



RESEARCH PAPER

The Personal Touch

The successful management of large scale international projects

Liz Thomson

Welcome to CfBT Education Trust



CfBT Education Trust is a leading charity providing education services for public benefit in the UK and internationally. Established 40 years ago, CfBT Education Trust now has an annual turnover exceeding £100 million and employs more than 2,000 staff worldwide who support educational reform, teach, advise, research and train.

Since we were founded, we have worked in more than 40 countries around the world. Our work involves teacher and leadership training, curriculum design and school improvement services. The majority of staff provide services direct to learners in schools or through projects for excluded pupils, in young offender institutions and in advice and guidance for young people.

We have worked successfully to implement reform programmes for governments throughout the world. Current examples include the Department for Children, Schools

and Families (DCSF) Programme for Gifted and Talented Education and a teacher training programme for the Malaysian Ministry of Education being delivered in the Tawau district of Sabah, East Malaysia.

Other government clients include the Brunei Ministry of Education, the Abu Dhabi Education Council, aid donors such as the European Union (EU), the Department for International Development (DFID), the World Bank, national agencies such as the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), and local authorities.

Surpluses generated by our operations are reinvested in educational research and development. Our new research programme – Evidence for Education – will improve educational practice on the ground and widen access to research in the UK and overseas.

Visit www.cfbt.com for more information.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to take this opportunity of thanking everyone who gave their time willingly to be interviewed and who also corrected any misapprehensions and errors I made before inclusion in this Report. They include: Anthony Abrahams, Clive Adderley, Lois Arthur, Liz Bryant, Allison Butcher,

Michael Carrier, Diana Cavanagh, Lesley Duncan, Carol Flach, Jonathan Greenwood, Paul Gutherson, Sara Hodson, Fiona Johnson, Chris Kennedy, Jack Lonergan, Tony McAleavy, Iain MacArthur, Elspeth MacGregor, Rob Nolasco, Becky Osborne, Chris Taylor, Peter Treacher, John Webb and Sue Yates.

The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of CfBT Education Trust.

© CfBT copyright 2009

All rights reserved

Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Abbreviations | 4 |
| Introduction | 5 |
| Section 1 Effective Processes for Recruiting and Selecting Staff | 6 |
| Job Analysis | 7 |
| Attracting and Managing Applications | 7 |
| Selecting Candidates | 8 |
| Making the Appointment | 8 |
| Profile: Lois Arthur | 9 |
| Section 2 Systematic Approach to the Induction of Staff at all Levels | 11 |
| Profile: Elspeth MacGregor | 12 |
| Section 3 Standardised Personnel Procedures | 13 |
| Travel and Accommodation Arrangements | 13 |
| Fitting in to the German context | 14 |
| Structure of the Scheme | 14 |
| Specific Problems | 14 |
| Profile: Iain MacArthur | 15 |
| Section 4 Support for Professional and Career Development | 17 |
| CPD and Career Development now | 17 |
| CPD in Germany | 18 |
| Area Meetings | 18 |
| Half Year Conferences | 19 |
| Management Training | 19 |
| Materials Development and Resources | 20 |
| The PLATOV Awards | 20 |
| Award-bearing Courses | 21 |
| The Resettlement Team | 21 |
| Strengths of the approach to CPD in Germany | 21 |
| Profile: Diana Cavanagh | 23 |
| Section 5 Developing the Culture of a Learning Organisation | 24 |
| Characteristics of a Learning Organisation | 24 |
| Systems Thinking | 24 |
| Personal Mastery | 25 |
| Mental Models | 25 |
| Shared Vision | 25 |
| Team Learning | 26 |
| Profile: Michael Carrier | 27 |
| Section 6 Leadership that Supports Development | 28 |
| Profile: Jack Lonergan | 30 |

Abbreviations

| | |
|--------------|---|
| CESC | Colchester English Study Centre |
| CPD | Continuing Professional Development |
| CBT | Centre for British Teachers (Germany) |
| DD | Deputy Director |
| DES | Department for Education and Science |
| EEC | European Economic Community |
| EFL | English as a Foreign Language |
| EI | Emotional Intelligence |
| ESP | English for Special Purposes |
| ETRC | English Teaching Resource Centre |
| HMI | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| HYC | Half Year Conference |
| IFC | International Finance Corporation |
| MAMA | Malaysian MA |
| NCO | Non-commissioned Officer |
| NCSL | National College for School Leadership |
| NPQH | National Professional Qualification for Headship |
| NUT | National Union of Teachers |
| OC | Orientation Course |
| PAYE | Pay as You Earn |
| PGCE | Postgraduate Certificate in Education |
| TDA | Training and Development Agency for Schools |
| TEFL | Teaching English as a Foreign Language |
| TES | Times Educational Supplement |
| TRIST | TVEI-related inservice training |
| TVEI | Technical and Vocational Education Initiative |
| UWIST | University of Wales Institute of Science and Technology |
| WB | World Bank |

Introduction

“ *The Anthony Abrahams Award celebrates the significant contribution that the Founder and Life President of CfBT has made to the development of the organisation since its inception in 1968.* ”

In 2008, as part of CfBT Education Trust's 40th Anniversary celebrations, the Board of Trustees agreed that a bursary in Anthony Abrahams' name should be made available to support a programme of research into the management of international projects. The Anthony Abrahams Award celebrates the significant contribution that the Founder and Life President of CfBT has made to the development of the organisation since its inception in 1968.

Today, those who work for CfBT are very conscious that they belong to an organisation where it is important to have personal contact at all levels: with clients, whether overseas or in the UK, with teachers and consultants who work on international projects, and with each other. In this respect CfBT is carrying on a tradition where the 'personal touch' can make all the difference. Whilst the organisation today is much larger and more diverse, it still reflects some of the values that were established by its founder. The Report that follows is the outcome of research that was conducted to see how CfBT's work in Germany from 1968 to 1982 exemplified key principles that still apply to the management of people working on international projects today.

In the course of conducting the research I was able to interview former teachers and former professional and administrative staff from the German Scheme. I also had discussions with several members of staff in Reading who originally worked for CfBT as teachers, in Germany, Malaysia and Brunei. As the interviews and discussions progressed I became very conscious of how their early experiences of working for CfBT had influenced the development of their careers. The profiles included in the Report are of former teachers who participated in the German Scheme. They all acknowledge the way that the experience provided a foundation for their future professional and career development. When reading the profiles, it is clear that the personal touch of Anthony Abrahams and his team had a lasting effect on the way in which these former teachers

were able to take on greater and diverse responsibilities as their careers progressed.

The Report sets out to identify what constitutes key principles that inform the successful management of people working in large and complex organisations. The application of each principle is discussed and practical examples are drawn from CfBT's experience in Germany from 1968 to 1982. A detailed account of the German Scheme is set out in a companion publication, *Interesting company*,¹ which charts the provenance and history of CfBT over the past 40 years. It is not my intention to replicate what has already been written, but rather to link some of the personal experiences of those involved in the German Scheme to the key principles set out below.

Key Principles for Success

- Effective Processes for Recruiting and Selecting Staff
- Systematic Approach to Induction of Staff at all Levels
- Standardised Personnel Procedures
- Support for Professional and Career Development
- Developing the Culture of a Learning Organisation
- Leadership that Supports Development

¹Taylor, C. (2009) *Interesting company*, Reading: CfBT Education Trust

1. Effective Processes for Recruiting and Selecting Staff

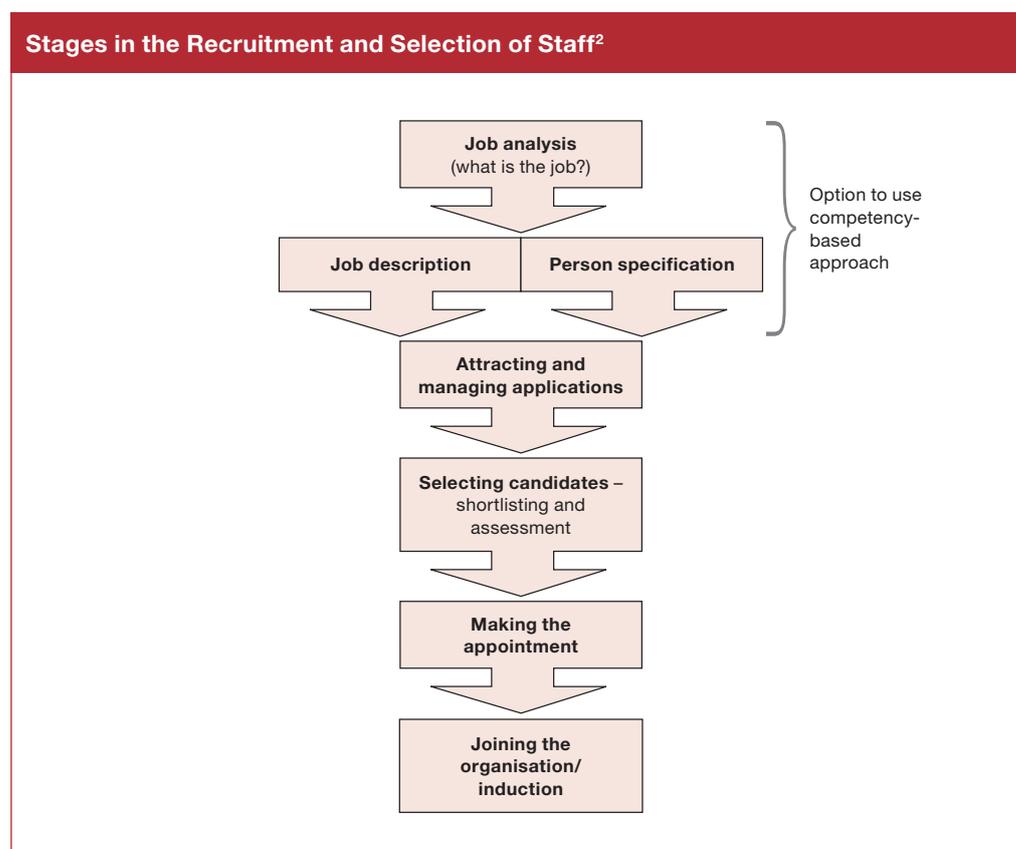
“One of the keys to the successful management of people in any organisation is its approach to the recruitment and selection of staff.”

