

Making People Count : a workforce bulletin



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People Management

Psychological safety and infection control

Source: American Journal of Infection Control

In a nutshell: Psychological safety is the blissful state of affairs in which people find it OK to raise concerns, speak their minds and discuss problems with their managers. In this study M. Todd Greene, from the University of Michigan Medical School, led a team of researchers investigating the links between psychological safety and infection-control practices. The researchers surveyed 531 acute-care hospitals in the US asking them about their infection-control practices and their levels of psychological safety. 38% of the hospitals reported high levels of psychological safety and this was associated with increased odds of regularly using urinary-catheter reminders or stop-orders and nurse-initiated urinary-catheter discontinuation for catheter-associated urinary-tract-infection prevention. Hospitals with high levels of psychological safety were also more likely to use 'sedation vacations,' to prevent ventilator-associated pneumonia.

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

Employee Resource Groups – coming to a workplace near you?

Source: thebenefitsguide.com

In a nutshell: Back in the 1970s team building consisted of going down to the pub at lunchtime, having a pint and a cheese-and-onion bap with your colleagues and gently oozing back to work after about an hour or so. Things have been going downhill since and even a short coffee-break with powdered milk and arguments about washing up is a distant memory for many. In their place have come “team-building,” events most of

which the average employee approaches with all the enthusiasm of a nun being invited out for an evening with Donald Trump. Employee resource groups (ERGs) offer employees with common characteristics the chance to get together in an attempt to foster inclusivity and communication in the workplace. They can be made up of employees with a common goal, identity or interest. Employees meet to discuss common struggles, interests, and other relevant topics; then they help one another with advice or support. Managers can get the ball rolling with a “lunch and learn,” on a specific topic or suggest groups that people might be interested in. “Once people start talking to each other about the subjects they value,” – argues Suzanne Lucas – “they’ll find it easier to extend those strong relationships into the rest of their professional lives.”

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

Goodbye succession planning, hello intentional pathway planning

Source: Personnel Today

In a nutshell: Intentional pathway planning sounds like a nice job in a national park involving Ordnance Survey maps, some marker pens and a pair of walking boots. However, it could be the next big thing in HR management – at least according to Miecha Ranea Forbes from [Koya Leadership Partners](#). She argues that succession planning concentrates too much on replacing specific leaders, typically those at, or near, the top of an organisation. Organisations need to think more holistically about leadership transitions with the goal of ensuring stability, sustainability and continuity if and when leaders leave the organisation. Intentional pathway planning is a holistic approach that considers every step of hiring and growing effective leaders. To do it you need to:

Think holistically. Understand your organisation’s leadership needs and business goals.

Prioritise this initiative. Make sure someone on the leadership team champions this effort.

Plan for any contingency. Address future departures across multiple roles, including executive director, high-level staff positions and board roles.

Respond to generational trends. Millions of Baby Boomers are retiring. The next generation are vocal about wanting more professional development opportunities.

Develop emerging leaders. Proactively prepare emerging leaders to ensure a robust pipeline for the future.

Promote internal talent. This will help you to capture institutional knowledge, improve team morale, and increase retention and engagement.

Know when to look externally. Sometimes it's necessary to expand beyond your current team.

Anticipate your organisation's biggest challenges. Identify current – and potential – challenges that your organisation faces and consider the types of leaders that will help you overcome them.

Communicate clearly and effectively. Promptly communicate any leadership change to internal and external audiences, including staff, donors, media, board members, customers, members, and other key stakeholders.

What's the value of values?

Source: Personnel Today

In a nutshell: In the good old days people used to turn up on time to work, do what they were told, go home at the end of their shift and collect their money at the end of the month without having to answer any awkward questions about what it was all for; questions, as Philip Larkin reminds us, that are wont to bring “the priest and the doctor in their long coats running over the fields.” Nowadays everyone is expected to read, memorise and act out their organisation's values but does this actually do any good? A 2016 study by Gallup found that only 27% of employees believed in their company's values and only 23% knowingly used them in their jobs. However, in this article, Debra Corey argues that values help to define what an organisation stands for, act as guidelines for operational and strategic decisions and give employees the energy and passion to get things done. However, organisations need to get the right values so HR leaders need to ask themselves:

- Are our values servants to the organisation's purpose or mission?
- Are they specific to the company?
- Can (and will) they be lived and acted on?
- Can (and will) they take us to a new planet?

