



When did you join the company?
1st July 2004

What are the best and worst aspects of the job?
Completing all payroll on time and correctly: ensuring people get paid on time is always a good point! I enjoy the buzz of deadlines such as the completion of Year End. In the last 12 months my responsibilities also covered Human Resources which I love as it has given me more involvement and new challenges. Trying to get through to Inland Revenue queries is a pain though.

Favourite sports team/hobbies?
An avid fan and dedicated supporter of Stockport County FC since 1988 (I don't think that gives my age away??). My 12 year old son is also a keen supporter. My most memorable time was travelling to Wembley last year to see us defeat Rochdale to move us up to League 1.

Any vices?
The odd beer

What is your pet hate?
People driving whilst talking on their mobiles: they are clearly not concentrating on the road.

What is your most cringe worthy moment?
I have a few but one of my classics was going head over heels (very high) in the middle of a dance floor in Yates, Manchester!

What is in your CD player?
I have a battle with my daughter (8) who is mad on shows so at the moment it is Pop Princess 2009. I, however, would prefer Razorlight.

If you were stuck on a desert island, what are the two things you could not do without?
A TV and several cases of Budweiser and of course my family!

If you did not work here, what would your ideal job be?
A nurse.

Plans for the future?
To progress within the company and expand further into HR, and of course to see County into the premier league.



Lynn ventures into showbiz

Our Tax Manager Lynn Spence has had an allotment in Cheadle for 5 years, growing all sorts of fruit, vegetables and flowers. With much trepidation, in September this year she attended The Cheadle Hulme 50th Annual show.

Lynn entered plums, dessert apples and dahlias and came up trumps with a first, second and third place respectively. Lynn was particularly pleased as she also won Best in Show (fruit class) for her plums!



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Congratulations to...

Kerry Hinks who has recently completed the professional stage of ACA and Rob Bowler is now qualified as an Accounting Technician.

Accounts Manager, John Bate and Financial Advisor Jon Nield, whose wives gave birth to baby girls, Ferne and Emily respectively in August.



Portfolio Manager Gareth Jones who wed long term partner Leanne 29th August 2009. The ceremony took place at St Johns Church, Chorlton followed by a fantastic reception at Manchester's 5 star Radisson Edwardian hotel. Many of the Clarke Nicklin team attended the evening reception which was kicked off by an Indian belly dancer who had both bride and groom strutting their stuff!

A fond farewell to Account Manager Rick Downes. After 16 years with the company Rick is moving to pastures new. We wish him all the very best for the future.

SURPRISE SUPERVISOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

Clarke Nicklin has picked up another award this month as office manager Margaret Meynell received the Supervisor of the Year award presented by Damar Training.

The body, which provides business skills training, recognised Margaret's support at the accountancy practice, and presented her with the surprise award after she was nominated by representatives from Damar. The award came as part of a wider NVQ presentation ceremony in which two members of Margaret's team, Anna Litherland and Chelsea Maher, received accolades.



From left to right Anna Litherland, Margaret Meynell, Chelsea Maher and Nicola Clayton.

WINTER 09

"Increasing your wealth...
...reducing your stress"

the addition⁺

- | Profit Improvement
- | Tax Saving
- | Wealth Protection
- | Cash Management
- | Finance Raising
- | Exit Strategy

We're on the move!

The Clarke Nicklin Group will make a new start this New Year as the team relocates from Hazel Grove to a prestigious new development at Cheadle Royal Business Park.

The new building, developed by Muse Developments, is synonymous with the company's fresh culture and ethos and reflects the Group's plans to extend its presence in the region, and become more accessible for clients. It will also help accommodate the rapid growth through which the business has gone, with the accountancy practice doubling in size in just four years.

Based on this growth, partners Steve Humphries and Andrew Baggott decided

to acquire new premises in the Cheshire or Greater Manchester area, which would convenience their clients, as Steve Humphries explained: "Considerable thought has gone into our new location. We considered carefully about where our staff and clients are based and how this will affect them. The building's proximity to motorway and other road links, along with public transport and cycle routes – and the fact that we're moving closer to the epicentre of our client base makes the decision an easier one."

The Clarke Nicklin Group offers a huge range of services concentrating on the company's central ethos of 'increasing your wealth and reducing your stress'. That, coupled with the Group's commitment to improving value to clients helped the team make the final decision, with the new offices providing a fantastic environment for clients to visit and to even further boost team productivity.

Partner Andrew Baggott added: "In acquiring a modern, state-of-the-art headquarters will help to build on our success. With its excellent location and unrivalled amenities, Cheadle Royal was head and shoulders above any other office development in the region, living up to its pedigree as the North West's premier business park."

Clients will soon receive details of the move, including the exact moving in date. In the meantime, for ongoing developments, and other news about Clarke Nicklin, follow us on [twitter](https://twitter.com/ClarkeNicklin):

www.twitter.com/ClarkeNicklin



As always we donate to a local charity rather than send Christmas cards.

A very Merry Christmas and Prosperous New Year to all!!



PAY IN LIEU

In the current economic climate more people than usual have to think about the tax consequences of losing their job. The sack is bad enough without having an argument with the taxman. It's well-known that £30,000 of a golden handshake is supposed to be tax-free, but it's less well-known that HMRC aren't always willing to accept that the exemption applies.

