

# INSIGHTS

HUMAN RESOURCES

JANUARY 2019 ISSUE 5

## THE DANGER OF UNDERVALUING HUMAN RESOURCES

PAGE 7

RECRUITMENT &  
HR OUTLOOK 2019

MENTAL HEALTH  
POLICIES IN THE  
WORKPLACE

ARE THE  
FOUNDATIONS OF  
#METOO BEHAVIOURS  
BEING BUILT IN  
YOUR WORKFORCE?



**BOND WILLIAMS**  
PROFESSIONAL RECRUITMENT



Based across our three offices in Bournemouth, Southampton and Oxford, our entire recruitment consultancy team has over 200 years' combined experience and each specialise in one of our five core divisions.

**Bournemouth**  
01202 233 777

**Southampton**  
02380 173 655

**Oxford**  
01865 546 046

[www.bondwilliams.co.uk](http://www.bondwilliams.co.uk)

## MEET THE TEAM

YOUR SPECIALIST HR RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS...



Claire Bond



Hannah Darby



Carole Connor



Suzanne Sherriff

Headed by our founder, Claire Bond, our specialist HR division has been successfully placing suitable candidates with HR clients since Bond Williams Professional Recruitment opened its doors in 2004.

Claire alone has almost 25 years' experience recruiting for the HR sector and can offer clients a detailed insight into current job market trends, available skills analysis and candidate expectations.

She is supported by Hannah Darby and Carole Connor on the permanent side and Suzanne Sherriff who looks after temporary, contract and interim roles. Together, they bring an additional 40+ years' experience to the team.

The team delivers an exceptional and fast service to both clients and candidates at all levels, and are responsible for our series of free and ever-popular educational events for HR professionals. See more information on page 10.

*Did you know about our other specialist divisions?*



OFFICE & COMMERCIAL



ACCOUNTING & FINANCE



IT & SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS



ENGINEERING,  
SCIENCE & SPACE

# Hello and welcome

## TO OUR FIRST ISSUE OF HR INSIGHTS FOR 2019

We are again delighted to be able to bring you industry insights and advice from both our in-house team as well as HR professionals and subject matter experts from across Dorset and Hampshire.

This quarter, we start by reflecting on 2018 and take a look at the year ahead.

At Bond Williams, it's been an exciting 12 months, with the opening of two new offices in Southampton and Oxford, the launch of a new specialist Engineering, Science & Space division and the subsequent growth of our recruitment team. Inside, we share some of our figures and research findings as well as industry data from REC and other organisations that gives an idea of what employers and HR professionals believe the outlook is for the next 12 months.

There are plenty of other hot topics featured in this issue too. Our contributors cover everything from sexual harassment to avoiding boring briefings, while our own articles explore the true value of HR, the cost of a bad hire and why firing staff may not be your best option.

As always, details of our upcoming seminars are included too, which are free to attend. We've already had to increase numbers for the Employment Law Update with Frettons in Bournemouth due to such high demand so book your place soon to avoid disappointment. Remember, it will also be held in Southampton a week later if the Bournemouth event does become fully booked.

Enjoy!



**Claire Bond**  
Director, Bond Williams Professional Recruitment

If you would like to be involved or contribute to the next issue of HR Insights, we'd love to hear from you.  
Please email [marketing@bondwilliams.co.uk](mailto:marketing@bondwilliams.co.uk)

## CONTENTS

### 04

Recruitment and HR outlook 2019

### 06

Keep up to date with statutory rates

### 07

The danger of undervaluing Human Resources

### 08

Employment law update

### 09

Managing conflict

### 10

Upcoming Bond Williams HR seminars

### 11

How to avoid firing your staff

### 12

How do you engage staff when the topic is as dull as dishwasher?

### 13

Mental health policies in the workplace

### 14

Supporting staff with financial wellbeing could positively impact the bottom line

### 15

Are the foundations of #MeToo behaviours being built in your workforce?

### 16

Dealing with sexual harassment in the workplace. What is the latest?

### 17

Growing socially aware leaders

### 18

How much hiring the wrong person is costing your business

# RECRUITMENT AND HR OUTLOOK 2019

IF DATA FROM THE REC'S (RECRUITMENT & EMPLOYMENT CONFEDERATION) ANNUAL REPORT IS ANYTHING TO GO BY, THEN 2017/18 WAS A POSITIVE YEAR FOR THE RECRUITMENT INDUSTRY.

Despite political and economic uncertainty, recruitment industry turnover increased 11%, implying business growth and the successful placement of candidates.

At Bond Williams, we also enjoyed a successful year in FY 17/18, and this trend has continued so far this year. The number of successful placements made in Q3 of 18/19 increased 25% compared to the same period the year before.

The average value of permanent placements also rose 11%, which can be accredited to the fact that the average salary offered also rose 11%. For temporary placements, this increase stood at an impressive 54%. This is not only due to the fact that the length of temporary assignments is on the up, but that more senior interim expertise is required by our clients.

Having said that, there are still challenges facing the job market as a whole, and growth levels are more likely to slow over the coming years. This is already evident from the latest report on jobs from REC and KPMG, which shows that UK employers hired permanent staff at the slowest rate since April 2017 in December 2018.

No one has a crystal ball when it comes to Brexit – will we even leave the EU and if so, what will be the impact be? This hasn't seemed to put the brakes on any recruitment plans for most businesses in our experience. What we are finding, however, is that employees are choosing to stay put rather than jump ship, and this is all contributing to the current skills shortage.

## Businesses reveal recruitment challenges

In fact, a Bond Williams survey carried out among businesses in Dorset and Hampshire found that a shortage of suitable candidates is the biggest recruitment challenge for local employers. Over a quarter (29%) of respondents told us lack of relevant experience or specialist skills, or not being a right 'fit' for the company culture was a big problem.

