

20th February 2017

Critical Advice on Flexible Resourcing

The Bank's Real Agenda

When the Judge who ruled in our favour on the 'Non-Signer' Employment Tribunal case gave his Judgement, he drew attention to an extract from a report given to Lloyds Bank's GEC in 2009, just before the Bank began the process of harmonisation of contracts across Lloyds Banking Group. The report said:

"The recession, on top of integration, means that colleagues will be most concerned about staying in employment and potentially less concerned than normal about the employment proposition."

In other words, because people are worried about job security given the merger and recession, we'll get away with forcing through contract and other changes that ordinarily staff wouldn't accept.

That's the attitude of the employer you work for.

We recognise that there are large numbers of managers in the Bank, many of whom are our members, who want to manage staff reasonably and ethically.

But the problem is that the culture that fostered that approach to management died a long time ago. Today's Lloyds agenda is all about cost and short-term profits, irrespective of the longer-term

effects on the Bank's business and certainly with little if any consideration of the impact on staff, many of whom have worked loyally for the Bank for much longer than any of the Executive.

Fundamentally, the emphasis is not on seeing staff as 'Human' but as 'Resources', entirely at the disposal of the Bank and its agenda.

An Iron Fist In A Velvet Glove

Lloyds tries to camouflage its unremitting agenda with chatty blogs, manipulative language such as the use of the word 'colleague' to imply that everyone's in the same boat and piecemeal strategies that conceal the longer-term intent of policies.

One need look no further than the language used in these extracts from the CSA Flexible Resourcing handout:

*"take the **first steps** in implementing resource sharing between small groups of branches"*

Translation: this is just the beginning of what we've got planned.

*"Any changes to colleague working patterns or working location... will be achieved in full discussion with colleagues and by mutual agreement **wherever possible**"*

To get LTU newsletters by email either:

Phone 01234 262868, email us at 24hours@ltu.co.uk or text your email address after the words 'LTU news' to 66777

Translation: if mutual agreement can't be achieved, we'll try and make you do it anyway. That's why we re-wrote your contracts in 2010 after all!

"...an **independent review panel** has been set up to ensure that the business request of the colleague is reasonable taking into account the colleague's individual circumstances"

I can't give you a one line translation for this one: I'm going to need a whole newsletter to cover the non-independent 'Independent' Review Panel!

Critical Advice for PBAs and Managers

Whilst all the Bank propaganda has focused on CSAs, we understand that Bank Managers have been conducting 1-2-1 meetings not only with CSAs, but with PBAs too. A cynic would argue that this is a calculated move on the part of the Bank to collect evidence from PBAs under the radar, which will later be used against them to justify working pattern or location changes.

Whatever the motive, our advice to CSAs applies equally to other branch staff:

- 1.** If you have any concerns about changing your location, or working hours or about mobility, you seek LTU's advice before you meet your line manager.
- 2.** Do not enter into any verbal agreements or accept any verbal assurances.
- 3.** Do not agree to temporary changes to be helpful without clear written understandings on the nature of the arrangement you are entering into.
- 4.** Listen to what is being proposed but do not enter into any agreement or commit yourself to any changes/flexibility at the meeting.
- 5.** Ask for the Bank's proposals in writing so you can't 'misunderstand' what's being said. You can do this using the letter template we sent you recently (please contact us if you need us to send you a replacement template letter).
- 6.** If you don't have a copy, write to the Bank to obtain a copy of your Contract of Employment. You can do this using the letter template we sent you recently (please contact us if you need us to send you a replacement template letter).

7. Remember that if you sign the Bank's form describing your 'flexibility' that will be treated as a commitment – don't sign.

8. Spend a day or two thinking about the proposal and decide what you can and can't commit yourself to doing and why.

9. Take carefully into account how changes in your circumstances could make something that's reasonable now, impossible at a later date e.g. care commitments.

10. If necessary, contact LTU's Advice Team on 01234 262868 (Choose Option 1) at any stage. If you haven't already done so, provide the confidential information we've asked members to give us so we can tailor our advice to their personal circumstances. This can be done by completing our secure web form at:

<https://www.research.net/r/flexibleresourcing>

Please contact us if you need a paper copy of this form.

The Next Steps for CSAs

Thank you to all members who have completed our online form collecting data about personal circumstances: if you haven't already completed the form, please to do so at:

<https://www.research.net/r/flexibleresourcing>

Please contact us if you need a paper copy of this form.

Following your 1-2-1 meetings, the Bank will begin drawing up new schedules from 6th March 2017, so it's essential that you write to the Bank before that date to confirm your position with regards to flexibility. We advise that you use the template letter enclosed.

If you can work flexibly, indicate that in your letter to the Bank, but remember that changes in your circumstances could make something that's reasonable now, impossible at a later date e.g. care commitments.

Emma Stopford
Director