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

Moral meaningfulness, mindfulness and social loafing

Source: Journal of Business Ethics

In a nutshell: Team working is in vogue at the moment, both in education and the workplace, despite the fact that its results are often a great deal less than the sum of its parts, as many Arsenal fans will testify. One reason for this discrepancy is social loafing, members of the team slacking off in the expectation that others will do all the work for them. In this study Katarina Katja Mihelič and Barbara Culiberg, from the University of Ljubljana, studied 319 business students. They found that mindfulness and moral meaningfulness (the extent to which ethics was important in people's lives) both reduced loafing attitudes, whilst social loafing attitudes positively predicted social-loafing intentions; a relationship that was strengthened by extrinsic motivation.

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

Unlocking the secrets of leadership

Source: BMJ Open

In a nutshell: The links between leadership and health workers' motivation are what psychologists call a black box – much like Donald Trump's head, although rather less frightening, nobody knows what's going on in there. In this study Zakaria Belrhiti, from the Ecole Nationale de Santé Publique in Morocco, led a team of researchers investigating the contents of the black box. They conducted a two-week field visit to a hospital and carried out 18 individual interviews and held three group discussions. They found that effective leaders adopted an appropriate mix of transactional, transformational and distributive leadership styles that fitted the mission, goals, organisational culture and nature of tasks of the organisation as well as the individual characteristics of employees. Leaders' effectiveness was affected by their degree of responsiveness to the basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. However, transactional and over-controlling leadership decreased people's autonomy and mutual respect. The researchers concluded that “by distributing leadership responsibilities, complex leaders create an enabling environment for collective efficacy and creative problem solving.”

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

Which comes first, motivation or mental health?

Source: Work and Stress

In a nutshell: Motivation and psychological health at work have been found to be related but it's hard to tell which comes first. Do people lose interest and then become depressed or become depressed and lose interest, for instance? In this study Véronique Dagenais-Desmarais, from the University of Montreal, led a team of

researchers investigating this problem in a study of 805 Canadian workers. The researchers found that only identified regulation (the extent to which one values goals rather than the behaviour which produces them) had a fully reciprocal relationship. “Only psychological well-being at work was positively associated with the three most self-determined types of motivation at work six months later, and only identified regulation predicted psychological health at work after six months.”

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

Making those New Year’s resolutions stick

Source: change-effect.com

In a nutshell: In the New Year many of us blithely ignore past experience and attempt to convince our leopard natures that stripes are in this year. In this article Neil Thompson addresses managers attempting to change their teams – or themselves – in the New Year. There are three things managers need to think about before they try and transform their teams:

Beliefs. Do people really understand and want to make the change that you’re trying to achieve? Do they believe the steps you’re outlining will actually make the difference? Do they really want a new, different, reality?

Behaviours. Are people willing to take their personal responsibility to do something differently? Do they recognise the way that they behave supports and reinforces the way they are right now?

Systems. Are the structures and processes that we have in place reinforcing where we are now? Do we need to add something new in, or take something away? Does the environment support the different outcomes we want to see?

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

Why do black sheep keep putting a shift in?

Source: The Journal of Social Psychology

In a nutshell: Many families and workplaces have a black sheep, whether through prejudice and bullying from the rest of their staff or the personal failings and inadequacies of the black sheep themselves. In this study Robert Steinbauer, from Brock University in Ontario, led a team of researchers investigating what keeps ostracised employees’ motivation going. They found that those who were intrinsically

motivated (i.e. motivated from within) used “self-leadership,” strategies to improve their job performance more than employees who were not intrinsically motivated.

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

What makes people cynical about performance appraisal, and does it matter?

Source: Personnel Review

In a nutshell: Very few employees embark on their annual performance appraisal with wide-eyed innocence and puppyish enthusiasm; one might almost find it disturbing if they did. Too much cynicism can be a bad thing though and in this study a team of researchers led by Michelle Brown, from the University of Melbourne, investigated “the influence of employee performance appraisal cynicism on intent to quiet and sportsmanship.” The researchers studied 104 pairs of supervisors and employees and found that employees were most likely to be cynical about performance appraisal when they experienced *high* levels of job resources (leader-member exchange and feedback) and high levels of job demands (difficult objectives). The employees who were most cynical about the performance-appraisal process were more likely to be thinking about leaving the organisation and were more likely to be seen as ‘bad sports,’ by their supervisors.

