



**Executive Recruitment**

## **Modern day working practices must include the 'F' word - flexibility**

**TravelMole Guest Comment by Kristina Wallen, managing director HARP wallen Executive Recruitment**

Apparently more than 80% of senior executives are so “paranoid” that they stay in touch with the office while on holiday.

I am not sure how I feel about reading this statistic which was taken from a survey by ladder.co.uk. For one thing I am not in the least surprised and also, does this necessarily make them paranoid? Or perhaps just conscientious?

There is a fine line between paranoia and being conscientious but it is also part of today's modern flexible working.

The upside of all the great communication tools of today, such as the Blackberry and widespread wireless broadband, is that you get mobility and flexibility. The downside is that you can get obsessed with them and you fall into the great trap that is the electronic leash.

The impression given by the survey results is that these executives who stay in touch on holiday are paranoid because they want to stay visible in their organisations despite being on holiday and that they are genuinely concerned about job security.

This is in our opinion a rather old fashioned view as staying in touch with your office for these reasons will not guarantee your job is safe in today's market.

On the flip side we are pleased to report "without the aid of a survey" that the vast majority of modern and forward-thinking businesses not only don't want to hear from their senior executives while they're away and actively encourage them to take their holidays and recognise the benefits to productivity of doing so. There are of course exceptions and in these circumstances responsible executives will be expected to be involved.

We believe that the businesses that think you need to keep in touch during your well-earned holidays are the same businesses that haven't yet woken up to the fact that modern day working practices must include the “F” word. Flexibility.

The need for contemporary methods for attracting and retaining talented staff has never been more necessary. With budgets tight and headcount freezes increasingly the norm, project management, interim and part-time skills have never been more in demand.

Modern businesses have to get past the notion that flexible working is only for the candidate's sake, it's beneficial to business.

Employing someone to complete a particular project often means they are recruited and working far faster than getting in a high-level executive on a permanent basis due to notice periods and contract negotiations.

There is significant evidence that it does work in many cases "there is an increased demand from all sectors and all levels and it is here for the foreseeable future.

This is not crystal ball gazing - the "F" word is here to stay.