Making People Count : a workforce bulletin

November 2017

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CPD

TUC finds dearth of workplace training

Source: Personnel Today

Date of Publication: November 2017

In a nutshell: The TUC have been asking people about the amount of training they receive at work and have found that almost a quarter of their 3,000 sample had received no training other than an induction for new workers. White-collar workers were almost twice as likely as blue-collar ones (40% vs 21%) to receive training but employers in other EU countries spend twice as much as we do on improving workplace skills. 41% said that big changes had been driven through without consultation while 21% said that suggestions were ignored by management with a fifth (22%) saying that management did nothing to reduce stress in the workplace.

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

Why companies should invest in career development

Source: Fistful of Talent

Date of Publication: November 2017

In a nutshell: Career development can cost organisations time and money but in this article Elizabeth Dickerson outlines some of the ways in which it pays off. Career development supports employee retention and reflects well on the organisation and, more importantly, helps to make employees better producers and performers. Rewarding employees with training and development opportunities lets them know you're listening and care about their growth. This can be as simple as setting up a career resource centre, setting up weekly meetings so employees stay on track, or goal setting. Organisations can find and attract the best talent by promoting flexible programmes and career progression – you can do this by updating your careers site and social-media platforms to display various programmes at your organisation. Simple images or videos of training or guest speakers can do the trick allowing candidates to visualise all the amazing things you're doing. Empowering employees can translate to loyalty so give employees freedom in career discovery to take on projects outside their comfort zone, and the confidence to develop their skills.

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

Learning and development for the 21st century
Source: Personnel Today

Date of Publication: November 2017

In a nutshell: Young people seem to spend at least half their lives with their nose stuck in some sort of electronic gadget. However, one man's pasty-faced geek is another's digital native and, whatever you think about them, the future is lumbered with the young. Youngsters are technically-gifted and always looking to improve their abilities and – according to Deloitte – learning and development is now the number one reason millennials choose an employer. So while the workforce is insistent on CPD training strategies need to remain up-to-date in an environment where software often seems to last no longer than a pint of milk. Employees can now take on information in bite-sized chunks as opposed to traditional class-room learning which might be more convenient but can also lead to forgetfulness. However with "micro-learning," employees can quickly learn something new, put it into practice, get immediate feedback and then get back to learning more. Each employee needs to be made an expert – always learning and always looking out for what's next. By showing that an organisation's training strategy nurtures employees' needs and aspirations firms can build a real community around their staff.

You can read the whole of this article by Julian Wragg, from [PluralSight](#) [here](#).

… but managers still prefer face-to-face
Source: Personnel Today

Date of Publication: November 2017

In a nutshell: Managers still prefer face-to-face learning to digital, according to a new report by learning-resources provider GoodPractice. However more than half of the 500 managers who took part in the survey said they had had good experiences of online learning and 60% said it had had a significant impact on their performance at work, saying their experiences were inspiring and engaging. The most-preferred ways of learning were face-to-face training (92%), coaching/mentoring (90%) and then e-learning (86%). Managers said e-learning was accessible and were most likely to choose it when they needed to learn something specific. Mobile learning was thought to be the least useful option and less than 3% said they would choose a mobile-learning option as their first choice of learning method. Managers were less keen on learning networks with only 22% considering them very useful and 35% saying they were useful.

You can download a copy of the Learning Technologies: What Managers Really Think report [here](#).

Engagement

How to get happiness into the workplace

Source: Personnel Today

Date of Publication: November 2017

In a nutshell: "Happiness, happiness, the greatest gift that we possess …" Well that was Ken Dodd's view, if not Sigmund Freud's and, to quote the great Doddy again "Freud never played the last house at the Glasgow Empire." More and more employers are inclined to agree with Doddy and in this article Wendy Dean from Strategi Solutions Group looks at the "real drivers for engagement [Ms Dean probably never played the Glasgow Empire either] and how to foster them." Since the unfortunate events of 2008 employers have had to focus on retaining and nurturing the best of their talent and employees now expect there to be an emphasis on their happiness and satisfaction. Genuinely happy staff provide the best advocate for your business and are more likely to go the extra mile, both for their bosses and their customers. So employers should ask themselves whether staff are prepared to go above and beyond regularly and are willing to go to out-of-work events to represent your business. How well do staff interact with clients? And how prepared are they to get involved in helping to set the strategy of your organisation? One way of doing this is by having "employee champions" throughout all levels of an organisation and challenging them to come up with new ideas on how the business can be improved so that change comes from the bottom up and is embraced by staff without being dictated to them. Flexibility is also important – both adopting flexible working hours and making sure staff get a good work/life balance. Senior management teams should be accessible, regularly engaging and listening to staff and when success happens everyone should be recognised for their contribution.

