

# 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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## A little too personal

The firm Weightwatchers announced recently that they have begun selling their services to employers and staging weight loss classes for staff in workplaces around Britain, including a weekly check on the scales. The claim is that this will help improve staff health and boost productivity



How much interest should a manager take in the lifestyle and health of staff? Would your staff welcome your involvement in keeping them healthy or does that encroach a little too much into their private lives? Do you know where to draw the line between constructive concern for staff wellbeing and unwarranted intrusion?

## Currying Favour

A recent survey by the online dating firm Partnership.co.uk found that flirting with the boss in order to gain promotion or advancement was on the increase. One in five workers admitted they would be prepared to flirt in order to get ahead, more than twice as many as four years ago. The figure included both men and women



As a manager, have you been subjected to flirtatious behavior or flattery from people trying to gain your approval? Have you ever fallen for it and made an ill-considered decision in someone's favour? How do you ensure you can never be accused of having 'favourites' among your staff.

## Undivided Attention?

In his book 'Persuasion,' international work psychologist James Borg claimed that people's concentration comes in intermittent waves and that it is impossible to retain their total attention for prolonged periods. As a result, he said, it's essential to repeat key points to ensure the message is received. He added that, for a wide variety of reasons, people won't admit that their attention wandered and that they missed some of the information given to them.



As a manager how skilled are you at briefing individuals or teams when you need something to be done? What techniques do you employ to check that your instructions have been received or to identify points you might need to cover again? If a member of your team produces unsuitable work through misunderstanding a brief, do you tend to blame the individual concerned or question the quality of the briefing you gave?

## Risky Behaviour

A new survey by the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health found that only a third of workers would report their line manager to their employer if they witnesses breaches of health and safety rules in the workplace.



In the light of tougher health and safety laws introduced this year, are you confident that your managers are managing the risks effectively good practice or that a good safety culture exists within your workplace? How can you ensure that staff feel sufficiently confident to speak up if they are unhappy about the way health and safety is approached in their working environment?

## Invisible Customers

Legendary motor tycoon Henry Ford once commented 'It's not the employer who pays the wages. Employers only handle the money. It's the customer who pays the wages.'



It seems obvious, but do all of your staff have this view of the business world? Is there a danger in larger organisations that some staff who don't deal directly customers might lose sight of the essential link between the customer and the wage packet. How do you ensure that employees, in all roles, are reminded of the importance of meeting customer needs? If you're in a non-commercial organisation, do your staff have a clear understanding of who their customers are?

## A Good Read

"The Momentum Effect" J C Larreche (Wharton School Publishing)

Business success is often elusive, and even when found, it is even harder to maintain.

J C Larreche, a professor at INSEAD, argues in this outstanding book that the secret to sustaining success lies in what he terms 'the momentum effect'. After extensive research, Larreche believes he has identified the key drivers of exceptional growth in organisations and what they must do to sustain such phenomenal growth. He sets out a simple framework for others to emulate, although as he acknowledges, the implementation often proves problematic.

Leading Wales Towards Management Excellence