The second biggest recruitment challenge related to the cost of offering competitive salaries or benefits packages, with 15% of companies saying they are not able to compete with larger businesses in the area. This is particularly the case for not-for-profit organisations and the care sector. A further 10% of respondents are concerned that the inability to keep up with wage expectations or wellness and benefit offerings will negatively impact staff retention.

Coming in at a close third is the recruitment process (14%). The majority of businesses clarified that the time to hire is the main problem. Some companies stated that candidates pulling out of interviews or after receiving counter offers from existing employers is understandably frustrating. Others struggle to shortlist applicants or conduct interviews that provide enough evidence on whether the interviewee has the skills and experience to do the job.

The good news is that these recruitment challenges can be overcome. Companies need to think of innovative ways to reach the passive market and consider looking further afield geographically. It's never a bad time to review the whole package on offer either, as salary isn't always the deciding factor for candidates.





## The struggle for HR professionals

An annual report by Cascade supported our findings and showed that internally, the three biggest challenges for HR professionals is employee engagement, recruitment and retention. With employee rights and wellbeing programmes making mainstream news headlines, the UK workforce is more aware than ever about whether they are getting the 'whole package' from their employer. In turn, this causes employees to ask more questions and consider leaving their role.

This sheds a somewhat unwanted light on HR departments who are constantly under pressure to show how they are developing and improving employee engagement strategies and maintaining morale. With only 15% of UK employees engaged in their jobs, it could be that the traditional Intranet is no longer good enough, and much more will need to be done in 2019.

At the same time, workforces need to be educated on what HR departments actually do. Research over the years has revealed that employees are mistrusting of their HR colleagues, assuming that they only have the company's interests in mind. This could be why employee engagement programmes have struggled over the years. It's time to focus on telling employees how you are prioritising them.

## HR skills and candidate availability vs job vacancies

Thankfully, we are finding that more businesses are developing or growing in-house HR departments than in previous years, with a particular focus on mid-level management roles. This might be down to the challenges in the labour market and requirement for employers to improve long-term retention rates or to ensure all aspects of employment law are covered from a policy point of view.

Management boards are finally seeing the value in having skilled HR departments, but the priority continues to be the integration of new systems and processes, and so an eye for technology is high on the list of desired skills.

---

Key findings from KPMG's 'Future of HR' report revealed that about two-thirds of HR executives agree that the industry has undergone or is undergoing a digital transformation; however, only 40% of HR leaders said they have a digital workplan in place. HR candidates now will need to be open to new technology, such as Artificial Intelligence, at the very least, or be able to lead such projects.

---

From a candidate point of view, fewer junior applicants appear to be actively job seeking, and Director-level candidates are opting for more interim contracts or starting their own businesses. Mid-level HR managers are often consumed by projects right now, which makes them less likely to be searching for jobs, but more open to being approached.

Salary expectations have increased, as fewer employees are willing to take the risk of starting a new job without any financial benefit whatsoever, but salaries overall are higher because businesses are willing to pay a premium for digital experience and skills.

Partnering with the right recruitment agency can ensure you reach the best passive candidates and mould roles to the right people, provided business objectives can still be met.



# KEEP UP TO DATE WITH STATUTORY RATES

The start of the 2019/2020 financial year may seem a little way off yet, but the proposed statutory rates due to come into force from April were announced at the end of last year, despite fears that Brexit might delay their publication.

This means that HR professionals can plan their budgets in good time and amend contracts and policies where necessary.

The revised rates for maternity, paternity, shared parental and adoption pay will occur on Sunday 7th April 2019 and the rate of statutory sick pay will increase on 6th April 2019.

	2018/19 (per week)	2019/20 (per week)
Maternity/paternity/adoption	£145.18	£148.68
Sick pay	£92.05	£94.25
Lower earning threshold	£116	£118

From 1st April 2019, minimum hourly rates of pay will also rise. The National Living Wage, applicable to workers aged 25 and over, will increase almost 5% from £7.83 per hour to £8.21 per hour. This is estimated to benefit around 2.4 million workers and give those working full-time an annual pay rise of £690.

In line with recommendations from the Low Pay Commission (LPC), other National Minimum Wages will be increased as well.

	2018/19 (per hour)	2019/20 (per hour)
<b>National Living Wage</b>		
Workers aged 25 and over	£7.83	£8.21
<b>National Minimum Wage</b>		
Workers aged 21-24	£7.38	£7.70
Workers aged 18-20	£5.90	£6.15
Workers aged 16-17	£4.20	£4.35
Apprentice rate	£3.70	£3.90

More information can be found on the Government website:  
[www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates](http://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates)

# The danger of undervaluing Human Resources

**When it comes to Human Resources, many businesses fail to see the immediate value in investing in a department. As a result, HR teams can be the first to go when finances are tight, or the last to be considered as an addition to a growing business. Investing in Human Resources, however, can save your organisation thousands of pounds, keep you legally compliant when it comes to employment law and be instrumental in future success by setting out concise recruitment and retention strategies.**

## **In control of recruitment costs**

So where does HR's value lie? The first thing that may spring to mind is the management of your recruitment, but this isn't always the case, or the most effective use of an internal HR team.

While HR professionals may understand the fundamentals of recruitment, it's not usually their core or day-to-day focus unless the company is continuously recruiting. Instead, they should be spending more time ensuring that staff onboarding and retention processes are in place.

Having said that, a good HR department will take on the responsibility of managing external recruitment agencies and act as the gatekeeper between shortlisted candidates and management teams.

They will play a key role in finalising job descriptions and potentially carry out first-stage interviews, freeing up senior staff until their involvement is essential.

## **Solutions to stop repeat recruitment**

If you're looking for new staff due to expansion – congratulations – but if you're continually searching for people to replace resignations, you have a different problem that HR could solve.

