



# Magazine

Autumn 2013

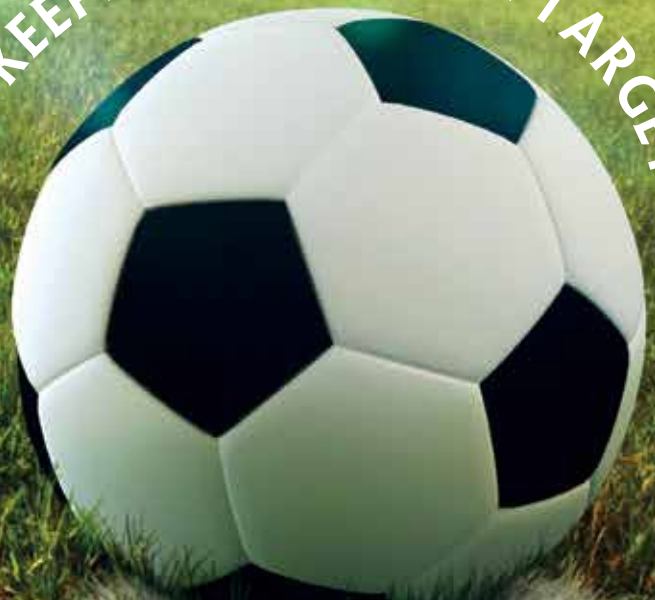


**PING PONG  
TABLES & HR**

**MANAGING  
DIFFICULT  
EMPLOYEES**

**HK HIRING  
WOES**

**HR BY MANCHESTER UNITED**  
KEEPING TALENT ON TARGET



Australia AU\$7	New Zealand NZ\$9
China ¥50	Philippines P250
Hong Kong HK\$45	Singapore S\$8
India Rs250	South Korea W6,500
Indonesia Rp50,000	Thailand B1200
Japan ¥650	Vietnam US\$6
Malaysia RM15	Rest of the World US\$15

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# HR BY



## Don't get red carded by your employees

Employers globally are getting less and less 'risk ready'. Just 59% now consider themselves prepared for—or at least aware of—the multitude of factors which could damage their brand reputation, working capability and potential for talent attraction. This figure has declined by 7% since 2011, perhaps accounting for the increase of 14% in reported loss of income from the top ten rated risks between 2011 and 2013. 'Failure to attract or retain top talent' has been rated as the fifth most important risk facing managers worldwide, representing a five-point leap in four years, showing the increase in people-strategy anxiety amongst HR managers.

This, according to the *Aon Global Risk Management Survey 2013*, recently launched in Hong Kong with the help of a host of individuals well-versed in people decisions and team tactics including Manchester United legend Bryan Robson, Phil Townsend, the club's Director of Communications and John Shiels, CEO of the Manchester United Foundation. With AON supporting the team's 2013 pre-season Asia tour—which ended with their 5 – 2 victory against Hong Kong's Kitchee team—they were able to share the team-behind-the-team's wisdom on team investment and analysing the competition.



*From left to right: Phil Townsend, Director of Communications, Manchester United, Bryan Robson, Manchester United Legend 'Captain Marvel', and John Shiels, CEO, Manchester United Foundation*



Left: Aon Hewitt and Aon Risk Solutions leadership teams meet with the media

### Team players

With a team of 60 players, 750 employees behind the scenes and 650 million fans worldwide, managing expectations poses a challenge of impressive scale. Townsend acknowledged that when it comes to the players, money is the number one retention tactic, while Shiels stressed the importance of making the team robust enough that it is never overly reliant on just one individual. For instance, the loss of Ronaldo did not damage the team as heavily as it could have thanks to the dynamics already fostered between the remaining teammates. Health and well-being ranks high on the agenda for the club too, which takes responsibility for the team as a whole including players, cleaners, ticket collectors, security and pitch management.

### Brand pride

With a reputation such as Manchester United's preceding them, job applicants often bring with them an already-established sense of pride and brand loyalty, something which the club does not want to disappoint. Players' fitness levels are assessed continuously by ever-more technical means, showing them that the club values their investment and wants to help them be the best they can be. Staff are kept motivated by the prospect of supporting their club—when the team makes it to a league final, the contribution of the staff is rewarded, they are taken to cheer on the team at the match. For domestic finals they can share the team spirit and bring a plus one.