One of the keys to the successful management of people in any organisation is its approach to the recruitment and selection of staff. It is a truism worth re-stating, to say that the people who work for an organisation are its most important resource; so the way that staff are recruited and selected is vital to its productivity and well-being.

Over the years experience has shown that preparation for every stage of the process is vital. We now take for granted the range of selection and interviewing procedures that good employers adopt, but this was not always so in the educational world. For many of us the kind of attention to detail evident

in records and the personal memories of those involved with the recruitment of British teachers to work in German schools in the 1970s did not occur in mainstream education here until the 1980s and 1990s. The business approach introduced by Tony Abrahams was both supportive and rigorous, designed to ensure that teachers of imagination and quality were recruited to participate in what can only be described as a huge investment in people.

The diagram below gives an overview of the main stages of what is now regarded as good practice in the effective recruitment and selection of staff.



²Source: Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) Factsheet on Recruitment – August 2009 <http://www.cipd.co.uk/subjects/recruitment/general/recruitment.htm>

“The first stage in successful recruitment is to identify exactly what is required for the job in question.”

Job Analysis

The first stage in successful recruitment is to identify exactly what is required for the job in question. In 1968 the Centre for British Teachers³ (CBT) was set up to respond to a need for teachers of English identified by the German authorities in Rheinland Pfalz. How this came about is described in *Interesting company*.⁴

...Tony [Abrahams] was on holiday in the mid 1960s in the town of Bamberg in Bavaria, where he fell into conversation with the mayor. The mayor explained that the local schools needed teachers of English and, accordingly, the first thirteen arrived soon after. Other districts in Germany were showing interest in acquiring the services of native speakers of English in their schools. In 1967 the Minister of Education in Rheinland Pfalz in the South West asked the British Council if it could supply them and the representative in Germany, James McDonough, put him in touch with Tony Abrahams.

At the beginning of the Scheme the Centre was looking for Modern Languages graduate teachers as it was felt that they were more likely to be able to teach EFL than other graduates. Another factor was that graduates with a 'good knowledge of German' were an essential requirement for the Gymnasien and Berufsbildende Schulen (the German equivalent of technical and vocational schools and colleges in upper secondary education).

Initially it was possible to take teachers with no Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) because at that time it was not a requirement for schools in England; this changed in later years when teachers were expected to have a recognised teaching qualification. Applications from Modern Languages graduates were encouraged as they were used to teaching foreign languages. Despite the desire to recruit experienced teachers, exceptions were made so that each year about 10%, mainly German graduates, were recruited straight from PGCE courses.

As the project progressed and the need to recruit more teachers to serve other areas grew, the field was widened. The Centre then started to offer professional support in German through providing distance learning materials (cassettes and booklets) and also in TEFL. Before that, as the 1975 briefing manual shows, all successful applicants were urged to undertake courses in German before taking up their appointments.

Today it is common practice to draw up job descriptions and person specifications for posts, often linked to specific skills and competencies that will be required. The type of people the Centre looked for were: those who had already spent time (mainly) in Europe; who seemed to be adaptable; and who didn't have children of secondary school age. For many teachers the German Scheme offered something out of the ordinary which was beyond their experience. Whilst such qualities as flexibility and adaptability were important, it also helped if the British teachers had a sense of adventure and exploration.

Attracting and Managing Applications

The next stage in the recruitment process is to advertise the post and in so doing ensure that potential candidates are given the information they need to go ahead with an application. The main difference between now and 1968 when CfBT started is that most international teaching posts are advertised through the internet as well as through the more traditional routes of newspapers and professional journals. Today recruiters are advised⁵ to place advertisements that are clear about:

- the outline requirements of the job
- necessary and desirable criteria for job applicants (to limit the number of inappropriate applications received)
- the nature of the organisation's activities
- job location
- reward package

³The Centre was known as CBT at that time – the change to CfBT occurred later.

⁴Taylor, C. (2009) *Interesting company*, Reading: CfBT Education Trust

⁵ibid (1)

“All applicants were sent an application form and a small brochure which outlined the range of posts, types of schools, and different states that participated in the Scheme.”

- job tenure (e.g. contract length)
- details of how to apply.

The recruitment cycle for the German Scheme began in January when posts were advertised in *The Guardian* and *The Times Educational Supplement*. The original advertisement offered opportunities for teachers with a minimum of one year's experience to work in the German system and included information about the number of teaching hours and the provision of TEFL training as part of the orientation for the post. All applicants were sent an application form and a small brochure which outlined the range of posts, types of schools, and different states that participated in the Scheme. The booklet also gave brief information about the number of class contact hours (which varied state by state) and other school duties. A unique feature of the Scheme was that Tony Abrahams had been able to arrange for the teachers to continue paying National Insurance and superannuation contributions throughout the period of their contract in Germany. This meant British teachers were not disadvantaged by losing pensionable years of service whilst working overseas.

Selecting Candidates

Applicants were then selected, using the criteria referred to earlier, for a preliminary interview which was held either in or near their home town. These took place in February each year and were conducted by teams of people that included former teachers and visitors from Germany. A critical feature was that all applicants were interviewed by someone who had done the job, as they were in a strong position to answer questions and provide more personal details about the experience of living and working in Germany. This stage was followed by a further sifting of applicants, before the final interviews. These were initially held in London, but later, as numbers increased, this process was extended to regional centres in Manchester, Birmingham and Edinburgh.

Records for the 1974/75 academic year⁶ show that the *Guardian* and *TES* adverts

generated 1670 enquiries; and 850 of these made serious applications. Around 80 Centre interviewers were involved in the preliminary interviews and approximately three quarters of the applicants were put forward to the second (final) interview. The professional services department was responsible for the final selection of 294 teachers (just over a third of the original applicants).

Making the Appointment

Because so many teachers were being recruited to do the same job the process was not strictly competitive. However it is clear from interviews conducted with former teachers, and from reading handbooks that were produced to support those involved in the selection process, that enormous attention was paid to detail and that every stage had been considered carefully from the perspective of what it would be like for the teachers who were finally appointed.

Prior to taking up the appointment in Germany, all successful candidates were invited to a two-day briefing in London. The aim of the briefing sessions⁷ was to discuss:

- employment of teachers in Germany in general
- the conditions of service with the Centre (including contractual)
- administrative preparation
 - travel
 - baggage
 - accommodation
 - insurance
 - postings
- professional preparation: German, EFL
- personal preparation.

All sections of CfBT's organisation were involved in the briefings including the Director, Tony Abrahams; the Recruitment and Briefing Department; the Professional Services Department; the Accounts Department; someone from the German office in Bamberg; and a member of the Resettlement Team.

⁶Centre-produced booklet describing the work of the Centre for British Teachers in Germany in 1975

⁷Taken from CfBT Briefing Handbook 1979, Nordrhein Westfalen Gymnasium

Each gave very comprehensive briefings related to aims a. – e. above. The briefings also involved Deputy Directors, German visitors and union members.

The organisation of the briefing sessions was meticulous. The number of teachers targeted in each session was around thirty; which would mean that, in 1974, ten such sessions were organised from April to June. Several people have spoken of the military precision of the recruitment and selection operation. One of the most memorable features, still remarked on by former teachers, was the way in which Tony Abrahams went through each clause of the contract to ensure that every teacher being recruited understood exactly what they were committing themselves to. Another significant feature was the quality of the hotel accommodation and the briefing venues in London. Teachers today take such things for granted, but in the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s this was not the norm.

Teachers were informed about postings and asked to complete forms related to continuation of payments to teachers' superannuation in the UK, accommodation, medical examination, medical and baggage insurance and residence permits. They were also informed about travel to Germany and the dates of the two weeks' Orientation Course in Germany. The Director was available at each briefing and interviewed those teachers who wanted to have a personal interview. By the end of the two days the majority of teachers had signed their contracts.

For some candidates the outcome of the briefing session was far more memorable than for others. Sue Yates, who is now Head of Business Development at the School of Oriental and African Studies, recalls meeting her husband Chris at the briefing and again on the boat that took them to Germany. Romance flourished and by the end of their first year in Germany they were married.

| PROFILE | Lois Arthur |
|---------|---|
| | <p>Lois Arthur was a Geography teacher in Liverpool, when a friend told her about an advert in the <i>TES</i> for British teachers to work in German schools. The friend had applied for one of the jobs, and Lois decided to do the same. She was invited for an interview in Manchester, conducted by Tony Abrahams and a colleague, which she remembers as demanding and challenging. She was delighted, if slightly surprised, to be offered a post, and a little embarrassed, as her friend was unsuccessful. However, it was the beginning of a new and exciting period in her professional life, which started with a very thorough briefing session in an impressive London hotel. The direct and personal involvement of Tony Abrahams at every stage from interviewing, through briefing, orientation in Germany, and half-yearly in-service support and training, reflected an inspiring and, at that point, unfamiliar level of professionalism and employer care.</p> <p>Like many of the others employed by CBT, Lois describes the strong camaraderie between the teachers working in Germany, and the remarkable value of the training and support they received there. As a non-German graduate she found that the orientation course provided a huge confidence boost, as well as clear guidance on every possible aspect of life and work ahead. This included thorough familiarisation with the German school system and how to fit into it, a sound grounding in how to teach EFL in the German context, provision of a range of support materials, and advice on adjusting to day-to-day life in Germany.</p> <p>After teaching in Germany for three years, Lois received a PLATOV award to study for a Diploma in TEFL at what was then the University of Wales Institute of Science and Technology (UWIST) – now the University of Wales College Cardiff. She was then appointed as a Deputy Director back in Germany. Before starting this post she participated in both levels of the very innovative CBT Management Training Courses, and a year later she became one of the course tutors herself.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Continued...</p> |

“Lois believes that the training she received on the management courses and the experience of being a Deputy Director provided a basis for all the subsequent work she has done in educational management and beyond.”

