



**THE Holywell**  $\alpha^+$   
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## 'Trading Places' – A New Concept from The Holywell Partnership



The Holywell Partnership Ltd provides tailored learning and support for seasoned and high potential executives. We focus on practical, engaging experiences that stimulate and excite our clients.

Our core platforms are **Coaching**, in presentation skills and personal development; **Tailored Programmes**, highly competitively priced; and **Consultancy**, in talent management, strategic review and offsite facilitation.

In our consultations with clients it has become clear that there is a shortage of programmes that provide development experiences that excite cynical executives whilst delivering structured learning to meet the objectives of the managers and HR sponsors.

'Trading Places' is a new Holywell service that offers stimulating, tailored short term executive assignments at high profile and attractive hosts. A coach works with the individual throughout to embed learning and change.



## So Much More Than a Sabbatical

Seasoned and highly regarded executives represent a major developmental challenge for managers and L&D professionals. Many are seeking fresh perspectives and stimulation beyond the boundaries of their current roles but have tired of traditional training courses, whilst expressing scepticism regarding the benefits of executive coaching. The understandable reluctance to disrupt day-to-day management responsibilities by excessive commitments of time is another major obstacle.



A consistent issue presents itself for many ambitious executives: do they have sufficient breadth of experience, across functions and, often, outside the organisation they work for? The compression of career development within vertical silos is a challenge familiar to many – good for driving performance, less helpful as preparation for senior leadership roles.

'Trading Places' offers a fresh and original approach to these challenges.

Significant projects are offered by a wide range of hosts, including NGOs, entrepreneurial businesses and leading organisations in sport, fashion, the media & the arts. Executives will work with a host manager to complete the assignment, working all the time with a Holywell coach. This is crucial as it embeds momentum and learning to the process. It is also a unique feature.

The essential character of 'Trading Places' is that of tailoring to individual circumstances and to clearly defined learning and change objectives, as specified by line managers and L&D professionals. The coach ensures that this agenda is consistently addressed.

Unlike more traditional sabbaticals, these placements run concurrently with the job at the employer. This is both commercially realistic and also helpful to transferring learning to the workplace. Typically the time commitment will be between a day a week and a day a month – although more intense assignments of a month straight are available.

For the executive the environment offers a tremendous platform for development. A different culture stretches behaviour, careers are placed in better perspective, and new approaches can be risked in a safe and confidential environment, prompted and encouraged by the coach.



### Key Differentiators

'Trading Places' offers a particular learning platform:

- The projects that are offered are high profile and significant to the hosts. There is an expectation of leaving a lasting legacy in terms of processes and culture.
- Change sits at the heart of the exercise. New approaches and techniques are encouraged in a safe environment. Risks may be, and are, taken.
- The involvement of the coach is central. Unlike general coaching programmes, the executive is physically removed from his/her comfort zone. The project provides a revealing focus – and a finite coaching commitment.
- The hosts offered by Holywell are prestigious and cover a very wide spectrum of activities. This helps engage potentially sceptical individuals.
- The host manager can offer fresh observations and perspectives on the placed executive. These may confirm or challenge received wisdom.

Specific outcomes include increased motivation, a more balanced perspective on career prospects and greater appreciation of the employer. However the most striking change is most often seen in self-awareness and maturity.



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## 'Trading Places' Hosts



The Directors of Holywell enjoy relationships with an impressive array of host organisations. 'Trading Places' is built on the principle that executives must be placed in cultures and environments that differ greatly from those of their employer. Consequently, we have negotiated access to a wide range of activities – charities, government agencies, entrepreneurial business and leading organisations in the worlds of sport, the arts, media and fashion.

Crucially, the relationships are based upon engaging active support from the most senior managers at host organisations – Chief Executives and Proprietors. This ongoing connection secures many benefits: the quality of the projects is high, and often related to strategic priorities; there is close scrutiny of the placed executive's contribution; problems and issues are effectively resolved; and there is tremendous scope for longer term institutional links to build between the host and sponsoring employers.

We have placed the logos of a number of 'Trading Places' hosts across this card. The full, updated list may be found at our website, [www.holywellexec.com](http://www.holywellexec.com).



