

Boyden's *Partner Spotlight* shares expert knowledge and views from our Partners across the globe. This edition is a discussion with Francesca d'Arcangeli and Claire Lauder of Boyden United Kingdom. They give their view on the opportunities and challenges facing UK industrial businesses right now.



Francesca d'Arcangeli

Francesca d'Arcangeli is a Managing Partner in the UK. An accomplished Executive Search consultant and industry expert with a wealth of UK and international experience, Francesca returns to the UK after co-launching and developing a new Boyden office in the Middle East.

Claire Lauder is Partner in the UK, providing interim management solutions to industrial businesses. A recent addition to the Boyden team following five successful years providing interim management services to the manufacturing sector.

Claire, you have recently joined Boyden UK as Partner, to provide interim management solutions to businesses across the industrial sectors, what prompted you to join Boyden UK?

Claire: There were two main reasons which motivated me to join the Boyden team, firstly is its superb international footprint of over 65 offices in 40 different countries. This presented me with an opportunity to work on a global basis with a very experienced team, but perhaps more importantly it allowed me to offer a stronger international network to my clients.

The second reason was my desire to work in a business which had both an established Executive Search and Interim Management offering. I was previously working with one of the UK's leading interim providers.

In that time, I recognised that an interim manager is a valuable part of the management tool kit, however for me to be considered a strategic partner to my clients, I felt I could offer more value if I could discuss broader talent and executive needs across the longer term permanent team.

Francesca and I work in tandem to understand the business needs first and provide recommendations on what is best for the business, whether that be me providing interim management solutions or Francesca providing Executive Search and leadership consulting services. The client's needs are at the centre of everything we do.

How do you manage your clients' need for both Permanent and Interim Executives?

Claire: The nature of the job market since 2008 has changed drastically and some permanent jobs could be considered long-term interim roles and vice versa. Businesses need to be agile and this applies to their people strategy, the Boyden offering provides a total talent solution at executive level.

Francesca: Whilst I have focused on executive search at Boyden and Claire's experience has been providing interim management solutions, we have actually worked with quite similar businesses both in terms of turnover and seniority of role. They are businesses across the industrial and manufacturing sectors which are either high growth, in rapid change or undergoing complete transformation.

I have worked client side as well as being part of Boyden for over eight years. We work closely with our clients - as real partners, and with very much an advisory approach to come up with the best solution for them.

How is the UK industrial sector fairing up with the uncertainty of Brexit looming overhead?

Claire: The way manufacturing and industrial businesses have been impacted so far has been very interesting to watch. In one sense there are some good news headlines, according to [October's IHS/Markit CIPS](#) report, UK manufacturing PMI was 56.3 and 56 in September.

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The EEF 2017/2018 investment Monitor suggested just over 50% of businesses are either not affected or positively affected by Brexit ([The Manufacturer's Organisation's Investment Monitor Report 2017/2018](#)). There are also many contradictions, the EEF investment forecast suggest less commitment to invest in 2017/2018 whereas the OBR and BOE have a far more positive outlook.

With sterling losing value since the EU referendum there has been an increase in the number of UK-based companies who have been acquired by overseas businesses (see Office for National Statistics at www.ons.gov.uk/). I am certain we will see this trend continue for a while if the current economic climate continues. With new ownership structures often comes the need for new leadership.

Ultimately the UK has a lot going for it, we are great at innovation, we have excellent universities and according to The World Bank ease of doing business rankings, we out-perform many of our EU neighbours. (see [The World Bank's Annual 'Doing Business' Rankings](#)).

Whilst I was a definite “remainer” in the EU referendum I can't help but think there are greater things at play than whether we remain a member of the EU. I don't doubt that the short-term pain will be significant but if government policy supports industry and recognises the need to invest in digitalisation, there is ample opportunity for the UK to thrive.

The world is changing at an unprecedented pace, aging populations and associated health problems, housing and food shortages, cyber threats and global warming are all far bigger risks to the human race than whether the UK is part of the EU or not.

Our focus should be on innovation, education and long term policies to enable the UK to become world leaders in the [4IR](#). There is no reason why with the right government policies and long-term investment, the UK cannot only survive but also thrive, despite not being a member of the EU. I feel like we have reached a point now where we just need to get on with it.

What is the focus going to be for Boyden's Industrial Practice in the UK?

Francesca: We are a broad based practice working with companies across industry segments, and across functions.

Our sub-sector experts internationally and functional leaders provide added insight and input in a matrix structure and all Partners are part of Global Practice Groups known for Thought Leadership and deep insight.

Boyden has consistently delivered results for companies large and small with the same trend of Emerging, high growth, transformational strategies and plans with an international agenda. We will work with non-UK companies to assist their growth in the UK and with UK companies to drive their growth internationally.

We are proficient in 4 languages in the UK office and intend to grow this skillset!

Francesca, you have worked with Boyden for over eight years, what do Boyden Candidates and Clients value the most in the Boyden approach?

Francesca: We Listen hard and really try to understand the objectives, get stuck deep into the business and truly 'feel' the culture of the organisation – visit plants and offices, meet with leadership and teams – before we start as much as possible and depending on confidentiality.

We ask difficult and uncomfortable questions and with an integrated talent approach we guide our clients to a solution that will deliver their business agenda – the results they are looking to achieve. This may be Executive Search in favour of Interim or vice versa or Assessment and Leadership Development over new hires.

We find this translates into clear candidate briefing and clients having difficulty choosing between candidates at the final stage. It also leads to deep trusted relationships and we become Trusted Advisors to both sides of the equation.

How do you know whether you are doing a good job?

Francesca: First of all we never relax and always strive to analyse our performance and find ways of improving different aspects of the process, development of the teams and measuring the results.

As part of this, over the last few years - through an independent organisation we have carried out a client feedback process internationally called 'Client Voice'. It is both qualitative and quantitative and includes detailed interviews.

The proof is in the statistics from this feedback on the Industrial Practice;

- **83%** repeat business over the last 5 years
- **94%** of roles filled were filled first time
- **93%** Clients Highly Satisfied
- **96%** Candidates Highly Satisfied

We actively seek feedback and we are proud that our clients are happy to be referees to other clients.

Tell us a bit more about how the international footprint benefits clients?

Claire: The Global Industrial Practice Group is a focal point that brings together industry expertise, functional knowledge and local geographic understanding.

It is a forum to share challenges, provide advice and take advantage of a massive wealth of expertise from across the 60+ offices. One of Boyden's key strengths is many of its Partners have had extensive careers on the client side in the sectors they work in. That is definitely true of the Industrial Practice!

Francesca: Boyden pride's itself on our extensive footprint. We work closely with Boyden Partners across geographies to identify top talent that may currently be on the other side of the globe but is right for a role in the UK; and we focus on being able to support clients with candidates across their own locations with a common understanding of their needs.

Partners become Trusted Advisors locally and work as teams internationally in a very hands-on approach. The respect for local cultural knowledge is important to us and has been a winning factor with many clients fed up with a purely global approach to talent needs.

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Would you like to discuss your leadership requirements? Get in touch.

Executive Search & Leadership Consulting

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