

Management

THINK ABOUT IT

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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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Curse of the Clutter

In a new book entitled "Detox Your Desk," Theo Theobald and Cary Cooper argue that a cluttered desk is used by many managers both a badge of honour, proving how busy they are, and also a shield covering up for acts of 'self-sabotage' which waste time and prevent the manager achieving his or her objectives each day.



Do you have one of those desks? Have you ever analysed how a cluttered desk hinders your ability to concentrate fully on each piece of work you undertake and ultimately undermines your productivity? How can you rectify this?

Flying off the handle

A new survey by business equipment giant, Canon, found Cardiff to be the UK city with the 'angriest staff.' Almost seven out of ten staff there admitted an outburst of rage in the office. Across the country the study found that being 'spoken down to' by superiors was the most common trigger for this kind of incident.



As a manager how do you monitor the atmosphere in your office to spot signs of tension before such outbursts occur? Are you happy that you and managers under your supervision use the appropriate tone when speaking to staff?

What they really want

The world's first mass-market motorcar manufacturer, Henry Ford, once said that, if he had asked people what they wanted before he created his business, they would have told him they needed a faster horse.



How imaginatively do you interpret your market research? Do you take potential customers' stated desires at face value and simply deliver a better version of your current product or service, or do you try to work out what they really want and need, and develop innovative solutions?

New age of uncertainty

New surveys by the Employers Forum on Age and Eversheds Solicitors indicate that a big majority of UK firms are failing to manage older workers effectively. However, the UK Pensions Commission has warned that, by 2011, older workers will be needed to fill nearly two thirds of all vacant posts in the economy.



In this fast changing employment market, with a growing shortage of young entrants, are you confident that your policies and work practices will make your firm attractive to older job-seekers or persuade some existing staff to postpone retirement and continue giving you the benefit of their skills?

Fruitful complaints

Microsoft boss Bill Gates maintains that a company's most unhappy customers are its 'greatest source of learning.'



Do you see things that way? Do you regard complaining customers as an irritating fact of life who must be appeased or a valuable opportunity to pinpoint underlying problems in your business and put things right? How do you capture information from these customers and take advantage of such opportunities?

A Good Read

"The Art of Creative Thinking" by John Adair (Kogan Page) has been reprinted, following its initial release in 1990. We all crave new ideas, and the objective of this book is quite simply to help us to develop strategies to be able to do so. How about starting by reading a book? If nothing else it gets you in the mood for creative thoughts. There are lot of examples of great thinkers to inspire the reader. If you find yourself staring at a blank computer screen, waiting for inspiration to flow, this might just be the book for you.

Leading Wales Towards Management Excellence