

## Disaster for recruiters if migrants up and left

COLIN COTTELL

Most recruitment agencies would go out of business if migrant workers left, according to the manager of a recruitment agency in a town featured in a television programme last week.

Vicky Collins, manager of Swift Recruitment in Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, told *Recruiter* that despite 2,000 unemployed in the town, her business was still heavily dependent on workers from abroad. Only five of the 49 she had out working were from the indigenous population, she said.

"I believe that my agency and most other agencies in the town in would shut down if the foreign workers left," said Collins.

Collins' comments followed the



The BBC's Wisbech experiment

filled by migrant workers, particularly from Eastern Europe.

*The Day the Immigrants Left* showed that while a number of Wisbech's unemployed were up to scratch, others either didn't turn up or walked off the job.

Collins said that in her experience most of the unemployed among the town's indigenous population weren't prepared to do the sort of minimum wage jobs her company offered.

She said that her attempts to help this group had proved futile. "I laid on jobs for 60, gave them work, but only three turned up," she said.

Only three English people have come through the doors since Christmas, compared with 50-60 from Eastern Europe, she added.

Collins said she blamed the government for making it so easy to get onto benefits.

Justin Locks, general manager at 5-Star Cases, which makes cases for audio equipment in Wisbech, told *Recruiter*: "Before we had the foreign workers, we had an absolute nightmare, as the English people didn't want the jobs."

And he said that of six English people taken on recently, while "two are brilliant", two others hadn't lasted the course. "One said it wasn't worth his while because with wages of £250 and benefits £200, he was

working for £50."

Locks added: "We have some really good English people, and some really good foreign workers. It's half and half."

Another local recruiter, who wished to remain anonymous, told *Recruiter* he would soon need more than 100 people to pick flowers for Mother's Day. "Probably 95% of them will be foreign nationals," he said.

And he scotched any idea that local workers would be able to fill the gap if the migrant workers left. "A lot of the factories and the companies that use our services would probably move their operations elsewhere."

He added that he had nothing against indigenous workers, but he didn't have a choice. "You have to recruit the person you deem to be best for the job regardless of where they come from, but time and time again it's the foreign nationals who do the job better."

## Innovate CV is headline sponsor of Awards



Innovate CV, the newly-launched global interactive CV platform, will support *Recruiter's Awards for Excellence 2010* as headline sponsor.

"Innovate CV is delighted to sponsor the prestigious *Recruiter Awards* this year," said Daniel Lyons, Innovate CV founder. "We wish all the nominees the best of luck, and are really looking forward to the Awards night and the announcement of all the winners."

*Recruiter* publisher Philip Hayne said: "It's great that we have an innovative new company to headline this year's awards which, for the first time, are offering the opportunity for both in-house recruiters and agency teams to come together and celebrate the industry as a whole."

The gala Awards evening will be held on 14 April at the Grosvenor House Hotel.

● See [recruiter.co.uk](http://recruiter.co.uk) for more about Innovate CV. See also page 8 for the announcement of the Awards shortlist.



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JUSTIN LOCKS, 5-STAR CASES

screening of a BBC TV programme, which showed a number of Wisbech's unemployed trying out a number of factory, catering, agricultural and manual jobs.

In recent years many of these unglamorous, long hours and minimum wage jobs have been

## Prepare for video interviewing, says Canavan

COLIN COTTELL

The traditional face-to-face interview could disappear in the near future, according to the HR director at The British Library.

"I don't see that just doing traditional interviewing will stand the test of time. Everything is being driven online. It's the way things are going," Mary Canavan told *Recruiter*.

"In a couple of years, you



Canavan: online interviewing

probably won't even have the traditional interview process, because employers will be looking at other more effective ways of assessing

candidates," she explained.

"There will be a lot more upfront online testing before candidates are invited in, and a lot more checking of candidates' history and background." Video conferencing would also increase in popularity, she predicted.

Canavan said The British Library was already making increasing use of assessment

centres, psychometric testing and appraisals of candidates' presentation skills.

Speed was a key driver, said Canavan. "Everybody wants to get people in quickly."

Equally, she said many candidates didn't have the time to go through the traditional interview process, because they lead busy lives.