

Management

THINK ABOUT IT

April 2008

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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Helpful Advice?

Seventeen century French author, Marquis de la Grange once wrote: "when we ask for advice we are usually looking for an accomplice," while American entertainer and politician, Al Franken, cautioned that: "when you encounter seemingly good advice that contradicts other seemingly good advice, ignore them both."



When needing to make a difficult management decision, who do you turn to for advice, how do you evaluate that advice and do you genuinely seek guidance or simply look for someone to support the decision you wanted to take in the first place?

Revolving Door or Settled Team?

According to latest figures from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, around a quarter of British workers have been in their jobs for five years or more while, on average, companies lose 18% of their staff a year.



Do you know what the average staff turnover rate is for your industry or have you a view on what level of turnover is healthy for your company? When people do leave your company, do you take the trouble to discover the real reason for their departure and try to identify any underlying problems that might be causing the loss of staff?

Voice of Authority

Leading business coach Miranda Kennett commented: "Don't confuse authoritarianism with authoritativeness. The basic message of the former is 'do what I tell you right now' while the latter says 'This is the way we are going, come with me.'



As a leader, are you able to make this distinction in your dealings with your team? Have you mastered the art of securing people's co-operation and support without being pushy, controlling or even aggressive?

Acting Up

Business author Richard Templar advised everyone in the management chain to study and behave like those above them if they want to progress in the organisation. He said: "If you are a middle manager you should be acting and talking as if you were already a senior manager."



Have you got a role model manager more senior or more experienced than yourself whom you seek to emulate? Do you agree that this is the right approach or should you try to develop your own distinctive style of management in order to get ahead?

A Question of Trust

An Ipsos MORI survey of the British public found that only 31% of respondents trusted business leaders to tell the truth, compared to 92% who trusted doctors and 88% who trusted teachers.



Why do you feel so few people expect business people to be truthful? Is there a fundamental conflict between telling the whole truth and the commercial imperative to present the best image of your company and your offering?

A Good Read

According to Management Today magazine, Managing Difficult conversations at Work by Sue Clark and Mel Myers (Management Books 2000) is "academic, highly detailed, with practical exercises, this book provides a thorough guide to dealing with every kind of awkward officer conversation. The authors, psychologists with 20 years of coaching experience, cover everything from conflict of loyalty issues to coping with criticism. It demands time, so it's best suited to those after an in-depth read". Could be time well spent.

Leading Wales Towards Management Excellence