

It's all about our staff!

With several of our team passing exams and a new team member. This page purely focuses on the **staff at Clarke Nicklin and their achievements.**

An integral part of your **SUCCESS**



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Autumn 2006

Marketing appointment

We would like to welcome on board our new Marketing Manager Julie Etchells.



Julie was formerly Sales and Events Manager at Edgeley Park Conference and Banqueting Centre (Home of Stockport County and Sale Sharks) and is very much looking forward to the new challenge ahead. When asked why she came to Clarke Nicklin, Julie responded

'I had been with my previous company for 4 years and wanted to develop my skills and focus purely on Marketing. In the short period I have been with the company I have had an outstanding welcome and can see that service, good practice and client satisfaction are of utmost importance to Clarke Nicklin. In my mind they have already quashed the image of accountants being stuffy and dull, the refreshing attitude of the partners and staff will make my role far easier to fulfill'

'Congratulations!'

To both **Gareth Jones** and **Rob Mowat** who have passed their final ACCA examinations at the first attempt.



Well done also to Catherine Young who has passed the next stage of her ACCA exams.

Staff Spotlight

The most important asset in our business is the people who work for us. This issue focuses on **Margaret Meynell**. Margaret has been with us for the past 14 years and is responsible for all of the in house administrative duties.



tried to say I liked tea when I'm thirsty and coffee when I'm hungry, but in French what I actually said was: I like tea when I'm thirsty and coffee when I have a woman! I couldn't understand why the husband wouldn't leave me alone all night!

■ What are your outside interests/hobbies?

My daughter lives in France and my second eldest son in Canada so we have a perfect opportunity to travel at any given chance. I am also very much into music, myself and my husband have a season ticket for Opus Concerts at the Halle and I help run a folk train from Manchester to Hathersage every month (actually it is really an excuse for a drinking excursion!)

■ Do you have any vices?

It would have to be Wine, Brandy and Chocolate.

■ If you had the chance to go anywhere, no expense spared. Where would it be and why?

I have been very lucky in that I have seen most places I have wanted to. One on my hit list for the future is Egypt. I love anywhere historical and would like to see the beauty of it before it's lost. I have heard you can see MacDonalds from one of the sphinxes now, why?!

■ What are your day to day duties?

A bit of everything! I am responsible for all of the internal admin for Clarke Nicklin. My role is aimed at working towards the month end so I concentrate on daily bookkeeping, invoicing, sales and purchase ledger, monthly balance and general day to day tasks.

■ You've been with us for 14 years! What's the secret of your success?

I actually really enjoy what I do, I have always liked working with figures (a trait of being a Capricorn) and still get a buzz when it all balances at the end of the month. I have a great relationship with all of the staff too having been here for so long.

■ What is your most cringe worthy moment?

I don't really have any, I do however manage to put my foot in it generally with conversations. Recently at a BBQ with the French family next door speaking in my pigeon French talking about English tea, I

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This firm is not authorised under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 but we are able in certain circumstances to offer a limited range of investment services to clients because we are members of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales. We can provide these investment services if they are an incidental part of the professional services we have been engaged to provide.

Announcing a Breakthrough... ...Business is Rocket Science!

- What is your vision for your business?
- What is your strategy for achieving this vision?
- Do you have the structure in place to carry out and monitor your strategy?

These are some of the questions that you should be asking yourself. Many business owners do not spend enough time thinking about the above, but if you take the opportunity to look at strategising your business the benefits are immense.

At Clarke Nicklin we believe that too much time and effort is spent focusing on past performance of the business instead of focusing on future performance and goals. There also tends to be a reliance on looking at a business from a financial statement perspective, as opposed to looking at it through the many different windows of strategy, direction, competitive position, operations, effectiveness and efficiency.

Our goal is to help you achieve sustainable growth in your business, improve profitability and to focus on the end game that will be your exit strategy or succession plan.

In order to meet these challenges, Clarke Nicklin have invested in training members of our team to specialise in this new approach as well as obtaining cutting edge tools and software to aid this process.

