

Von Rohr & Associates has recently integrated the Dryden Group: what were the drivers of such a merger?

ND*The link with Von Rohr & Associates is already a well-established one! Our companies have worked together for over ten years, mainly around taxation, setting up companies, and entrepreneurship. At the time when Eva von Rohr announced her wish to retire it was natural to discuss how we could expand our relationship - which rapidly became the trigger for bringing the companies together under the same group. As I personally had been a board director of Von Rohr & Associates for over three years, I was in a great situation to see the advantages of bringing these two complementary companies together.

How would you describe outplacement?

ND For me outplacement is the closing of a chapter and the opening of a new one. It is important to manage what is a major career transition as part of a career life cycle management program. If done well it opens up a window to reflect on what an individual really wants to do with their life going forwards taking into account education, experience and lifestyle. Once the reflection is ready it provides a road map to reaching the next step and finding a new role in harmony with what is best for the individual's future.

What are the main objectives of outplacement?

ND An outplacement program is targeted and designed for each candidate. Some programs may be longer for certain individuals and require more investment. The programs at Von Rohr & Associates are therefore more personalised than perhaps at other companies and are modular in design to allow specific tailoring for individuals. Obviously for the former employer it is a major benefit to know that an employee has increased opportunities post departure, this also reflects positively on the organisation.

Is an outplacement program the prerogative of large organisations?

ND Originally transition programs were introduced by larger multinational organisations. However, as the value of these programs has been recognised, they have been incorporated as best practice by smaller and local companies. My personal comment would be that for those organisations that feel a responsibility for their personnel when their role is no longer available, career transition is a natural service to provide no matter what their size.

What are the mutual benefits for organisations and individuals?

ND For many organisations, the benefits are financial and strategic. Having well organised transition structure enables companies to react rapidly to changes in their operating structure – which may involve re-assignment or terminations, with reduced time and effort to manage these transitions. From a wider point of view it enables the HR function to become strategic partners to the business during a period of rapid organisational changes with career life cycle solutions rapidly available. From an employee's point of view, they know that if organisational changes result in the loss of their job, the organisation has put in place a smooth support process to minimise the friction and disruption at what is a very stressful time. This can be part of a package when signing a contract. The greatest ambassador is a former employee who leaves with positive memories of a company. Outplacement has a high return investment in this context.

How does Von Rohr & Associates position and differentiate itself?

ND That's a good question. There are other good companies in this sector, and each has its strengths and weaknesses. When a candidate looks at working with Von Rohr & Associates statistically, they are more likely to have been a senior executive with University education and in the second half of their career. As I mentioned before, many of our candidates look at changing their roles and becoming entrepreneurs and setting up their own business. As a result, we have very strong taxation and corporate administration experience to provide a one-stop shop for people in this situation.

Finally, the person that matters is the candidate. Our advice is to always profile yourself against the outplacement company. Having a good contact with your future lead coach during the introductory meetings is vital as they will accompany you in your program. If you need personalised services check that your requirements can be met. The program is an important investment in time, so you want the best possible result for yourself and for your future.

How would you describe yourself in 3 words?

ND That's a more difficult question! Hopefully my children would say helpful, curious and a (dreadful) sense of humour.