Lois believes that the training she received on the management courses and the experience of being a Deputy Director provided a basis for all the subsequent work she has done in educational management and beyond. On returning from Germany she taught EFL in a language school in Bournemouth for two years before being appointed Director of Studies at the Bell Language School in Cambridge. In 1983, when Lois's husband, Rob Nolasco, was appointed Project Director of CfBT's second project in Morocco, she was given two years' secondment from Bell to work alongside him as Deputy Project Director. This included responsibility for the professional support and development of 115 British teachers working in Moroccan schools.

Lois returned to the Bell as Head of Young Learners, managing a large programme of children's summer courses, and eventually became Operations Director of the Bell Educational Trust. She left in 1996 to go into partnership with her husband writing secondary school textbooks for Oxford University Press. She also worked for 10 years as an inspector for the British Council's English in Britain Accreditation Scheme for UK language schools, and served as a school governor in both the state and private sectors; in the latter case providing support to Bedford School's International Study Centre. Lois now spends more time on charity work, including service as a Member of CfBT Education Trust.

2. Systematic Approach to Induction of Staff at all Levels

“As the numbers grew, the logistics of organising as many as eight courses running simultaneously in different locations was a major administrative achievement...”

The purpose of any induction programme is to ensure that new employees are integrated into their roles within organisation. This should be for the mutual benefit of the individual (employee) and the organisation they are working for. Induction can start before the employee has taken up their post. This is particularly evident in the way that the two day briefing sessions for teachers on the German Scheme covered much of the detail that one would expect to see in an effective induction programme.

The main elements of a good induction programme have been identified⁸ as:

- Orientation (physical) – describing where the facilities are
- Orientation (organisational) – showing how the employee fits into the team and how their role fits with the organisation’s strategy and goals
- Health and safety information – this is a legal requirement
- Explanation of terms and conditions
- Details of the organisation’s history, its products and services, its culture and values
- A clear outline of the job/role requirements.

The previous section sets out the areas that were covered on the two-day briefing course, before teachers took up their posts; so that such elements as health, explanation of terms and conditions, and details of CfBT’s history, culture and values were communicated at that stage. However, it was not until teachers arrived in Germany that the other elements were addressed.

Peter Treacher, the Head of Professional Studies, and Edith Czerwinski, who ran the Centre’s German office in Bamberg, were responsible for the overall organisation and

co-ordination of the courses which took place in the last week of the school holidays and the first week of the Autumn Term. As the numbers grew, the logistics of organising as many as eight courses running simultaneously in different locations was a major administrative achievement; particularly when each of the courses needed to fit in with the curriculum and timetable of the German schools that were being used for practice teaching. The main focus of the orientation course was on what to teach and how to teach in German schools. The 1976 Orientation Handbook defines the meaning of orientation as: ... *bring into clearly understood relations with ... make familiar with*; and goes on to describe its application on the course, which was to bring *[participants] into clearly understood relations with English language and familiarise [them] with the German situation in all its aspects*. At the end of the orientation course all teachers were given a suitcase, which contained a folder of forms they would need whilst they were in Germany, and basic reference books including a dictionary and a book on German grammar.

To achieve this, the orientation courses each had a Course Leader (one of the Deputy Directors) who in turn was supported by a Deputy Leader. Their role was to be responsible for the preparation of the course and organise the practice sessions in local schools. They were also responsible for organising the input of British tutors and German teachers to different sessions of the course. More comprehensive information about the range and scope of the orientation course is available in the companion publication, *Interesting company*. It is however important to say that the former teachers interviewed were very clear about the effectiveness of both the briefing sessions and the orientation courses in terms of providing them with a very secure foundation for their work in German schools.

⁸ Source: CIPD Factsheet on Induction – February 2009
<http://www.cipd.co.uk/subjects/recruitmen/induction/induction.htm>

| PROFILE | Elspeth MacGregor |
|---------|---|
| | <p>Elspeth MacGregor's involvement with what became the Centre for British Teachers started when she worked as a teacher in Sweden in the 1960s. She then returned to take a PGCE at Edinburgh in 1965 and taught in Scottish comprehensive schools for three years. She joined the German Scheme in 1968 and returned to the UK in 1969 to complete the Diploma in Applied Linguistics at Edinburgh University. In 1971 she returned to teach on the German Scheme and worked there for two years.</p> <p>Elspeth has very positive memories of the German experience starting with the very thorough briefing and preparation on the orientation course. Virtually all aspects of living and working in Germany were covered. She particularly appreciated the interactive training programme provided on the orientation course; and feels that the role plays, simulation and teaching practice helped to overcome any fears that she and others might have had of going into German classrooms.</p> <p>The opportunity to be part of the professional and social network generated by the Scheme was extremely supportive; as Elspeth describes it – <i>'it was like being encapsulated in a little net of goodness.'</i> Elspeth's involvement in materials development can be traced back to the area meetings in Germany, when she and other teachers met four times a year to share experiences, solve problems and look at how they could improve their practice.</p> <p>Elspeth left Germany in 1973 to work in Austria, then returned to England in 1977 to work at the Colchester English Study Centre (CESC) where she focused on teaching English for Special Purposes (ESP). Whilst in Colchester Elspeth worked with students who were sent for specialised training in English by the German Foreign Service; this led to a further career opportunity when she was invited to work at the Diplomatic Training School in Bonn. Elspeth then spent twenty-two years working in Bonn during which time she reviewed training at all levels, wrote materials that formed the basis for the training of all German Foreign Service trainees and had overall management responsibility for course programmes and teaching. She is now retired and living in Edinburgh.</p> |

3. Standardised Personnel Procedures

“ There is no doubt that the procedures that were developed for the German Scheme were designed to support teachers at every stage of the process.”

In most organisations personnel procedures cover the basic requirements for the appointment and support of staff during their period of employment. These usually include: arrangements for employment, payment of salaries, PAYE and superannuation, holiday, holiday entitlement, and sickness benefit. The procedures set out the conditions of service which include: arrangements for the appointment and dismissal of staff, the organisation's policy related to disciplinary action and grievance procedures, the approach to performance management including appraisal and staff development strategies. Some procedures are mandatory, whereas others are discretionary and are specific to individual organisations. Associated benefits might include health insurance, company vehicle, disturbance allowance (payable when significant expenses are incurred for the employee when taking up the post); as well as any other entitlement there might be for expenses associated with the post such as travel and mileage.

Standardised personnel procedures are usually linked to specific policies or strategies within the organisation which are included in relevant handbooks or manuals that set out the conditions of service. A large international organisation like the World Bank produces a Staff Manual⁹ which sets out eleven principles underpinning the management of people within the organisation with each of the principles relating to a specific policy and procedure. The principles aim to cover all aspects of personnel requirements by setting out in detail the obligations of the World Bank (WB) to its employees and what is expected of staff members at all levels of the service. They include all the areas referred to in the above paragraph, together with two additional areas, appeals and staff consultation.

Nearer home, the National Union of Teachers (NUT)¹⁰ provides advice concerning conditions of service for teachers who plan to work overseas. They list such areas as Teachers'

Duties, Residential Accommodation, Sick Leave and Sick Pay, Maternity Leave and Maternity Pay, Leave of Absence, Discipline/Dismissal, Visa/Work Permit, Location of Appointment, and the Cost of Return Journey; although interestingly they do not include any reference to CPD, induction or end-of-service resettlement/repatriation.

There is no doubt that the procedures that were developed for the German Scheme were designed to support teachers at every stage of the process. The arrangements for recruitment and induction have already been commented on in Sections 1 and 2 of this Report and Section 4 gives details of the approach to CPD and resettlement; but what is also quite remarkable is the high level of support that was given to ensure that the personal and professional welfare of teachers and their families was catered for.

Travel and Accommodation Arrangements

Many of the personnel issues were dealt with directly by the German office under the direction and supervision of Edith Czerwinski, a German national who became involved in the Scheme from the very beginning. She was responsible for making all the in-country arrangements, which included finding suitable furnished accommodation for the teachers and, if applicable, their spouses and families. This was not an easy task as it was not usual to let furnished accommodation in Germany at that time. By the end of May each year, Edith would know at least 80 to 90% of the number of teachers who were coming out to Germany in the following September. She then had to find accommodation near to the schools where teachers were to be posted. Initially this was done by contacting school secretaries to enlist their help in finding somewhere suitable. It is a tribute to Edith's formidable powers of persuasion that she was able to ensure that all accommodation needs were met by the beginning of the next school year.

⁹<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/NEWS/Resources/8.02Policy.pdf>

¹⁰<http://www.teachers.org.uk/story.php?id=1892>

“ Tony Abrahams’ main concern throughout the scheme was to provide a very strong personal and professional welfare support system so that teachers were able to focus on the job of teaching. ”

Further evidence of Edith’s persuasive skills was shown when she was able to arrange direct access to passport control by asking the airport authority to move it to where the charter plane bringing the teachers from London landed, as she had already arranged parking nearby for the coaches that were waiting to take the teachers to their different destinations.

