



Stuart Packham met Andrew Wayland, Global Chief Information Officer for Michael Page International. Starting out life as a Chartered Accountant, Andrew's career has taken him from Audit and Insolvency Consulting to a career leading business transformations for some of the world's leading professional services organisations. Before joining Michael Page at the end of 2005, Andrew spent 10 years in IT Leadership roles with PWC. So does Andrew regret leaving his career in Accountancy for IT? Read on and find out!

Michael Page International is one of the world's leading professional services recruitment businesses. Established over 32 years ago in the UK, Michael Page International employs over 3700 staff across 142 offices and 28 countries. With a purely organic growth strategy, 68% of the Group's revenue is generated outside of the UK.

CAN YOU EXPLAIN YOUR ROLE AT MICHAEL PAGE?

As the Chief Information Officer for Michael Page, I am a member of the Executive Board of Directors, charged with supporting the Group's vision and strategy through business and IT transformation. When I joined the organisation, I became the first global CIO and was hired to partner with the key business decision makers. Michael Page has a very clear strategy to continue driving the organic growth model across countries and functions, and it is critical that I understand the challenges that the business faces and that our IT and Process strategy aligns with the business priorities.

WHAT CRITICAL FACTORS MUST EXIST FOR YOU TO SUCCEED IN YOUR ROLE?

Any business transformation relies on having full support at all levels of the organisation. One of the key factors is working with an inspirational Chief Executive who has a clear agenda for change, and supports this not only in words, but also in actions. Keeping the business focused on long-term objectives in the face of short to medium-term concerns is critical to success.

AS THE FIRST GLOBAL CIO, WHAT DID YOUR FIRST 90 DAYS LOOK LIKE?

My first priority was to understand the business. I spent most of my time working in different offices and with different people – this gave me a clear indication of how the business worked. I also had to engage with the IT functions around the world (Andrew has IT staff around the world including London, Paris, Sydney, New York and Sao Paulo), especially as they had not worked in a global function previously. Understanding the strengths and gaps of the team was fundamental to our success as a group. In a short space of time I started building a global IT leadership team, ensuring that we hired and retained the right talent for the task ahead. We worked together to develop an IT strategy, and everyone on the leadership team contributed. Along with the strategic elements, I focused on dealing with short-term operational issues, delivering some quick wins to the business and running a hygiene check across IT. Ignoring these tactical issues can often derail or kill your longer-term strategic objectives.



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Michael Page
TECHNOLOGY

YOU ARE HEADING UP THE GLOBAL BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME FOR MICHAEL PAGE INTERNATIONAL. WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO IT OR BUSINESS LEADERS ABOUT TO UNDERTAKE A TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY?

The current multi-million pound business transformation programme is a key element of the Group's growth strategy, encompassing business process and technology change across all functions and geographies. From the outset, it is essential to create an achievable vision that everyone can understand and buy into. Once this vision is in place, great communication throughout the lifecycle of the programme of the end state will ensure people stay engaged. Breaking a complex programme into smaller chunks will help you and the business focus. Alongside this, engaging the business at the beginning to help shape the solution and then building a governance process around their feedback is invaluable. We have representative teams from the business in each country to ensure we get agreement and commitment to a set of standard global business processes. These teams will be with the programme from beginning to end. Selecting the right technology solution once you have agreed best practice then mitigates the risk of business rejection.

WHAT PITFALLS SHOULD PEOPLE LOOK OUT FOR?

A key risk is scope creep. You have to ensure that you agree and control the core requirements of the programme, regardless of pressure or persistence! Avoid complication – it is easy to over complicate or engineer solutions, which ultimately puts the transformational goals at risk.

HOW DO YOU KEEP UP-TO-DATE WITH DEVELOPMENTS IN TECHNOLOGY?

With so many sources of information available, I tend to establish themes from the industry and business media, and then if I want to delve deeper, I work with vendors and partners to help educate myself and my team on the detail and relevance to our business. I am always looking for the 'killer' advantage, and get excited by new ways of delivering technology services that will help transform the way we do business.

HOW IMPORTANT IS TALENT MANAGEMENT IN YOUR ROLE?

It is the most important part of my role. Without hiring and retaining the best people, we wouldn't be able to achieve our objectives. You have to ensure you get your key team in place, and that they are thriving in their roles. I look for people that are team players, capable of taking the initiative, being a leader and shaping their own teams to support the overall vision. They need to be passionate about delivering excellence to our business. I couldn't achieve anything without the fantastic people I am privileged to have around me.



WITH A GLOBAL ROLE IN A FAST PACED BUSINESS, WHAT DO YOU DO TO RELAX?

One of my big passions is adventure racing – a combination of canoeing, extreme cycling and running as part of a team! There are always a few surprises thrown in like a frozen canal or three feet of mud just to make things interesting. It's a combination of endurance and technical challenge that takes you way out of your comfort zone. The more I describe it, the more it sounds like my day job!

WHAT ELSE IS IMPORTANT TO YOU IN LIFE?

My Christian faith is the core foundation. As a member of a large local church, most weekends I lead "Kid's Church". This involves some inspirational life lessons and drama (with the obligatory costume), crazy games, and of course Mentos and Coke explosions wherever possible. If you don't know what that means I am sure Google can help.

“ MY FIRST PRIORITY WAS TO UNDERSTAND THE BUSINESS ”

CONTACT



Stuart Packham is the Director for Michael Page Technology. For a discussion on the marketplace or for support with IT recruitment, call **020 8742 5963**.

