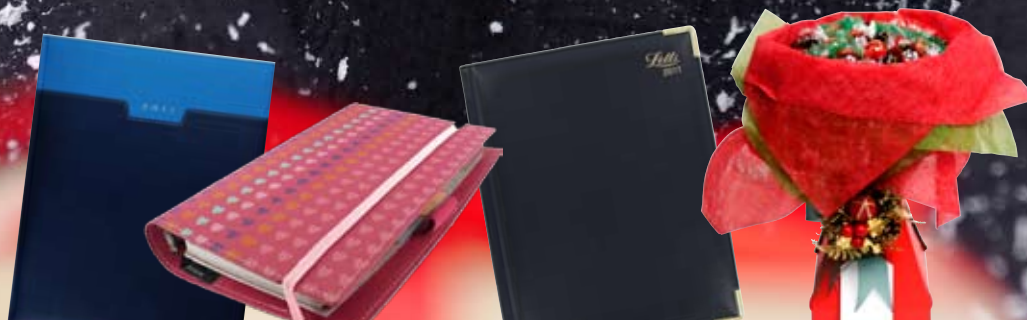


PA ENTERPRISE

DeskDemon's Magazine for Executive PAs, Office Managers and Secretaries

December 2010

**Happy Christmas
to all our Readers!**



Fabulous offers in this issue!

**WIN! Letts Diaries • Filofax Organisers
• Chocolate Bouquet • Castelli Diaries**

**PLUS: News / Are jobs becoming boring?
Redundancy legal advice / Finding a life coach**

A publication of
Deskdemon.com



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PA Enterprise Christmas Offers:

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PA Enterprise is sent to DeskDemon UK e-newsletter, audited by ABCE (5th/6th July 2007) with a net distribution of 70,581 email addresses.

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Win a Chocolate Bouquet!

HAVE A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS

Win a Chocolate Bouquet from The Flower Stork

It's not Christmas without chocolate and what better way to unwrap your Christmas spirit than with a sumptuous bouquet of Lindor Lindt chocolate. A very grown up version of the advent calender and with two dozen chocolate buds in the bouquet you could even share!

The perfect gift whatever the occasion and adding the WOW factor to any celebration, they are sure to be a hit with staff and clients this Christmas.

The Flower Stork is the perfect partner for all your corporate gift giving needs. With an innovative and award winning gift range, UK next day delivery and Petals Loyalty Program they have a loyal corporate following.

The Flower Stork is offering two lucky PA Enterprise readers the chance to get a head start on their Christmas shopping with a delicious chocolate bouquet from their 2010 Christmas range.

For your chance of winning email your name, address and contact number to competitions@deskdemo.com with **PA Enterprise/FlowerStork** in the subject line by 15th December 2010.

CLICK HERE TO ENTER



THE FLOWER STORK

Babywear Bouquet Company™

CONVERT YOUR DOCUMENTS TO EDITABLE FILES

Find out how ScanSnap Scanners can revolutionise your office life

The **ScanSnap** range of scanners offer on demand scanning at the press of a button. You can convert your documents into searchable PDF files and with ABBYY® Fine Reader for ScanSnap create editable Word, Excel and PowerPoint documents.

ScanSnap scanners can scan up to 20 colour pages per minute single sided or 40 images per minute double sided and can cope with mixed documents in terms of thickness from business card up to A3 size. Scanned data will be automatically deskewed, cropped, rotated and have blank pages removed. ScanSnap also comes with CardMinder software enabling speedy scanning of business cards and extracting the data to a database application. Additionally the S1500 features a QuickMenu utility, which launches after scanning offering the user the option to scan to folder, email, printer or application.

Do you already have a ScanSnap? If so you could win £100! Visit www.fujitsu.com/emea/products/scansnap/testimonials.html to add your testimonial.



Win a Filofax Heart Organiser!



HEART FILOFAX ORGANISER

Enter NOW for your chance to win

You could win a fabulous Filofax in the fun and funky Heart design just in time for Christmas and the New Year.