## Matching Individuals with the Right Projects

In Holywell's experience the decision to utilise the 'Trading Places' platform is motivated by a variety of considerations: senior managers have been concerned by the lack of broad experience secured by next generation high potential executives; there has been a need for eye-catching development programmes to engage cynical professionals; many talent management programmes have been poorly served by the random application of executive coaching; or, simply, an individual has requested a sabbatical.



Whilst we endorse strongly the notion that external placements provide tremendous opportunities to address issues of motivation and perspective, there have always been problems for the 3 parties involved.

- For the individual the key issues are practical: can I afford to take the time away from my responsibilities? Is the project sufficiently challenging? Can my learning be applied within my career?
- For hosts there are challenges too: what is the level of experience and capability of the executive? How much management resource will be required to secure real benefits from the placement? What is to be done when things go wrong?
- Perhaps it is the sponsoring managers and HR professionals who have the greatest misgivings: How is progress to be monitored and maintained? Will there be demonstrable performance improvements as a direct result of the experience? Is a placement optimal use of a substantial commitment of time and resources?

Consequently, Holywell ensures that there is no generic format to an assignment through 'Trading Places'. Individual skills and experience will be carefully matched with appropriate host needs to ensure that the projects stretch and motivate each executive individually.

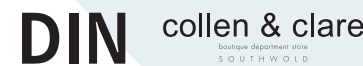
Most hosts will look for an injection of energy and fresh perspectives. Their financial, technical and marketing resources are often constrained and tactically orientated. A focused contribution from an assigned executive can have a substantial impact.

There are exciting options for executives considering 'Trading Places' for themselves. The range and diversity of our hosts will meet most development requirements. Fast-growing entrepreneurial businesses provide intense, hands-on challenges; charities broaden cultural horizons and counterpoint cynicism; sporting institutions inspire obvious motivation to many; and in fashion, leisure, media, the arts and many other sectors there are new cultures and practices to embrace and learn from.



At any one time it is likely that Holywell will be able to offer 10 or more specific projects to interested executives. Some will inevitably be unsuitable because of location, required time commitments or technical expertise, but many will be relevant.

Outlines are available in hard or soft copy by contacting one of the Directors by e-mail or at 01502 724 042. However, many projects can be created 'in reverse', by sending the CV of an interested executive, together with development goals and an outline of particular skills, to Holywell. We will then discuss possible options with managers at hosts who are not advertising specific projects through 'Trading Places' at that time. Often a match can be found and a new assignment formulated.





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## Holywell's Coaches



The differentiating feature of a 'Trading Places' assignment is the wrap-around coaching. Clearly, the relationship between the executives and their coaches will determine many of the longer term benefits secured from the placement.

Holywell's 3 Directors are personally committed to leading the coaching for 'Trading Places'. They have coached executives from Retail, Leisure, Hospitality, Technology, Finance, Healthcare, Government Agencies and the NGO sectors.

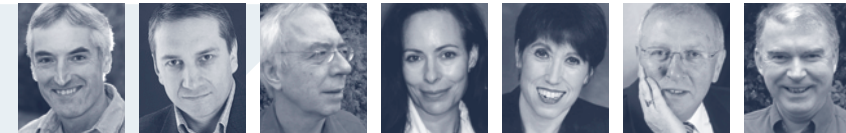
The company is a member of the European Mentoring and Coaching Council ( www.emccouncil.org ) an organisation that is bringing transparency and discipline to the notoriously opaque market for executive coaches.

**Andrew Macdonald**, with 15 years' managerial experience at leading global financial institutions, has a practical, results-orientated approach which builds self-awareness and challenges inertia.

**Sally Atkinson** has been a member of Faculty at Cranfield School of Management for 15 years. She has been coaching for 15 years, with a focus on personal effectiveness and relationships.

**Charles Spencer** is proprietor of Althorp, a bestselling author and has many years experience as a TV journalist. His coaching is centred around presentation skills and effective communication.

Our other coaches are all associates to Holywell. They come with deep and varied experience, from backgrounds as practitioners and academics. All share a commitment to embed learning and change from the stimulating experiences provided by 'Trading Places' assignments.



