

# the **HRDIRECTOR**

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## the **HRDIRECTOR INTERVIEW:**

**Jack Constantinides – VP HR Business Partner,  
Monster Europe West**

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**Are your executives match-fit?**

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**Revealing a surprise or two...**

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**Mike Barnato –  
Interim manager, Local Better Regulation Office**

**Hazel Dickinson -  
Human Resources director, ADP UK**

**Dina Knight -  
HR director, Northgate Information Solutions**

**Becky Mason – People and policy manager, BT**

**Bristow Group**

**British American Tobacco  
Hertfordshire Constabulary**

**Lloyds TSB**

**NHS**

**Sara Lee**

Pictured: Jack Constantinides  
VP HR Business Partner, Monster Europe West

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**DON'T MISS NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE WHERE WE LOOK AT: FORUM - OUTSOURCING; LEADERSHIP;  
CSR; INFORMATION SECURITY...AND A SPECIAL DIVERSITY SUPPLEMENT**



## I WANT IT ALL! – DEVELOPING TEAMS THAT BRING THEIR HEADS, HEARTS AND SOULS TO WORK

COULD THE MUSIC WORLD BE THE UNLIKELY PLACE TO LOOK TO, FOR UNIQUE INSIGHTS INTO THE LEADERSHIP OF INNOVATIVE TEAMS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGH PERFORMANCE ORGANISATIONS? PETER COOK, MD, HUMAN DYNAMICS AND AUTHOR OF “SEX, LEADERSHIP AND ROCK’N’ROLL – LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM THE ACADEMY OF ROCK”, ARGUES THAT IT IS.

### WHY DO WE NEED TEAMS AT ALL?

Teams are vital for innovation in 21st century workplaces because innovation is so complex that it's rare for all the relevant talents to reside in one person. Also, many organisations are no longer self-contained entities due to outsourcing, partnership working and other flexible firm strategies. They must, therefore, know how to collaborate across external networks that they do not 'own'. How then do you get the best out of them?

### MANAGEMENT OR LEADERSHIP?

In an innovative enterprise, HR must bring diverse teams of experts together. My own experience in leading pharmaceutical research and development teams bears out the research which says that such people do not respond well to management, but they can be led. A 21st century leader must therefore be a master of flexibility - being able to operate across a wide range of leadership styles, from visionary, salesperson, facilitator, coach, reflective practitioner etc.

However, leaders must also be authentic when 'shifting shapes' and not try to 'fake it'. Authenticity matters more than being able to copy a particular leadership 'technique', in the same way that learning musical techniques on a guitar is relatively easy, but this does not necessarily provide us with the kind of mastery that players such as Django Reinhardt, Jimi Hendrix and BB King possess. Each of us is able to work within a range

of styles in an authentic manner. The best we can do is to understand what these are, work within them and continuously flex our learning muscles to extend our repertoire over time. If leaders need to exhibit diversity in their dealings with team members, what about those they lead?

### STIR IT UP – ENABLING A CULTURE WHICH ENCOURAGES DIVERSITY AND CREATIVITY.

High performance springs from difference i.e. diversity. Differences produce creativity which ultimately leads to greater levels of innovation. Innovative companies have teams of diverse people, just as rock groups are diverse by design: extroverts, introverts, structure freaks, improvisers etc.

Successful businesses also recognise the importance of differences. They encourage mixing between different professions and are prepared to handle, tolerate or encourage the confusions, contradictions and conflicts that this produces.

Tim Smit is CEO of the Eden Project in Cornwall – characterised as the 'eighth wonder of the world'. His approach to teams is informed by a successful career in the music business. He recognises the need for dissonance in the creation of a team that really performs to their best. He sees the CEO role at Eden as someone who leads by example on occasion, but who mainly stirs things up, creating chaos at other times. At the same time, he hires people who really engage with the purpose of Eden. This

produces a shared direction where traditional control is less important. However, this makes for an activist organisation where conflict must be expected.