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

Leadership

Leadership in Libraries

Source: Library Leadership and Management

Date of Publication: November 2017

In a nutshell: In this article Christopher Stewart, from Dominican University in Illinois, reviews the literature on library leadership published since 2000. In the first part of the article he discusses leadership competencies – what makes a good leader. These include technical knowledge such as fund-raising and scholarly communication as well as personal attributes such as managing, leading and planning, dealing with

others and general and individual leadership. Negotiating and influencing skills are seen as highly-important for senior leaders as is political sensitivity. Senior leaders also thought relationship-management and the ability to build strategic alliances were important. In the second part of the article Christopher Stewart discusses leadership characteristics. Skills seen as important for library leaders include: verbal skills, receptivity to new ideas, commitment to new ideas, ability to communicate across the organisation, ability to motivate staff, persuasiveness and service to communities with 'toxic,' traits including autocratic leadership and the inability to delegate. Other qualities identified include: strategic vision, imagination and creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship, planning, courage, trust, values, getting to the truth, passion, caring for colleagues, communication and transformation.

You can read the abstract of this article [here](#).

Recruitment

Making your workplace millennial friendly

Source: Personnel Today

Date of Publication: November 2017

In a nutshell: Millennials are people born between the 1980s and 2000s. Everyone is keen to suck up to them these days – advertisers and political parties among them – and employers are no exception. In this article Mufid Sukkar, the Group Chief Strategy Officer at Nest Investments, offers a few tips on how to make your workplace attractive to Millennials.

Make your company a worthwhile one to work for. Employees produce their best work when they feel that their organisation is working towards a shared and meaningful goal. To do this employers must be able to demonstrate that their business adheres to the highest levels of corporate social responsibility and transparency and actually works to support the values it espouses. Attracting Millennials isn't about pizza and beanbags in the office – it's about creating a fair and equal environment and making sure that ethics and responsibility become part of the organisation's culture.

Adapt to new ways of working. Don't keep a battery farm of workers chained to their desks. Embrace flexible working including the opportunity to work from home and assignment-based contracts.

Understanding the millennial perspective. Millennials have lived through the Financial Crisis of 2008 so they take an understandably cynical view of the world of work and don't feel an automatic sense of loyalty to a particular employer. Employers need to prove their commitment to them as much as they do to their employers.

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

How to give opportunities to people with Down's syndrome
Source: benefitsbridge.unitedconcordia.com

Date of Publication: November 2017

In a nutshell: People with disabilities have a big contribution to make to society and people with Down's syndrome are no exception. In this article Suzanne Lucas offers a few tips as to how to get the best out of people with Down's. One of the best ways is to provide internships for them in the same way as you provide internships to college students. Carrying out individual assessments and providing individualised training and mentoring can make sure that the job, and its responsibilities are a good fit for your new employee. The National Down Syndrome Society provide the following guidelines for working with people with Down's:

- Set goals

- Provide a routine

- Meet regularly

- Encourage inclusion

- Be flexible

- Keep an open mind

- Educate your staff

People with Down syndrome tend to be very concrete in their thinking and don't do well with abstract ideas so it's good to be as specific as possible – do x, then y, then z – rather than just giving generalised instructions such as 'sort out x.' Above all though people with Down's Syndrome are individuals, with different personalities and different skills, who can be held to standards of personal behaviour and performance just like any other employee.

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

The British way of recruitment
Source: Personnel Today

Date of Publication: November 2017

In a nutshell: Different cultures do things differently and recruitment is no exception. In this article Rob Smith from reference-checking company Xref looks at some of these differences and their pros and cons. French people are happy to be emotionally expressive and confrontational in the recruitment process while in the UK both of these tendencies would be looked on negatively. And while interviewers sometimes beat around the bush in the UK they are much more likely to be direct in the US. In the UK it's unusual for candidates to include their photos in their CVs, and there is more desire for privacy so personal questions are deemed not just inappropriate but potentially illegal. British people are also more reluctant to include negative information in references with 38% saying that they wouldn't do this. 29% of people admit to having deliberately lied to a potential employer, 21% said they had asked referees to lie on their behalf and 21% said they had asked their referees to pretend to be someone they are not. Countries like the U.S., Australia and Canada have been much faster in recognising the value of new technologies to speed up parts of the recruitment process while in the U.K. people are more traditional and use phone and emails.