## Experienced and Challenging Coaching

**Coaching is central to the 'Trading Places' experience. Fresh perspectives, new cultural challenges and the isolated nature of the assignments create an appetite for discussion and self-appraisal. Coaches clarify issues and provide a pivot for the experience**

The Holywell coaches will typically hold 8-10 sessions (most by phone) in the course of the assignment. They will also meet with the line manager and host manager towards the end of the process.

Objectives will, of course, vary from individual to individual. However, underpinning every placement is a desire for fresh learning, new perspectives and personal change and growth. The coaches will sustain intense focus upon these fundamental elements throughout - and particularly when external distractions present themselves.

The 3 Directors of Holywell are all coaches on the platform, but there is a wide diversity of additional coaching available from our experienced team of associates:

### Dave Higgs

I have been a facilitator and trainer in the field of personal development for 22 years. I have worked with the full spectrum from shop floor to board level but in recent years my focus has been mainly with middle and senior management. I specialise in the understanding of the place that personal behaviour and mental focus have on influence and effectiveness in a managerial context. My work has also included implementing organisational cultural change, leadership development and course design.

### Magnus Spence

Most practised in leadership coaching; I tend to focus on commercial problems first and personal issues second. I have coached in several sectors: financial services, media, technology, and fmcg for example. Most are large firms but I am also experienced in (and enjoy) smaller entrepreneurial environments. I have a Post Graduate Diploma in Executive Coaching - University College Chester/ Liverpool University.

### Mike Meldrum

My work varies between long-term relationships with politics and change as a critical focus, through performance improvements for selected individuals, to team development around strategy or specific projects. I combine a Rogerian approach to coaching (after Carl Rogers) with some of the more goal oriented methodologies, which encourages and enables clients to establish solutions within the context of their own unique circumstances.

### Debora Weston

A performance coach and professional actress for over 15 years, I have a BA in psychology and theatre from Yale University and an advanced degree from Central school of Speech and Drama in England. I focus on building Leadership Presence and impact as well as communication and presentation skills. What do actors have to teach leaders in the business community? Presence, flexibility, expressiveness, empathy, status awareness and building rapport to name a few.

### Ros Barker

I bring more than 20 years experience of HR practice in a variety of commercial sectors working with all levels of management. I hold a Post Graduate Diploma in Career Counselling and Consultancy from London (Birkbeck) University. A range of techniques are employed ranging from cognitive behavioural work to solution focused interventions. My principal area of expertise is career direction but I also have a particular interest in working with senior executives in transition situations whether it's a new appointment within an existing organisation or a new phase of life.

### David Parton

I have held Executive Director level positions in a blue chip UK company and have been involved in coaching for 15 years. I have successfully coached executives in all aspects of organisational and personal life including business strategy, personal effectiveness, career planning, team development, relationships at work and organisational growth.

### Iain Thomson MSc

(Organisational Behaviour), Post Graduate Diploma in Counselling and Work, FCIPD - I prefer to use commonsense and practical approaches to coaching (eg via project work), with some elements of Transactional Analysis - my areas of experience include (inter)personal effectiveness, achieving results and strategic thinking in various sectors (mainly financial) across the UK and Europe.



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## Holywell's Commitment to Host Organisations



The Directors of Holywell have been delighted by the tremendous contribution to 'Trading Places' made by the management of host organisations. We make every effort to ensure that involvement with the platform is simple to manage and generates real, incremental benefit.

There are a variety of circumstances that persuade hosts to offer assignments through 'Trading Places': strategic projects that require specific expertise; a desire for an experienced 3rd party perspective; the need to address politically sensitive subjects by involving an outsider; and a desire to inject fresh energy and enthusiasm to an organisation.

Holywell seeks to develop long term relationships with all of our current and future hosts. A great deal of effort and time is committed to maintaining lines of communication, particularly when there are no placements currently being managed. Matching anticipated organisational needs with executives with the necessary skills and experience to address them requires ongoing dialogue and regular review.

The first 'Trading Places' assignment at a new host represents an opportunity for all parties. The Directors of Holywell are committed to ensuring an excellent outcome, preparing the ground for further projects in the future.



