



Course of Life

Laurence Lewis asks what 2015 has in store for the yachting industry and more specifically for the crew recruitment industry

As I am writing this paper I am also juggling with my end of the year accounts and analysis, dissecting the past year trying to predict future trends and elaborating the SWOT – strength, weakness, opportunity, threat - analysis to help me navigate in a forever evolving market.

An interesting observation is that the number of jobs available in 2014 is back to the level it was in 2008 at the time of the financial crisis. This is surely the sign that our economy is picking up, new projects are being launched but also that more jobs are becoming rotational and not just at engineering levels. This is definitely going in the “Opportunity” part of the SWOT analysis, so what about the Weakness and Threat section? The fact that customers can be sceptical about our value in a world where CVs are easily available on the internet and social media perhaps? Vast subject.... It is true that candidate identification will become easier BUT recruiting and hiring will get harder and harder without the input of professional recruiters. What is indeed the value of CVs if nobody is there to decipher them with you, give you some input and guidance on the candidate’s history, career choices and motivation? This is where recruiters give added value because we are not disconnected with the human factor. We spend a good proportion of our day meeting candidates and of course, more importantly, we know the market well, we know when it’s safe for a client to perhaps give it more time, wait a

bit longer for better suited candidates to be discovered, but we also know when it’s time to “interview and hire” now because the candidate will be snapped up by someone else the next day. Our role is to inform the client what options are available and to advise as to what could be the best and safest one.

It is our job to educate clients to expect quality driven searches and 2015 is going to be a turning point. Clients have come to realise that it is actually counterproductive to use loads of agencies. Recruiters work best when they are engaged in a search, when they know they have a good chance of making a placement, that’s a fact, it’s human. Of course some competition is good and healthy, it keeps everyone on their toes and engaged in the search which is why working with, at the most, two or three quality and result driven crew agencies will give you the best service. Why should the client waste time reading 50 random CVs when he can read four or five, on brief? Who has the time to waste time these days?

It would not be appropriate to elaborate on the “strength” and “weakness” part of my analysis as they are company specific but I am certainly pleased that, at least on paper, I have been able to turn a “threat” into an “opportunity”. As recruiters want to do a good job, and as clients will demand more service, surely, it should not be rocket science to work together well in 2015?