

Management

THINK ABOUT IT

April 2007

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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Finger on the pulse?

In the classic, and recently republished book 'The Unwritten Laws of Business,' US engineer and author WJ King wrote: "Every manager must know what goes on in his or her domain, but that does not mean keeping up with all minor details. Your involvement should never impede operations."



What are your techniques for keeping abreast of how your team are getting on with work you have assigned to them? Are you confident you can get the information you need without frustrating, irritating or discouraging them?

Growing into the Job

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development reports that 85% of organisations have recruitment difficulties. In particular they are struggling to find people with specialist skills or relevant experience. As a result many are having to make compromises in their selections.



If under pressure, would you risk filling a key vacancy with someone who wasn't fully equipped for the job? If so, how would you manage the risk involved and how would you ensure the chosen candidate had the potential to grow into the role?

A Pivotal Player

Business authors Gordon Bell and Heidi Mason wrote in their book *The Care and Nurture of Intrapreneurs*: "Silicon Valley has developed a 'genius' business model. You find a genius and build a business around them."



Is it ever wise to structure a team, department or company around a single individual of exceptional ability, even if this opens up a major business opportunity? If you did this, what steps would you take to guarantee the individual's loyalty, or how would you cope if they decided to leave?

Enjoyment and success

In a new survey by the Chartered Institute of Management, six out of ten managers said they believed enjoying work was essential for success. However only six out of a hundred believed their employers shared that view.



To what extent do you make enjoying work a priority in your organisation? If you do regard this as important how do you communicate that view to your managers and staff?

Mum's the Word

A survey by retail trade union USDAW found that 62% of workers who became pregnant felt their boss behaved more negatively towards them as a result, and 25% felt marginalised or ignored.



As a manager are you ever guilty of consciously or unconsciously 'sidelining' a pregnant worker? Do you plan properly to ensure maternity leave works positively for the staff member involved and the business? Have you considered how you might make constructive use of new rules that allow you to keep in touch with employees who are on maternity leave?

A Good Read

Having just flicked through Harvard Business School's Spring Collection of books, a main theme is "Putting your People First". Titles include "The HR Value Proposition", "Thinking for a Living", "The HR Scorecard", "The Essentials of Corporate Communications and Public Relations" and "Hiring Smart for Competitive Advantage" and, between them, they will provide you with ideas, support tools, information on managing crises and responding to queries, and tips on putting the right people into the right jobs.



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