

Management

THINK ABOUT IT

May 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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Discovering the Home Truths

According to a new survey by telecom company Mitel, three in ten Welsh managers believe staff who say they are working from home will in fact be using the time to attend to their domestic affairs.



Given that technology makes 'home-working' an increasingly practical option these days, how well equipped are you or your supervisors to manage employees who are working remotely – ensuring they are accountable for their time without being intrusive and causing friction?

Choosing your battleground

'If you do not have a competitive advantage, do not compete,' was a classic piece of advice for business people from Jack Welch, former Chairman and Chief Executive of General Electric.



How much time do you spend chasing contracts speculatively when you are clearly not best placed to win the particular business concerned? Do you spend enough time developing a genuine competitive edge and pursuing more business that you have a real chance of winning?

Presenting your case

The University of New South Wales claims to have proven that the all-pervasive Powerpoint presentation system isn't as useful as many managers assume because audiences can't handle both written and verbal communication at the same time?



As a manager do you follow the crowd when it comes to styles of presentation or do you try to innovate to ensure you are communicating effectively with staff, customers and others?

Family ties

New research by nationwide financial services firm, Bibby, indicates that six out of ten UK companies are more than 50% family-owned.



If 'family' is a factor in the running of your business how do you ensure that blood ties never distort business judgement and that non family members in the management team remain fully engaged and loyal to the enterprise?

Letting go of the past

Writer Alvin Toffler, who is renowned for his insights into the technological revolution of the 20th century, commented in his book *The Third Wave* that 'The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn.'



As a manager are you able to let go of managerial and operational practices that are no longer of use to you and embrace new methods, or do you find yourself clinging to old familiar attitudes and approaches even when you're trying to move your department or your business forward?

A Good Read

"Five Minds for the Future" by Howard Gardner (Harvard Business School) is a good read, which aims to "describe the kinds of minds that people will need to thrive in the future". There are five chapters for the five minds of the title – the disciplined mind, the synthesised mind, the creative mind, the respectful mind and the ethical mind. It's interesting and an easy read, aimed primarily at educationalists and managers. It's insightful in that it really does make you think carefully about how we will all need to be thinking in the future, and you'll have fun working out what kind of a mind you have – not easy.



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Leading Wales Towards Management Excellence