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

What people think about flexible working?

Source: Personnel Today

In a nutshell: There has been lots of coverage of the ins and outs of flexible working. Adding to the pile are [Morgan McKinley](#) who have been asking 1,500 people what they think about it. 91% of the people in the survey worked beyond their weekly hours and 55% of people expected flexible working when they were looking for a new job. 65% of people said their employers offered flexible working. Of the 65% of people who could work flexibly 84% made use of it by working from home. When they were asked to single out a benefit of flexible working 43% said improved staff wellbeing and 30% said reduced time spent on commuting. Some people said flexible working created more work for others and/or that workers jeopardised their career prospects by working flexibly. 78% of workers and 57% of employers said that flexible working had had a positive effect on their company’s performance and profitability.

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

What makes people share knowledge?

Source: Iranian Journal of Nursing and Midwifery Research

In a nutshell: Like love knowledge tends to give more satisfaction when you share it, especially when it comes to pub quizzes. It's also useful in the workplace and in this study Hamid Rafieian-Isfahani, from Islamic Azad University in Iran, led a team of researchers studying the links between nurses' motivation and their intent to share knowledge. The researchers found a statistically-significant association between both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and knowledge sharing. Knowledge sharing was positively associated with public recognition, "knowledge self-efficacy," and altruism but there was no link between whether people expected to get knowledge back in return and how likely they were to share knowledge.

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

Humility – the missing link in leadership

Source: change-effect.com

In a nutshell: Confidence is one of the qualities people look for in their leaders but in this article Neil Thompson argues that humility can be just as important. For years people have had an "unnatural," focus on confidence. "We base our assessments around it, we appraise and review people against it and ... we have made it a central part of our definition of a leader." However, many corporate scandals have come about as a result of over-confidence but the relentless pursuit of corporate goals needs to be balanced with collective responsibility, a constant awareness of strength and weakness, a "collective conscious," and the willingness to understand and accept when things have gone, or are going, wrong. "We all need leaders that inspire us, who breed confidence and hope and who will follow over the top. But we also need those that are strong enough to admit that sometimes, they'll get it wrong."

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

How mentoring turns followers into leaders

Source: Journal of Vocational Behavior

In a nutshell: One of the ways people get trained up for more senior positions is via mentorship. In this study Min-Kyu Joo, from the University of Texas in Houston, led a team of researchers investigating this process in more detail. The researchers studied 174 pairs of mentors and protégés and found that motivation to lead was related to formal leadership mentoring. The mentoring increased the protégés' self-efficacy and

the quality of the mentoring and the protégés' willingness to learn both played important roles in this process. Female protégés were less likely than male ones to benefit from the mentoring relationship.

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

The perils of being proactive

Source: Journal of Vocational Behavior

In a nutshell: Having served in the Army in World War Two the novelist Anthony Powell concluded that the best way to cope with it was to do what one was asked to do gladly but never, ever, to volunteer for anything. Modern managers are made of sterner stuff though and being proactive is usually counted as being a good quality to have. But what is its effect on the workers themselves? In this study a team of researchers, led by Karoline Strauss from ESSEC Business School in France, investigated this issue further. They studied 127 pairs of employees and supervisors across a variety of sectors. When controlled motivation (in the form of punishments and rewards) was high and intrinsic motivation was low being proactive made people feel more job strain. However, when employees had both high controlled motivation and high intrinsic motivation, there was no effect of proactive behaviour on job strain.

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

Psychological safety – is it the magic ingredient at work?

Source: Journal of Vocational Behavior

In a nutshell: Psychological safety is the ability to be yourself – within reason – at work without worrying about victimization or harassment and to be able to come up with new ideas without being labelled a subversive or a lunatic. In this study Tiphaine Huyghebaert, from the University of Tours in France, led a team of researchers investigating the power of psychological safety to improve the workplace. They found that increased levels of psychological safety meant people's psychological needs were less likely to be thwarted which, in turn, led to less work-family conflict and fewer turnover intentions, as well as a decrease in burnout three months later.