Replacing staff is expensive and it's been quantified. A study by Oxford Economics found the average cost of replacing a single employee is in excess of £30,000 – that's more than £25,000 in loss of productivity while a new joiner gets up-to-speed and an additional £5,000 spent on things like advertising costs and hiring temps.

While some resignations are inevitable, HR can implement strategies to stop worryingly high repeat recruitment. It all starts with staff retention. Good staff are worth holding on to – if they're invaluable, do everything you can to keep them. After all, you've invested time and money in hiring them in the first place.

A lack of a clear pathway to success and feeling under-appreciated appeared in Glassdoor's top 10 reasons why employees resign but both can be mitigated with a strong HR department. They're best placed – and best qualified – to devise plans to keep staff engaged and on the payroll.

## **Retention delivers rewards**

An added benefit of retaining excellent employees is internal promotion – a process that HR can take control of.

As well as facilitating performance reviews and professional development programmes, HR will take control of succession planning, ensuring there is a long-term plan for staff that is in line with business objectives.

Internal promotions are also an outward sign to other employees that all the opportunities they could want are right there. If staff know they can progress their career within their existing company, they're more likely to up their game and wait for that opening – a double bonus.

## **Hit the HR ground running**

Add an HR team to your business and you're also investing in specialist skills so best employment practices – above and beyond recruitment – are implemented effectively. HR professionals are specifically trained so business owners don't have to be. They're qualified to co-ordinate staff benefits and perks; ensure there is a clear path to promotion; organise appraisals; implement, improve and review workplace policies; adhere to constantly changing employment law and create an 'open door' environment where dialogue is encouraged.

An HR department's remit is huge so don't underestimate the benefit and value to your business in having one, especially in a competitive job market where staff retention is key.

At Bond Williams, our specialist HR division focuses purely on finding suitable candidates for a variety of HR roles, from administrators through to directors. Whether you're building an internal HR function for the first time or want to expand your team, get in touch today.





# EMPLOYMENT LAW UPDATE

WE HAVE BEEN GOING THROUGH A RELATIVELY SLOW PERIOD REGARDING EMPLOYMENT LEGISLATION, AS UNCERTAINTY AROUND 'THE B-WORD' HANGS OVER US.

The Government did, however, provide some guidance and time-scales for the implementation of its 'Good Work Plan'. In what has been hailed as 'the largest upgrade in a generation to workplace rights', the Good Work Plan was announced just before Christmas.

The plan comes as a result of the Matthew Taylor Good Work Review and we've outlined the key proposals for you below.

## What is the Good Work Plan?

The legislation announced will aim to:

- Change rules on continuity of employment
- Close a loophole in the agency worker regulations by repealing the Swedish Derogation
- Extend the right to a written statement of particulars on day one
- Quadruple maximum employment tribunal fines for employers
- Extend the holiday pay reference period from 12 to 52 weeks
- Lower the threshold required for a request to set up information and consultation arrangements
- Legislate to streamline the employment status tests so they are the same for employment and tax purposes
- Impose a ban on employers making deductions from staff tips

## Clarification of employment status

Legislation to clarify employment status is, of course, welcome, however it is still difficult to establish clear definitions which are better than those we currently have. Nobody knows how to do that, and the Government has simply said that detailed proposals will be published in due course.

## Zero hour contracts

Zero hours were addressed, albeit in a more limited manner than many groups had hoped for. The Government proposes a right to request a specific working pattern for those who do not have one, after 26 weeks on a non-fixed pattern.

Presumably this right will be similar to the right to request flexible working, i.e. a series of procedural requirements an employer must follow but – broadly – considerable discretion for the employer to refuse, with very limited financial penalties if breached. However, the Good Work Plan gives no details of what enforcement mechanism is proposed.

## Key dates

The following statutory instruments were laid out by the government the day after the announcement of the plan.

The Employment Rights (Employment Particulars and Paid Annual Leave) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 was laid before parliament on the 17th December and will come into force on 6 April 2020 and:

- Provides that the written statement of employment particulars must be given from day one of employment
- Changes the rules for calculating a week's pay for holiday pay purposes, increasing the reference period for variable pay from 12 weeks to 52 weeks
- The Agency Workers (Amendment) Regulations 2018 abolishes the Swedish Derogation for agency workers and also comes into force on 6 April 2020.



**Author: Paul Burton, Associate, Frettens Solicitors**  
www.frettens.co.uk | pburton@frettens.co.uk

**Paul Burton is an employment solicitor and Associate at Frettens Solicitors. He has recently been shortlisted for the upcoming Lawyer of the Year Award at The Dorset Legal Awards, and will be speaking at our Employment Law Update events in both Bournemouth and Southampton in March.**



# MANAGING CONFLICT

Conflict and disagreement is an inevitable part of working life that many people avoid and ignore. The truth is, by effectively resolving conflict, you can save and even improve relationships. The challenge is how to develop the interpersonal skills that are needed to handle these issues when they arise.

Take a step in the right direction by following three basic principles: respect, negotiation and compromise.



## 01

### Respect yourself, and others

We all perceive the world in different ways, and this is what makes us unique. Be honest with yourself and take time to understand the events, behaviours, or topics of conversation that might 'trigger' anger or conflict in you. Recognising these triggers is the first step towards helping you to control your emotions when these issues arise.

Resist the urge to dismiss the opinions and thoughts of others. Ask people to explain more about their thinking, and if you disagree, suggest they explain what the advantages are. Understanding their motives makes it easier to find a common viewpoint and resolution.

It's important to know when to walk away from a dispute. Separating yourself from the conflict gives you time to clear your head and some space in order to think of a constructive way to respond.

## 02

### Negotiating to work through the conflict

Keep yourself calm by controlling your breathing. In times of anger or stress we often respond by breathing rapidly, which depletes our oxygen and raises our blood pressure, which in turn can cloud our judgement.

