



send some of our people to trainers in the UK, Australia, the US or wherever.

"We make sure we stay abreast of developments and set aside a very big training budget even during the recession - when for many companies this is the first area to be cut. The world is changing and so is recruitment."

For a largely unregulated sector with traditionally low levels of entry, the recession has had what Annette Kinnear describes as "something of a cleansing effect".

"Many small companies are up and coming all the time but over the last year and a half due to the recession a lot of the smaller recruitment operators are going out of business. The people and companies that remain are those proving an excellent service."

But why should a company not recruit directly or through its HR department?

"You would be limited in terms of exposure to talent, and with the skills shortage background this is something everyone involved in recruitment must understand.

"We really depend on a very, very strong network of people. Those that are openly available in the market and can be reached through advertising or a career site make up a pool certainly, but it is one to which everyone has access.

"Everyone wants that great talent that you want. If you are looking for something very special - a calibre person - then you must work with a professional recruitment consultancy because in a skill shortage situation the really good people are working and you need to know how and where to find them. They will never ever ever put their CV on a career site, but they might be available and looking and talking to somebody about it.

"And there's no cost involved, you only pay once you've engaged the person and then you get a guarantee. So you can't lose by talking to a professional recruitment person and I can't see anyone would not want to do that. And if you want to have a recruitment experience you've never had before then