The bright linen-look organisers come in either a gorgeous sugary pink or eye-catching yellow, and are packed with a diary, colourful dividers and all the stationery you need to keep on top of 2011.

There's plenty of room for all those dates, parties and secret assignations as well as boring old New Year's resolutions!

Who knows - with a Filofax Hearts organiser at the centre of your life, next year could see the start of a wonderful new relationship!

For your chance of winning email your name, address and contact number to competitions@deskdemo.com with **PA Enterprise/Filofax** in the subject line by 15th December 2010.

[CLICK HERE TO ENTER](#)

CHRISTMAS PARTY WITH A DIFFERENCE FESTIVE COOKERY MASTER CLASS

We think this is a great idea for an alternative to the traditional Christmas Party. Using their expertise in providing team cookery events throughout the year, Inneventive has come up with something perfectly suited to the season - the **Festive Cookery Master Class**.

This interactive festive cookery event lets guests cook a three-course festive feast with all the trimmings, over a glass of mulled wine or two, before being seated in the onsite dining area for the Christmas banquet.



Food brings people together and Christmas is a wonderful time for this. Share in some festive cheer for an alternative company Christmas party get together.

Guests work in teams to prepare the feast and are guided by an expert chef.

Included in the event are Mulled wine and mince pie reception, all ingredients, utensils and stoves, three course sit down dinner, 1/2 bottle of wine and water per person.

www.inneventive.co.uk



ADORABLE TEDDY

National Trust for Scotland
Tartan Teddy Bear for Christmas

We couldn't resist this gorgeous teddy bear when we came across him on the **National Trust for Scotland** website. In 2010 the NTS had a new tartan custom-made by Johnstons of Elgin in Scotland. This charming **Tartan Bear**, unique to the Trust, features this special tartan on his paws and scarf.

Soft and cuddly he has all the classic good looks of a traditional teddy bear. A must for any collector - and of course a perfect stocking filler.

The Tartan Bear costs £6.99 and is available from www.nts.org.uk

Planning for 2011

Making the right choice when buying a planner for your office can be a bit daunting, as there are so many options to choose from. Sasco have put together some useful tips to help...

The first question to ask is, are you using the right planner for your particular planning need? There are 15 different Sasco planning grids to choose from - each one designed to fulfil a particular need or planning task. If you are planning for a team of people, refer to the people planners section, or if you work in education there's a planner based on the academic year, similarly for those in finance, the fiscal planner is designed around the tax year. For those needing to see 2 years' information at a glance there is the long range planner, and the EU planner is populated with all EU bank holidays and national day dates. Dates are marked with the relevant nations flags.

LIMITED WALL SPACE?

As our workspaces are becoming more and more open plan, many of us are struggling to find a home for our trusted Sasco planner. The following planners have been developed with this very problem in mind.

- **Compact planner:** The original and favourite Sasco planner only smaller. 610mm x 405mm
- **Portrait planner:** Fits neatly on to the back of a door
- **Compact portrait planner:** Fits comfortably on the side of filing cabinets
- **Magnetic compact planner:** Effortlessly clings to filing cabinets and other metal surfaces
- **Super compact planner:** Perfect for desk partitions
- **Magnetic compact planner:** Effortlessly clings to metal desk partitions and other metal surfaces

STRUGGLE TO FIT EVERYTHING ON YOUR PLANNER?

The oversized planner has been designed just for you. Sasco have taken the favourite original year planner and increased each day box by up to 4mm allowing you more room to record your notes.

PROJECT PLANNERS

Any of the people planner designs can be easily utilised as project planners. Simply replace names with tasks, and utilise the matrix for Gantt style planning. The day planner offers 7 days a week information, the staff planner shows just the working week (5 days) whilst the holiday and annual holiday planner are split by weeks.

YEAR PLANNERS

Sasco year planners help you track events holidays, staff movements, training and all your key dates. With 15 different planner designs to choose from Sasco continues to lead the way and today offers the most a comprehensive collection of dated planning products available. From poster style, mounted card or magnetic formats, there's a Sasco planner that's right for you, your workplace or home.