Stay quiet and really listen to what the other person is saying. This will mean that you may be able to find something in the other person's argument that you can actually agree with. If so, tell them that you agree with them on a particular point, and show that you are trying to understand their point of view.

Hopefully, they may be more willing to listen to you in return. Think of the conflict in terms of the issue – not the person – and try to keep the focus on one issue at a time.

If you can, try to forget about the concept of winning or losing. Working together to find a resolution means you stop trying to 'defeat' the other person and are receptive to each other's good ideas.

## 03

### Compromise and move on

You can't force others to agree with you. You must have an open mind and be willing to admit that you are wrong. This helps to prevent any possibility of lingering hostility and may mean that others will feel more comfortable admitting their own mistakes in future.

After having a disagreement with someone, it can be helpful to acknowledge that you've both been part of the resolution to the conflict by thanking them for their willingness to reach a solution.

If appropriate, arrange a time to catch-up again in the future. Some time to reflect on the conflict and the resolution can be useful and helps to preserve and develop the relationship. You don't need to specifically talk about the conflict, but move on to learn more about each other to help you work together going forward.



**Author: Chris Mooney, Co-founder, Right Trax Training**  
[www.righttraxtraining.co.uk](http://www.righttraxtraining.co.uk) | [hello@righttraxtraining.co.uk](mailto:hello@righttraxtraining.co.uk)

Right Trax Training works with managers and their teams to help them interact and communicate more effectively, giving people the skills and mindset they need to better deal with change and conflict. This helps people to understand themselves and adapt their approach to better connect with others, increasing team cohesion and performance.

# UPCOMING BOND WILLIAMS HR SEMINARS

WE REGULARLY RUN FREE EVENTS ACROSS BOURNEMOUTH AND SOUTHAMPTON FOR BUSINESS OWNERS, HR PROFESSIONALS AND EMPLOYEES WHOSE ROLE INVOLVES HR FUNCTIONS.

Held in partnership with specialist guest speakers and other local businesses, these half-day seminars cover a variety of relevant and timely topics including employment law, professional development and industry innovations.

All attendees are issued with a personal certificate of attendance which can be used as supportive evidence with CPD credits.

All of our upcoming events are detailed below.

To book, please visit [www.bondwilliams.co.uk/events](http://www.bondwilliams.co.uk/events)

## MARCH 2019

### Annual Employment Law Update

featuring Paul Burton from Frettons Solicitors

9am-11.30am

Tuesday 5th March

*Vitality Stadium, Bournemouth*

Tuesday 12th March

*St Mary's Stadium, Southampton*

## MAY 2019

### Mock Tribunal with CIPD\*

featuring representatives from Ellis Jones and 3PB Barristers

8.30am-11am

Wednesday 15th May

*Dudsbury Golf Club, Bournemouth*

\*sponsored by Bond Williams

## JUNE 2019

### Improving your communications with coaching conversations

featuring Dee Clayton from Simply Amazing Training

9am-11.30am

Tuesday 18th June

*Ocean Village Innovation Centre, Southampton*

## GET INVOLVED!

We're always on the lookout for new event opportunities for the HR industry as well as our other specialist divisions – Accounting & Finance, IT & Software Solutions, Office & Commercial and Engineering, Science & Space.

If you'd like to suggest topics or get involved in any way, please contact:

**Laura Webb on 01202 233777**  
**[laura.webb@bondwilliams.co.uk](mailto:laura.webb@bondwilliams.co.uk)**



# HOW TO AVOID FIRING YOUR STAFF

**Letting staff go is never an easy decision to make, and rarely a smooth process, but in some circumstances, it can make sense to make more of an effort to retain employees in the long term.**

Research from company formation experts, Turner Little, recently revealed the 10 most common reasons why British employees were fired in 2018, with poor performance and excessive personal internet usage topping the list.

While these present fair grounds for dismissal in many cases, too much socialising during work hours and excessive toilet breaks and sickness for instance, could be easily avoided by amending internal working practices and adopting a more laid-back managerial style.

Here we look at 5 approaches business can take to prevent staff putting themselves in the 'firing' line in the first place.

## **1 Be flexible**

We already know that flexible hours and the option to work from home is rated highly by the UK workforce – a poll from YouGov found that 70% of employees want to be able to work outside of the old-fashioned 9 to 5; and a CIPD survey revealed that working from home is already available for 42% of workers.

Often, commute times and congestion can be a common reason for lateness, and even contribute to tiredness and low productivity. If employees had the option to start earlier or work from home, businesses may even see a reduction in absenteeism and sickness.

## **2 Open door policy**

Sometimes, poor performance or high absence rates could be related to something going on in an employee's personal life. It could also be down to them struggling with stress and workload or having issues with a colleague.

If you promote an open door policy, and be proactive in getting to the bottom of potential issues, productivity and attendance could quickly improve.

## **3 Offer training programmes**

When employees are failing to meet deadlines or complete their work effectively, first ask yourself as a manager whether you're asking too much or if the skills requirement have changed. The job specification you hired for may have evolved, and staff members could be finding it hard to keep up.

Recruitment can be time-consuming and costly, and it may be a better idea to move the employee into a different role or department or finance some additional training, so that the historical knowledge of the business they have built up is not lost.

## **4 Encourage work socials**

The upside of working in an office compared to working from home or for yourself is the camaraderie you get with fellow colleagues. Spending hours gossiping instead of working is unacceptable, but exchanging the

odd nicety and catching up on the weekend can actually be beneficial to your business.

Employees who get on tend to work better together in a professional capacity too. In fact, you should encourage social interaction and if you do so out of normal working hours, you can minimise time spent chatting in the office.

