about money while, nine times out of ten, training and service go by-the-by. I want to rewrite the rule book."

When Jonny met Mace

The turning point for Jonny came just six months ago when he sat down in front of the 17-strong business management group of Mace and all agreed to the challenge of Mace's worldwide recruitment activities. This automatically gave People the financial muscle it needed.

Next, Jonny appointed Mike Jones, as the Managing Director of the brand new venture, People, which exploded onto the international construction and property scene in June 2004.

Says Mike, "People was born out of innovation, creating a completely unique business model. It broke and will continue to break the mould. Mace was clever enough to ditch its vast annual recruitment spend, stop dealing with agencies that didn't always deliver, and gain equity in a recruitment business – one that has turned expenditure into value and profit instead. Now Mace will get a quality service and access to the very best people available."

So what is it exactly that makes People so different from the rest? Jonny states, "It's about shared risk. If our clients don't make money through the appropriate placement of key people we don't believe we should either. We only get paid for the service we

deliver, so it's absolutely in our interests to get it right first time."

All too often recruitment is a question of ticking off requirements on a check-list – age, salary, and qualifications, etc, but dealing with people is obviously a far more complex affair than that. Mike continues, "If you think you can appoint people by tick boxes, then try appointing your new MD over the Internet! It all starts with providing the client with solutions that are effective because they're built on integrity. We believe that if we do the vital groundwork thoroughly enough in the first place, success for our client and ourselves will be a natural consequence."

The Process of People

The People process begins with an intensive client briefing. Says Jonny, "It's nowhere near enough to ask only about the job. In order to place the right person, we have to understand in fine detail what the business is all about: its goals, its challenges, its culture. Usually, more time is spent discussing this than the basic job description."

Furthermore, Jonny is a firm believer that it takes far less energy to sit and look at things from the same side of the desk rather than trying to read upside down. He therefore makes a point of doing just that, literally. "I don't do 'them and us' when I'm trying to build a working rapport with someone, I prefer to be on their side. A traditional meeting with the tennis net stretched between two opponents is not the People way."

Public perception of recruiters ranks them alongside estate agents

People doesn't just probe the psyche of its potential candidates – clients get the same treatment, as Mike reveals. "At this initial briefing we ask the employer to undertake a psychometric test under the watertight Belbin System. This will tell us about the person the candidate will be working for, or the team they'll be operating within. It's about matching personalities. For example, a creative working for another creative could prove disastrous. However, a creative working with someone who can provide structure is a positive

combination, rather like Jonny and myself."

After the briefing, a candidate specification is drawn up between the client and People. This covers the characteristics of the person required – a mover and shaker, a diligent stalwart or one of the zillion other personalities that range between the two. Only then, the nuts and bolts of the job description are drawn up, accurately detailing what the successful candidate will be doing in practical terms.

Jonny's passionate approach leaps to the fore again. "This draft job specification is fundamental. If it has to bounce back by email 50 times between me and the client to make 110% certain that we're barking up the same tree before we start our search, that's exactly what I want. Often through talking, a client will realise that it's someone entirely different he requires, or the role itself has evolved. That's what I consider to be proper service."

There are two approaches to identifying candidates: Selection through advertising and/or 'Search' – usually referred to as Headhunting. Emulating Mace's own 'open book' policy, once the correct mix has been agreed, People provides a complete breakdown of when and where adverts will appear, costs, headhunting timescales, and delivery dates – all clearly set out on a standard construction industry spreadsheet.

Key to the success of the headhunting approach is the compilation of a painstakingly researched database of companies from which the right candidate can be identified. Says Mike, "We make sure that we only include companies we consider relevant. Once we've built up the database, we present it to the client to ensure he's satisfied that we've made the most intelligent selection."

Unlike many other recruitment organisations, People actively encourages transparency in all its dealings with clients. Each client is allocated a password allowing them to access People's CRM – a database used for storing information on candidates. In this way they can keep a daily check on progress, should they wish. This innovation is regarded as another recruitment industry first for People.

After selection, a number of candidate profiles are drawn up and People carries out initial interviews to arrive at a short-list of three to four people. Client interviews follow and an intricate phase of negotiation is entered into, culminating in a successful placement.

