

20% Job Cuts: Cutting Through The 'Spin'

The Bank has resorted to the increasingly familiar tactic of 'spinning' on claims that it plans to cut jobs by 20% across its non-customer facing areas.

Despite LTU having amassed reliable evidence that the Bank is aiming to cut staff numbers by 20% in non-customer facing areas, the Bank has until now failed to inform or consult LTU over its plans or considerations.

Interestingly, in an Interchange communication issued last Wednesday which sought to criticise LTU for communicating on the job cuts, the Bank chose not to take the opportunity to deny it was planning thousands of job cuts in non-customer facing areas.

Of course this would not be the first time the Bank has been caught out concealing plans for major job cuts. In May 2002 the Union asked the Bank to confirm or deny 'strong rumours' that it was planning to export jobs abroad. The Bank responded that "we have no plans to outsource contact or

The Importance of Independence

LTU's New, Confidential 'Whistleblowing' Email Service

processing centres to India or South Africa". Just four months later the Bank confirmed to staff that it was to export jobs abroad and it is now in the process of transferring thousands of jobs to India.

LTU has now written to the Bank seeking an unequivocal answer to the following question:

"Does the Bank acknowledge that it is preparing plans that will lead to reductions in staff numbers in non-customer facing areas?"

This is a simple question. We wait to see whether the Bank is willing to answer it in a clear and unambiguous manner.

Credibility Of The Message

Over the years staff have regularly had to make up their minds when faced with apparently conflicting information issued by the Bank and Union.

Of course, the track record of the parties involved will have the most influence in determining who staff trust.

LTU places great importance on its credibility and it is a matter of fact that everything we have predicted on job security in Newsletters in the past has been proven 100% correct.

Take, for instance, the issue of exporting work abroad. The Bank insisted that the Union was incorrect and Unifi accused LTU of being alarmist when we said that thousands of jobs would be exported abroad. Subsequent developments therefore speak for themselves.

In fact, with clear parallels to the Bank's latest communication, in June 2002 the Bank issued an

Interchange communication criticising LTU in which it stated:

"You may have seen the LTU Newsletter claiming the Bank is finalising plans to outsource work to India. We currently have no plans to do this. . . . As with any major business initiative, if we were to pursue this option, we would involve the unions and ensure staff were informed about the changes as soon as possible."

Bank Interchange, 28th June 2002

We are confident that when faced with needing to decide between conflicting information from the Bank and Union, the overwhelming majority of staff will recognise LTU's track record.

Of course, there is now an opportunity for the Bank to 'put its money where its mouth is'. It can issue a clear, unambiguous statement on whether or not it is developing plans for substantial job cuts across non-customer facing areas. We'll wait and see.

Importance of Independence

Recent events concerning job security illustrate the importance of completely independent representation within Lloyds TSB.

The Bank would like to pressurise LTU into keeping quiet on the prospect of major job reductions in its Head Office, Departments and other non-customer facing areas.

It would also like LTU to scale down its opposition to the offshoring of thousands of jobs to India. But LTU refuses to enter meaningless deals with the Bank that fail to protect staff from having their jobs exported abroad or made redundant.

So how does LTU guarantee its complete independence from the Bank and ensure that it

will not 'buckle' under pressure from Senior Management?

- * **With 45,000 members (more than ten times that of Unifi within Lloyds TSB) the Bank has no option but to deal with LTU. And the level of our membership means we can be sure that we command the support of the overwhelming majority of staff; from junior staff to the most senior levels of management.**
- * **All LTU Officials providing members with Individual and Collective Representation are employed direct by the Union and not Seconded from, or subsidised by, the Bank. So their independence cannot be called into question.**

This means the Bank is unable to exert financial pressure on LTU to 'toe its line' by threatening to withdraw Secondees or any other financial support.

LTU is the only union not to use Bank Secondees in the representation of its members.

- * **LTU has always refused attempts by the Bank to censor our communications.**

That is why LTU chooses not to use the Bank's internal postal system, even though to do so would result in considerable financial savings.

Our independence is the real guarantee that the Union will fight to safeguard the interests of our members.

in.confidence@ltu.co.uk

LTU is introducing a new confidential email service to allow members to notify the Union in confidence of concerns they may have.

The service is ideal for those instances where members know something of concern and want to be sure LTU is aware too.

This could perhaps include bullying by a line manager, improper working practices or even details of a reorganisation affecting staff upon which a member isn't sure the Bank has briefed LTU correctly.

All information provided will be treated in total confidence. Only one senior LTU Official will have

access to these emails.

Where information provided is of a sensitive or highly confidential nature then members are encouraged to use their personal rather than work email addresses. To maintain utmost confidentiality, LTU will not reply to any emails received using this service unless specifically asked to do so.

Members wishing to use this service should email the Union at **in.confidence@ltu.co.uk**.

IAN PARTRIDGE
General Secretary