

# Victorian International Human Resources Management Network

## The New Normal - 27 November 2010

### VENUE

Rialto Tower Theatrette  
Ground Floor, 525 Collins Street  
Melbourne Victoria 3000

### SPEAKERS

George Elsey, Group Manager Human Resources, Sensis  
Jayanta Jayaratna, Managing Partner, Business Resources Management Services  
Karl Burns, Partner, Crossroads Human Resources

### FACILITATOR

Sue Ellson, Convenor, AHRI Victoria IHRM Specialist Area Network

### EVENT FORMAT

We ran this as an informal interview discussion starting with an introduction by each of our panelists followed by questions from the audience and more probing from the facilitator. Guests were invited to bring their own business cards for extra networking and were invited to enjoy the refreshments and network with other guests before and after the presentation.

### PHOTOS





## CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT HOURS

2.0 CPD hours

## DETAILS OF PREVIOUS AHRI IHRM EVENTS – NOTES ETC

<http://www.ahri.com.au/scripts/cgiip.exe/WService=AHRI-LIVE/ccms.r?pageid=10937>

## SPEAKER PROFILES

### Karl Burns

#### Partner, Crossroads Human Resources

Karl is a Partner in the business Crossroads human Resources. He is also on the advisory board of the largest bilingual French school program in Melbourne. Crossroads HR is a business that has provided HR Consultancy Services across all Industries for over 10 years.

Karl's areas of expertise include change management and organisational design & development. Karl has held Senior Management roles in Financial Services in the UK.

Karl's qualifications include an MBA, MA (Hons) Oxford in Modern Languages and an Advanced Diploma in Sustainability (Cambridge). Karl is a Global citizen with a keen interest in immigration and the ability of

Australian businesses to accommodate different cultures in a work environment. Karl recently gave a series of talks on recruiting from overseas – “from the inside out”

**George Elsey (Dip IR. G Dip IR. G Dip Org Change, MSC (org Change) M Comm)**

**General Manager, Human Resources**

George Elsey joined Sensis in October 2001 as General Manager, Human Resources. During his time at Sensis, George has been instrumental in leading the employee People Commitment Program and successful staff integration programs following company acquisitions made in Australia and China.

Before joining Sensis, George worked at Qantas for six years where he was Group General Manager Human Resources. In addition to Qantas, George has held senior human resources positions in the mining, meat export and manufacturing industries. He has extensive experience in industrial relations, organisation change, training and management development, designing and structuring businesses, and strategic change management.

**Jayanta Jayaratna BA(Hons) , MBA**

**Managing Partner, Business Resources Management Services**

Currently Managing Partner, Business Resources Management Services which is a Consulting Training Firm. As well as a Council Member Institute of Personnel Management Sri Lanka Member , National Productivity Steering Committee.

Jayanta is a Fellow of The Institute of Personnel Management Sri LANKA and Member of Australian Human Resource Institute.

Formerly, Deputy General Manager (HR) Commercial Bank of Ceylon , A leading private sector Bank in Srilanka, prior to that Former Chief Executive Officer, X-pertise Ltd, a fully owned training subsidiary of Commercial Bank of Ceylo. Former Chairman, Skills Development Fund Ltd under the Ministry of Private Enterprise and Skills Development and Past President ,Institute of Personnel Management of Sri Lanka. Past Vice President, Asia Pacific Federation of Human Resource Management.

Jayanta has 38 years managerial experience in HRM out of which 25 years as Head of HR Function. Winner of the life time Gold Medal for Best HR Practitioner 2002 awarded by the Institute of Personnel Management Sri Lanka.

## EVENT NOTES

The following is a rough summary of some of the comments made at the event.

**Karl** – McKinsey/Pimco noticed that things had changed and as a result of the GFC, the phrase 'New Normal' was created early in 2009. They said that the economy may not come back to the same levels and be flat for years. They provided scenarios only, no definition of what was happening. Financial thinking became the focus, cost/benefit analysis. Talent management and sustainability issues. If need to move people, only move those with high potential – what are their motivations and the situation, is it worthwhile for the company? Costs versus flexibility. Currencies – protected in some countries. 200 page policy not appropriate – ask the person what they want – trend to concertina relocation assistance into one overall amount. There is also a trend for the number and quantum of allowances to be reduced.

**George** - Romance of the offshore acquisition – not ugly Australians coming in to run the company – keep local hires. Sensis has 5,500 employees and only 5 expat Australians. Beijing is a controlled city – need to have a car/driver etc. UK moves may be one way. Some are open ended and brought back to Australia. Local salary needs to be attractive. Need to have cultural training and business trips to the new country and take the spouse. 52% of Sensis expats are female. Cultural training is an extremely good investment. Teach people how to create trust. Expat variances – if husband is trailing spouse – what will he do, his visa may restrict his options – don't want to end up as pool boy.

**Jay** – countries and nationalities, need to make sure that the person is suited to selection – China and India are different. Psychometric testing for testing the whole personality. Relocation – invest in training that suits the country the history, background, personal family, culture shock. Decide how you will appraise their performance and have a training plan and also plans for them coming back to the parent country or another location. Determine the salary package – may need a mix of local salary, expat pay perks. Expat and local packages may be different. Some countries will not tolerate same sex personal relationships. In some countries, parent company is international but the human resources division is local – to help with visas, school, shopping etc. Assessment and selection is very important – include cost of cultural training before business trips

### Other general comments

Some expats who complete business trips may not go for the assignment if they have a poor experience – testing their expat sensitivity. They are there to do a job – discuss what is discussable with them.

Business faces surprises – cannot spend too much time second guessing yourself, need to create trust and a bridge for communication regardless of what happens.

International Managers should be trained to cope with any culture.

HR Managers need to look after expats and locals and their policies need to be well planned.

Managers need to appreciate diversity, not consider names on resumes – that is an immigration debat. Every time there is an election in Australia, the trust that has been built up with overseas qualified professionals is undermined. When

people spend time together and share different experiences in the workplace, will respect diversity, gain insights and develop trust.

In Malaysia, quotas of staff is complex.

More international companies are realising that local people have local knowledge, if they have some skills, they can learn additional skills.

It is believed that salaries will become identical worldwide at managerial level. At the moment, Sensis has an Australian payroll for employees in China.

More companies are hiring and training locally. The net migration from developed countries to less developed countries is reducing. There is still a skills gap with immigration.

In the United Kingdom, the economy relied on the banking sector – when that collapsed, so did the economy. Australia has resources – but for how long? Developed economies need to choose the right industries. A shock and innovation create the will to adjust.

Contract import people – prove skills transfers and new management team there.

Sensis, over 50% of staff are aged 25-32, most are under 45 – for younger people, career development is a high concern – what is the quality of learning and progression like with this company. There is only six layers within the business, 60% move into new roles but are always 'open to offers'.

Generally, have a parent company policy but have it suitably adjustable for the local market.

#### **AHRI VICTORIA IHRM NETWORK COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Convenor - Sue Ellson, Founder and Director, Newcomers Network (Settlement and Employment Consulting and Publishing) <http://au.linkedin.com/in/sueellson>

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**AHRI IHRM ONLINE FORUM:**

Post your IHRM news and requests online at <http://www.hrconnect.ahri.com.au/viewforum.php?id=44>