



As you may have seen in recent announcements, we have implemented some changes in the internal management structure of Ross Human Directions since our last newsletter that I'd like to tell you a little more about.

A key change is that the Group Managing Director's role that I have enjoyed working in for the past 20 years or so will now be performed by Ralph Shreeve, whom many of you will know from his role with us as Global Managing Director. I will be taking up a new opportunity that has been created by the Board – the role of Executive Deputy Chairman.

Ralph will take on responsibility for all the operations of the company under both of our brands, Ross and Julia Ross. Of course, Ralph will do this with the support of the existing teams in place - many of whom you know. Those of our clients who have not yet met Ralph will have an opportunity to do so over coming months so please do contact him if there are any matters with which he can assist.

I will be taking on a new role in the business. I will remain the company's largest shareholder and an Executive Director on the Board as is now the case. My responsibilities will move to a more strategic level and important components of my new role will be to explore international expansion opportunities as well as bringing substantial focus to client relationship development. Working closely directly with our clients is something I always seek to do as much as possible, and this new structure will provide the time and opportunity for me to do that in ways that add value to you now and in the longer term.

Ralph's experience in other organisations and strong background in HR and Recruitment place him ideally to direct the operations of the company moving forward and we look forward to introducing you to improvements and updated services in the coming period.

If you have any queries regarding this progression for the business, please do speak with your Account Manager or Consultant. I look forward to staying more in touch with all our clients in my new role. I do hope you enjoy this edition of RossNews and I welcome any feedback you have at marketing@rosshumandirections.com

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→ macro economic update

by Glenn Meekin, Group Financial Controller

The global economy continues to be strong, although international share markets were shaky at the end of February 2007, with concerns of a slowing China and falling resources prices.

In China, the equities market fell by almost 10% on 27 February 2007. Growth slowed to 15.5% in the fourth quarter from 16.5% in the third whilst inflation increased above 2% in December 2006 and January 2007. The economy is slowing in response to three interest rate increases in 2006.

The Hong Kong economy is exceeding expectations with growth of 7.5% in the December 2006 quarter. Unemployment is at an eight year low and the outlook for domestic spending remains strong. Singapore GDP growth is solid at 6.6% YOY buoyed by expansion in the services and manufacturing sectors. The unemployment rate is low at only 2.6%.

The growth outlook in the US has weakened. Growth was revised down to 2.2% in December 2006 due to a contracting dwelling construction industry and a fall in business investment. Inflation is expected to be below 2% in 2007.

It is anticipated that UK GDP growth will moderate slightly from 3% in the 2006 calendar year to around 2.75% in 2007 and 2.5% in 2008. While consumer spending is expected to grow below trend by 2.5% in 2007 and 2.25% in 2008, business investment is expected to remain strong. Employment levels have continued to rise with unemployment remaining steady at around 5.5%.

In New Zealand, growth has slowed from 4.5% in 2004 to only 1.5% in 2006. The NZ economy is starting to show signs of vibrancy in 2007 with growth of above 2.5% but this is expected to be short-lived due to imbalances in the economy (in particular, an unsustainable current account deficit). In January 2007, the Reserve Bank indicated it is likely that interest rates will be lifted further due to a housing market that is showing no signs of moderating. Economists believe that a material improvement in economic activity is not likely to occur until late 2008 at the earliest.

Sources: PricewaterhouseCoopers "UK Economic Outlook March 2007" and ANZ International Economics Monthly February 2007.

Setting up the room

The size and shape of the room, the seating arrangements, and your location in relation to the audience are critical factors to consider before you prepare your presentation. Following, are some important room setup basics.

Is the room properly lit?

Effective communication, enthusiasm, inspiration, or motivation of an audience is impossible in a dimly lit room. You must be able to see the audience, and they must be able to see you.

Does the room have cool, fresh air?

A room that is too warm, with stale air, will put your audience to sleep – especially after a meal. Also ensure that adequate clean, cool (but not too cold) air is circulating.

Is the speaking area neat and professional, with no distracting clutter?

The place from which you present is your 'personal space', and your audience will judge you by its appearance.