Fitting in to the German context

The German nationals who staffed the Centre office in Bamberg were an invaluable resource in helping teachers to adapt quickly into the German system. Edith Czerwinski produced a booklet called *Read Me!* which gave a step by step guide to new teachers on what they needed to do on arrival in the town they were teaching in. One of the first steps was for teachers to register their name and address and ask their landlord to sign the registration form. This process was followed by collecting the necessary forms for medical checks and taking the registration form to the civic authority to obtain a resident permit.

The Accommodation section of the booklet gives comprehensive details of what was required when renting a property, including procedures for paying rent, legal responsibility, arrangements for the different services: electric, gas and telephone. It also offered advice on how to remain on good terms with the landlord and neighbours. The remaining sections included: Banking, Salaries, Advances and Expenses; Medical Arrangements, including the kind of cover available throughout the EEC. The section on General Matters set out guidance and advice related to such areas as owning and driving a car and insurance, passport renewal, radio licences and local and national travel services. The penultimate part of the booklet provided the addresses of the British Consulates in the regions the teachers were working in and information about the office in Bamberg; whereas the final section was concerned with National Customs.

Whilst the detail of the booklet may seem to be over protective today, it is important to remember that the opportunity for young teachers to travel was far more limited than it is now, so the practical advice and help given must have contributed greatly to the way that they were able to fit into the German context. Tony Abrahams’

main concern throughout the Scheme was to provide a very strong personal and professional welfare support system so that teachers were able to focus on the job of teaching.

Structure of the Scheme

Throughout the German Scheme there was very clear line management. Initially this was directly to Tony Abrahams but as the Scheme progressed, the Deputy Directors in each region took on a significant line management responsibility particularly in terms of supervising and evaluating the performance of teachers. The next section gives details of the way that the structure operated through the Area Meetings and Half Year Conferences (HYC). These, together with the Deputy Directors’ visits to schools, enabled a continuing review of progress across all regions. The review was based not just on what was said and remembered, but it also relied heavily on extensive records that were kept at all levels, through reports, notes of meetings and through records that were kept of any questions and concerns raised by teachers at the briefing sessions and on the Orientation Course.

Another aspect of the structure was the very strong and effective communication that occurred between the Bamberg and London offices, and between those who were working at the Professional Studies and Publications Departments in Colchester. If a teacher had a query that could not be answered in Germany, for example about superannuation and National Insurance, it was passed on to the relevant member of staff in the London office who would respond within a matter of days. There was a very strong interchange between staff from the London and Bamberg offices, through their presence at the briefing sessions in London and through the Orientation Courses (OC) and HYCs in Germany. Peter Treacher made regular trips to Germany, in addition to those already mentioned, to take out the materials and books that had been published in Colchester to support the teaching of English.

Specific Problems

Specific problems such as termination of contract or death of a teacher were again catered for within the system. Whilst this

happened rarely, nevertheless procedures were in place to deal with such problems. At Briefings, teachers were informed about the policy regarding termination of contracts when they were on the OC and this information was included in their contract. Their contracts also included a clause on summary dismissal for Professional Misconduct, but according to Liz Bryant this was never activated throughout the period of the Scheme. If teachers needed time out for the death of a close relative in the UK, they were advised to ring their Deputy Director who would then inform the Bamberg Office, who then phoned London. All teachers were issued with a CfBT Identity Card, designed by Edith Czerwinski, which helped when having to deal with the German authorities, when either they, or a member of their family, died in Germany. Both Liz Bryant and Edith Czerwinski remember the difficulty that teachers had when asking for time out because of a death in the family; this was mainly because German teachers were only allowed half a day's bereavement leave. It is important to recognise that although the British teachers were working in German schools they were employees of the Centre and as such it was possible for local regulations to be waived, albeit reluctantly.

The way that personnel matters were dealt with both in the UK and in Germany was impressive. The procedures adopted meant that teachers were able, as Tony Abrahams wished, to 'get on with the job of teaching'. The support from the Bamberg office was critical to the success of the Scheme in Germany, but equally so was the support that teachers received from the London office. The terms of their contracts were made very clear to teachers at the Briefing sessions before they went out to Germany. This meant that they were fully aware of the arrangements for giving notice to terminate the contract, either by them or by CfBT. The continuing support from the London office was also important to teachers as they came towards the end of their contracts; when they were interviewed and supported by members of the Resettlement Team. For, whilst the resettlement consultants interviewed teachers in Germany, all the systems and support for this important aspect of the operation were based in London. These examples highlight the very high degree of transparency at all operational levels of the Centre which again was clearly a strong contributory factor to the efficient and effective implementation of the German Scheme.

| PROFILE | Iain MacArthur |
|---------|--|
| | <p>Iain MacArthur taught German in an English secondary school for four years before going out to Germany on the CBT Scheme in 1973. He describes his two years in Germany as the best two years of his professional life. Working for CBT meant that he was part of an organisation which helped him to know where he was; to be clear about what was required and to know how to deliver effective teaching. CBT was an organisation that epitomised the connection between an effective 'top down' and powerful 'bottom up' approach.</p> <p>Iain speaks of being part of a community of professionals who felt valued, useful and well-prepared. As a young teacher, he moved from a situation where nobody visited his classroom or expressed interest in how he was getting on, to an organisation which was committed to a culture of sharing. This was evident from the initial briefing and orientation sessions and was further strengthened through 'inventive' Area meetings and Half Year Conferences. Iain's lessons were observed for the first time since completing his PGCE, an experience which was positive and constructive because of the time spent on debriefing and providing feedback.</p> <p>In his second year Iain had the opportunity to participate in one of the management training courses. He now says that the management training he received was well ahead of its time and that when he went on an ILEA management course in the 1980s he encountered nothing new.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Continued...</p> |

After Germany Iain received a PLATOV award to study for an MA in applied linguistics at Edinburgh University. He went on to work with the Centre in the UK as part of the team working on writing and curriculum development. Following that he was a Senior Lecturer in an ILEA FE College. He believes that the experience of working with CBT made his career, for without the management experience and perspective gained from Germany he would not have gone into an admin and support role in Further Education and later Higher Education.

Iain has continued to be committed to CfBT. He was a Trustee until November 2008 and is still active as a Member.

4. Support for Professional and Career Development

“ The term Continuing Professional Development [CPD] is used to describe the process to maintain, develop and enhance skills, knowledge and competence in order to improve performance at work. ”

CPD and Career Development now

All successful organisations recognise the value of promoting an effective approach to the continuing professional development (CPD) of their staff. This is evident in the proliferation of literature and materials to support CPD training that has occurred in most disciplines over the past few years.¹¹ The definition of CPD below is one which is easily recognisable across different professions:

‘The term Continuing Professional Development [CPD] is used to describe the process to maintain, develop and enhance skills, knowledge and competence in order to improve performance at work.’

The recognition of a need to support CPD in education came to the forefront in the 1980s when the Department for Education and Science (DES) and local authorities became more aware of the need to extend and develop the teaching force. At the time, staff development was seen as a significant factor in promoting whole school self evaluation and development. The concept of staff development was taken from industrial management models where the benefits of having clear strategies and programmes were realised through increased productivity and effectiveness.

Its attraction to the education sector was that it put into context the need for personal professional development, which until 1987¹² occurred on a purely elective basis, with a need to look at how the strengths and expertise of staff could be developed to support the implementation of the school’s aims and objectives. In the secondary sector this was supported through the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) and the TVEI-related inservice training (TRIST) scheme, which provided large scale specific grant support to LEAs in areas that had been identified by the Government.

The introduction of the Education Reform Act (1988) and the National Curriculum (1989) meant that teachers were at the forefront of implementing radical changes in the curriculum and in the way it was taught in schools. Inservice training was only an initial stage in the CPD process, as it became essential to widen the approach to include all the different levels of support and development that occurred within and between schools. Whilst traditionally inservice training has been associated with training that occurs outside the work place, there are many CPD activities that take place on a continuous basis within schools. These include opportunities to:

- learn on the job through sharing experiences and working together
- develop materials and resources to support teaching and learning
- participate in staff seminars, meetings and INSET days
- become involved in classroom action research.

More structured learning occurs through opportunities to attend courses, workshops, conferences and seminars as well as undertaking award-bearing postgraduate courses linked to the theory and practice of education and the management of change.

Below are some commonly recognised principles underpinning effective CPD:¹³

- The individual learner is responsible for managing and undertaking CPD activity and the effective learner knows best what he/she needs to learn
- The learning process is continuous and part of a systematic cycle of analysis, action and review

¹¹ Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, July 2003, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Briefing and Policy Statement CPD 29

¹² This situation changed in 1987 when teachers’ conditions of service were revised to include five non-contact days each year to support the development of the school

¹³ Adapted from principles set out in CPD 29 – op cit (11)

“A conscious effort was made by the Centre to ensure that newly appointed teachers did not feel either socially or professionally isolated when working in schools that could be up to as much as 30 km apart.”

- Learning objectives should be clear and should serve organisational needs, client needs and individual goals
- The CPD process is planned and based on identifiable learning outcomes that can be achieved by the individual.

Until the 1990s, organisational support for career development in Education was *ad hoc*, as it was up to individual teachers to work out their own career path through gaining promotion in schools, local authorities and in Higher Education. Today the approach is far more structured and is reflected in the range of training and support available for different levels of responsibility within schools. The Training and Development Agency (TDA)¹⁴ website sets out exactly how teachers can progress in their careers, either within the classroom or in a leadership role. It gives information about career progression in primary and secondary schools and provides links to qualification routes, e.g. the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH), the National College for School Leadership (NCSL), and the Fast Track teaching programme which is a scheme designed for talented teachers with the ability and ambition to make rapid progress into their careers and achieve leadership positions sooner rather than later.