Claim half-price accommodation at over 4,000 hotels worldwide ONLY with SASCO 2011 Year Planners

With an exclusive hotel offer, your Sasco 2011 Year Planner is the passport to a getaway lifestyle. Sasco purchasers can claim a 50% discount on full room rates subject to expected availability at over 4,000 choice hotels participating in the Hotel Express programme around the world. The offer is valid for accommodation booked until to 31 August 2011 and can be used as many times as you wish for the duration.

www.sascoplanners.com

10 WEEKEND BREAKS FOR 2 TO BE WON!

There are 10 super Weekend Breaks for two to be won in the free to enter competition. Winners can choose to stay at any participating hotel in the UK or Ireland.

www.getawaywithsasco.com

One of the most effective ways to solve your time management problems is by using a diary. Here's a look at the different formats to help you decide which one is best suited to your needs.

A5 Diaries

This is a desk diary format, page size 205mm x 145mm approx, cream or white pages. Choose either one day per page or one week per page, A5 diaries in weekly appointment format with the days of the week in columns, and also the traditional landscape days. A5 Comb bound diaries have the advantage of lying flat on the desk and also after the first purchase, in the future years the inserts only can be bought and slotted into the wallet.

Quarto Desk Diaries

The diaries are often mistaken for A4 diaries, however they are slightly shorter than A4 at 260mm x 210mm. Quarto diaries are mostly in the weekly format, we have found one quarto daily diary, however it is very expensive and would suggest either an A4 daily or A5 daily instead! The quarto format is popular as a gift for

managers and senior executives, and is also suitable for custom production with high quality leather covers.

A4 Diaries

Daily or weekly formats, these premium quality diaries are designed to withstand heavy use during the year. The daily diaries show appointment times and formats vary slightly between the different brands.

Pocket Diaries

The most popular promotional diaries are pocket format, for corporate use this generally mean a week across two pages. An interesting variation is the notable format with the days of the week on the left and a notes page on the right hand side. So if you can make a couple of appointments per day, say, and then have some notes space to use at the site meeting. The comb bound pocket diaries do this job particularly well.

DIARIES FOR 2011

Charles Letts & Co. is a leading diary specialist, with over 200 years experience in diary and stationery publishing and enjoys a worldwide reputation for the quality and excellence of its products. In 2012 Letts will celebrate the 200th Anniversary of the publication of the worlds first commercial diary which was produced by John Letts in 1812.

Letts manufacture over 22 million diaries in the UK each year. The company supplies more than 40% of all branded diaries in the UK and exporting to over 75 countries worldwide.

Letts is an environmentally aware company who takes environmental concerns seriously. They strive to minimise their impact on the environment by promoting environmental awareness and by sourcing from suppliers who are FSC or PEFC certified wherever possible.

For further information on Letts visit www.letts.co.uk

Reader offer

Letts are giving away 28 diaries to PA Enterprise readers from their Verona, Lexicon and Sovereign ranges. Verona: Soft feel, fashionable diary in A5 or Quarto size;

Lexicon: luxurious diary featuring a stitched case, gilt metal corners and cream paper in Desk or Slim size;

Sovereign: fabulous design radiates luxury with a beautiful textured cover, in A5 size

For your chance of winning email your name, address and contact number to competitions@deskdemo.com with PA Enterprise/Letts in the subject line by 15th December 2010.

CLICK HERE TO ENTER

Letts Diary Give-away!



Verona



Lexicon

Diaries for 2011

There is no doubt that out there somewhere is the perfect diary for you! The choice on offer is huge, from classic desk diaries, slimline pocket diaries to a whole host of personal organisers. Here are a few of our favourites, all available online...