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

Learning and Development

The workers stuck in the gig economy

Source: Personnel Today

In a nutshell: The gig economy means rather different things to Elton John and the poor sod cycling around Kilburn with a rucksack full of lukewarm curry. Digital think tank [doteveryone](#) have been looking into the lower reaches of the gig economy and have been interviewing people for their [Better work in the gig economy](#) report. They found that workers are often trapped in insecure work because long hours, financial insecurity and piecemeal work mean they are often unable to develop skills that will get them further in their careers. They also found that low pay becomes “unliveable pay,” after costs are accounted for and that the promise of flexibility is an illusion as workers must be available 24/7 and scrabble for every gig available. Doteveryone recommend that the Government’s National Retraining Scheme is adapted to include micro-learning and mentoring courses that can be used flexibly around working schedules. They also recommend a “minimum gig wage,” that would include an allowance to cover a fair amount for the extra costs gig workers face, including the full cost of statutory employee benefits and protections that employees enjoy.

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

Recruitment

Is ‘get a new job,’ your staff’s New Year’s resolution?

Source: Personnel Today

In a nutshell: Sadly Investors in People – an otherwise splendid organisation – don’t go around investing in pianos and snooker tables for middle-aged librarians in Crewe; they tend to stick to matters around the workplace instead. They’ve been surveying the nations’ workers and have found that 24% are actively looking for a new role while 32% are considering a move. Almost two-thirds go to bed on Sunday night feeling dread about going into work the next day*, a quarter are unhappy in their current role and 77% are stressed at work. Employees gave three main reasons for looking for a new job. 30% said money, 23% said not feeling valued and 22% said wanting a better work-life balance whilst 14% said a ‘thank-you,’ would encourage them to stay in their current job. Almost two-thirds of staff said that stress about work was affecting their sleep, and a similar proportion always felt on duty, even when they were at home.

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

*As opposed to the joyful anticipation at finishing a cup of tea while it's warm, uninterrupted by small children, experienced by this author.

Graduate hiring slows down

Source: Personnel Today

In a nutshell: Also surveying people are the Institute of Student Employers (ISE) who asked 197 organisations about their recruitment plans for graduates. The organisations planned to increase graduate hires by just 3% in 2020, the worst rate of growth in graduate recruitment since 2016. Most of the planned increase in recruitment was driven by the public sector and charities which expected a 14% increase in the university leavers they hired. However, employers in construction expected a 5% reduction in graduate recruitment and energy, engineering and industry firms predicted a 4% decrease. The most-common concerns about apprenticeships were the need to reform the apprenticeship levy, the 20% off-the-job training element of apprenticeships and the need for increased flexibility in how apprenticeships operate. One in five organisations claimed that those leaving education were not ready for work, while 12% said the availability of skills was an issue.

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

How many people have never done a day's [paid] work in their lives?

Source: Personnel Today

In a nutshell: Work is a bit like the dentist. It's nice to know it's there when you need it but nobody in their right mind rushes into it unless they have to, which, of course, nearly all of us do at some point. The young have got more of an excuse than most – certainly the cultural landscape of the UK would look a lot different without the protracted periods of unemployment experienced by Mick Jagger and David Bowie, among others. The Resolution Foundation have been asking people all about not working and has found that the number of people who have never worked grew by 52% in the past 20 years, an increase driven more by younger people delaying entering the workplace rather than a sharp rise in workshy wastrels. Only a quarter of 16 and 17-year-olds were in work between 2017 and 2019, down from 48% between 1997 and 1999. Just over 8% of working-age people (between 16 and 64) – 3.4million in total – had never had a paid job, up from 5.4% in 1998. In the late 1990s 56% of young education leavers who had never previously worked got a paid job within the first year after leaving education; by 2019 that figure had fallen to 44%. The proportion of 25-39 year-old mothers who had never worked went up from 3.3% in the late 1990s to 6.5%

today, whilst the proportion of 25-39 year-old men with health problems who had never worked increased from 4.8% to 7.6%.

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

Why technology isn't a magic solution for recruitment

Source: Personnel Today

In a nutshell: Bad recruitment can cost companies a huge amount of money, not just in having to re-advertise positions and pay redundancy money but in the amount of damage an ill-advised appointment can cause while they are in their post. More and more organisations are using IT in their recruitment processes now but in this article Steve Phillips, from the recruitment consultancy Sanderson, argues that it's no substitute for the human touch. Companies need to know what they want from candidates and articulate it to the right target market and what is being offered should accurately reflect the opportunity being provided. Any drive to innovate must be guided by long-term thinking: what sort of organisation are you? What kind of people do you want to attract? What can you offer to prospective employees that others can't. "In many ways, recruitment has never changed. It's ultimately about people and their relationships with each other, something that machines still have some way to go before they can understand."