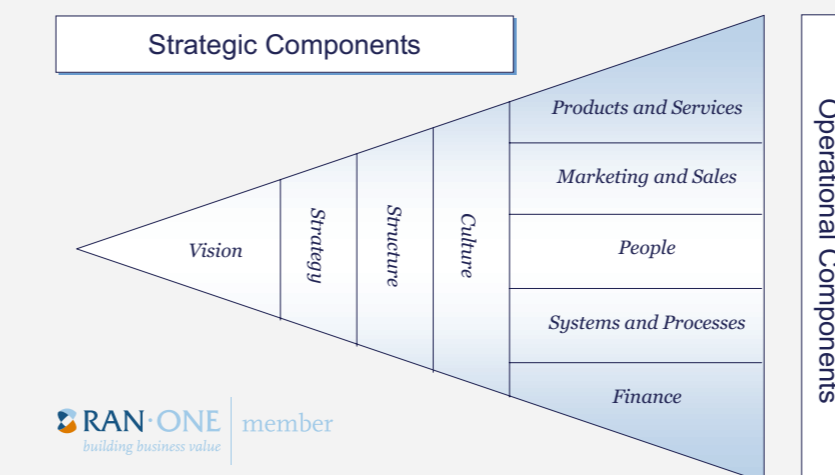
Brian Bradley and **Rob Mowat** have recently completed a two month training programme (including a hard working week in Barcelona!!) and have become accredited **RAN ONE** Certified Consultants.



Partner, **Andy Baggott** says *'We are delighted that Brian and Rob have gone through this rigorous training to obtain accredited status, and also with the adoption of this new approach. Both of these enhance our offering in the consultancy and advisory services and further support our objective of being the main advisor to our clients'*

Clarke Nicklin have adopted a new structured approach to assessing your business...

The ROCKET Method



RAN ONE member
building business value

RAN ONE Global Network

Clarke Nicklin is a member of the **RAN ONE global network**, which is the largest network of independent accounting firms in the world, specialising in the small-to-medium sized enterprise (SME) market.

FREE Consultation

If you're ready for this kind of relationship, **Brian and Rob** are here to help. Discover what opportunities exist for your business – call Brian now on 0161 419 2482 or alternatively email brianb@clarkenicklin.co.uk

Sleeping well at night with Clarke Nicklin!

In this issue, we are delighted to profile one of Clarke Nicklin's original clients, general haulage contractor, **BC Transport**, which has been with us since our formation in 1987. However, their connection to our partner, Andrew Robinson goes back even further, having been a client of Andrew's father's practice, **W. Nicklin & Co** since the late 1960's.



Established in 1964 in Bollington, Cheshire with just one vehicle, today the company operates a fleet of 32 vehicles, has 48 employees and a turnover of around £3 million.

We spoke to BC Transport Chairman, Jean Cooper, whose husband was one of the founders of the business, and Managing Director, Chris Goodwin, who joined the business in 1988, to discuss the highlights and strength of the two companies' working relationship.

Jean spoke first: "With Clarke Nicklin you always sleep well at night! Their work is continuously very thorough and completed to an extremely high standard."

Chris continued: "In addition to dealing with the normal compliance matters, Clarke Nicklin has provided us with the invaluable business tool of Management Accounts, and regular quarterly meetings over the years, usually with Andrew Robinson. He and the team have provided us with proactive help and advice on many important business changes. Two of which come into mind that even today are providing major financial benefits for the company and increased flexibility in how we operate the business.

In the early nineties, we restructured the business to bring onto the board, Rod Nuttall as Director of Transport & Operations and Adam Chadwick as Director of Fleet & Maintenance.

These appointments were essential for us to maintain the growth of the business and to maximise the use of our growing fleet of

vehicles in the highly competitive pallet carrying sector of the general haulage market.

At a later stage Clarke Nicklin's input was once again invaluable in the setting up of a Small Self Administered Pension Scheme for the company. This sound advice proved very tax efficient at the time and has continued to give us a high degree of financial independence when growing the business in the past few years."

The company has a very loyal customer base, many of whom have been using the services of BC Transport for years. A development in August 2001 saw a major customer service improvement and a business opportunity for the company. As always we discussed this with Andrew Robinson before going ahead.