For a tangible touch of quality, you can't beat a **Smythson** diary. The range represents over one hundred years of craftsmanship, timeless quality and innovative design. Each diary features signature watermarked paper, durable thread-sewn binding and exclusive editorial. The **Soho** diary comes in a compact, handbag-friendly size, with 64 leaves of ruled paper for additional notes and musings. For a truly individual touch, diaries can be personalized with a name, initials, motto or motif.

www.smythson.com



The **Castellì** collection of diaries, journals, note books and gifts all feature a distinctive Italian design inspiration. The **Castellì 2011 Quarto** diary is traditionally the management-sized diary. Whether you need to organise your active life, busy work commitments or the family, the quarto 2011 diary is the one for you. Not only is it an exceptional planning tool it is also elegant and in-vogue in its subtle Italian design. All Castellì diaries can be personalised.

www.castelli.co.uk

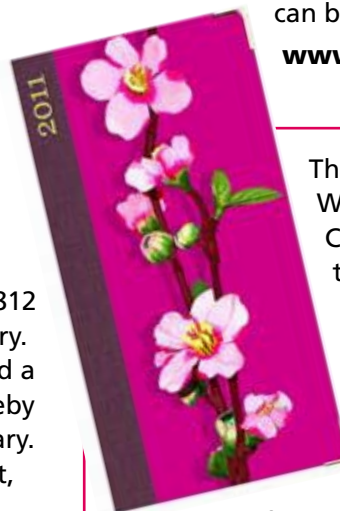
Perfect for business, the **Financial Times Diary** range from Letts is well worth a look. For example, the **Corporate Desk Diary** is slimmer than the other desk diaries yet generous on business information. As a gift purchase, this product is attractively priced and can be personalised in a number of ways.

www.letts.co.uk/ft/store



Also from diary experts Letts, is their exclusive **Letts of London** range. A luxury, genuine leather diary range inspired by the company's founder John Letts, who in 1812 invented the modern-day diary. Stationer John Letts combined a calendar with a journal, thereby inventing the modern day diary. The Duchess range is a bright, beautiful product featuring a chic clasp on textured genuine leather. This range includes a Ladies London Directory.

www.lettsoflondon.co.uk



The **2011 Elegance Slim Week** to view diary from Collins features week to view layout, printed casebound covers with soft fabric spine, protective gilt corners and a ribbon marker.

It also includes international

information, 2011 & 2012 Year planners. Size is a neat 152 x 80mm (perfect for handbags) and is available in blue or pink.

www.collinsdebden.co.uk

The **2011 A4 One Day Per Page Pink Diary** from **WH Smith** has ample space to write your daily reminders, meetings and notes in. Each day has its own separate page. At the back there is room to record any important notes,



together with address and phone number sections. There is also a 2012 forward planner. Keep yourself and your peers amused with the daily informative and humorous anecdotes. All the information you will need to plan your weeks is right at your fingertips and with conversion tables, yearly calendars and

personal notes at the front there is nothing you will forget in 2011. www.whsmith.co.uk



Filofax is synonymous with personal organisers. The Filofax Personal Organiser range is huge - you can choose from 6 different sizes, a rainbow of colours, varied materials and a price to suit your pocket. For example, the **Filofax Classic Personal Organiser** exudes style, in elegant Italian leather with classic quartered styling and stitch detail. Quite simply the perfect organiser, available in black, cherry, chocolate or pink.

www.filofax.co.uk

You could win a Filofax Heart Organiser – see page 5

THE ULTIMATE CHRISTMAS PRESENT....

Looking for a gift...and not sure what to buy?
Why not choose a Castelli Diary?

The Castelli corporate gifts range gives you the opportunity to buy sophisticated and stylish diaries but with the added bonus of corporate benefits and offers. Castelli diaries are designed to accommodate customised corporate branding or advertising on the cover using foil blocking or embossing techniques. In addition, bespoke printed information pages can be inserted into the front of any diary. Turning a branded promotional gift into a useful vehicle for up to 16 pages of detailed information. Castelli also offer a gift-wrapping service and have the fastest delivery times in our market, insuring your order will arrive just in time for Christmas.

You can view the entire collection on line or contact us for a full brochure. www.castelli.co.uk

Email: sales@castelli.co.uk Tel: 01892 612200

Reader offer

Castelli are giving away 5 fabulous Quarto size two tone 2011 desk diaries featuring contrasting materials in china blue and light blue (illustrated above right).

