

Rewarding businesses which have the spirit of innovation

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MANY of the North East's biggest business successes have relied on innovation whether it is from lightbulb creator Joseph Swan, steam railway pioneer George Stephenson or the team behind software giant Sage.

But bright new ideas are also important when companies look to improve the way their staff work and this will be recognised this year in awards organised by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and backed by The Journal.

The Innovation in Social Media or Technology Award is a new category at the awards which will reward the achievements made by new ideas or new ways of using technology on the development of the workforce.

The judges will be looking at work which may involve new initiatives as well as recognising the professional approach the team have taken to move the organisation forward.

This category recognises all types of innovation across the spectrum of HR&D. Organisations which have designed or delivered technology or a new approach to a standard problem are encouraged to apply.

Judges will be looking for something that is original and effective which may be IT orientated or an innovative approach to a business opportunity. Previous entries have included development of e-learning, computerised safety/HR and payroll systems and competency models.

The team will be able to demonstrate how it has created either a new culture or ensured a business has survived in difficult situations.

Companies and organisations from



across the region will compete to win one of the titles at the awards which culminate in a ceremony at the Hilton Newcastle Gateshead on Thursday, May 3. And this year the awards are in association with Nigel Wright Recruitment. Details of how to enter will be available each Thursday in The Journal until March 19, the closing date for entries. To enter, log on to www.journal-live.co.uk/cipdawards or contact Lesley Hampson, events manager on 0191 201 6435 or email lesley.hampson@trinitymirror.com

The award categories are:

- Excellence in Developing People Award
- Innovation in Social Media or Technology Award
- Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace Award
- HR&D Team of the Year Award
- Engagement and Wellbeing Award
- Change Management Project of the Year Award
- Talent Attraction and Management Award
- SME Excellence in HR&D Award.



KEEN Carsten Staehr, chief executive of Cintra HR & Payroll Services, which is sponsoring this awards section

AWARD SPONSOR: CINTRA HR & PAYROLL SERVICES

CINTRA HR & Payroll Services are delighted once more to be involved in sponsoring the CIPD Awards. Innovation and success are in our blood and we are keen to have the opportunity to help recognise and reward success in others.

Having built our highly successful business through delivering innovative payroll and HR solutions for over 30 years, we are especially pleased to be sponsoring the Innovation in Social Media or Technology Award.

The North East has a sparkling history of innovation. From railways and steam through electricity to modern technologies, this region has always



punched far above its weight. These awards demonstrate how it continues to do so, showing the tremendous capacity for creating world-class solutions out of new ways of thinking that exists in the North East.

As a multiple-award-winning company, we know that words like in-

novation and excellence are not to be used cheaply. They represent real achievements that need vision and dedicated perseverance. We know such achievements come at a real cost.

Times of austerity make this doubly valuable. That is why Cintra is so keen to sponsor these awards. The idea for these awards started with CIPD North East and is now being taken up around the UK. This is innovation in itself and shows what great work the CIPD does in promoting the region and its excellence in business.

We are proud of our region, proud of the CIPD and proud to take part in this prestigious event.

ASSOCIATE SPONSOR: NIGEL WRIGHT RECRUITMENT

THE 'social network' is the new panacea of communication and engagement. What started as a trend among college students in the USA is now ubiquitous – an integral part of people's lives across the world. Today, however, social networking isn't just about swapping pictures and music, or discussing the trivial details of a night out. It is increasingly becoming the space where professional life happens.

There is no doubt that social networking has improved the recruitment process. The broker relationships shared between consultants and senior executives are no longer exclusive to those two parties. Professional relationships have been democratised and it is now much easier for employers to gather data about potential candidates themselves, using social media sites. This, however, raises important questions:

If candidates are online waiting to be

approached, why do companies need to engage a recruitment consultant to find them? The candidate database in effect becomes public, and some would argue, the recruiter becomes obsolete. The situation however, is more complex:

- Diversity and adoption. There are a lot of statistics available that point towards a lack of diversity on social media sites. Although candidates can be sourced effectively online, the risk is, if this strategy is not complemented with other traditional search methods, then talent will be missed.
- Transparency and discrimination. Assessing someone's potential based solely on



an online profile leaves the door wide open for unethical practices. Candidates feel more secure if they are being represented by a recruiter, and are willing to share relevant information openly in a confidential transaction.

- Self promotion and confidentiality. Not all employees are activity looking for a new role and these individuals are also usually the most sought after candidates. Employers are aware of this and in some cases, are urging employees not to promote themselves too effectively online, as they can become vulnerable to poaching.
- Employer branding. To attract candidates

companies have to be wary of how the 'employer brand' is perceived online. Hiring managers have to work closely with marketers to get the messages right – highlighting the company culture, values and vision in a positive light online via social networking sites, corporate videos, blogs etc.

By using social media for recruitment, companies won't benefit from a robust search selection and assessment of talent. The recruiter, therefore, still has a key role to play – they must become social media experts and ensure clients take full advantage of the hiring solutions it can offer. Many employers are realising they need to work more closely with the experts in order to get their hiring right first time.

You can download the full Impact of Social Media on Recruitment report on our website – www.nigelwright.com

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