## **5 Adopt a firm but fair managerial style**

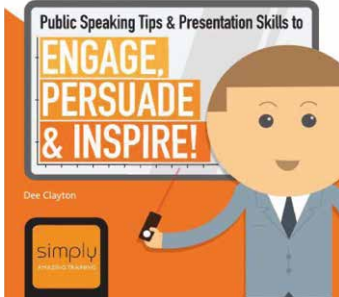
It has been said that people don't leave jobs; they leave managers. The type of management style you adopt will very much be down to your own personality and the right approach will also depend on the type of industry and organisation you work in, the size of the business and the existing culture.

If possible, however, try and be reasonable without being a pushover and you'll find that employee loyalty and job satisfaction will lean in your favour.

### **When there isn't an excuse...**

Of course, there will always be situations when the excuses run out or behaviour is completely unacceptable. If you can say honestly that you tried and have followed the correct dismissal procedures, then letting an employee go could be the best business decision you make.

# HIGH PERFORMANCE PRESENTATIONS



## HOW DO YOU ENGAGE STAFF

when the topic is as dull as dishwater?

**Sometimes in our careers we are tasked with communicating what we might think are less than exciting topics to staff. Not only do we have to deliver our message in an engaging way to get them to pay attention, but we also need to motivate them enough to take action. This may sound like an impossible task, but once you know how to tackle it, it's really not.**

My Simply Amazing Structure (SAS) can be applied to any form of communication – staff meetings, webinars, leaflets, emails, letters, etc. – and is particularly useful for structuring briefings and presentations. It enables the audience to feel comfortable and easily follow what you are saying. No more boring briefings! Your presentation will be talking to them in a relevant manner. To put it simply, your audience will be more engaged because SAS forces you to think about them, not you.

Here is a brief breakdown of the Simply Amazing Structure:

### 1 LITTLE INTRO

A short introduction, no more than a few sentences.

### 2 WHY

Give your audience three reasons why they would WANT to listen to your talk.

### 3 WHAT

Share the actual content of your talk, with facts and information.

### 4 HOW

Explain how the audience can use or action the information you have shared.

### 5 WHAT IF

Allow ample time for the audience to ask questions, reflect and then wrap-up.

**PULL  
DON'T PUSH**

A lot of professionals I train and mentor fall into the same trap of 'telling' and trying to push their information at people. This is a very old-fashioned approach, yet it is rife in organisations of all sizes. Instead, briefings (and most communications) work better when they 'pull' the audience in. That way, they want to listen and are asking you for more. So, make sure that you plan your presentations around what the audience wants to hear rather than what you want to tell them.

That's not to say you don't have an agenda – but it should be positively positioned and blended with the needs of the audience. If you want to communicate in a successful, persuasive manner that inspires action, the audience should never feel that your agenda is higher than theirs!

The pull approach ultimately encourages empowerment, so if you notice a lack of empowerment around you, this could be part of the reason. You need to take people on the journey with you. This becomes of greater relevance as the balance of power in business moves more and more to individuals and workers – through social media and websites such as Glassdoor, TripAdvisor and Twitter – rather than organisational leaders.

**To summarise, there isn't such thing as a dull subject when it's presented in a manner that is relevant to the audience. When you use SAS to target your presentation many clients have begun to find the topic more interesting themselves and their audiences have been engaged and inspired to take action.**



**Author: Dee Clayton, Founder Simply Amazing Training**

[www.simplyamazingtraining.co.uk](http://www.simplyamazingtraining.co.uk) | [dee@simplyamazingtraining.co.uk](mailto:dee@simplyamazingtraining.co.uk)

Dee Clayton is a speaker, trainer, author and founder of Simply Amazing Training. Her latest book, 'High Performance Presentations Public Speaking Tips & Presentation Skills to Engage, Persuade and Inspire', is available on Amazon from February 2019 and contains more on SAS and how to use it.



# MENTAL HEALTH POLICIES IN THE WORKPLACE

WITH STATISTICS CONSISTENTLY SHOWING THAT ONE IN SIX PEOPLE EXPERIENCE MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS IN THE WORKPLACE, IS IT TIME FOR ALL HR PROFESSIONALS TO COMMIT TO PRODUCING A MENTAL HEALTH POLICY?

Findings from a Deloitte survey carried out in 2018 revealed that UK employers are doing more to raise awareness of and support staff with mental health issues compared to their counterparts across the globe. However, a 2017 report written by Chief Executive of Mind, Paul Farmer, recommends improved mental health policies are needed in the workplace.

The development and implementation of any new policies requires financial investment, but with 12.7% of sick days attributed to mental health conditions and 42% of employees pretending that they have a physical instead of mental condition when calling in sick, it's undoubtedly an investment worth making.

The 'Thriving at Work' report from Paul Farmer says effective mental health policies have a return of between £1.50 for every £1 invested. Large organisations like Asda are doing it and now SMEs should consider rolling out a mental health policy too.

In case you have no idea where to start, here are some steps to take towards creating your first mental health policy.

## **Put your case forward**

Gaining leadership support is your first challenge in developing a mental health policy. Ensure you have gathered enough information and evidence about how poor mental health can negatively impact the workplace. There may be a number of key stakeholders, each with different priorities, so ensure you cover the tangible impacts on the bottom line, as well as staff morale and productivity.

At this point, you want them to commit resources to developing a strategy and plan for implementing a policy.

## **Carry out some analysis**

Look at the mental health statistics you have available within your own organisation, such as sickness days related to mental health issues and turnover rates. Also consider the qualitative data you can get from exit interviews and performance review feedback to see if you can identify any trends.

Involving staff early-on can be extremely useful. You could run an anonymous survey to ask about their mental health experiences and what could be done to improve mental wellbeing in the workplace.

Review any existing policies you have as well as any services you already offer, the cost and effectiveness.