For your chance of winning email your name, address and contact number to competitions@deskdemo.com with **PA Enterprise/Castelli** in the subject line by 15th December 2010.

CLICK HERE TO ENTER

Win a Castelli Diary!



Castelli Arles Pocket Diaries are part of the extensive range to view online

MAKE MEETINGS WORK HARDER

Top tips for SMEs, from Intel

Small and medium-sized businesses could be missing a trick by not thinking smarter about meetings, and the start of a New Year is the perfect time to make a resolution to make meetings work harder, say the meetings and conference experts at Intel. Last year the 4.8 million SMEs in Britain employed over 23 million people, making them a potentially powerful force in the MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences & Events) industry. However, many SMEs spend more than they need – in both financial and man-hour terms – through lack of a sensible MICE policy.

“SMEs are the backbone of British industry, and many have struggled to stay in business over the past year. Taking a smarter approach to meetings and conferences could do much to keep costs and hassle down. Planning a basic corporate MICE policy is not rocket science, but can make a big difference,” said Intel Managing Director Douglas O’Neill.



AVANTA LAUNCHES OFFICE LITE

shared space for single users

Avanta has launched **Office Lite**, a new shared office space service across 12 of its nationwide serviced office centres in direct response to more than 200 enquires for single occupancy workspace during the past six months.

With prices starting from just £199 per month for a fully equipped desk, complete with lockable pedestal storage unit, IT connection, telephone with free local and national calls, and business support services, clients will get a swipe card and key access to high quality shared office space. Clients will also get access to Avanta’s Wi-Fi equipped communal areas, refreshment points and highly-trained, Institute of Customer Service accredited support teams.

www.avanta.co.uk/UK/offices/shared-office

INTEL’S TOP MICE TIPS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

- 1 If your company regularly books meeting rooms or accommodation in a few specific locations, build a **venue programme**. Work out which areas you use the most, research the hotels and meetings venues in that area and negotiate a discount for regular use. And be creative – Intel has even booked meetings in village halls!
- 2 Can the meeting be held **internally**? If you have a suitable meeting room in your own offices, there’s no need to look elsewhere.
- 3 Room hire charges for meetings held on **Monday or Friday** can be substantially cheaper than those for Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday.
- 4 Leave the capital! Meeting space in **London** is still at a premium, with venues around the rest of the country significantly less. But when considering your venue, always consider the cost of travel.
- 5 Examine the amount of **travel** involved. Free parking is a huge bonus at city centre locations, as are venues close to regular train links or airports if delegates are coming from further afield.
- 6 If colleagues are attending the meeting from two different locations, consider **meeting in the middle**, as this could reduce the cost of hotel accommodation.
- 7 Always ask if any **extras** you require can be provided free of charge.
- 8 Is that meeting really necessary? Can you communicate just as effectively using **video conferencing**?
- 9 Be prepared – whether you’re booking a meeting room for 4 or for 400, taking the time to put together a **comprehensive brief** will pay dividends. Having a clear idea of what you do and/or do not want makes it much easier for you to get exactly what you need.
- 10 **Shout about it!** Communication is key to the successful implementation of a MICE policy, so set out the terms of the policy clearly and make sure all your organisers understand it. You could even set up a special web page, accessible only by your organisers, which contains the policy and links to your approved hotels and venues.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Pensions seen as top employee benefit

Workers in the UK increasingly regard a **pension** as the most important part of their **employee benefits package**, it has been found. A poll conducted by the National Association of Pension Funds showed that 41% of the 984 people quizzed rated a pension as the best employee benefit they could be offered. A bonus and flexible working came in joint second place at 17%.

44% of employees said pensions were the best way to save for retirement. This was a marked rise from 35% this time last year, and was more than twice the number who cited property as best (20%) and almost four times the amount who chose individual savings accounts (12%).

But only a third (35%) of respondents said they were confident their pension will give them enough to live on in retirement.