### Risk vs. opportunity

When it comes to match strategy, no coach or manager will ever take a decision without fully considering the risks involved. Up until the last minute, even when player fitness has been assessed and the competition has been observed and analysed, one under-thought decision could spell the end of a winning streak, or even a career. The nature of risk, however, is such that one decision could bring dividends. The *Aon Global Risk Management Survey*, compiled from the responses of over 1,400 companies worldwide, shows that in 2013 the most-used risk assessment method, primarily used by 62% of organisations, is senior management judgement. Hugh Graham, SVP, Balance Sheet & Risk, AIA warned that this traditional method needs to be shaken up, with contribution moving both top-down and bottom-up. He explained, "Risk management can be invisible; either nothing is going wrong or it's thanks to the good—or lucky—risk management." He shared that companies must ascertain their risk appetite through scenario modelling, updating of governance guidelines and benchmarking to prevent talent from defecting. Fortunately for Hong Kong's hard-core Kitchee and Manchester United fans, it was decided to let the friendly go ahead despite international unease about their match being played on a highly waterlogged pitch, which presented the risk of player injury shortly before the start of the season.

### People risk on the rise

Edouard Merette, CEO, Aon Hewitt APAC advocated creating a risk-aware culture with ownership, management and communication, and at the same time ensuring that risk factors are high on the board's list of priorities.



Left: Winnie Wong,  
CEO, Aon Risk Solutions,  
Hong Kong

Left to right: Murray Wood, Regional Managing Director Asia, Financial Services & Professions Group, Aon Risk Solutions, Edouard Merette, CEO, Aon Hewitt Asia Pacific, John Shiels, CEO, Manchester United Foundation, Gavin Gui, General Manager, Hilti (Hong Kong) Limited, Hugh Graham, Senior Vice President, Balance Sheet and Risk, AIA Group, Y.C. Koh, President, Asia, American Express Int'l, Inc. and Jeremy Andrulis, Managing Director, Aon Hewitt Hong Kong and Taiwan



Jeremy Andrulis, MD, Aon Hewitt Hong Kong & Taiwan revealed that the least risky location in the world for people is New York City, followed by Singapore. Hong Kong came in at seventh place. This is, however, set to change. Merette explained, “In the mid 90s it was difficult to find talents. Now the whole world has come to Hong Kong and the locals have entered the market. China and India is set to produce a huge amount of qualified individuals and so the challenge will increase greatly.”

#### Opportunity cost

Phil Clement, Global Chief, Marketing and Communications Officer, Aon plc urged employers to consider the level of engagement within their firm when weighing up risks. Whilst risk is, as is its nature, a game of unknown outcomes, risk officers and HR teams should be recognising that their entire team is crucial in moving forward. Whether it be by ensuring the health of every member is up to scratch, assuring members that input and innovation are welcomed and encouraged, or appreciating the value of developing your people against the

opportunity cost, he said, “You’ve got to do something difficult to get to that end part.”

#### Three degrees of generation

The emergence and integration of the younger generation into the workplace has caused HR managers headaches aplenty. Trying to align their future aspirations, working styles and benefit must-haves with the time-honoured traditions in place in established organisations is no mean feat. Add to this the challenge of appeasing the Gen Yers and even Baby Boomers that are comfortable with their working routine and were required to jump through the very hoops that the latest generation is managing to avoid. But who is to blame? Merette believes that dynamic and varied work spaces and working styles are the way of the future and that trying to stave off progress is pointless. He commented, “The problem with Gen Y is us old people.”

#### Players to trainers

Robson, having been able to make a career out of football since the tender age of 15, acknowledged that those in football, and those around them, must always be aware

of what will happen once a player is too old to play. While some are fortunate and able to continue in a career related to football, such as Ryan Giggs as coach for Manchester United and Robson as Manager of the Thailand national team, the reality is that even football stars must plan for when their skills and talents no longer place them on the top of the pile. Robson commented, “You must plan before you finish your football career. You don’t want to end up about 35 with no education.” For managers, Shiels recommended fostering team spirit and stressed that if in a position to do so, you should help to make youths more successful than when they joined you. The Manchester United Foundation is designed to seek out children in less fortunate areas to give them the opportunity to be bigger and better than they themselves thought possible. Managers could do well to take this view, teaching not only the soft skills but also the harder skills to make employees more engaged, more productive and great brand ambassadors.

So, are you doing enough to make sure your team is engaged, brand proud and aiming for the same goal?