



'Realism is now evident'

Fergal Brosnan **Berkley Recruitment Group**

"This economic climate will help to make demarcation lines between recruitment consultancies and agencies clearer. Not always differentiated by employers and candidates, the levels of market knowledge and service levels will become a lot more evident. Continuity of people and service will also become more obvious to employers as to who can deliver for them.

"The knowledge economy is thriving and the people with IT and life science skills are still in demand. However employers are now being more tentative when hiring. The trend is to hire a person on contract and use that period to assess the individual before offering a permanent role. This trend is occurring mostly in technical IT roles. In construction and manufacturing, there is evidence that

people are willing to take a slight reduction in salary to find new employment. But this is not the majority.

Realism is now evident. People are realistic about their own expectations and that of the employer, which is refreshing. In recent years, base salaries for sales executives were increasing but now that has stabilised. However mid to high level R&D roles are still commanding good salaries. Candidates now value a company's longevity and take comfort in knowing that an employer has been through a downturn before, and has the product or service to cope.

"In the recruitment sector, small operations will find the current climate tough, due to lack of cashflow. A lot of the larger high street recruitment companies are extremely focused on short-term goals and KPIs. I believe they will suffer, not the boutique operations"

'There is more focus on job security'

Amanda Swift **Kelly Services**

"Just because the economy is contracting does not mean that certain skills are more available. There is still a need for agencies to perform search



and selection for a variety of skills sets, most predominantly in emerging sectors such as the sciences. In our experience, employers are still actively recruiting in the areas of sales, science and IT, especially software developers. However the economic downturn has certainly affected construction and manufacturing. Other sectors that also link into the property market are suffering too, such as financial services (mortgage brokers in particular), the motor industry and retail.

"There is a general trend in companies hiring temporary or contract staff. The do not want to hire permanently while business confidence is in retreat. The main shift has been that companies are now focusing more on the quality and experience of candidates to justify the spend on salary costs. For candidates, there is definitely more of a focus on job security as opposed to monetary return. Candidates are now turning their concerns to the track record and financial stability of the company. This is becoming more and more important as the economy tightens."

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