SANTA'S SIZZLING SALAD AT TOSSED WESTFIELD

You know it's almost Christmas as lunchtimes have suddenly become a lot more exciting. Sandwiches come with Turkey and Cranberry stuffing, tempting mince pies abound, but at what cost for the waistline? Christmas has never tasted so good at **Tossed**, the healthier eating place at Westfield London. Shop 'till you drop for all those Christmas presents, and when you need a break head for Tossed in the Balcony area.

For £12 including a glass of festive Möet & Chandon champagne and a Christmas cracker, discover pure indulgence without the guilt.

Santa's salad at Tossed is a tasty combination of turkey, pigs in

FAMILY ALBUM

Photo favouritism for first born children

Nikon research reveals that almost half of parents in the UK admit to taking more photographs of their first born child.

In a study covering 14 regions across Europe and South Africa, Spain's parents top the list when it comes to photo favouritism, with 70% taking more images of their eldest son or daughter. This is not going unnoticed by the children themselves, with 34% of UK siblings agreeing that the oldest brother or sister appeared the most in the family photo album. When parents were asked why they took less photographs of their younger children, time pressures was the most popular answer. Also, it seems dads are more likely to get bored of taking pictures of their expanding family, with one in five claiming the photos got repetitive, compared to 15% of mums.



Nikon has also revealed the UK's favourite childhood image is the family holiday photo with one in five children saying pictures of the family on a sunny beach or visiting famous landmarks are their most cherished.

Educational psychologist, Dr Michele Borba, believes this parental favouritism could be contributing towards the theory of 'Second Child Syndrome', which looks at the impact of birth order on personality: "Sibling rivalry is common place in families, especially large families with three or more children. Whilst many parents might try and treat all their children the same it can be very easy for those little firsts that the eldest child makes to seem less remarkable with subsequent children.

"Parents should make an effort to take a range of different photos of all children, both on their own as well as with the family, to ensure all children feel equal, loved and they maintain a sense of their own individuality."

blankets, sage and onion stuffing, roast parsnip and potatoes, carrots, cranberry yoghurt served on mixed leaves freshly tossed in French dressing. It's high in protein, low in calories and saturated fats (just 2.4g), with no added salt and nutritionally balanced, and only 547 calories for a very large serving.

The Christmas salads are also available at all other **Tossed**, selling at £5.95 for a large portion without alcoholic drinks (£5.25 for the veggie option).





FAMILY FINANCES

Study discovers the return of family meetings

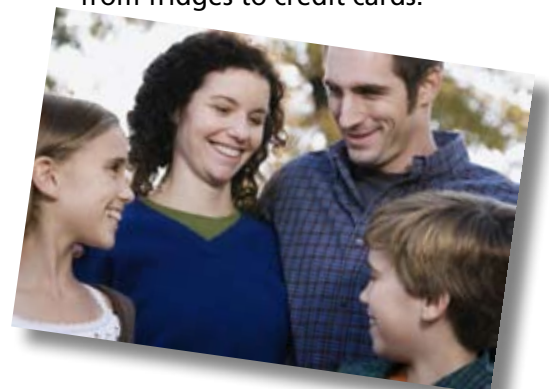
M&S Money has revealed the results of its latest study which shows that family meetings are back in vogue with Brits who have turned their focus on finances, instead of just the traditional family politics.

The new 'family finance' study shows families across the UK are coming together to discuss everything from holidays and TVs to credit cards and broadband.

59% of families make all their financial decisions together before buying anything. The study found that one in ten families take the traditional route and seek wisdom from the older generation by involving their own parents in making financial decisions for their household, but parents are increasingly involving their entire families.

Children who are under 18 are now commonly involved in decisions regarding buying furniture and clothes, to holidays and cars. Indeed, of those with children at home, 24% said their kids help decide on where to go on holiday, and 44% said their kids help decide on their wardrobe.

Colin Kersley, chief executive of M&S Money, said: "British families are embracing the old adage that 'two heads are better than one'. We've seen a revival of traditional family meetings to discuss what to spend the family cash on. Children and even grandparents are involved in a variety of decisions from fridges to credit cards."



WORKING MUMS

Stay-at-home Mumtrepreneurs vital to the economy

Stay-at-home mums, who feel under attack by a Government that is clawing back their Child Benefit, are restoring their financial independence by creating businesses at home according to entrepreneur Krista Waddell.