## **Document findings and ideas**

Gather all feedback and information obtained from research and develop a one page report that details the findings, core issues that need addressing and ideas for how to address those issues within a policy.

Where possible, provide a brief overview of human and financial resources required to implement each idea and the potential return on investment.

## **Develop a plan**

Set out your objectives, perhaps by using the SMART model – specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-specific – and detail the action you are going to take to meet these objectives.

Within smaller organisations, it may take time to implement a policy so you could adopt a staged approach. For example, if your first objective is to raise awareness and improve understanding of mental health, you could start by holding a workshop for employees.

Create an action plan template for each objective, setting out what you're going to do, how and who should be involved and when.

## **Commit and communicate**

Ensure responsibility for the policy is allocated to a member of staff or a small team of 'champions', each with specific roles. Then communicate your plans to the whole company, so everyone knows what effort is being made to address mental health in the workplace.

You could hold a launch event, distribute posters and electronic handbooks and post on the intranet if you have one.

Remember that any policies should be reviewed regularly, especially after initial implementation, as it will only become clear what aspects need improving once the policy is in force.

Further guidance on workplace mental health policies and programmes can be found on the World Health Organization's website:  
[www.who.int/mental\\_health/en/](http://www.who.int/mental_health/en/)

# Supporting staff with financial wellbeing could positively impact the bottom line

**A 2018 survey by Barnett Waddingham revealed that some 88% of UK employers are concerned about the financial issues their employees are struggling with. This has since raised questions around whether businesses should focus on supporting the financial wellbeing of staff.**

Talk Money Week, which was held in November and is part of the Financial Capability Strategy for the UK, says that money worries have a clear impact on how people feel and behave in their day-to-day lives and at work.

## **The problem**

According to the Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development, adults in the UK believe their financial situation will only get worse in the future. This can be largely attributed to the impact of the 2008 financial crisis. In the years that followed, wages fell consistently in real terms, meaning that the money in our pay packets wasn't in keeping with the price of the things we needed to buy.

From mid-2014, wages started to increase above the rate of inflation, but to nowhere near pre-crisis levels. During this time, house prices have remained high, affordability criteria has changed and there has been a rising trend to live on credit.

According to figures from Equifax, UK adults owe £3,320 in unsecured debt on average and a third of us don't believe we'll ever be debt free. In addition, a fifth of us have been made redundant over the past two years, so it's no wonder that money worries are the biggest cause of stress for employees in the UK.

## **Why should employers care?**

Financial concerns prevent 59% of employees from performing their best at work and a Global Benefits Attitudes Survey found that those employees who are troubled by their finances are twice as likely to be in poor health – resulting in increased absences.

All of this can clearly have a negative impact on the bottom line and a report from Barclays quantified this at 4%.

In addition to this, a pay increase is high on the list of reasons why people look for a new job, but an increase in salary might not help employees overcome their financial issues. Instead, having options and access to education with their current employer could result in them staying put, reducing costly staff turnover rates.

## **The solutions**

Introducing benefits packages can go some way to alleviate money worries, especially those that are effective in helping employees to save money on living expenses, such as healthcare plans and discounted utility and insurance products. However, companies should review the paid benefits they are offering to see if they are effective, or even being used at all.

Employers should also consider salary sacrifice schemes, and even loan and savings schemes.

One of the more obvious but less widely adopted strategies for supporting staff with financial wellbeing is through education. All businesses have (or certainly should have) business plans, profit and loss spreadsheets and a way of tracking income and expenditure. Why not invest some time in sharing tips for budget management with your staff? It could benefit your business in the long run if employees become responsible for departmental budgeting.

In the last eighteen months, since the birth of the #MeToo movement, much has been talked about in the workplace of unwanted sexual advances. Typically, but not always, this has related to senior men taking advantage of women who are junior to them. Some of those men either overtly or covertly even demand sex in return for opportunity, pay rises and promotions.



## ARE THE FOUNDATIONS OF #METOO BEHAVIOURS BEING BUILT IN YOUR WORKFORCE?

Unfortunately, I've seen this behaviour at play during my own career on many occasions – serious stuff that deserves the attention it garners. However, little has been or continues to be said about the more general belittling of women and young ladies and the long-term impact that has.

I remember a CEO once saying to me: *'You're just a little girl Helen, what would you know?'* I was in my early thirties at the time with three children and had already built and sold one business. I was challenging the business strategy of a business that I was a director of (that just six months later was closed down on the recommendations of its auditors who confirmed all that I had been saying). It worked though... his belittling made me doubt my abilities, my business instincts and, above all, ensured I knew my place. His words, not that he would have known that, reinforced messages I had received throughout my childhood and early adulthood about my competence, my place, and my value in the world.

*I had little to offer... men didn't want my opinions... business is for men...*

The cumulative effect was why I felt unable at that time to defend myself or fight back. It was simply easier to put up and shut up and slink away back to my desk.

I have experienced this belittling too many times to count across my career. Interestingly from women too. So, let's not just focus on the impact men have in the workplace. I recall one friend greeting me by saying: *'How's the business? I don't suppose you'll ever get it to make money?'* Wow! Way to go to ensure I have a few more limiting beliefs! Another friend asked me to deliver training for her company then expressed

surprise when she found out I charge commercial rates rather than a couple of hundred a day – like I'm not good enough to demand market rates.

I have lived out my business life in an environment created by family, friends and a business network of low expectations, throw-away comments, insinuations about lack of business nous or 'gravitas' etc. I have succeeded in spite of all this, but am left wondering daily how very much more successful I might have been had I set up and grown my business in an environment of high expectation, perceptions of competence rather than incompetence and positive support rather than constant jibes (whether intended or not). I won't let it get me down or let it take away from what I have achieved, but I can't help wondering.

