

the Wharf



WHAT WHARFERS WANT

Canteen chef's quick-fire lessons on eating habits of the hungry hordes

Recruitment agencies say Wharf is back in business

Banking boost as jobs start to return

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THE Canary Wharf recruitment drive is under way with firms fearing getting "left behind" in the race for top candidates. Following months of a static jobs market during the downturn, recruitment companies are now reporting a surge in activity. Alexandra Kelly, director at Wapping-based pre-employment screening firm Powerchex, said: "It's going crazy. Not just now, it started before Christmas and it's gone unabated since then. "Many of the firms were waiting. They were not hiring graduates but just replacing staff they lost. Now they are afraid of being left behind." The rise of job offers has resulted in Powerchex having to double staff numbers to 60.

The company has seen a recruitment drive for graduates mainly in the retail banking sector but also in larger investment banks. Alexandra also believes these employment trends are limited to London's financial district. She said: "I've been hearing from other companies in our line of work who deal with different sectors. They are not experiencing the same strong rush, so this really is a City of London and Canary Wharf phenomenon." Neil Owen, a regional director at Robert Half, recruitment agreed there was renewed confidence in Canary Wharf and the City. He said: "We're seeing an increase in companies looking to hire in their finance teams across all levels."

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LOUISA EMERY



And the sun came too

Prime minister Gordon Brown praised the heavens last week when a pre-election visit to Tower Hamlets went off without a hitch, despite the presence of a heckler

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WH... the... stir...
PEO... Susi... goes... great... in C...
V...
10 p... Golf

More confidence in the jobs market

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"History would tell us it's the industries hit first that recover first. Financial services took a hit quicker so it was always likely it would see the increase first.

"Our own research in March with chief financial officers found that nearly half were a lot more confident of the company's prospects compared to six months previous when 84 per cent were pessimistic."

The survey also found 17 per cent of CFOs were looking to hire permanent accountancy and financial staff over the next six months.

Neil said these averages were highest in the capital. He said he believed much of the renewed optimism and desire to recruit was down to a more mobile, talented jobs market.

He said: "There's a renewed confidence within candidates to look for new opportunities. This time last year, people wanted to stay with their current employers and didn't want to risk moving and being the last one out, first one in. But now they are looking to move on."

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There's a renewed confidence in candidates to look for opportunities

Newcomers to the Wharf

CANARY Wharf Group has completed a number of letting deals in the last few months which will see the employee numbers in the area rise.

In January, Barclays Capital secured a deal to take on an extra 45,000sq ft until 2032. Meanwhile, the Financial Services Authority, Locog, MasterCard, Crossrail, KPMG, State Street and Fitch Ratings are also expanding on the site

Recent arrivals include recruitment firm Global Sage, insurance and financial services company MetLife Inc and pharmaceutical business Novartis – all at One Canada Square.

Another big move looks likely next year after oil company Shell has revealed plans to move into 40 Bank Street while refurbishment works are carried out at its Southwark offices.

Other recruitment agencies, including Hays and Robert Walters, also reported stronger than expected figures on the back of a recruitment boom driven in the main by the financial sector.

Paul Venables, finance director of Hays, said: "There has been a gradual increase in private-sector hiring, particularly by the banks, offset by reductions in the public sector. So far this has been a London recovery."

Robert Walters, chief executive of Robert Walters, said: "The group

is benefiting from increased hiring activity in the UK particularly in the banking sector."

Canary Wharf's banks refused to comment on headcounts. But *The Wharf* understands that most are recruiting to replace staff lost during the economic crisis, with the bulk of that recruitment taking place at graduate level.

Institutions such as Barclays, Morgan Stanley and HSBC have all been part of an upward trend of recruitment, but advise prospective employees to try and get work experience through an internship before applying.

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