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

What do you ask when it's all over?

Source: thecut.com

In a nutshell: "How was it for you?" is a question probably best not asked in any context, including after a job interview where – in common with other situations – it can be hard to give a diplomatic answer. Likewise asking about lunch hours, holidays and how many hours a week it's deemed acceptable to spend on Facebook. In this article Alison Green outlines a more thoughtful approach. Her ten questions you can ask are:

How will you measure the success of the person in this position? What does it mean to do well, and what will you need to achieve in order for the manager to be happy with your performance?

What are some of the challenges you expect the person in this position to face? This can get information you'd never get from the job description, alert you to

potential minefields and allow you to demonstrate how you've solved similar challenges in the past.

Can you describe a typical day or week in the job? This can help you to visualise what it will actually be like to be in the job day after day.

How long did the previous person in the role hold the position? What has turnover in the role generally been like? If no one has stayed in the job very long, that could be a red flag about a difficult manager, unrealistic expectations, lack of training etc.

What are you hoping this person will accomplish in their first six months and in their first year? This question can give you a sense of what kind of learning curve you're expected to have and the pace of the team and organisation.

Thinking back to people you've seen do this work previously, what differentiated the ones who were good from the ones who were really great at it? This goes straight to the heart of what the interviewer is looking for and makes you sound like someone who's at least aiming at being great.

How would you describe the culture here? What type of people tend to really thrive here, and what type don't do as well?

What do you like about working here? A long silence in answer to this question isn't a good sign!

Ask the question you really care about? If you're focused on getting the job and not whether it's the *right* job for you you're in danger of ending up in a job where you're struggling or miserable.

What's your timeline for the next steps? It's much more relaxing to know that you're not likely to hear anything for two-four weeks while the interviewer is off on holiday.

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

Welcome home – the London Trust now “insourcing,” staff

Source: Personnel Today

In a nutshell: For a long time contracting out services to the private sector was seen as a way of saving money, providing a more efficient service and releasing money for patient care. This idea has fallen out of favour recently though and Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust – which runs five hospitals across London – has now decided to directly employ 1,000 workers who had previously been outsourced. The staff all

provide “hotel services,” and were all employed by Sodexo at St Mary’s Hospital in Paddington. The workers’ pay will now be harmonised at £11.28 an hour. Some studies have shown that hospitals that outsource their ancillary staff have higher incidences of infections, including MRSA.”

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

Wellbeing

Men still struggling with mental health

Source: Personnel Today

In a nutshell: Men can often struggle to talk about their feelings yet many of us suffer from mental-health problems. [Cigna](#) have been researching this issue finding that two-thirds of men suffer from work-related stress. 13% of them say that their stress is unmanageable yet only 12% have spoken to a professional about it. Work-related stress can affect performance with stressed employees often seen to be less engaged and motivated and less productive at work. However, only 28% of UK employers have a formal wellness programme in place to support their staff and even where there is a wellness programme in place take up can be worryingly low. Many men work in environments where a macho culture prevails or where a competitive environment can exist that prevents them from feeling able and to be open. Communication has to be an ongoing commitment from top down, to educate, make people aware and give easy access, regardless of whether people work onsite or remotely.

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

Being compassionate with the January blues

Source: Personnel Today

In a nutshell: Even when people move into a new house it’s not long before there are teabag stains on the wall behind the bin, red-wine marks on the carpet and grease all over the oven window. January is the calendrical equivalent of this with thoughts of a bright new start soon giving way to broken resolutions, left-over chocolates and a nasty head cold brought on by jogging in the rain. In this article Amy Bradley from Hult International Business School outlines some of the ways in which employers can become more compassionate. Researchers have detected a clear, positive correlation between compassionate behaviour, work satisfaction, and company success and in

compassionate work environments employees often report higher levels of engagement, trust and teamwork. Management style is the third most common cause of stress at work but only one in three people feel genuinely supported by their organisation and less than half feel confident in disclosing emotional or personal issues to their manager. Managers can be more proactive by asking people how they would like to be supported and if they would like their situation to be communicated to other staff or customers. Managers should not just offer a one-off conversation but continue to create the time and space for confidential non-work conversations where employees can openly express their emotions without fear of judgement or reprisal. HR professionals should feel free to flex policies to allow people to take the time away from work they need while recognising that some people prefer to work throughout difficult times, even though their performance might not be quite at its best. HR professionals should also consider offering employees access to a named member of staff other than their line manager.