CPD in Germany

The German Scheme was remarkable in the way that from the very start it placed importance on the need for teachers to be trained to the highest standards. The orientation course is described in detail in *Interesting company* (Taylor, 2009); it aimed to ensure that the British teachers who were appointed by the Centre were able to ‘hit the ground running’ when they took up their appointments in German schools. Reference has already been made to the way in which the course was run by teachers who had personal experience of working in the German system, whether they were British teachers in the second year of their contract (like Michael Carrier and Lois Arthur) or German teachers. The German teachers were able to

provide invaluable insights into the cultural and organisational differences that new teachers would encounter. One cultural difference that several former teachers commented on was the German attitude to cheating in examinations. British teachers were often shocked to discover that it was very common for students to cheat in examinations and that the local teachers turned a ‘blind eye’ to this as it was not considered totally unacceptable in the German context. An interesting outcome of the involvement of German teachers was that the orientation course provided them with an important professional development opportunity; so much so, that many asked to continue to be involved in subsequent years.

Area Meetings

A conscious effort was made by the Centre to ensure that newly appointed teachers did not feel either socially or professionally isolated when working in schools that could be up to as much as 30 km apart. This meant that Centre teachers were not living in an expatriate community but quickly became integrated into the local community and culture. Several of those I interviewed commented on the very strong social cohesion and camaraderie that was engendered through the regular Area Meetings. Each year, one of the teachers was invited to take on the role of Area Secretary; usually these were teachers in the second year of their contract, but as the Scheme grew some teachers were selected at the end of the Orientation Course. They were responsible for convening the meetings (about four a year) and linking with the Deputy Director of their region with regard to the arrangements. The purpose of the meetings was ostensibly for teachers to share experiences, problems and specific difficulties of working in the German system. However, the meetings also provided the opportunity to share teaching materials and for many was the starting point for what later became a career in writing and publishing TEFL textbooks. In this way the meetings supported an opportunity for grass roots growth and provide a very clear example of the way in which, given the right conditions, teachers are able to take responsibility for their own professional development. The credit for

¹⁴TDA website: <http://www.tda.gov.uk/Recruit/lifeasateacher/careersprospectsanddevelopment.aspx>

“During many of these activities, they were observed by a group of external observers from areas outside education who gave feedback on the way they had responded to the task.”

providing the right conditions must go to the Centre who not only organised the venue and travel expenses, but also paid for a communal meal after the meetings had ended.

Half Year Conferences

Specific training needs and issues arising from Area meetings were fed into the organisation of the Half Year Conferences (HYC) which took place in February each year. The HYC focused on both the professional and career development of the teachers attending. The professional side was concerned with extending teachers' knowledge of specific techniques and approaches to TEFL whereas their career development was catered for through the individual review sessions conducted by the resettlement team and through the personal interviews with Tony Abrahams.

Many of the former teachers I interviewed paid tribute to the work of Peter Treacher who, as Head of Professional Studies, was responsible for the overall organisation and management of both the orientation courses and the Half Year Conferences. Like the orientation courses, the HYC required considerable logistical organisation and co-ordination as the number of teachers involved at the height of the scheme meant that up to six conferences were running concurrently during February. The professional focus of the conferences was decided beforehand by the Deputy Directors and Area Secretaries, so that each conference covered five topics and catered for up to thirty teachers.

Management Training

As the German Scheme developed it became necessary to delegate more responsibility at local and regional levels. Full time Deputy Director posts were introduced to ensure that the personal and professional needs of teachers and their dependants were catered for. At the height of the scheme in Germany there were twenty one Deputy Directors, who covered a range of responsibilities in the field. All those appointed had worked previously as teachers on the scheme so they had first hand experience of what it was like for the teachers they were supporting. Comprehensive details of their responsibilities are set out in Chris Taylor's history of CfBT (Taylor, 2009), but it is

worth noting two factors that relate directly to professional development:

- the creation of the posts provided an opportunity for career progression within the Scheme
- a recognition by Tony Abrahams of the need to provide the Deputy Directors with training as educators and managers.

This led to the creation of what at the time was a very innovative management training programme; initially for the Deputy Directors and later for teachers who were interested in furthering their careers by taking advantage of the opportunity the training provided. The content of the programme was ahead of its time as there was no equivalent management training for teachers in the UK. It was Tony Abrahams' idea to develop the management training programme and John Webb led the first course which, he remembers, was held at the German National Television Centre. Subsequent more advanced courses were led by Neil Rackham on whose ideas they were based. As the Deputy Directors gained in confidence and experience they too became involved as course tutors; this also provided them with another valuable professional development opportunity.

The first level management course lasted for four days and took place during the Easter holiday. The course focused on: decision making, preparation and organisation of meetings, planning a timetable, preparing, structuring and presenting information, minute writing and report writing. In the working groups there was a strong emphasis on practical tasks activities. Participants were encouraged to apply problem solving skills through the use of simulations, games and role plays. During many of these activities, they were observed by a group of external observers from areas outside education who gave feedback on the way they had responded to the task. The second level course also took place during the Easter break and focused on two main areas:

- reviewing the work of the Centre and formulating suggestions for improvement
- developing and improving skills of working with people: communicating, negotiating, chairing and working in teams.

Again Tony Abrahams drew on his extensive network of contacts to draw in experts to provide support, commentary and advice to all those involved.

What is interesting about the management training courses in Germany is the way in which they opened up the experience of teachers to approaches that were being developed outside education. For many it was their first contact with highly skilled and experienced personnel from other fields, an experience that was sometimes salutary but always challenging. It is interesting to note, when reading the profiles of Lois Arthur, Iain MacArthur and Michael Carrier, how each of them refers to the way that the management courses and the experience of being a Deputy Director created a foundation for all their subsequent work as managers and leaders in organisations.

Materials Development and Resources

From the start, the German Scheme was responsible for actively encouraging teachers to develop materials to support and supplement the required texts in teaching English, and Area Meetings were a forum for sharing good ideas and teaching materials. Tony Abrahams recognised that when teachers were involved directly in developing materials they became more innovative and exploratory in their teaching. Teachers were also encouraged to share their ideas and practice through the Centre newsletter, *FORUM*.

Peter Treacher played a key role in promoting, editing and publishing materials that were based on the good ideas and experience of teachers. These were produced by the Publications Division, which was set up in 1976 and based in Colchester. Several of the former teachers I spoke to either went from Germany to work on developing materials with Peter in Colchester or were employed by CfBT in its English for Special Purposes Division (ESP), also in Colchester, with Shiona Harkness. Those who worked for ESP were available for short-term overseas consultancies or to develop Communicative English materials for business and other specialist organisations.

Other teachers went from Germany to work for the Colchester English Study Centre (CESC), the first language school in the UK to offer tailor made English courses for specific purposes.

In 1975 an English Teaching Resource Centre (ETRC) was established in Wuppertal. The first Director was Jack Lonergan, a former teacher, Area Secretary and Deputy Director. The Resource Centre was in many respects like a Teachers' Centre in that it provided all the facilities for establishing a supportive environment for the personal and professional development of teachers. These included a reference library, a visual aids resources room, an audio listening room, a conference room, kitchen and coffee area as well as offices for the Director and Secretary. The facilities were not confined to British teachers but all resources, inservice training and professional advice were also made available to teachers of English in any German state institution.

It is important to recognise that the development of materials and the establishment of the ETRC were, as Jack Lonergan said in 1983,¹⁵ *'in keeping with Tony Abrahams' principle of sharing experience and knowledge, and providing a suitable environment for personal and professional development.'*

The PLATOV Awards

The PLATOV awards were the brainchild of Tony Abrahams who decided to provide financial support for teachers from the German Scheme who wanted to pursue postgraduate study, usually in the field of applied linguistics. From as early as 1969, teachers were able to apply for an award which was offered on condition that they completed the course and wrote a report on their experience for the benefit of future Centre teachers. For the first three years of the awards, Tony Abrahams financed the scheme personally. However, as the German Scheme progressed, it became possible for CfBT to invest some of their profits into the award scheme.

The PLATOV awards continued until the early 1990s when the diversification of the

¹⁵ From an article written to celebrate Tony Abrahams' 60th birthday in 1983

“The success of the resettlement team was based on the extensive network of contacts that was established in the UK.”

company's activities led to the establishment of a coherent Research and Development strategy for investing profits into people and ideas. Five of the former teachers I met had benefited from receiving a PLATOV award and these clearly provided a strong contribution to their subsequent career development.

Award-bearing Courses

Throughout the period of the German Scheme there was a strong link with the University of Birmingham's English Language Department, which was headed by Professor John Sinclair. The first EFL lectureship was supported financially by the Centre when Diana Cavanagh was appointed in 1973. When Diana left in 1975, Chris Kennedy took on the task of formalising the development of an Inservice BPhil in Education which was designed for serving teachers¹⁶ who did not have graduate qualifications. This course ran for about six years, until the need for upgrading certificated teachers' qualifications had been met, and catered for twelve students a year, six of whom were funded by CfBT.

Another important feature of the connection with Birmingham was the way in which PGCE students taking the TEFL option were able to have a two-week placement in a German school alongside a CfBT teacher. This connection also applied to staff from the Department who contributed regularly to the orientation courses and the Half Year Conferences. A further development outside the German Scheme was the establishment of what was known as the 'Jungle MA' which involved one of the university lecturers being based in Kuala Lumpur to run a research Masters programme for serving teachers (known locally as MAMA). One term of the MA was spent in Birmingham but the rest focused entirely on site-based action research back in Malaysia.