Jonny explains, "At this stage, if a placement doesn't work out within an agreed time period, we undertake a fresh search completely free of charge to the client, or we give them their money back. Sharing the risk is what makes People so revolutionary. Mind you, I'm proud to say to this day my accountant

We are emulating our own 'open book' policy

has not drawn up a single Credit Note. Often I have to pass my accountant's telephone number to the doubters!"

In his previous business, Jonny often left the invoice for the final instalment of fees blank, inviting the client to fill in the number that he felt he deserved, feeling strongly that he only wanted to earn money that people felt happy to pay. Some were incredulous at first, but the approach was welcomed and respected. It's this same spirit of fair play that Jonny is injecting into People today.

The ingredients

It goes without saying that great consultancies do not come about without great employees. Great employees require



training, nurturing and rewarding on an on-going basis.

Even People's internal HR policies go that one step beyond as Mike explains, "We pay a higher basic than the vast majority of recruitment consultancies. We don't set sales targets because that gets people working for all the wrong reasons. Instead we pay bonuses to staff if they successfully complete training and development programmes. Commission is based on repeat business and development of relationships with clients. It's definitely the way forward."

World domination anyone?

It's clear that People is a consultancy that's going places, so what are its aspirations for the future? Mike replies, "To grow into a world-class international construction and property brand, and to recruit, retain and develop world-class recruiters. I believe we are the model that the rest of the recruitment industry will come to observe."

Jonny agrees, concluding, "Ultimately, our aim is to build something we're deeply proud of. And yes, I want to build the best property and construction recruitment business on Earth."

Break free

You recruit
You love your industry but hate how it's done
You want to break out of the mould

We are People
We are a brand new company who will rewrite the rules.
And do it better than the rest
We need fresh blood seeking an honest new challenge

To apply to us please send your CV to Mike Jones Managing Director on mj@people-powered.co.uk or call Brighton 01273 686867

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Owen needs support

You are an experienced Commercial Manager with a background in surveying. If you were given the opportunity to move to Madrid, would you take it?

- Can you manage the commercial operations of the Spanish division of a highly respected global player within the commercial fit-out market?
- Have you got the energy and vision to build a new site in one of Europe's most exciting cities, whilst working in a challenging, fast paced environment?
- Do you want to be part of a multinational company that operates in the feasibility, design, procurement and construction of facilities for the global property industry?
- You don't need to speak Spanish, but you do need to be passionate about delivering the highest quality design, construction and technical services to our clients.
- Naturally, the substantial executive package that you'd expect from one of Europe's most dynamic property companies.
- Rapid progression to Directorship is anticipated.

If this once in a life time transfer sounds tempting, then don't hesitate like Michael – send your CV and a covering letter to Andy Jones aj@people-powered.co.uk or call 01273 686867.

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A selection of People adverts placed in the press recently

Leadership qualities?

Our client is the leading player in the construction industry with a global reputation for quality and innovation. With two of the world's largest, most complex projects currently underway, the need for specialist individuals with like-minded standards from cost management and estimating backgrounds is key to the further development of the already impressive portfolio.

Senior Cost Manager
You are either already in a senior position or seeking to your current role and eager for the next challenge. Your extensive experience derives from the private or public sector in a commercial, retail or residential context, and demonstrates your skills within the cost management sector. A strong portfolio of high profile projects across a range of disciplines is a pre-requisite of the role – per Capex Estimator.

Experienced on projects £15 million-plus, you are from a commercial or social housing background. You have successfully proven your expertise in your current role and now wish to test your skills within a high profile organisation – your client.

To apply please send your CV, with covering letter and quoting reference number to Andy Hollis, ah@people-powered.co.uk. For further details please call 01273 686867

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If the cap fits

People possess a whole wardrobe full of hats. All shapes and sizes, and for all occasions.

Even though we stock many hats in many styles, we would never try to pass you off with one that was ill fitting, or obviously not appropriate.

People are a brand new company that believe in old values – honesty, hard work, value for money and service.

Presently we have these four hats that need filling:
Quantity Surveyor – Estimator – Project Manager – Construction Manager

To apply for any of these vacancies please send your CV to James Maltman on jm@people-powered.co.uk or call 01273 686867

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