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

Getting your work/life balance right

Source: fistfuloftalent.com

In a nutshell: “Nobody ever died of overwork, but why take the chance?” was one of the late President Reagan’s quips. Despite winning the Cold War and presiding over an economic boom not everyone has heeded his advice since then and in this article William Wiggins addresses some of the issues around work-life balance. All work and no play can leave employees exhausted with their ability to perform productively often suffering, leading to dangerous and/or costly mistakes. Stress can adversely affect the immune system and missing important family events or working through precious time with family can leave employees feeling isolated and disconnected from what brings them to work in the first place. Managers should take time to find out what motivates their employees and what’s important to them. Asking simple questions in staff-support surveys such as “how can we support you in achieving work-life balance?” may reveal some prime opportunities to support them. Leaders should also model a good work-life balance by not sending emails over weekends, holidays or evenings – instead employers should make an effort to reward efficiency rather than hours worked.

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

When flexible working is too much of a stretch

Source: Personnel Today

In a nutshell: As many an A&E doctor will tell you there's a fine line between demonstrating your flexibility and rupturing something. Working Families has been asking people about their experiences of flexible working and have published the results in their [Modern Families Index 2020](#) report. The report found that three in five working parents are doing extra, unpaid, hours to cope with their workload. 48% of parents said that working from home had increased their workload. 52% said that working overtime was part of their organisation's culture whilst 60% said it was the only way they could get their work done. Nearly half (47%) of parents said that technology had blurred the lines between their work and home life. 16% of people who regularly worked extra hours planned to change jobs, compared to 11% of those who did not work extra hours.

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

Are managers tackling harassment?

Source: Personnel Today

In a nutshell: Bullying and harassment are a bit like weeds on a patio. You just stamp them out in one place and they pop up in another. The Chartered Institute for Personnel Development (CIPD) have been asking people about it. Four in 10 said that their manager was responsible, whilst 34% said their manager's lack of confidence to deal with harassment meant conflict was not being dealt with effectively. Only two-fifths of managers said they had had any kind of people-management training. 15% of employees said they had been bullied in the last three years, 4% said they had experienced sexual harassment and 8% said they had been subject to other forms of harassment. And more than half (53%) of people who had experienced harassment in the last three years had not reported the latest incident. The CIPD's tips for dealing with the issue are:

- Increasing investment in training for managers – specifically on managing conflict at work
- Encouraging a speak-up culture where the complaints procedure is well-publicised
- Considering whether issues can be resolved informally first

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

I've got to get out of this joint

Source: Personnel Today

In a nutshell: Joint can mean a number of different things to different people: an illicit cigarette, a sizzling hunk of delicious meat, or a complex arrangement of interlocking wood. For those suffering from, or treating, musculoskeletal conditions, though it's all about bones and in this article [Willis Towers Watson](#) have been asking 2,000 workers about musculoskeletal pain. More than two-thirds of them said that their job had been a contributing factor to their condition. 64% thought that their condition had been made worse by their job and a third said that their employer had not provided adequate support despite being told about their condition. 87% of workers between 18 and 24 said that their work had contributed to their musculoskeletal problems – only 58% of workers aged 55 and over thought the same. There has been a gradual decline in the rate of self-reported work-related musculoskeletal problems but this trend has slowed down over recent years and around 6.9m working days are still being lost to musculoskeletal conditions.

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

Counting the cost of mental-health problems

Source: Personnel Today

In a nutshell: Mental health is, of course, a valuable thing in its own right but it can also cost employers money. How much is a moot point but Deloitte have been attempting to put a figure on it in a new report called [Mental health and employers: the case for refreshing investment](#). The report estimates that mental ill-health costs the UK economy between £42bn and £45bn a year, up 16% from 2017. Although there have been many positive changes made by employers in that time, including encouraging greater openness in discussions about mental health at work and increased provision of support these improvements have been negated by increases in mental-health-related presenteeism, absenteeism and staff turnover. Employees have been affected by the “always-on,” culture and the belief that they need to continue working instead of taking time off to look after themselves with younger people being particularly hard hit.

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