At that time, BC Transport was one of the founder members and shareholders of PalletFORCE, who today is one of the UK's fastest growing palletised distribution networks. Handling over 6,000 pallets per night from a central hub in Lichfield, Staffs, PalletFORCE enables BC Transport to offer its customers a next-day delivery service throughout the UK for loads that would previously be uneconomic. In addition to this, extra business has resulted for the company as for the rest of the PalletFORCE network BC Transport is responsible for all deliveries in the SK postcode area.

In conclusion, Chris said: "Our day to day business is always a fraught, balancing act of providing the best service for our customers as well as maximising the use of our fleet. However, as Jean said earlier, we always sleep well at night knowing we have the Clarke Nicklin team supporting us."

New legislation for subcontractors

From 6 April 2007 a new and revised subcontractors' regime will be in place. This will affect workers in the building industry.

The new scheme aims to review the self-employed status of many workers in the building industry. HM Revenue and Customs believe that many workers are claiming self-employed status when they are, in fact, employees. They do this because the tax regime is more favourable to the self-employed and can result in lower tax bills.

The new regime will introduce:

1. Strict new tests to determine if a worker is self-employed or employed;
2. New registration requirements for businesses and workers in the building industry;
3. New monthly returns for employers and main contractors;
4. Fines for failing to comply with the administration requirements.

Now is the time for Employers and workers in the building industry to address these new regulations. This will ensure that you are completely ready for the start date.

If you need any advice about these new rules and how they might affect you, please do not hesitate to contact **Tony Jakara** on 0161 419 2465.

Tax Returns

The normal deadline of 31st January 2007 for submitting your tax returns is just around the corner.

If you have not done so already please can you submit your tax details to us as soon as possible. Thank you!

Employers Beware:

HMRC are on the look out!

Employer PAYE compliance visits

HM Revenue and Customs are increasing the number of payroll-compliance visits they are making to employers, with the aim being to ensure that payroll and related matters are being correctly applied.

Notification

You would usually be notified by post that a visit is going to be made, though the initial contact can be by phone. The notification will set out the documents that you need to have available at the meeting.

Style of the meeting

The meeting is usually conducted at your premises and normally two inspectors will attend. The exact format of the meeting will vary from case to case but there is usually an opening meeting, a review of the documents and then a closing meeting to discuss findings. When the visit is booked, you will normally be given an indication of how long it will last.

What are the inspectors looking for?

Again, this will vary, but the visit will typically include a review of:

- all payroll records
- all benefits paid to employees, e.g. cars, health care
- expenses paid to employees
- the status of contractors – for instance, checking whether subcontractors in the building industry are genuinely self-employed or whether they should really be treated as employees (see section titled 'New legislation for subcontractors').

Conclusions

At the end of the meeting, the inspectors will report their findings. There might be 'matters of fact' that you and they can agree at the time. Matters of opinion or disputed areas might need further correspondence or meetings to resolve.

Where errors are found, the inspectors will seek to recover the owed tax and National Insurance. You might be charged penalties depending on the magnitude and seriousness of the errors.

If you ever find yourself in a situation where you will be paid a visit by HMRC then please contact us as we can advise you appropriately and even act on your behalf.



Memorable Quotation

"The best we can do is size up the chances, calculate the risks involved, estimate our ability to deal with them, and then make our plans with confidence." – Henry Ford

Bits & Pieces

Age discrimination

Since October 2006 it has been illegal for an employer to discriminate against an employee based on their age. The implications of this ruling are that employers cannot:

- Discriminate against employees based on their age when recruiting;
- set a compulsory retirement age of below 65; or
- dismiss an employee because of their age.

Companies House Fines

Did you know that if a private limited company fails to file its accounts at Companies House within 10 months of that company's year end, it will receive an automatic fine? The exact amount of that fine will depend on how late the accounts are when they are eventually filed.

Tax and Business Tips

Every month we send out free tax and business tips via email. If you would like to receive these please register on line www.clarckenicklin.co.uk

Keep those records

Good records are a key decision-making tool. Instead of waiting for tax time to get records up to date, keep track of them regularly and they won't build up to become a big problem. Here are some of the most often overlooked:

- Equipment maintenance histories
- Personnel information
- Tax-deductible purchases
- Lists of archived items
- Insurance policies
- Warranties and guarantees

These records will help you know how the business is performing and what areas need attention.