#### THERE MAY BE TROUBLE AHEAD – HANDLING CONFLICT IN TEAMS.

Where there is true diversity, there will also be differences in personality, opinions and behaviour. Any organisation thinking of developing truly diverse teams must, therefore, accept there will be conflicts due to these differences. Low level solutions to address conflict include avoidance, accommodation, compromise and self-centred competition. These rarely allow teams to reach high performance. Higher level solutions include healthy competition and collaborative problem solving, seeking the best possible outcome to a conflict rather than the lowest common denominator. At the Eden project, conflict is recognised as a perfectly natural human condition, rather than instituting processes to neuter such differences artificially. Tim Smit points out that organisations are good at getting rid of their edgy people, yet these are the people who keep the organisation from atrophy. Just as Tim draws heavily on his experience in the music business to help him run Eden, what other transferable lessons can we learn from this field?

#### LESSONS IN LOVE – WHAT CAN WE LEARN ABOUT TEAMS FROM ROCK STARS?

Most rock bands are dysfunctional teams in the sense that they do not manage to work together successfully and often split up within months. However the exceptions stand out in terms of their longevity and continuing success e.g. David Bowie, Madonna and Prince. These examples offer transferable lessons for organisations; let's look at Prince, for example.

**“surrounds himself with extremely talented people and gets the best out of them”**

Once we look past Prince's image, we discover a deep thinker, a master musician who plays 43 instruments and it becomes apparent that he sets himself apart in substance as well as style. Prince is unusual in the rock business since he surrounds himself with extremely talented people and gets the best out of them. This is very different from most rock artists, who comfort themselves with fairly average people to ensure that they are not upstaged.

When Prince performs, he is comfortable with swapping the traditional role of the leader as lone hero, with taking the backseat whilst other, lesser-known, talents grab the spotlight. This is an emotionally literate outlook on leading teams, which springs from an inner confidence that understands that there is greater strength in this strategy than the lone hero approach.

On diversity, Prince also shines. He has built his bands from an extremely diverse talent pool, designing a meritocracy and putting this above diversity for its own sake. This comes from a deep conviction around the issue of diversity as a precondition for creativity. In Prince's case, this is embedded at a spiritual level – in other words, it is not a superficial belief.

Sir Bob Geldof is also unusual in so far as he has managed to bring a wide church of diverse musical talents together over a 20 year period, in his sustained efforts to bring the problems of Africa to the world's attention, where others would have failed to find a town big enough for all the egos involved. He has also held together

a very wide coalition of politicians and aid agencies across this period, unusually taking the advice of the aid agencies not to set up a separate organisation to deliver aid packages to Africa. This again is a hallmark of true emotional intelligence. How, then, do you recognise and reward talented individuals and teams?

#### LOVE IS THE DRUG – MOTIVATING TEAMS.

HR is full of contradictions and team motivation is one of the most difficult issues. Whilst motivation is entirely a personal issue, many organisations attempt to solve this complex issue through a 'one size fits all' approach. Another facet of motivation in the current age is that many people have reached the higher levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, where money ceases to be a motivator, especially if that money cannot be exchanged for higher order needs, such as time off or a sabbatical/career change etc.

The smart HR director sets out a strategy that produces a close fit between reward elements and each individual's wants/needs.

This requires a menu based rewards approach and the organisation must handle the conflict that different reward strategies produce. They also know the vital role that recognition can play, drawing on Frederick Herzberg's work on satisfiers and dissatisfiers, which I have been able to explore further in my book. Recognition factors are less expensive than rewards but require more time and greater skill levels. Nonetheless, they lead to longer-term job satisfaction and high performance. Pfizer and Prêt à Manger are good examples of organisations who understand these principles in terms of making their companies great places to work.

#### SUMMARY – LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM THE ACADEMY OF ROCK.

1. Creative team work needs requisite variety as an HR design principle. Recruitment policies must build in the selection of 'edgy' people as a first principle and practices that encourage looseness must be adopted, e.g. job rotation and flexible career pathways.
2. Conflict must be handled in an adult way rather than avoided, accommodated or using self-centred competition strategies.
3. We can learn how to lead an organisation of diverse, creative and precocious talents from those such as Prince, Sir Bob Geldof, The Eden Project, Madonna and David Bowie.
4. Reward and recognition systems must recognise a general rise in workforce aspiration levels and a greater need for personalisation. This need not be the enemy of teamwork if properly communicated.

#### For further information:

[www.academy-of-rock.co.uk](http://www.academy-of-rock.co.uk)



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