The rule allows a payment for breach of contract to fall outside tax – "here's thirty grand to clear your desk and go quietly, never mind your employment rights". If the contract describes the payment as something that will happen when the job ends, it isn't exempt at all – it's as much part of the contractual, taxable pay as the monthly salary and the annual bonus. This was applied recently to a payment in lieu of notice – the company had the choice in the contract to give three months' notice or make a payment in lieu, and the payment was therefore taxable.

Once a contract's been drawn up, it's usually hard to change the tax effect of it. It's still worth discussing because an unexpected tax charge is even more unwelcome than one you know about. If you are involved in redundancy – on the receiving or the giving end – and you want to discuss the tax consequences, we will be happy to advise you.

BEAT THE 50% HIKE

There are significant tax increases coming on 6 April 2010 for anyone who earns over £100,000 a year. Tax allowances are restricted at that level, and there will be a new top rate of 50% for anyone earning over £150,000. If you are affected, there are things you can do to reduce the impact.

Action	Possible Impact
Advance income from next year into this	Reduce tax from 50% to 40% (although you may pay tax a little earlier)
Pay dividends this tax year rather than next	Reduce tax from 36% to 25%
If self employed, incorporate as a limited company	Reduce tax on retained profits from 50% to 28% or less (plus savings on profits withdrawn)
Divert income to a non-working spouse	Reduce tax from 50% to, say, 20%
If you are a partnership or LLP, appoint a corporate partner	Reduce tax on retained profits from 50% to 28% or less (plus savings on profits withdrawn)

If you are concerned about the impact of the new rates of tax and require further options, we will be happy to discuss your options.



If you want to talk about your financial issues call us today:
0161 483 5284

SA OR NOT SA?

...that is the question. HMRC have removed many of their "customers" from the obligation to file annual tax returns in recent years, saving them the trouble of processing paperwork and the individuals the time involved in filling in forms – but that creates a big problem if the person should have been paying more tax all along.

The trouble is that the responsibility for noticing that there's a liability falls squarely on the taxpayer. If HMRC send a letter saying "we don't think you need to fill in a tax return any more", who wouldn't joyfully dismiss their accountant and hope to live happily ever after? But those letters are not always reliable. Circumstances may change. For example, if you are a higher rate taxpayer and you receive even small amounts of bank interest or dividends, there will be some tax to pay in addition to the tax credited or paid before you see the income. On the other side, if that person makes Gift Aid donations, they may be able to claim some tax back, but only by filling in a tax return.

Unfortunately, if this goes on for several years, even a small amount of income can create a large liability and a major exercise in digging out all the old records in order to put the taxpayer straight with HMRC. There is an official policy to forgive tax where the taxpayer had provided information to HMRC and could reasonably expect that they had done whatever they wanted to do with it, but it's unlikely to apply to many situations under self-assessment.

If you don't fill in an annual tax return but you are a higher rate taxpayer, it may be worth checking that you don't have hidden liabilities. Better to deal with it early than late. We can advise you.

COMPANY PROFILE

BRAND IMAGING

Manchester based Brand Imaging Solutions started life in the 1950's as Replica, with the core of the business focussed upon reprographic and artwork services in and around the Stockport area.



In 2005 the business was acquired by the ex-Seven Worldwide management team of Mark Bent and Justin Jenkins, with Clarke Nicklin assisting in the Buy In Management Buy Out (BIMBO!) and Brand Imaging was born.

Over the next three years the business has expanded considerably through acquisitions covering Design, Creative Packaging, Marketing, Advertising and Printing Plate manufacturing. This has placed the company ahead of competitors, providing packaging design and artwork, catalogues, brochures, web design, exhibitions, advertising and flexo printing plates. The team of 22 provide an extensive service for clients such as Avon, Vimto, Coca-Cola, Parkers Garden Centres and Dawson's music.

The team of now 22 provide an extensive service for clients...

Andrew Baggott has had close involvement with Brand Imaging from the first deal four years ago working closely with the Management Team. Since then he and other specialists at Clarke Nicklin have provided advice on matters such as finance raising, tax planning, management remuneration and strategic planning. The company also utilises Clarke Nicklin for compliance services including accounts preparation, corporation tax and payroll.

Operations Director Mark Bent said 'Clarke Nicklin have been on our side from the beginning. Originally the key role was assisting with business strategy in which Andrew had a comprehensive involvement. Recently he has helped with three acquisitions which has enabled Justin and I to restructure the business, and to consolidate everything under one roof at our new premises in Trafford Park. The reports Andrew constructed for the Banks were vital and he is the heartbeat of all financial activity.'

Mark adds 'Future plans for Brand Imaging are to focus further on the Design, Marketing and Advertising sector which is picking up dramatically. We have won several new clients over the last six months so primarily we will focus on them over the next year and ensure that they are serviced well and we deliver our promises. The strength of the business is in our staff and their relationships with our client base, on which we will further build during 2010'. There are also plans in the pipeline for further expansion and setting up a Southern base. Clarke Nicklin are sure to be heavily involved every step of the way!'