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

How to recognise a bad workplace

Source: money.usnews.com

Date of Publication: November 2017

In a nutshell: It's not always easy to tell in advance whether an organisation will be easy to work for or not – and sometimes one finds out after it's too late. In this article Alison Green gives a few tips on some warning signs to look out for.

1. **The hiring process is chaotic**. If interviews are re-scheduled lots of times, nobody knows who you're supposed to meet, and everyone you talk to has a different description of what the job involves you can assume that you're learning something valuable about what it might be like working there.

2. **The interview is really short**. If you get a job offer after a single short interview, e.g. half an hour, that might be a sign that the organisation doesn't prioritise building a strong staff. This means you could end up in a job you're not suited for or with other people who aren't great at their jobs.

3. **The manager says "we're like a family here."** This *could* be a sign of warm, supportive environment but it could also mean that people don't respect boundaries and expect you to forgo your own home life and live in the office.

4. **The hiring manager seems very impressed with themselves.** Good managers tend to be aware of their weaknesses and can tell you a dozen ways

they'd like to improve. Bad ones tend to have a high opinion of themselves and aren't self-aware.

5. **Nobody seems to stay there very long.** This *could* be a sign of bad luck but if nobody has been around for more than a couple of years there could be a reason why.

6. **People look miserable or sound cynical when you talk to them.** If everyone you pass on your way to the office looks fed up and has dead eyes don't ignore it. And if people are prepared to sound cynical to outsiders, this could be just the tip of the iceberg.

7. **The hiring manager can't tell you how success would be measured.** A manager who can't articulate what good performance in the role looks like is someone whose expectations might be all over the place and, ultimately, might be impossible to meet.

8. **The hiring manager isn't interested in having a real conversation with you.** Bad hiring managers don't recognise that hiring is a two-way street and that they need to try and win over good candidates.

You can read the whole of this article here.

When automation comes to HR
Source: Personnel Today

Date of Publication: November 2017

In a nutshell: Anyone who has done battle with an automated call centre can be forgive for being sceptical about artificial intelligence but a lot of people take it seriously and those working in HR are no exception. Recruitment – which matches what candidates put on their CV with what recruiters are looking for – is an obvious candidate for this and in this article Robert Bolton, partner at the Global HR Centre of Excellence at KPMG, looks at some of the ins and outs of automated recruitment. Computers can help remove unconscious bias from the recruitment process but the algorithms themselves need to be tested for bias. Unilever's recruitment process gets candidates to take part in a series of games with an algorithm assessing their performance against a pre-determined personality profile. Some tech start-ups are working on software that will carry out a first interview and others are working on facial-recognition software which can detect body language and emotional cues to help screen candidates. 60% of HR departments are planning to adapt cognitive automation in the next five years. As well as helping with the actual recruitment process computers can also work out what qualities high performers have and get

them to be included in the person specification for the job. However, care needs to be taken with this approach as firstly environments can change meaning certain qualities can become more or less important, and secondly it also risks creating a monoculture where everyone has the same qualities and personalities which can mean different perspectives are missed out on.

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

Is the apprenticeship levy really working?
Source: Personnel Today

Date of Publication: November 2017

In a nutshell: In April this year the Government introduced the apprenticeship levy with the intention of increasing the number of people in workplace training. Employers with an annual pay bill of £3m or more – around 2% of organisations – have to pay a 0.5% tax, designed to raise more than £2.5bn. However, only 48,000 people began an apprenticeship in England between May and July, down 59.3% on the same quarter last year. The Department for Education said that it had expected an initial fall in numbers following the levy's introduction and suggested that because employers have two years to spend the money many are still drawing up new schemes.

