

Management

THINK ABOUT IT

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

Productive Time

The newly released 2008 Global Productivity Report from Proudfoot Consulting found that UK managers spend an average 38.5% of their time on administrative tasks compared to an estimated ideal of 23%. According to Proudfoot, this put Britain's 'administrative overload' at second highest of the 12 countries surveyed.



How does your working week match up against these figures? How do you measure and review the amount of time you spend on administration compared to supervision, instruction, mentoring of staff and other tasks that can have a direct impact on productivity. Are you confident you are dividing your time most productively?

Conditional Loyalty

The Prime Minister has called for an end to the culture of big bonuses in the banking and finance industries. However, despite the current economic crisis, many financial services businesses are reluctant to let go of this method of rewarding staff for fear of losing their best people to competitors.



How important are bonuses in your organisation? If you stopped or cut back on bonuses because of the credit crunch what other steps could you take to retain the loyalty of talented staff?

Friends in Need

The current issue of Management Today magazine highlights the importance of having good business friendships to rely on during times of economic hardship and market turbulence.



As part of your management role, do you consciously and consistently make and nurture good relationships with your customers, suppliers and other contacts? How do you sustain these links? Do you feel the number and quality of your firm's relationships is good enough to help you through the current market difficulties?

Present but how correct?

The current fear of job loss is said to be increasing the number of people who insist on staying at work, even when they are feeling unwell. However many studies have found this can have a more damaging impact on productivity than workers being absent, because their performance plummets and they risk passing germs on to colleagues



How good are you at spotting if a member of your team is ill but continuing to work? Do you encourage them to go home in order to get treatment or recuperate, or do you allow them to carry on, hoping to minimize disruption?

Planning for the Worst

Business author Richard Templar says contingency plans are an essential tool of management and that the wise manager should always try to visualize the worst possible scenario and have a specific plan to cope with it.



In the present economic downturn have you considered the various circumstances your business could face? Have you worked out what you would do in response to each situation? In what form have you stored this plan and with whom have you shared it? How confident are you that your response would be the right one or would be enough to enable the company to survive, should the worst occur?

A Good Read

Leading Wales Towards Management Excellence