The Resettlement Team

The resettlement team was established in the early 1970s and ran until the end of the German Scheme in 1982. Again, its provenance and

the detail of its work is described more fully in *Interesting company* (Taylor 2009) but it is important to recognise that it provided valuable support to many teachers when the time came for them to re-enter the UK system. The team included former HMI, serving headteachers, FE principals and College of Education staff, and each year two or three of them would attend the HYC to provide professional advice and ongoing support for individual teachers. Donald Watson, a former member of the team, speaks warmly of the way that their work was organised and the support they received from the Administrative Section who catered for all the arrangements for the visits. As with every other aspect of the German Scheme, they too received a detailed briefing before going out to Germany. After each visit there would be a follow-up meeting in London with Lewis Marsters, the Head of the Team, Myra Anderson, and Liz Bryant who had overall administrative responsibility. The purpose of the meeting was to go through the placement and resettlement arrangements for individual teachers. Donald also referred to the way that members of the team would continue to provide follow-up support once teachers were back in the UK through either telephoning or writing to individual teachers.

The success of the resettlement team was based on the extensive network of contacts that was established in the UK. This, together with the support, advice and guidance that individual teachers received from highly skilled and experienced educators, meant that CfBT teachers did not experience difficulties re-entering the UK education system when they returned from Germany.

Strengths of the Approach to CPD in Germany

The approach to CPD in Germany is characterised in a number of significant ways. These can be summarised as follows:

- A recognition that the *quality of members of staff* was integral to the success and overall quality of the scheme

¹⁶Some teachers in Germany had gained their teaching qualification in Colleges of Education where they were awarded a Teaching Certificate. The general introduction of graduate status on initial training courses did not occur until 1970.

- A belief that *heightened levels of expectation* resulted in a higher level of professionalism
- A commitment to providing *strong professional support* for British teachers so that they could focus on the prime objective which was to be highly effective teachers of English within the German context
- The provision of an *entitlement* to training for all teachers working on the scheme
- The way that the Centre really was a '*listening organisation*' at all operational levels
- The contribution that the systematic approach to the provision of training made to *quality assurance* through the acquisition of *clear and accurate feedback*.

Quality members of staff

Whilst the main focus of training and support was on teachers, it is important to recognise that the quality of all members of staff was a significant factor in the success of the German Scheme. The levels of briefing and support that have been described in Section 1, also applied in varying degrees to those who were responsible for the administration and organisation of the Scheme. No-one, whether they were trainers, re-settlement consultants or staff from the London office, went out to Germany without receiving a comprehensive briefing on what to expect. The same applied to German teachers and visitors who came to England to contribute to the briefing sessions. The former teachers I met believed that they had participated in a high-quality operation which had extended them professionally far beyond the level they could have reached at that time in the UK. They were aware that they were representatives of CfBT in Germany and speak with pride of their contribution to what was achieved as well as exhibiting tremendous loyalty and regard for Tony Abrahams.

Heightened levels of expectation

Tony Abrahams believed that if the conditions were right teachers could operate at a much higher level and there is no doubt that this was a critical factor in the success of the German Scheme. I have already referred to the way that teachers were encouraged to take responsibility within the organisation through becoming Area Secretaries; through developing materials; and through providing

training and support for newer colleagues as the Scheme progressed. Time and again teachers were given the opportunity to demonstrate what they were capable of achieving through the way that they responded to the challenges of teaching a different curriculum in a different country with a totally different education system.

An entitlement to strong professional support

I have already outlined the range of professional support that was given to teachers on the German Scheme. However, what is remarkable is that the support was offered both as a requirement and an entitlement to professional development and training, and was part of the overall package that teachers received when they became involved in the German Scheme. The concept of entitlement is interesting because at that time there was no equivalent in the UK. In the 1970s, there was no provision for shared responsibility and dialogue about the professional and career development of teachers which, as has already been indicated, tended to be *ad hoc* and based upon the personal qualities and drive of individuals.

Listening organisation

One of the key features of the success of the Centre for British Teachers in Germany was the way in which those responsible really listened to what teachers said so that they could provide training and support that was targeted directly at teachers' professional needs. This kind of active listening resulted in the collection of *clear and accurate feedback* through the reports of Area Meetings and the individual reviews that Deputy Directors conducted of teachers' classroom practice. These were very powerful determinants in ensuring that the Centre's ear was to the ground and that action could and would be taken to solve problems and provide support. This dimension is discussed more fully in the next section when looking at the way that systems thinking was applied to the German Scheme.

Assuring quality

The rigorous approach to review and development at all levels was at the centre of ensuring consistency of quality throughout the German Scheme. The majority of teachers

working on the Scheme had not been observed teaching in classrooms since they undertook their initial training. Many of those I interviewed commented on how valuable this was and how much they appreciated the observations and advice of the Deputy Directors. It would seem that the Deputy Directors were very skilled at handling what for many has often been seen as a tension

between evaluating performance and giving advice; in this respect they were acting as *critical friends*. The fact that they too had taught English in German schools also meant that they had strong credibility with the teachers.

| PROFILE | Diana Cavanagh |
|---------|--|
| | <p>Diana Cavanagh was one of the third cohort of teachers recruited to work on the German Scheme in 1970. She had previously taught German for three years in the UK and like many other single young teachers was looking for something out of the ordinary when she saw the CBT advert for teachers to teach in German schools.</p> <p>Diana describes the high level of support she received from the initial briefing in London to the orientation course, Area meetings and the Half Year Conferences. Everyone was supported by the organisation and administration of the scheme both from the local office in Bamberg and from the London office where all concerns and queries were dealt with promptly and efficiently. She speaks very warmly of the professional support received on her orientation course, particularly the way that Peter Treacher, Head of Professional Studies, helped to develop her understanding of the application of practical approaches to TEFL in German classrooms.</p> <p>Diana found that she enjoyed TEFL and although offered the opportunity for management training she preferred to focus on developing her expertise in the classroom. During the last year of her contract in Germany she was encouraged to gain a further qualification in this field, and went to Edinburgh University to complete the Diploma in Applied Linguistics.</p> <p>There is no doubt that the experience in Germany provided Diana with a stepping-off point for the rest of her career in TEFL. After completing the Diploma at Edinburgh in 1973, she became the first Centre-supported EFL lecturer at the University of Birmingham; whilst there she worked for both the English and Education Departments. This meant that she was able to continue her association with the Centre through the annual two-week placement in German schools of PGCE students taking the TEFL option. She also continued to contribute as a trainer to the Half Year Conferences.</p> <p>Whilst at Birmingham, Diana worked with John Sinclair on preparing and running initial training and INSET modules and courses that focused on both mother tongue teaching and ESL. These later provided the basis for the BPhil (Ed) which was introduced to provide graduate qualification for serving teachers.</p> <p>After two years Diana left Birmingham to work for the British Council in Saudi Arabia – an experience that provided a startling contrast to working in Germany but developed her interest in English for Specific Purposes and, on her return to the UK, led to a post in ESP/EFL in Manchester. After gaining a MSc in Education Management she moved into education administration and served as Chief Education Officer for 10 years in Rochdale and Bradford. She feels that working in Germany with CBT and being involved in the development of the company widened her horizons and experience of management styles.</p> <p>Until recently she was chair of the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA), one of the three largest examination boards in the country. She continues to support CfBT through her active involvement as a Member.</p> |

5. Developing the Culture of a Learning Organisation

“The plan set out exactly how it was expected the objectives would be achieved as well as the resources (human and physical) required for successful implementation.”

The concept of a learning organisation was initially identified in the late 1970s¹⁷ and the 1980s.¹⁸ It is an approach which arose out of systems thinking and a belief in the capabilities of individuals to contribute actively to change, growth and development in the company or organisation they work for. The concept gained much currency in public sector management in the 1990s; through the work of Peter Senge¹⁹ in the United States and Mike Pedler, Jack Burgoyne and Tom Boydell²⁰ in this country. Its application in relation to the business sector is often seen in terms of developing a learning company.

One of the most accessible definitions is provided by Mike Pedler (1997), who defines a learning organisation as ‘an organisation that facilitates the learning of all its members and continuously transforms itself’.

Characteristics of a Learning Organisation

The main characteristics or disciplines of learning organisations have been identified (Senge 1994) as:

- systems thinking
- personal mastery
- mental models
- a shared vision
- team learning.

Today, these are seen as being critical to establishing a culture within the organisation which is predicated on the assumption that the capacity and capability to learn are vital to its growth and success.

The above characteristics are evident to a greater or lesser degree in the way that the work of CfBT was developed in Germany,

although it would be fair to say that the organisational model that was applied then owed much to Tony Abrahams’ military experience as a serving officer with the 12th Royal Frontier Force Regiment in the Indian Army during the Second World War. However, the capability to respond to different contexts and apply what has been learned to future growth and success was very evident as the German Scheme progressed.

Systems Thinking

Many of those interviewed as part of this research have reflected on how Tony Abrahams was ahead of his time in the way that systems thinking was applied to the German Scheme. Clear objectives were established from the outset and their implementation was planned with meticulous attention to detail. Every stage, whether it was recruitment, induction, professional development or the resettlement programme, was planned, prepared and thought through in terms of the experience for the teachers. Underpinning this approach was the annual operational plan, based on agreed objectives and anticipated outcomes. The plan set out exactly how it was expected the objectives would be achieved as well as the resources (human and physical) required for successful implementation.

