

I recently moved from Surrey to the North East to become Chief Executive at Nigel Wright. Having worked in the recruitment industry for almost thirty years, Nigel Wright was already a name I was familiar with and its strong brand and potential to become a globally recognised specialist recruiter, made joining the business an easy decision. I was equally excited, however, about the prospect of living and working in a region well known for its incredibly talented and diverse workforce.

The employment landscape of the North East has changed dramatically during the last 25 years and the evolution of the region's core industries has seen a significant increase in the demand for new skills and knowledge. By diversifying its economy, the North East has remained competitive, excelling in a number of key industry areas and enjoying an abundance of national success stories. Companies working across the oil and gas supply chains, business services, the leisure sector as well as the manufacturing and service sectors have performed particularly well.

Despite its recent expansion overseas, the North East has and will always be the foundation of the Nigel Wright business. By integrating with the region's evolving landscape, building long lasting and trusted relationships with customers from across the business spectrum, Nigel Wright has shared in the region's success. Although the last few years have been tough in the region, we are already beginning to see signs of a tangible recovery in the jobs market. Vacancies have increased significantly and businesses are once again showing a willingness to invest in their long-term future. The North East therefore remains a rich area of opportunity for a recruitment business, with a broad range of organisations continuing to recruit key staff across all disciplines.

As a business that specialises in talent, we are certain the companies that will continue to succeed within this renewed environment of growth will be those that focus on developing their people. It is the rich bed of talent in the region which continues to facilitate Nigel Wright's international expansion and this pool wouldn't exist if it wasn't for the outstanding work that is done by companies based in the North East in developing their staff and helping them to move forward in their careers.

The CIPD Excellence in Developing People Award recognises the businesses and organisations that utilise effective training and development strategies which have an impact on overall performance. Our HR division has seen a marked rise in the need for Learning and Development candidates across all sectors as organisations look to invest in their employees and focus on internal development. Over the coming months we urge businesses who are investing in employee development, to enter this year's award.

**Paul Wilson, Chief Executive, Nigel Wright Recruitment.**