

Going A Fairway

Franchisee Case Study

Jim Smith, CNA International franchisee explains why the executive search recruitment franchise is on par as a business opportunity.

Jim Smith has been an owner of his own CNA International recruitment business since 2001. CNA International is one of the niche recruitment business models offered by Network Brand Partnerships an arm of the Pertemps Group one of the largest groups of specialist recruitment companies in the UK.



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Jim's area of expertise is Banking & Financial Services, operating across the UK and internationally.

Why Jim chose CNA International

"I was a Bank Manager. At the time of leaving I was a Senior Manager responsible for about 130 people including 23 Managers across a geographical patch in North London. I looked after all aspects of the business from Personal customers to larger Corporate Business. Following a re-structure I was asked to take on a role I didn't really want to do and managed to persuade the bank to let me leave on voluntary redundancy." Says Jim "I did some consultancy work after leaving the bank and was looking to join a network; I saw an advert in The Times. I then met with Albert at a seminar when CNA also ran a consultancy network. He talked about the Search side, which sounded interesting, particularly as my working background has mostly been people related."

The man behind the business

Jim lives in the South, near Stansted airport with his wife and together they have 3 children, all grown up now. The eldest, Robert, is a PE teacher in Luton. Lorna the middle child is following in her fathers footsteps and currently works for HBOS/Lloyds Banking Group as a Regional Risk co-ordinator in Corporate Banking in London. The youngest, Kathryn, works in customer service in a local garage and is getting married later this year.

Jim has a great passion for sport, in his youth he played amateur rugby for Coalville and Market Bosworth in Leicestershire. Later becoming an active member of Bishops' Stortford rugby club in several roles including Chairman for 5 years and coaching for 8 years. Nowadays Jim concentrates on less strenuous sports and holds a modest golf handicap of 14, enjoying the social side as well as the challenge of the game. *"It's an addictive sport, that one magic shot makes you forgive yourself all the less than perfect shots I play much of the time"* laughs Jim. *"Given the opportunity I would spend more time on the fairway improving my swing and when I retire I will travel more too. I'm keen to keep my community involvements and I would love to read more about English and European history from the 17th – 19th century. I've always had a great interest."*

A great community supporter and sociable individual, Jim was a member of his local Round Table for some years. After leaving due to the age rule he joined the ex-Round Tablers Club (41 Club) and is now a National Councillor responsible for 45 clubs in his Region and will stand for one of the 10 National Executive posts at the next AGM. When asked why he was involved Jim replied *"The Round Table organisation is invaluable in developing business skills in young professionals in addition to being able to put something back into the Community. Table regenerates itself by having an age rule and when I left I still wanted to have some community involvement. It's very satisfying, very sociable and enables me to keep a network of good friends and contacts across the country."*

Behind the scenes

Jim is dedicated and driven professionally although he doesn't let that affect his humanity and compassion and has a way of putting you at ease instantly. He recounted an amusing story that demonstrates this. *"A funny story that stands out was a candidate at an interview with a client. He had been a bit wound up before the interview and we spent a lot of time in briefing talking to him about relaxing and enjoying the whole*

experience. Apparently he got carried away and became so relaxed in the interview that he ended up sitting back in his chair and putting his feet up on the coffee table. At the time he didn't know he'd done it. Although the client saw the funny side of it regrettably he didn't offer the job."

A great believer in involving others and working as a team Jim encourages input and ideas from his staff. "One of my members of staff had been on a training course at Donington and noticed they had a bell which was rung by anyone getting a confirmed placement. She felt this was a great idea but we could do better than the bell. She introduced the model cow to the office. Complete with sunglasses, flasher mac and shaking udders when set off. Far better than the bell and caused laughter every time we had a placement." Jim says.



Jims' advice to new franchisees

"The secret is confidence and a recognition that you can't succeed in this, or indeed any business, without hard work. The numbers do count. I would also say in recruitment choose a sector that you have a knowledge of or a real interest in, preferably both. You also have to learn to be able to do everything from managing the stationery, through IT/Telecomms, to finance and Marketing and Communication. If you can't self start or have to rely on other people to do some of the basic tasks don't do it, otherwise what are you waiting for?" Jim says.

Jim has seen the CNA management team change and is very impressed with the latest initiatives. "The takeover by NBP it's the best thing that's happened to CNA since I've been with them. There are so many positives; the credit factoring for one, meaning all our clients invoices are paid each month. It's just one of many added benefits they have introduced. Franchising is positive, you have a support network. When running your own business it can be lonely particularly when coming from a corporate business as I did. It's a half way house between going it totally alone and being an employee for someone else for the rest of your life. I know which I'd rather be."

About CNA International

CNA International is now one of the niche recruitment business models managed by Network Brand Partnerships, an arm of the Pertemps Group. Network Brand Partnerships are an award winning management team helping to fine tune and grow CNA International through improved support systems such as guaranteed cash flow. High quality search is a multi million pound industry. Substantial growth is forecast due to continued worldwide shortage of proven top management talent. "We are offering three very diverse recruitment business models covering Executive Search, Health Care and the High Street. We want to attract partners to run their own business in the sector that suits them. It is an exciting move forwards in a growing industry," commented Debbie Smith (Managing Director).

Discover more about joining the partnership and choosing your own recruitment business by contacting Debbie Smith on 0330 123 0907 or read more at www.networkbrandpartnerships.com
After business hours? Call our enquiries helpline on 07909 533726