

# INSID& OUT

Hello, and welcome to our Autumn Newsletter.

Routine, day in, day out, same place, same team... for many of us, the essence of working life. We know our daily tasks, we know the people around us, their strengths and weaknesses, and we feel safe.

But, what if you have only three, six, nine months to step into an unfamiliar setting, work with a team you have never worked with before and cover a fundraising function.

Daunting? Maybe for some, but this is a typical scenario in the working life of an interim. Demand for fundraisers who are flexible and have a wider range of skills is on the increase and we are seeing more interim roles than ever before for various reasons including maternity cover, recruitment gaps etc.

We talked to Richard Sved, who provides freelance, interim and consultancy support to charities through his company 3rd Sector Mission Control.

Richard began his fundraising career at KEEN, went on to work at ICAN as their Corporate and Trusts Officer and then Tommy's as Trust and Donor Development Manager, before becoming Head of Fundraising at the National Literacy Trust.



Vladka Wiswall  
Relationships Manager  
Kage Partnership

## Next Stop... Interim?

We asked Richard Sved, Director of 3rd Sector Mission Control, to give an insight into the attraction of interim work and why he chose to take this path.



### Why did you embark on working as an interim?

I set up my own company, 3rd Sector Mission Control, two and a half years ago with the idea that I would balance working as an interim with other consultancy projects for charities. After twenty years working in permanent jobs for charities, I felt the need for a more varied workload. Basically, I'm too interested (or perhaps nosy!) in learning about different charities, and helping them to achieve their mission through my work with them. But I knew I might miss some aspects of my previous 'day jobs' – working in a team, management, coaching and mentoring staff, learning from colleagues and peers – and interim working seemed like a perfect compromise for still getting that 'fix'! And so it has transpired.

### What do you like about this type of work?

All of the above and more. I've really enjoyed feeling that I'm helping to 'keep the show on the road' as well as moving

forward with various aspects of their work. I'm quite a social animal too, so very much enjoy meeting new people at each of the charities I go into, learning to work with them, and understanding and helping to articulate their passions for the causes they represent.

### What are the challenges of being an interim?

I think it's part of the territory with interim working that you often go in at a time of change for the organisation. And so there may be some tension and unhappiness within the organisation, which can be a challenge.

## I've found it a challenge to retain my external fresh point of view while not becoming too much of an 'insider' too quickly.

As an interim, I've found it helpful to remind myself that I'm primarily a consultant rather than anything approaching a permanent fixture (even if I'm there for many months). Oh, and I've also tried hard not to get too involved with office politics, wherever possible!

### Typically, for what reasons have charities engaged you?

It's been a range of reasons so far. Most recently, I've been engaged to lead the fundraising function ahead of a permanent head of fundraising starting.

In other places I've been brought in when charities are re-appraising both their organisational and fundraising strategy, and so it can make sense to appoint an interim to lead that thinking rather than someone permanent who may then have a vested interest in what comes out of the strategic development.

### Has the influence you have as an interim member of staff changed over the years?

I've only been doing it for two years or so, but yes I think so. I've happily been able to pick up more skills and experiences in double quick time which has, I hope, added to my influence as an interim member of staff.

But I don't think being a successful interim is about how much influence you are able to wield. I think it's more about really getting to the bottom of my brief and delivering it as well as I can. I think it's less about influence and more about adding value to the organisations that have taken me on.

### What are the personal attributes needed to be a good interim?

**You need to be able to learn fast, think on your feet, and deliver quickly. Charities aren't paying you to take time settling in.**

And I think being a 'people person' really helps, particularly when picking up the reins of team leadership and management. Resilience is an important attribute, as well as remembering to take stock at the end of each contract. I like to consider what I've learned from it, and consequently how much more value I can bring to my next clients.

### Do you have any recommendations or suggestions for people who are thinking of becoming an interim?

**I really love it, and would recommend it to anyone.**

But it may not be for you of course. My suggestion would be to try and balance it with other work within charities, as I've found that the different types of work re-energise me. And really focus on building and maintaining your networks – most of the work I've found so far has come through my agency, sectoral and freelancer contacts. Hopefully, the longer I go on in this area, this virtuous circle will continue. Apart from anything else, because moving from organisation to organisation can at times feel a little isolating, I've found it important and healthy to have peers with whom I can let off steam, from whom I can ask for advice, and with whom I may possibly work in future.

## New faces



**We are delighted to welcome Jessica Stoddart to our team. After a mild grilling, she tells us a little about herself:**

### Where did you work before joining us?

My career path has been varied. Before joining Kage I spent five years co-ordinating the Admissions for a private nursery group based in and around South West London. Prior to this I spent 10 years working behind the scenes in the wonderful world of TV production where there was never a dull moment!

### What made you want to work at the Kage Partnership?

I was ready for a change and it felt like a natural progression, from placing children into nursery to hopefully placing adults into jobs! Kage's ethos and impeccable customer service really grabbed me – the equality with which both client and candidate are dealt with matched my own passion for excellent customer service.

### What do you like to do in your spare time?

I love a challenge and being outdoors as much as possible. I am happiest swimming in a lake or up a mountain – even the film Everest hasn't put me off reaching new heights.

## GET IN TOUCH

**We have been recruiting Fundraising, PR and Marketing professionals at all levels within the not-for-profit sector for the last 17 years.**

For knowledgeable and friendly advice on any aspect of recruitment, please contact Liz Grimes, Vladka Wiswall or Jessica Stoddart.

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