"Over 60% of new businesses are started from home and most of them are being created by mothers who want to stay with their children," said Krista Waddell, founder and CEO of gold party organisers Ounces2Pounds, who spoke at the launch of Global Entrepreneurship Week.

"Many middleclass women are worried that they will lose their personal income when Child Benefit is removed from homes where one earner is in the high tax bracket. Modern IT capabilities and internet speeds mean that they can restore their income by setting up a business at home," said Mrs Waddell, who created Ounces2Pounds on her laptop at home following the birth of her daughter.

"There has always been pressure on women to stay at home with their children and they can be left with feelings of guilt when they leave their child in a nursery. Home-working is the ideal solution which allows a woman to bring up her children and run a business."

According to a report by the government adviser Enterprise Nation more than 1,400 new home businesses are created every week – far more than any other type of start-up.

Stay-at-home mums are responsible for setting up the most home-businesses followed by young people and the over 50s.

Ounces2Pounds and cosmetics giants Avon and Body Shop are all reporting a huge up take the numbers of stay-at-home mums who are offering the services as party organisers and home-workers.

It could be you!...

WHO WILL BE YORKSHIRE PA OF THE YEAR?

The Queens Hotel, Leeds, has started the search for Yorkshire's most dedicated and outstanding personal assistants as part of its Queens Yorkshire PA of the Year Awards 2011.

PAs are often the company's unsung hero. They run tirelessly around after your office colleagues organising the diary, booking the meeting room, stocking the stationery cupboard, making sure that the boss is in check. The Queens Yorkshire PA of the Year Awards is their opportunity to shine and be recognised for all the good things that they do for your office. All nominees and all things PA will be celebrated at a glittering awards ceremony to take place at **The Queens in Leeds** on **Thursday 10th February 2011**, from **7.30pm**.

The Queens Hotel, which is part of award-winning hotel group QHotels, has designed the awards to recognise the commitment and hard work of PAs in organisations of all sizes who work their socks off to help keep the wheels of business in motion.

Commenting on the Awards, David Kanarens, General Manager at The Queens said: "PAs are worth their weight in gold and are often the unsung heroes in a company, so we wanted to acknowledge and honour them by way of our awards.

"Anyone can nominate a PA they think is worthy of an award and we're confident that we'll get inundated with nominations from companies and organisations throughout Yorkshire who want to give them special recognition. There are six awards up for grabs, including the lifetime achievement award, the above and beyond award and the

coveted PA of the Year.

"When choosing our PA of the Year, our judges, who include Marketing Leeds Chief Executive Deborah Green, will be looking for that person who goes the extra mile and consistently shows initiative and adaptability. We want to find these extra special PAs – those who have a genuine black belt in Kung Fu organisation, whose businesses would be completely lost without them and their skills.

