

STRAIGHT TALKING BUSINESS ADVICE

ADVICE

RESOURCING FOR A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS

DONNA OBSTFELD RUNS DOHR, A HR PRACTICE IN HERTFORDSHIRE PROVIDING COMPANIES WITH TAILOR-MADE HR SOLUTIONS, AND CAN BE CONTACTED AT ENQUIRIES@DOHR.CO.UK.



There is no escaping from the fact that, for many retailers in the UK, the run up to the festive season can account for up to half of annual takings. The profitability for this well-anticipated period is as much down to having the right people

in the right place at the right time as it is to the product being sold. Staff costs can, however, account for 75 per cent of company expenditure after the purchase of stock, so the question is; what do you need to do to manage your staffing effectively? Here are some of the key issues to be aware of:

- The National Minimum Wage increases in October to £6.19 per hour for over-21s, and £4.98 for those aged 18-20.
- Non-EU citizens must have a work permit before you can employ them – do not risk a UK Border Agency inspection or raid. Make sure you hold copies of the necessary documents to prove you have taken all reasonable steps to confirm your workers' identities and right to work.

- Student visas – be aware that non-EU citizens on this type of visa can usually only work 20 hours per week.
- Recruitment – ensure you clearly identify the skillset and experience you require and then recruit to a clear job description and person specification. Obviously, employ the best person for the job and beware of discrimination on grounds such as gender, age, marital status, religion, sexual orientation and so on.
- Working Time Directive – do make sure you recruit sufficient staff to cover all the shifts you may have without breaching this legislation. Remember that staff have the right to a continuous break of 11 hours per 24-hour period and 24-hours break in each seven-day period. Ideally, no-one should work in excess of 48 hours per week. Be well-versed on the special regulations for night workers and young employees.

DOHR offers a full HR support service to employers. For further information on this subject and any other HR queries, visit www.dohr.co.uk or call 01923 504100.

RETAIL VIEW WORKING TOGETHER



As a retailer, I know that a good product sells. A great-quality handbag in a stylish design and an on-trend or classic colour will shift. But, sometimes we over-order, or a fad trend crops up, or the weather means it's time to move into the next season's collection.

I plan as much as possible for the coming season, but surprises do happen, and one of the difficult things about being an independent retailer is that we don't necessarily have other stores that we can move stock between. So when I opened up the supply arm of Harbourside, giving boutiques the opportunity to make short orders and stock Harbourside's mid-range, top-quality leather handbags and ladies' accessories, I knew that flexibility would be my priority.

With this in mind, we developed Team Harbourside. This collaborative way of working means that when orders come in directly to us, we offer the sale to our boutique stockists, particularly those who have had a style on the shelves for a few months and we think might be moving on to another "look" for next season.

Working for yourself, by yourself, is difficult, empowering, fun, hard work and inspiring, and the more retailers and suppliers can collaborate and feel part of a team effort to get sales coming in – particularly in the current climate – the better.

DAVINIA PARKER, OWNER, HARBOURSIDE.

FIVE STEPS TO: MAXIMISING THE POTENTIAL OF PINTEREST.

by Sarah-Jane White

Sarah-Jane White is an author, speaker and director at Peek Creative, a brand, digital design and marketing agency.

01

Plan a range of boards. Research what your ideal client is pinning, and look at other pins, boards and brands that are getting results. Then decide on the themes for your range of pin boards.

02

Be aware of pinning etiquette. Follow, pin, comment, repin, like, then repeat. Tag other pinners by name and say thank you for repins. Also space your pins out. When re-pinning, check the original pin is legitimate.

03

Choose what to pin carefully. Choose great images from your blog and add a watermark for protection. If you're selling a product, add the price to the description. Use Pinterest to promote competitions.

04

Get your pins found. Consider what content will bring users to your pins and what you want them to take away (repins). Add categories, keywords, urls and hashtags to make your profile and pins SEO-friendly.

05

Engage your audience. Put a call to action in your pins. Integrate Pinterest share buttons with other social media platforms. Download the Pinterest app for mobile and add the Pin It button to your browser.