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

Talent Management
How BMW are trying to grow their own entrepreneurs
Source: Personnel Today

Date of Publication: November 2017

In a nutshell: Some large corporations have been linking up with start-ups and entrepreneurs in an attempt to inject some new thinking into their organisation. BMW Financial Services have been trying to tap into the bright thinking of their own staff though – looking for 'intrapreneurs' within the ranks of their own company. 74 new ideas came from 115 people and BMW plan to take six or eight teams' ideas and provide the teams with coaching, time off their day jobs and a spell at Saíd Business School in Oxford. People will become much more 'visible' within the organisation, enhancing their careers. The company hopes to create a culture in which staff can come up with and test ideas but with the safety net of the company around them. There are risks that this sets up the expectation that all ideas are acted on and

disappointment when some of them never see the light of day but the early signs are promising.

You can read the whole of this article here.

Hiring and Developing Engaged Employees
Source: Library Leadership and Management

Date of Publication: November 2017

In a nutshell: Like many other organisations libraries are becoming more interested in developing the talent at their disposal and in keeping their workforce happy so that they give of their best and are more inclined to stick around. In the U.S. around 30% of 'credentialed librarians,' are over 60 implying a substantial number of retirements on the horizon. Talent management includes identifying what an institution needs and recruiting people to fill these need as well as things such as succession-planning and identifying and managing talented employees. In practice this included good hiring methods, effective performance management and budgeting annually for staff development. Ten common themes have been linked to employee engagement including:

- Pride in one's employer

- Satisfaction with one's employer

- Job satisfaction

- Opportunity to perform well at challenging work

- Recognition and positive feedback about one's contribution

- Personal support from one's supervisor

- Effort above and beyond the minimum

- Understanding the link between one's job and the organization's mission

- Prospects for future growth with one's employer

- Intention to stay with one's employer

While the goals for employee engagement are: lower absenteeism, lower turnover, fewer mistakes, higher customer satisfaction and higher productivity.

You can read an abstract of this article here.

Why do people really leave their jobs?

Source: cornerstoneondemand.com

Date of Publication: November 2017

In a nutshell: IBM have been asking 22,000 people why they have left their jobs. The results showed that 40% said they were unhappy with their jobs, 39% left for personal reasons, 20% left because they were unhappy with the organisation, 18% said they left because of uncertainty in the organisation e.g. restructuring and 14% said they left because they were unhappy with their manager. For people who are unhappy with their job managers should ask what exactly is it that people are unhappy about? Is it the work, the pay, the colleagues? Managers should give people interesting, challenging work and opportunities for growth and not allow 'toxic' employees to torment their co-workers. Managers might not always be able to fix personal reasons but allowing people to work remotely, flexible schedules and part-time work can all help. And being unhappy with an organisation can be helped by being honest with employees and not making unexpected and unexplained changes.

You can read the whole of this article here.

How to succeed as a new manager

Source: fistfuloftalent.com

Date of Publication: November 2017

In a nutshell: Replacing one manager with another doesn't always guarantee success as many a football-club chairman has found out to their cost. New managers often talk about needing time for their plans to come into fruition, struggling with the unfit/untalented collection of under-achievers they have inherited and not being given enough money to spend. It's almost as though they are getting their excuses in early before they themselves face the chop. However, in this article US HR expert John Whitaker is having none of it. He thinks blaming circumstances is deflecting blame, blaming the players (i.e. one's staff) just lowers morale and that the metaphorical cake needs to be made now, not when you've spent four years collecting your ingredients and fine-tuning the recipe. His tips for revitalising a team are:

Have a vision. This should be your Pole Star. Keep it clear, consistent and a constant in your communications with your team. It won't be your team until they buy into your vision although you can introduce this gradually rather than adopting a scorched-earth policy if you feel that's wiser.

Have an identity. The qualities, beliefs and actions taken by your team will define them – for good or ill. A good identity can become a rallying point and gets perpetuated over time and through changes of personnel.

Exude confidence. Even if you don't feel it, fake it. Confidence is contagious and it's a huge part of your armoury as you got about selling your vision and establishing your team's identity.

You can read the whole of this article here.

Cultures of permission and how to avoid them
Source: change-effect.com

Date of Publication: November 2017

In a nutshell: Cultures of permission can be defined as "an organisational system where people have given up their work-based autonomy (either consciously or subconsciously) and choose to respond instead to instruction and direction." Managers end up thinking "if only people would take a bit more responsibility," and employees say "if only we were allowed to take more responsibility." Something or someone at some point has caused this situation where managers become more and more hands-on and directive to try and get things moving while employees sink into learned helplessness. The only way around it is to coach, to support and encourage a new behavioural system and new way of working – this takes time and courage and a recognition that not everything will go according to plan.

You can read the whole of this article here.