But me aside, who is in your workplace who is regularly put down rather than built up? Take a minute to look around you! Who keeps their head down and shoulders hunched rather than striding through your corridors with head held high and shoulders back? Which long standing employee recently returned from maternity leave and was ridiculously grateful to be offered a role more junior than the one they competently held just 12 months earlier? Madness!

There is truly a mountain of untapped female potential out there if only more attention was given to spotting and supporting those who glide or slide through the workplace corridors shrouded in a cloak of invisibility built up in response to years of belittling and low expectations.

My pragmatic inner voice tells me that the belittling and consequent loss of potential to businesses will never be addressed for as long as #MeToo keeps everyone talking about sex, sex and more sex. Other hugely damaging, but less headline-grabbing behaviours simply never get noticed or discussed. While campaigners such as the women behind #EverydaySexism have done a great job in highlighting these normalised incidents, they are often talking to each other in a bubble, with men (and some women) uninterested or threatened by the insinuation that they might be part of the problem.

Insinuations of incompetence. Belittling of opinions. Language that demeans or suggests juniority (we have seniority so why not juniority?). It's time to start noticing it and it's definitely time to stamp it out.

*So where, how and when are you going to start? We are all part of the problem, so let's all take responsibility for dealing with it.*



**Author: Helen Jamieson, Managing Director, Jaluch**  
[www.jaluch.co.uk](http://www.jaluch.co.uk) | [helen@jaluch.co.uk](mailto:helen@jaluch.co.uk)

**Helen has been running her own HR and training business for more than 20 years and specialises in Diversity and Inclusion education for employers.**



# DEALING WITH SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE... what is the latest?

**GDPR aside, although 2018 was a relatively quiet year from a new employment law perspective, that does not mean to say that it was quiet for employment lawyers. 'Hot topics' included cases looking at employment status and the gig economy, important decisions on the subject of national minimum wage (impacting, in particular, the care and retail sectors) and the focus on sexual harassment in the workplace on the back of #MeToo.**

Having seen a sharp increase in the number of queries and claims related to the latter, there is unquestionably an unprecedented risk for employers. We explore this and the potential damage to their brand and reputation if they fail to act appropriately when allegations are raised.

## Unacceptable behaviour

Problems occur when employees do not behave in an acceptable way and create an environment where co-workers feel uncomfortable. This becomes a legal problem if the behaviour and language used is connected with a protected characteristic such as sex. The difficulties employers face is that sexual harassment cases often start with something subtle and take place over a prolonged period of time. What is key is the effect that the conduct has on the employee in question and whether this satisfies the legal test of being "unwanted".

In addition, employers are now receiving sexual harassment claims, not only against them as the employer, but also against the alleged perpetrator. The Equality Act 2010 provides for 'vicarious liability' in discrimination cases (including sexual harassment cases) and the only way an employer can attempt to avoid liability is to evidence that it took all reasonable steps to prevent the harassment (referred to as the "statutory defence"). This is, however, a difficult defence to run and requires employers to overcome a high threshold. We are receiving more enquiries from clients looking to understand what proactive steps they can take to be in the best possible position to run this defence.

## Address the issues and minimise risks

So, what steps should employers be taking to address this issue and minimise risks?

### 1 Create/review policies

Employers should have policies in place on topics such as inclusion, diversity, equal opportunities or respect in the workplace, and be reviewing these regularly.

### 2 Communication of policies

There is no point having such policies unless they are effectively communicated and all employees are aware of what behaviour is expected of them.

### 3 Train staff

Effective communication can be achieved through tailored training to employees so that they know what standards are expected and to managers who will be dealing with allegations of sexual harassment.

### 4 Take it seriously

Employees need to be confident that, if there is an issue, they will be taken seriously and it will be resolved. Employees shouldn't think they will be seen as a 'troublemaker' and that an allegation could negatively impact their career.

### 5 Dismiss where appropriate

It is important that employees are encouraged to report issues about sexual harassment and, if there is merit in the allegations, the employer takes forward disciplinary action which could result in dismissal of the perpetrator.

For some clients, the steps taken to minimise risks have included setting up working/focus groups and anonymous helplines for staff. Nobody wants an environment which is so clinical as to be utterly without humour, however, a level and tone of 'banter' needs to be carefully considered and addressed where appropriate.

On 18 December 2018, the Government **published their response** to the Women and Equalities Committee Report on Sexual Harassment in the workplace. The report focused on employers taking a more proactive role. The Government's response set out 12 action points, however, the key proposal being the creation of a Statutory Code of Practice on Sexual Harassment. This should prove to be a useful tool for employers and will no doubt be something that Employment Tribunals will take into account. For many employers, it will further help them to understand and demonstrate that they have taken reasonable steps to prevent harassment. There is no firm time-scale for when this Statutory Code will be available but, given Brexit negotiations, this is likely to be pushed aside until late 2019 at the earliest.

The key message to take away is that employers should create a culture where harassment is not accepted, deal with issues early and seriously, and implement the steps above to have the greatest chance of defending a sexual harassment claim.



**Author: Stuart Lawrenson**  
**Partner, Shoosmiths LLP**  
[www.shoosmiths.co.uk](http://www.shoosmiths.co.uk)  
[stuart.lawrenson@shoosmiths.co.uk](mailto:stuart.lawrenson@shoosmiths.co.uk)

Stuart is a Partner and head of the employment law team in the Solent office of Shoosmiths, a major UK law firm with a national network of offices.





# GROWING SOCIALLY AWARE LEADERS

**There is currently a lack of empathy in the 21st century working environment, which is preventing the growth of socially aware leaders. Geographically dispersed teams, digital communication, social networking, video conferencing and other forms of new media are being blamed.**

Without the signals of body language and non-verbal communication; without knowing our team members and with the additional ability to log off, unfriend, delete and ignore, we aren't taking action to understand the needs of others.

