

RENTOKIL-INITIAL

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Andy Kemp, Group HR Director, Rentokil-Initial

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WASHING UP

When Andy Kemp joined Rentokil-Initial as Group Human Resources Director at the end of 2005, he found a loose agglomeration of 122 different businesses in 48 countries employing 90,000 people. There was little cohesion or transparency between the businesses, which ran more or less autonomously, each with its own processes and procedures. Every business sold its own products and services rather than delivering integrated business solutions to clients' needs. There was no strategic overview, and very little investment in people.

“The average length of service of our senior executives was about 20 years,” recalls Kemp. “We needed fresh faces and ideas, new skills and competences. I clearly had an awful lot to do and I was inundated with calls from consultants offering to help me. But I knew [Harvey Nash consultant] Alex Woolgar of old, and rated him very highly, so I called him in.”

Woolgar put “a huge amount” of effort into understanding the business and establishing relationships with Kemp's peers. “He quickly established trust and confidence so that people across the business were very happy to use him.”

Woolgar's combination of strong interpersonal skills and recruitment rigour have helped him place around 40 people in Rentokil-Initial businesses in the UK, Europe, the Middle East and Africa and beyond. The assignments range from the Group CIO and Group Business Transformation Lead, to the Managing Director, Eastern Europe and Austria, of the Washrooms business.

Kemp says: “Alex is very communicative, there is very strong due diligence to his recruitment process, he keeps people informed – candidates as well as clients – right through the process, and he comes up with excellent shortlists. He is a real ally to both client and candidates right through to appointment.”

Woolgar's original and innovative approach to recruitment was also exemplified in his suggestion that Harvey Nash Offshore in Vietnam might be able to help the Group CIO with a technology change and transformation programme. Rentokil-Initial has now engaged in an international outsourced software development programme with the Hanoi operation.

Kemp says that Woolgar's understanding of the Rentokil-Initial business is “second to none.” He explains: “He understands the culture and the specific requirements of each different assignment and gets on with it. He sells the company very well

and excites people about wanting to join us. He is a very good ambassador for us.”

There has been a significant culture change over the past three years, concludes Kemp. “Rentokil had been in the doldrums for years, and Alex has helped us turn the company around.”



- When Andy Kemp joined Rentokil-Initial as HR Director, he faced the gargantuan task of trying to change the culture of a business that spanned 122 different companies in 48 countries employing 90,000 people
- He turned to Harvey Nash consultant Alex Woolgar for help, and Woolgar quickly got under the skin of the business, forging strong relationships with senior people, and fielding strong candidates for roles across the UK, EMEA and beyond
- Harvey Nash has placed more than 40 senior people over the past two and a half years, helping to transform the culture and turn the company around