

## **HR 'must support PAs'**

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HR professionals need to do more to ensure secretaries are supported in their roles, according to a new report.

Research conducted by Kingston University shows that people working in such roles are now better educated and perform more high level tasks than their predecessors.

However, it also revealed that many people working as secretaries and PAs lack career development plans and proper job descriptions.

Rosemary Parr, one of the study's authors and a former PA to BT chairman Sir Christopher Bland, called on HR professionals to recognise the value of such employees.

"They [secretaries] are more like management assistants: they need to be their managers' second brain - anticipating what their bosses want next as well as doing what they want now," she said.

PAs are valuable members of staff and HR professionals should look to retain them, the report added.

Indeed firms could face a significant challenge retaining their most talented staff once the recession comes to an end.

Yesterday, a study by the Hay Group revealed that engagement levels have fallen during the downturn and a third of workers are looking for a new job.

Posted by John Lynes.