## Hosts – The Key Questions Answered

### What is 'Trading Places'?

It is a unique service offering seasoned and high potential executives challenges outside their current roles and responsibilities. Assignments are set by a wide variety of hosts - NGOs, Govt agencies, entrepreneurial businesses and organisations in Sport, Fashion, the Media & the Arts. Often resource-constrained, they have the chance to tap top talent for projects that can radically impact performance and the realisation of strategic objectives.



### How does it work?

The host receives the executive resource for free. All that is required is that important projects are outlined and sponsored by a senior manager. Typically, the placed executives will be highly educated and trained with 15+ years of business experience. They will be from the full spectrum of backgrounds – banking, retail, media, hospitality and industry, with skills in sales, e-commerce, project management, legal, HR etc. The length of the assignment will be determined by the project needs and executive availability.

The key to success lies in matching suitable talent with a project that has genuine impact for the host. This is central to the Holywell service, with momentum sustained by the coach, who is in contact throughout with the host management.

**DIN** collen & clare  
boutique department store  
SOUTHWOLD



**WaterAid**

**SEACOR Holdings Inc.**

**FLEMING MEDIA**

### What's In It For Me?

'Trading Places' offers hosts some unique opportunities:

- Access to high performing, seasoned executives from blue chip organisations
- Resources to drive projects that would otherwise have remained shelved
- Fresh perspectives to stimulate internal managers and staff
- Deep relationship-building with next generation leaders at major institutions
- The resource is free – with all the hassle managed by Holywell and our coaches