The last thing to consider in room arrangement is the presenter's workspace. Your workspace is a reflection on you as a professional. When you arrange your personal space, try to:

- Set up a separate table for handouts on the side of the room or near the entrance. Stock the table with extra materials, pencils and notepaper. Locate this table away from your space, keeping your work area free from clutter.
- Use a separate table for the overhead projector. The table should be wide enough to hold your transparencies, a master copy of your script, and the student workbook. Avoid using a small table for the projector. Small tables tend to look 'overcrowded', and the materials appear to be messy.
- Put your notes where you can easily see them, but your audience cannot. This will make your delivery seem more spontaneous and 'live'. If you are not using a lectern, try to make sure your notes are not placed too low or far away. This will help you avoid breaking eye contact for long periods when you need to look at your notes.

Source: "Delivering Effective training sessions" McArdel, Geri

→ ergonomics

by Paula Spencer,
OHS & Injury Management Officer

Ergonomics or 'human factors' is the process of designing or arranging workplaces, products and systems so that they 'fit' the people who use them with the aim of developing a comfortable, safe and productive work system.

The study of ergonomics takes into account things such as people's shapes and sizes, strength, vision, sound, thermal comfort, motion, vibration and workloads. Take for example vision. It is our primary channel for information so to ensure high productivity, we need to see the work area clearly. Adequate light with no glare reflecting off our computer screens will also reduce the chance of headaches and eyestrain.

By improving ergonomics in the work environment, we may be able to reduce mistakes, absenteeism and workers compensation costs, increase productivity and improve employee morale and retention. Often, simple modifications to work methods, equipment or layout can yield surprisingly good results.

As our society becomes increasingly mechanised, many of us are spending hours each day in sedentary positions, such as at a computer, using a mouse and talking on the phone. Over the next editions of this newsletter you will find suggestions on topics such as posture, computer placement, workstation set up, and breaks, which we hope you will find helpful.

→ regional employer award

The Canberra Julia Ross team have been rewarded for their continued efforts in assisting people with disabilities by CRS Australia – Australia's largest provider of vocational rehabilitation programs.

After receiving the Runner Up award in 2005, we have been named as the NSW/ACT Regional Employer of the Year for 2006 for working with our clients to open doors for candidates with disabilities ranging from depression to cerebral palsy, with the understanding and support they need.

Vocational rehabilitation involves helping people "manage the effects of their disability, injury or health condition to benefit their quality of life and help them to get or keep a job" (CRS Australia, 2007). Our work in this area is not restricted to the NSW/ACT region, with our Melbourne branch also working with organisations such as Job Support and Job Network.

This latest award is a testament to the commitment of our branch staff and branch managers in continually identifying ways to make a difference in our community. In October 2005, Telstra opened up a large call centre, where we had the opportunity to provide 70 staff. Having worked with CRS Australia before, our Canberra team recognised the opportunity to place 15 staff with disabilities into Telstra. Our team also placed such candidates into roles within Telstra's back office and into executive assistant, mailroom and switchboard operator roles.

Our passionate and empathetic Canberra Branch Manager, Catherine Harman and her team were also rewarded with a nomination for the Prime Minister's National Employer of the Year Award in December of 2006.



Phillip Crowe joined Ross Human Directions at the beginning of this year in the new position of National Sales Director. Phillip brings to the role extensive experience in Recruitment and HR Solutions, with seven years' experience in the Recruitment Industry supported by a further three years in senior management on the client side. Phillip is a Civil Engineer and also holds an MBA. Prior to stepping into a Recruitment Industry career, he spend many years working in Europe, Australia and the USA on significant infrastructure projects.

He migrated from Ireland to Australia in 1995 and since that time, clients Phillip has worked with include Qantas, NSW Government, Caltex, Honeywell and Onesteel. The breadth of expertise he brings to our team and our clients is demonstrated by this background.

We have been delighted to welcome Phillip to our team and he is making substantial contributions to clients across both our Ross and Julia Ross brands in areas including:

- continous improvement
- service innovations
- new product offerings
- ensuring best practice
- identifying cost saving opportunities

Phillip's key accountabilities are in Account Management, Client Service and Business Development. He is based in our Castlereagh Street office in Sydney and welcomes the opportunity to be in touch so please call him with any questions or requests.