Why people putting their hands up is a sign of failure
Source: fistfuloftalent.com

Date of Publication: November 2017

In a nutshell: Meetings often tend to be dominated by people who like the sound of their own voice or who have the capacity to drone on *ad infinitum* on any given topic at the drop of a hat. This can leave quieter people feeling left out even though their ideas may be just as good as – or even better – than other people's. By the time anyone has noticed them meekly putting their hands up the conversation has moved on and their point may no longer be relevant. It's easy for managers to blame the people putting their hands up but in this post Kylie Quetell suggests that they might be better off taking a look in the mirror. Managers need to ask themselves:

- How many times have they been in a room and seen a good idea shot down (or shot it down themselves) without explanation?

- How many times did they try to speak in the past, only to have their opinions not be acknowledged?

- How many times did you see people being meek in meetings and not encouraged them to speak up?

- Look around the meeting. Are there certain people doing all the talking? The men/women? The old guard? The bosses? The egos?

- What are you doing to engage all of your people and make sure their opinions are valued?

You can read the whole of this article here.

Wellbeing

Helping people keep talking about mental health
Source: Personnel Today

Date of Publication: November 2017

In a nutshell: Employers lose up to £42bn a year due to staff suffering from mental-health problems and overall poor mental health is estimated to cost the UK economy £99bn a year. More than a third of employees are struggling with a health and wellbeing issue – the most common being anxiety, depression and stress. So what can employers do about it? Jo Salter from PwC makes a few suggestions in this article including training managers on how to spot mental-health issues, giving them the tools and skills needed to support their employees and creating a culture where honest conversations and caring are the norm. PwC appointed their first full-time Mental Health Leader in 2016 and launched a campaign called Green Light to Talk aimed at encouraging people to talk about mental health at work. Two thirds of employees want their employer to take an active role in their health and wellbeing and feel that technology could be used to help with this but less than half would accept a free wearable health monitor if they thought their employers had access to the data. So employers must take steps to overcome the trust gap and show they are serious about data security. Younger people are less worried about sharing personal data but ultimately employers need to communicate and educate constantly on mental health and wellbeing, look for ways to open up discussions and normalise such conversations.

You can read the whole of this article here.

Mental health – the view from the top vs the view from the ground
Source: Personnel Today

Date of Publication: November 2017

In a nutshell: When you're in a hot balloon looking down at the countryside you're left with a general impression of pastoral beauty – you don't see the barbed wire, cowpats and machinery held together with baler twine which are rather more obvious from ground level. In the same way managers can have a different view of proceedings from staff lower down the hierarchy. 61% of CEOs and managing directors believe that employees' mental health is being looked after, compared with just 40% of non-managers. It looks like the non-managers have a more realistic grasp of affairs as three out of every five employees say they experienced a mental-health issue in the last year due to work, or where work was a related factor, while 31% were formally diagnosed with a mental-health issue. However, only one in 10 employees felt able to disclose a mental-health issue to their manager and those surveyed said they felt more comfortable talking about race, age, physical health and religious belief. 15% of respondents said that after they had disclosed a mental-health issue they were subject to disciplinary procedures, demotion or dismissal. Few managers know what to say or do with someone with a mental-health problem. In this article Dr Wolfgand Seidl from [Mercer](#) argues that managers should adopt a proactive approach training people to spot the early warning signs of stressed employees and giving people resilience training to educate people in how to sustain good mental health. People can sometimes feel more confident talking about their energy levels than their mental health and managers need to consider employees as a whole rather than maintaining a false distinction between people's physical and mental health.

Creating a positive environment for mental health can be summarised in six points which are:

1. **Demands.** People are given adequate and achievable work and their skills and abilities are matched to job demands

2. **Control.** Individuals have some say over their workloads and deadlines. They are allowed to play to their strengths and feel able to manage their day in healthy ways

3. **Relationships.** People are allowed to talk about things outside work, enjoy social spaces and create good workplace relationships

4. **Role.** It's clear what's expected of people, the understand their role and objectives and have goalposts which aren't constantly moving

5. **Change.** Change and the need for it are effectively communicated. People understand the possible effects of change on their job and the timetable for the changes

6. **Support.** Managers understand their duty of care to others, make time to talk to people one-to-one and know how to direct them to appropriate support when needed

You can read the whole of this article [here](#) and download Mercer's Mental Health at Work Report [here](#).