

Management



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Wales Management Council works with partners within and beyond Wales to promote better management performance at all levels in the economy.

As part of that task we encourage managers like you to consider how they can expand their own capabilities and become better at what they do.

This monthly digest aims to help you, and people like you, to focus more clearly on the practical challenges you face.

We don't pretend to have all the answers but we hope these questions promote thinking that is helpful to you.

If you have views on any of the issues raised please let us know.
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What's in a Name?

In a new publication, business author Nigel Rees highlights the confusion caused by what he describes as "job title enhancement," giving the example of the Safeway shelf-stacker being termed an "ambient replenishment assistant."



Are job titles clear in your team? Do they describe what each person does and clarify levels of seniority and lines of responsibility or do they create a fog of confusion, envy, uncertainty and, in some cases, conflict between colleagues?

Could do better?

New research from the Chartered Management Institute found that 44% of managers in Wales frequently looked back and wished they'd developed more skills. Furthermore only 47% felt they were fully utilising the skills they'd already acquired.



Do you feel that you personally, or managers in your organisation, are acquiring the right skills and achieving true potential or do you share the lack of fulfillment demonstrated in this survey? How can you make an objective assessment of this and, if you are falling short, how could you start to put it right tomorrow?

All-rounders or good delegators

Howard Lester, chairman of mail order giant, Williams-Sonoma, explained in his on-line video contribution to the '50 Lessons' series, that others on his management team were far better in key areas of the company's business than he could ever be. He says he learned to focus strongly on what he did best and found others to major in those areas in which he was weaker.



Do you sometimes fall into the trap of believing you, as the boss, need to be the best all-rounder in the organisation. Do you find it hard to acknowledge that, in certain vital areas of your business members of your staff will be better than you? Do you give them free reign to apply their talent or sub-consciously compete with them?

Age of reason or political correctness?

The Employers Age Forum believes that claims under new age discrimination legislation could cost businesses £193m over the next year, suggesting that some firms will be less diligent than others in observing the letter and the spirit of the new rules.



Given that there are now more 55-64 year olds than 16-24 year olds in the UK population, do you regard the new age rules as a practical step that will ultimately benefit business or as an unnecessary and restrictive piece of political correctness?

Adapting or rebelling?

George Bernard Shaw said "The reasonable man tries to adapt himself to the world. The unreasonable man persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore all progress depends on the unreasonable man."



How reasonable a manager are you? Do you focus on making profit by adapting yourself to the status quo of your organisation, your market or the resources and technology available to you? On the other hand do you rebel against the environment in which you find yourself or your business and try to force change that potentially makes things either easier or more profitable?

A good read

The top five business books this month are – Freakonomics by Steven Levitt; How to Get Rich by Felix Dennis; The Undercover Economist by Tim Harford; The English Legal System by Jacqueline Martin and Taming the Lion by Richard Farleigh. Have any of your read any of these books? What do you think? Perhaps you have your own particular favourite. If so, we'd like to hear from you.