A rigorous system of reviewing and reporting progress was built into the annual cycle and the resulting feedback provided an invaluable contribution to planning and development for the following year. The review applied to all aspects of the scheme whether it was recruitment, training, observation of teaching, or materials development. The resulting feedback provided a systemic way of learning about the operation and quality of the scheme, so that appropriate measures could be taken

¹⁷ Argyris, C. & Schon, D. (1978) *Organisational Learning: A Theory of Action Perspective*, Reading MA: Addison Wesley

¹⁸ Handy, C. (1990) *The Age of Unreason*, Boston: Harvard Business School Press

¹⁹ Senge, P. (1994) *The Fifth Discipline: The Art & Practice of the Learning Organisation*, Paperback Edition, New York: Currency Doubleday

²⁰ Pedler, M., Burgoyne, J. & Boydell, T. (1977) *The Learning Company: A strategy for sustainable development*, London: McGraw-Hill

“If teachers are given the right opportunities and conditions to take responsibility they will surprise us and themselves by performing way above everyone’s expectations.”

for the forthcoming year. These built-in quality assurance procedures meant that those involved were able to take appropriate action to reinforce successful outcomes and address specific problems and difficulties. An example of this is the way that the Briefing Handbook was subjected to regular modification and amendment each year so that it reflected the direct experience of practitioners, whether they were teaching in classrooms, involved in providing training and support, or administering and managing the scheme.

Personal Mastery

The section on Professional and Career Development sets out how a learning culture was developed for teachers and others working on the German Scheme. Tony Abrahams is quoted as saying:²¹

‘If teachers are given the right opportunities and conditions to take responsibility they will surprise us and themselves by performing way above everyone’s expectations.’

Such responsibility requires that teachers want to develop as learners, whatever the context. As has already been indicated, a learning culture is developed through recognising the value of self-reflection, sharing experiences as part of a professional dialogue and having the opportunity to pursue different kinds of learning. The former teachers I interviewed benefited greatly from their involvement in the German Scheme and, as the profiles show, attribute much of their subsequent career development to the firm foundations provided at that time.

Mental Models

Senge’s (1994) discipline of mental models is based on a constructivist interpretation of the way in which we view the world. Senge suggests that this occurs through the way that the responses, feelings and motives of people we encounter provide an explanation for the world in which we live and help us to predict future actions. In this respect mental models provide the lenses through which we receive and interpret information.

Senge describes this as a ‘ladder of inference’ and says:

‘We live in a world of self generating beliefs that remain largely untested. We adopt those beliefs because they are based on conclusions, which are inferred from what we observe plus past experience. Our ability to achieve the results we truly desire is eroded by our feelings that:

- *our beliefs are **the** truth*
- *the truth is obvious*
- *our beliefs are based on real data*
- *the data we select are the real data.’*

Mental models require an ability to scrutinise and hold ourselves to account with greater intellectual rigour than outsiders could ever hope to bring to bear. In this respect it is truly a discipline of self as we first need to be aware of the mental models that we hold.

The discipline of mental models described above is very much concerned with individual world views. However, it can be applied to organisational constructs through the way that the creation of a learning environment is encouraged, where confrontational attitudes are replaced with an open culture that promotes enquiry and trust.

As indicated earlier, the German Scheme was predicated on a military model and as such is based on a clear hierarchy of roles and responsibilities. However, what is remarkable is that it provided participants with the opportunity to interact and develop professionally, to be creative, to be part of a collegiate structure within a highly structured and systematised framework.

Shared Vision

There is no question that Tony Abrahams was responsible for the vision that underpinned the German Scheme and indeed the development of CfBT. This vision was communicated from the very start of the recruitment process and was embodied in practical terms through his active involvement in the operational aspects of the scheme. Tony Abrahams’ leadership of

²¹ Speech by Anthony Abrahams to mark the Centre’s 20th anniversary

“The literature on learning organisations defines shared vision as an important incentive for the workforce ‘as it creates a common identity which can provide a focus and energy for learning’.”

CfBT as an organisation has been described as ‘charismatic’ and an expression of [his] unique personality; [as] he was the source of its originality and vitality (Taylor, 2009). It is important to recognise that it was this originality and vitality which drove the strong sense of purpose that not only underpinned the vision for the German Scheme, but also invited everyone involved to share and realise the dream.

The literature on learning organisations defines shared vision as an important incentive for the workforce ‘as it creates a common identity which can provide a focus and energy for learning’ (Senge 1994). It is often said that traditional structures, where a company vision is imposed from above, can prevent the creation of a shared vision; and there also tends to be an assumption that learning organisations should have flat, decentralised organisational structures. This raises questions about how the vision was communicated in Germany and why for most of those involved it created a common identity which did indeed provide a shared focus and energy for learning.

Team Learning

The ability to benefit from the learning of individuals is essential to the way in which people within an organisation are able to work together to achieve both personal and corporate success. This is why team learning is seen as an essential characteristic of a learning organisation, and why it is true that ‘an organisation’s commitment to and capacity for learning can be no greater than that of its members’ (Senge, 1994).

This kind of learning occurred in different ways on the German Scheme as teams were established for different purposes. The team responsible for the administration and management of the scheme operated from both the London and Bamberg offices and, even though they were operating in different locations, there was still very good communication between both administrative arms of CfBT. This also included strong links with and between the Deputy Directors who, because of the strong communication network that had been created, were able to pre-empt many problems that might arise in the field. The work of the resettlement teams and the

teams established for training and orientation has already been discussed in Section 4, but it is clear that the sharing of what was learned within those teams contributed directly to their continuing success.

The sharing of learning between teachers is dealt with in more detail in Section 4 but it is worth mentioning the kind of team learning that occurred through the way that teachers were encouraged to take on different roles within the scheme and how talent spotting was very much part of the organisation’s ethos. Again the context owed much more to a military organisational perspective, and it is interesting to note that when Peter Treacher, Head of Professional Studies, was interviewed he described his role as being an Adjutant to Tony Abrahams (the Commanding Officer). Similarly, Michael Carrier now sees the opportunities he had as a teacher to train others in Germany as analogous to becoming an NCO within the organisation. Michael also comments on the way that everybody was encouraged to feel part of the structure as the variety of roles offered gave teachers the opportunity to stretch themselves and develop a strong sense of ownership of the scheme in Germany.

In this section I have endeavoured to apply some of the characteristics of what is now regarded as part of the vocabulary and language of management and organisational development to events that were happening before the concept of a learning organisation had been articulated. It is therefore important to recognise the level of the achievement of the German Scheme, both at the time and in terms of its legacy to the current management and development of CfBT Education Trust.

| PROFILE | Michael Carrier |
|---------|---|
| | <p>Michael Carrier is currently Head of English Language Innovation at the British Council. He worked for CBT in Germany from 1974 to 1976. Michael first heard of the CBT scheme in 1973, whilst a PGCE student at Sheffield University. During the two years he was in Germany he worked in a Fachoberschule (FOS) which provided vocational training for students who were usually in the top two years of secondary education, but also for those who had dropped out of the education system and were returning to gain a vocational qualification.</p> <p>He believes that the CBT German Scheme had a huge effect on the German education system through the energy and dynamism of the operation. He describes the cross-cultural value of the experience and the significant contribution it made towards breaking down barriers and establishing an intercultural dialogue between Germany and the UK. Many Germans he met had first-hand experience and strong memories of the effects of the Second World War, including his headteacher who was a former tank commander.</p> <p>He is sure that one of the reasons why the scheme was so successful was because of the way that everyone was encouraged to feel that they were part of the structure. There is no doubt that a large number of teachers had an organisational responsibility, either as Area Secretaries, through promotion to Deputy Director, and through their involvement as tutors on the orientation courses. This gave them the opportunity to stretch themselves beyond what might have been possible if they had stayed within the UK system.</p> <p>Michael speaks of the sense of camaraderie engendered through being part of a professional community and the way that teachers were encouraged to contribute to the Half Year Conferences (HYC) and orientation courses. He also believes that the management training courses which promoted active learning through simulations, case studies and role play were something entirely new at that time. For him, working for CBT meant that there was an assumption that the organisation would be in place, with clear objectives linked to realisable outcomes.</p> <p>Like many others, Michael was able to continue working for the Centre after completing his two years in Germany, when he worked for a further two years developing materials to support the German Scheme at the Publications Division in Colchester. At that time the Centre was at the forefront of developing Communicative English through using authentic materials and realia. In 1979, Michael received a PLATOV award to complete an MA in linguistics at Edinburgh University.</p> <p>Since then he has continued his career in ESL through working for the English for Special Purposes (ESP) Division in Colchester to develop materials for contracts that arose through the work of CESC, and later through working with Siemens as a Curriculum Designer. In the mid 1980s he worked in management for Eurocentre and later moved to the US to set up subsidiary centres. Until recently he was CEO of overseas business at International House before taking up his current post at the British Council.</p> |

6. Leadership that Supports Development

“ Using inspiration together with the EI triad of self-confidence, self-awareness and empathy, visionary leaders articulate a purpose that rings true for themselves and attune it to values shared by the people they lead. ”

Much has been written about the leadership and management of successful organisations and attempts have been made to classify different styles and approaches. In the early 1980s Tom Peters and Robert Waterman²² looked at lessons that could be learned from successful American companies. Drawing on the theoretical perspective of John MacGregor Burns,²³ they refer to two basic styles of leadership, *transactional* and *transformational*. The *transactional* style requires leadership skills such as the ability to obtain results, to control through structures and processes, to solve problems, to plan and organise, and work within the structures and boundaries of the organisation.

Transformational leadership is concerned with engaging the hearts and minds of others. It works to help all parties achieve greater motivation, satisfaction and a greater sense of achievement and, according to Peters and Waterman (1982), ‘builds on man’s need for meaning, leadership that creates institutional purpose’. They believe that transformational leadership transcends transactional leadership because in order to achieve it the leader needs to be concerned with ‘the tricks of the

pedagogue, the mentor, the linguist – the more successfully to become the value shaper, the exemplar, the maker of meanings. His job is much tougher than that of the transactional leader, for he is the true artist, the true pathfinder.’ (p. 82)

The table below²⁴ summarises the basic differences between transactional and transformational leadership styles.

