

Using our talents differently

Several colleagues have expressed the view during the staff development festival that the opportunity they would most welcome is for a secondment across boundaries. In particular, there are some administrators who would like to become lecturers although there are also some senior managers, principal lecturers and senior lecturers who, while accepting that we are progressively reducing the numbers who work in the Met Office, would still like to switch into administration or support services. It seems that some think they need guidance, some want time to pursue a further qualification, some want a different kind of experience to help them secure other posts, some want a two year trial, others want a permanent move. In the circumstances and in the spirit of responding to festival-goers' constructive thinking, I will try to enable at least a few colleagues to experiment in this way as follows :

Those who are seeking an opportunity to work in the Met Office should consult in confidence Steve Denton, initially by an email marked clearly 'personal & confidential'.

Those who are seeking an opportunity to explore a switch into a lecturing career should consult in confidence Professor Sally Brown, initially by an email marked clearly 'personal & confidential', appreciating that she is at a conference abroad and that responses may not be immediate.

In either case, colleagues who wish to apply can then make a proposal in writing, by email or in hard copy, to Steve Pashley by 30 September, who will then decide with Steve Denton, Sally Brown and myself. If we consider that a proposal might work, then we would have to discuss with the relevant members of SET whether the transfer 'out' and 'in' is appropriate.

Only a few opportunities may be viable and their implementation could vary, for obvious reasons of operational requirements, from immediately in October to later in the academic year. We will review how this experiment unfolds and try to repeat the exercise with more notice for the following academic year.

Professor Simon Lee, 15 September 2005.