

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.
gwyneth.stroud
@crc-wmc.org.uk**



Cyngor Rheolaeth Cymru
Wales Management Council



A style for every situation?

HR specialists The Hays Group say that research shows 80% of unhappy workplaces are run by managers with predominantly 'directive' or 'coercive' leadership styles. However Hays director Chris Watkins argues that managers still need to be able to switch to this style in times of uncertainty or crisis



As a manager have you got the ability to alter your leadership style to suit the circumstances without confusing or alienating your staff? On the other hand do you feel your style should remain consistent in all situations?

Powerful incentives or misguided missiles?

Mark Gerzon, president of the Mediators Foundation said concerning staff incentives: "If you create rewards for people to behave like separate competing teams you will get separate competing teams but if you create rewards for people to behave in the best interests of the company you will get people who work in the best interests of the company."



Have you examined your staff incentive schemes recently? Have you thought about what behaviour they are intended to encourage and considered whether or not they are actually achieving this objective.

Credit crunch or cashflow control

A survey by the Asset Based Finance Association found that 50% of small and medium-sized companies in the UK have difficulty getting paid on time. Many expect the current credit crunch to make the problem even worse.



How often do you review your credit control processes? How well are they working at the moment and do you plan to make any changes in order to avoid cash flow headaches in the current economic climate without causing ill will among good customers.

Home wins from playing abroad

According to research from the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) and Ashridge Business School a high proportion of managers are reluctant to undertake placements overseas. Kai Peters a Companion of the CMI expressed concern about this, saying such experiences help managers understand their home country business better and give them insights into global best practice.



How important do you feel it is for you or your managers to experience foreign cultures and environments in order to do a better job 'at home.' Have you considered cost-effective ways you might lever such experience into your business; for example short-term secondments with overseas customers or suppliers.

Common courtesies and profitable cultures

Nineteenth Century American politician Henry Clay once remarked that: "courtesies of a small and trivial character are the ones that strike deepest in the grateful and appreciating heart."



How important do you make genuine politeness and consideration in the culture of your business? How big a difference do you think it makes to your bottom line and how much do you do proactively to encourage such a culture?

Management Webwatch

A great resource is the website of the Northern Leadership Academy. Free membership entitles you to course searches, community access, leadership articles and your own customised area. In addition to this, it has access to some great leadership e-books and reviews of major companies and their corporate strategies. What's particularly good about it is that it has dedicated areas for small business, big corporates, the voluntary sector and students. You can find it at www.northernleadershipacademy.co.uk

Leading Wales Towards Management Excellence