More recently,²⁶ Daniel Goleman has identified the visionary style as one which comes naturally to ‘transformational’ leaders. He sees it as exemplifying the emotional intelligence (EI) competence of inspirational leadership.

‘Using inspiration together with the EI triad of self-confidence, self-awareness and empathy, visionary leaders articulate a purpose that rings true for themselves and attune it to values shared by the people they lead. And because they genuinely believe in that vision they can guide people toward it with a firm hand.’

(p. 58)

| Transactional | Transformational |
|--|--|
| <p>The transactional leader:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognises what it is that we want to get from work and tries to ensure that we get it if our performance merits it. • Exchanges rewards and promises for our effort. • Is responsive to our immediate self interests if they can be met by getting the work done | <p>The transformational leader:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raises our level of awareness, our level of consciousness about the significance and value of designated outcomes, and ways of reaching them. • Gets us to transcend our own self-interest for the sake of the team, organisation or larger policy. • Alters our need level (after Maslow) and expands our range of wants and needs. <p>(Based on Bass 1985 – Wright 1996: 213)²⁵</p> |

²² Peters, T. & Waterman R. H. (1982) *In Search of Excellence*, London: Harper & Row

²³ MacGregor Burns, J. (1978) *Leadership*, New York: Harper Row

²⁴ *Infed* paper on *Classical Leadership* by Michele Erina Doyle & Mark K Smith, http://www.infed.org/leadership/traditional_leadership.htm

²⁵ Op Cit (22)

²⁶ Goleman, D. (2002) *The New Leaders*, London: Little & Brown

“For much of its early history, CfBT as an organisation was to a considerable degree the expression of Tony’s unique personality; he was the source of its originality and vitality.”

Goleman also identified three other leadership styles that are particularly effective in supporting what he calls resonance in an organisation. They are: *coaching*, *affiliative*, and *democratic*. The *coaching* style is concerned with the leader developing others – taking on the role of counsellor *exploring employees’ goals and values and helping them expand their own repertoire of abilities* (p. 62). In this respect, it relates directly to the development of emotional self-awareness and empathy. The *affiliative* style of leadership is concerned with *promoting harmony and fostering friendly interactions, and nurturing personal relationships* (p. 64). The *democratic* style of leadership *builds on a triad of emotional intelligence abilities: teamwork and collaboration, conflict management and influence. The best communicators are superb listeners – and listening is the key strength of the democratic leader* (p. 69).

Where, one might ask, does the leadership of CfBT throughout the period of the German Scheme relate to the above theories? There is no doubt that Tony Abrahams embodied different elements of both the transactional and transformational styles of leadership. And whilst he was clearly visionary in the way he established the Centre for British Teachers in Germany he led from the front and was very ‘hands on’ in his approach. Earlier in this Report, I referred to CfBT in Germany as a *listening organisation* and it is important to remember that the listening started at the top. In this respect Tony demonstrated some elements of Goleman’s (2002) democratic style, particularly in the way in which he was able to get the best out of teams and encourage collaboration at all levels. He also was and still is a very good communicator.

Tony Abrahams had personal contact with all the teachers employed on the German Scheme, as well as on subsequent contracts in Morocco, Brunei and Malaysia. This occurred through the final job interview and through the professional reviews he conducted with teachers at the HYC. He was also involved directly in supporting and training teachers and Deputy Directors on the briefing sessions, the orientation courses, the half year conferences and on the management training courses. He was quick at spotting

talent and ensuring that young teachers were able to perform way beyond what would normally have been considered as their level of competence or responsibility.

A clear function of successful leadership is to support development of the organisation and of the people who work there, and it is this that is one of the most striking features of the way that Tony Abrahams led and directed the German Scheme. Tony has been described (Taylor 2009) as charismatic insofar as he is a *‘mixture of entrepreneur, businessman, educator and philanthropist ... For much of its early history, CfBT as an organisation was to a considerable degree the expression of Tony’s unique personality; he was the source of its originality and vitality.’*

The whole organisation of the Scheme owed much to Tony Abrahams’ perception of what was needed in Germany after meeting the mayor of Bamberg in the mid 1960s. He had the vision, experience and imagination to make it work. One of the most striking outcomes of all the interviews I have conducted is the way that Tony Abrahams has communicated an abiding belief and interest in, and a basic curiosity about, people.

The level of personal support he gave teachers must have been unique at the time. How many leaders of other organisations in the 1970s were prepared to invest their own money into providing awards for employees who wished to improve their professional qualifications? The fact that later the investment was made from the profits of the organisation also reflects the strong ethical and moral dimension to the way that support was given. The effect of those experiences was clearly of huge benefit to those involved. The five former teachers I interviewed who were supported by the PLATOV award were able to have a year out to study the theory and application of linguistics. The wider influence is apparent in their profiles which show how CfBT provided what Jack Lonergan describes as block-building for their subsequent careers.

Tony Abrahams is a remarkable man. As well as all the leadership qualities I have listed it must also be remembered that he does not suffer fools gladly, a quality which can make

enemies but which also endears him to his admirers. As Chris Taylor (2009) says in his profile of Tony, *'To bureaucrats everywhere Tony is a fully paid up member of the Awkward Squad.'* The last word should go to one of the teachers who benefited greatly, Jack Lonergan, who may also have been regarded by some as a member of the Awkward Squad:

'The personal style of AA provoked open hostility from a few, left others neutral, but inspired great loyalty from the many. His German team led by Edith Czerwinski were awe-inspiring: firm but fair, daunting if crossed, but greatly respected and admired.'

| PROFILE | Jack Lonergan |
|---------|---|
| | <p>Jack Lonergan had been teaching for four years at the Collegiate School for Girls in Blackpool when he decided to apply for a job on the CBT German Scheme. He had missed out on the opportunity to spend a year in Germany whilst studying for his first degree in German and Russian at Durham University, so was keen to have the opportunity to spend a year teaching there. Jack was successful in securing a CBT post as a teacher at a Gymnasium in Hamburg and, together with his wife Virginia, moved there in September 1971.</p> <p>Jack describes himself at the time as being somewhat 'bumptious and lively'. He thought he knew how to teach languages, but found the approach to teaching he was introduced to on the Orientation Course 'mind blowing'. For the first time he became aware of applied linguistics, and how it contributed to teaching Communicative English. The course he and other CBT teachers were involved in was heavily influenced by the applied linguistics course at the University of Edinburgh. Peter Treacher, a former research associate at Edinburgh developed training materials specifically for the German Scheme, which were the first of their kind.</p> <p>Whilst on the Orientation Course, Jack's name was put forward by Tony Abrahams to become one of two Area Secretaries in Hamburg. He enjoyed the experience and tells the story of receiving a phone call from Tony Abrahams who wanted to transfer some training to Hamburg. Tony asked him to find a hotel which could provide twelve bedrooms for the trainers, a conference room that would accommodate forty and six break-out rooms. Jack had no previous experience of finding conference venues and the only hotel that could accommodate what Tony Abrahams asked for was the Reichshof, the most expensive hotel in Hamburg. The following day he contacted Tony to give him the hotel details and rates and CBT went ahead and booked the accommodation. Five days later he saw the other Area Secretary who said that he had been contacted by Tony Abrahams about finding accommodation and wondered what to do about it. This, and other experiences at the time, gave Jack the confidence to take action, something which has stood him in good stead throughout his career.</p> <p>At the end of his first year, Jack was offered the opportunity to become a Deputy Director in Nordrhein Westfalen, and he and his family (he now had a baby son) moved there in 1972. He speaks warmly of the experience, particularly the professional development opportunities he had to meet and work with people like Professor John Sinclair, Lewis Marsters, Peter Treacher and John Webb from CESC. He remembers when Lewis Marsters was called in to help deal with a poorly-performing teacher in Hamburg; Lewis invited Jack to go with him as an observer to see how he dealt with the situation. This opportunity was one of many where young teachers like Jack were able to observe and learn from highly skilled and experienced practitioners from different fields.</p> <p>After two years as a Deputy Director, Jack received a PLATOV award to complete an MEd at Manchester University. These were heady times in the field of applied linguistics, with the establishment of descriptors of attainment by the Council of Europe, Sinclair and Coulthard's</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Continued...</p> |

...Continued: Profile Jack Lonergan

approach to discourse analysis, and the way that different media could be applied to teaching and learning. Jack believes that, at the age of 30, he was given opportunities and levels of responsibility that he would not have had access to if he hadn't worked for CBT in Germany.

Jack returned to Germany in 1975 as Director of the English Teaching Resource Centre (ETRC) in Wuppertal. He spent the first year setting up the Centre and the second year running it. The ETRC had a huge impact, particularly on adult education, because it was involved in what Jack describes as 'cutting edge' approaches to the teaching of English in the region. After one year running the ETRC, Jack returned to England to work in the London office in the marketing section, conducting in-country analyses for future projects, but found that this kind of work was not for him. The experience made him realise that he was what he describes as a 'self-starter' and so he and Tony Abrahams agreed to part company.

After leaving CBT in 1979, Jack returned to Germany and was employed by the state to work with Tony Fitzpatrick, another former CBT teacher, on *Follow Me!* a large scale pan-European multi-media English project. He believes that he could not have qualified for this kind of post, which gave him high status and good pay, without the experience of working for CBT.

Jack's subsequent career has been as an EU-project leader, author, administrator, course designer, professor of applied linguistics and British Council Joint Chief Inspector. As a British Council Inspector he was reunited with Lewis Marsters, the former HMI who led the first team of British Council Inspectors. He is certain that the experience of working for CBT made an immense contribution to his career development and, from his point of view, has never been bettered.



CfBT Education Trust
60 Queens Road
Reading
Berkshire
RG1 4BS
0118 902 1000
www.cfbt.com