According to Daniel Goleman, the competencies associated with being socially aware are:

- **Empathy:** understanding others' emotions, needs and concerns
- **Organisational awareness:** the ability to understand the politics within an organisation and the effect on the workforce.
- **Service:** the ability to understand and meet the needs of clients and customers.

In other words, be able to read the (hypothetical) room, be the shoulder to cry on and the punching bag until people are working effectively together.

## **Physical presence is critical**

Trust is the greatest determinant of success in relationships, business or otherwise. This can only be built with face-to-face interaction and communication.

A recent Gallup survey found that 51% of actively disengaged associates would get rid of their leader if they could, and one quarter of all employees say they would like the opportunity. What then, are our leaders doing to solidify trusting relationships?

## **Building social awareness**

Here, we look at ways leaders can improve their social awareness.

### **1 Discover your style**

Complete an Insights Discovery Personal Profile and get your team to follow suit. Discover your style and how others perceive you and in turn understand others so that you can effectively adapt to meet their needs, gain trust and create authentic workplace relationships.

### **2 Observe the room**

Be it a conversation with a colleague or a full team meeting, watch your audience for a few minutes prior to engaging them. Note the overall feel. Is the mood negative or positive? Is there silence? Are people laughing? Clear the air to settle the room.

If you and your team have been profiled, use them!

### **3 Show your colours**

Consider how you might be being perceived. What is your facial expression and body language conveying? Are you holding back or too involved?

### **4 Upkeep**

Social awareness should eventually be built into your daily interactions. Pay attention, give everyone a voice, listen, follow up diligently and mark progress as a collective.

Social awareness is a key element of your emotional intelligence. Instead of grumbling about people who aren't understanding of your needs, focus on your own practise. As it improves, with emotional intelligence hot on its heels, so will your work life balance, your awareness of the needs behind the behaviour of others and your ability to respond positively to change.

---

## **The Colour Works**

[www.thecolourworks.com](http://www.thecolourworks.com) | [office@thecolourworks.com](mailto:office@thecolourworks.com)

This article was brought to you by The Colour Works, a team of personal, team and leadership development specialists who have been transforming performance globally for over a decade.



# HOW MUCH HIRING THE WRONG PERSON IS COSTING YOUR BUSINESS

WHEN IT COMES TO RECRUITING NEW EMPLOYEES, GETTING IT RIGHT THE FIRST TIME IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT AND THE COST OF HIRING THE WRONG PERSON WILL UNDOUBTEDLY OVERSHADOW THEIR VALUE TO THE ORGANISATION.

Whether there's a lack of required skills, poor quality work or simply a bad culture fit, when a new employee doesn't work out, it can result in a range of costs. The direct and indirect and short and long-term impact on time and money can be a much-underestimated threat to your organisation.

A report from the Recruitment & Employment Confederation (REC) has found that for a shocking two out of five roles, UK businesses are failing to hire the right candidate despite the financial implications.

Over a third (33%) of companies believe that hiring mistakes cost their business nothing, when in fact, a poor hire at mid-manager level with a salary of £42,000, for example, can cost a business more than £132,000.

The accumulative costs involved in bad recruitment include increased staff turnover, money spent on training and lost productivity. It was also revealed that hiring the wrong person can have a negative impact on morale and productivity amongst existing staff, which often results in worse monetary losses than those related to the recruitment.

In addition, 85% of decision-makers within HR admit their organisation has made a bad hire, and 39% of employers admit that their interviewing and assessment skills for candidates could be improved.

REC Chief Executive, Kevin Green, comments: "Getting recruitment right is even more important during a time of economic uncertainty because businesses need to ensure they're not wasting money. Our calculations show that UK businesses are wasting billions every year because of the volume of hiring mistakes being made.

---

"Shockingly, we discovered that employers are completely underestimating the financial impact of getting recruitment wrong, and not learning how to improve."

---

"This report outlines the hidden costs of making hiring mistakes, and outlines how employers can implement a robust selection process to minimise this risk and improve performance."

Claire Bond, Director at Bond Williams, says it's not just about hiring the right person for the job, but ensuring that successful candidates become long-term members of staff:

"Staff turnover is expensive and effective retention starts with getting the onboarding process right. In the short term, be clear about what you want, employ second interviews and capability tests if needed and ensure you have a system in place for integrating new staff. Longer term, you need to invest in a comprehensive management and appraisal process and ensure two-way communication. This will go a long way in reducing the chances of a 'bad hire, improving staff retention rates and ultimately, reducing overall recruitment costs."

# BOND WILLIAMS

## HUMAN RESOURCES

*Providing a truly personalised, professional and specialist HR recruitment service.*

*We go the extra mile. Every day.*

Combining cutting-edge technology and traditional, people-focused recruitment methods to source your ideal permanent, temporary and interim HR professionals.

HR Administrators | HR Officers | HR Advisors | HR Business Partners | HR Managers  
HR Directors | Personnel Advisors | Office Managers | Training Managers  
L&D Advisors | L&D Managers | Operations Managers | Interim HR | Temporary HR



ACCOUNTING & FINANCE



IT & SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS



OFFICE & COMMERCIAL



HUMAN RESOURCES



ENGINEERING,  
SCIENCE & SPACE

Oxford  
01865 546046

Bournemouth  
01202 233777

Southampton  
02380 173655

[www.bondwilliams.co.uk](http://www.bondwilliams.co.uk)

# HIRING?

---

[www.bondwilliams.co.uk](http://www.bondwilliams.co.uk)

---

**Bournemouth**  
**01202 233 777**

**Southampton**  
**02380 173 655**

**Oxford**  
**01865 546 046**

---

*Bond Williams is an accredited member of the Recruitment & Employment Confederation (REC), a professional body that represents best practice in the recruitment industry.*

**BOND WILLIAMS**  
PROFESSIONAL RECRUITMENT