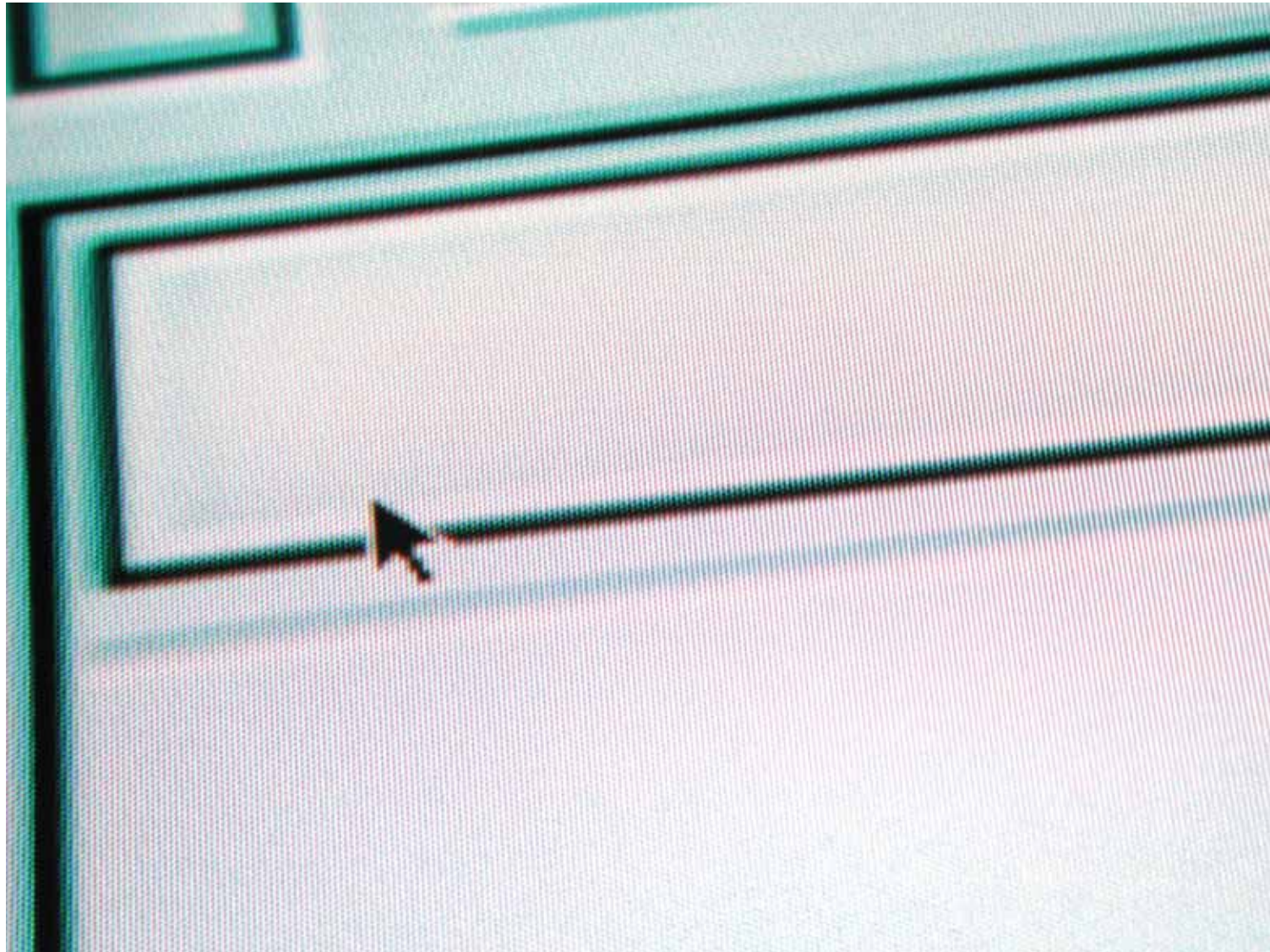
### Next Steps

A potential host needs to decide if it is prepared to commit to 'Trading Places' in principle, which will permit Holywell to use your name in promotional material.

When you have a specific project in mind, call in the Directors and we will help structure the assignment. At that point we will work with our network of clients to identify individuals who might fit the bill.

That done, an introductory meeting will be arranged so that both parties ensure that the match is suitable and for working practicalities to be agreed.





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## Making 'Trading Places' Work



One of the 3 Holywell Directors will work with our clients throughout the process of placing an individual on an assignment. We recognise that there may well be a need to introduce and explain the concept and its practical workings to managers and interested executives. We are very pleased to come and present 'Trading Places' at any forum of your choice. There are also personal testimonials available.

Time is the key determinant of the scope and nature of 'Trading Places' projects. Realistic commitments from the individual, the employer and the host's management are essential. Assignments can be for a day a month over a year, or, as likely, an unbroken 3 weeks to completion.

The service has been priced very competitively against other development programmes targeting seasoned and high potential executives. Given the outstanding results, we believe that there are compelling reasons to use the platform.



## Process and Administration



'Trading Places' is designed to be a simple platform to work with.

As matching projects with individuals within a suitable timeframe is the main challenge with the process, we recommend the following approach to secure maximum value from the service:



- 1) Communicate the concept so that managers and potentially interested individuals understand 'Trading Places'. We will be delighted to make internal presentations to explain the service in greater detail and answer questions.
- 2) Bring a Holywell Director in as soon as an individual expresses interest. We will need to clarify development objectives, practical issues such as time commitment and review currently available projects.
- 3) The Director will contact senior managers at the relevant host organisations to confirm project details and discuss the possible match. In cases where we cannot offer an immediately suitable assignment we will see if any of our hosts will fashion a project to fit the skills of the executive. A match is often found.

- 4) Once a project (often 2) is found and agreed in principle by the individual and host, a meeting between the 2 parties is arranged. This will clarify expectations and offers the last opportunity for either side to back out.
- 5) The assignment agreed, Holywell will recommend a coach who will fit best with the development needs and personality of the executive. If the 2 individuals gel, the coach will then meet the line manager and host manager for background.
- 6) Coaching will be conducted both face-to-face and by telephone throughout the assignment, in sessions of 1 or 2 hours as required. About half way through the coach will discuss progress with the managers at the employer and host.
- 7) The host will agree a date for the conclusion of the project with the executive, at which point the coaching will cease. Reports for the employer are available subject to the prior agreement of the coached individual.

Holywell charges fees for 2 elements of the 'Trading Places' service:  
A flat fee is charged for arranging the assignment. This covers the provision of a choice of hosts, the structuring of the project and ongoing supervision to completion.  
The 2nd fee relates to the Coaching. This will be decided by the executive use of the service, but will typically represent between 10 and 20 hours of coaching.  
Holywell requires a simple legal Letter of Engagement, with a tailored Service Agreement, to be signed by the executive's employers.



Unique Opportunities for Executive Development

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Tailored Executive Assignments



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