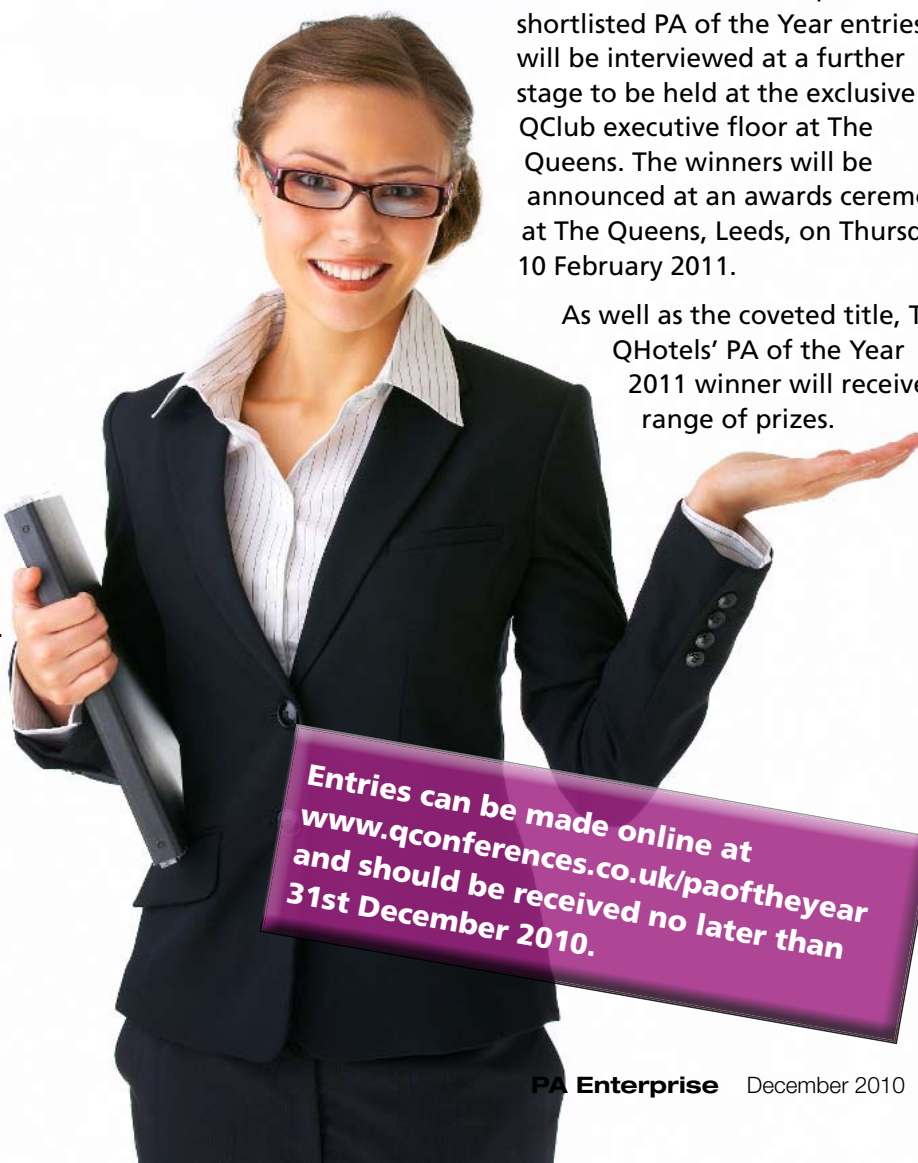
"PAs can even nominate themselves. The key to our awards



is recognising the hard work and commitment of PAs who hold such an important but often unacknowledged role in the business."

A shortlist of nominees will be announced in December, the shortlisted PA of the Year entries will be interviewed at a further stage to be held at the exclusive QClub executive floor at The Queens. The winners will be announced at an awards ceremony at The Queens, Leeds, on Thursday 10 February 2011.

As well as the coveted title, The QHotels' PA of the Year 2011 winner will receive a range of prizes.



Entries can be made online at www.qconferences.co.uk/paoftheyear and should be received no later than 31st December 2010.

BUSINESS TRAVEL & MEETINGS SHOW

GET THE INSIDE TRACK ON BOOKING TRAVEL



If you're one of an increasing number of executive assistants with the added responsibility of booking travel, hotel accommodation, conferences and meetings, perhaps your next trip should be to the Business Travel & Meetings Show in London on 8-9 February 2011.

A visit to BTMS will give you the inside track on performing these tasks more efficiently and with increased confidence. In just half a day, you will meet 200 suppliers of world-leading business travel and meetings services, including

airlines, train operators, chauffeur drive companies, hotels and venues. You will learn how and where to find better deals, cut costs and make your company's travel budget work harder.

By visiting BTMS you will also be making a solid investment in your CV and future promotional and career prospects as this year the event is hosting a free full day training course designed for specifically for PAs and EAs – you even receive a special certificate to take back to the office. And when the learning and networking is done, why not enter the many competitions and prize draws open exclusively to PAs? You never know, you may just have sorted out next summer's holiday by the time you leave the show!

To register for a FREE ENTRY badge to the show and conference, simply visit www.businesstravelshow.com/pa



IT SECURITY LACKING

More than half of small businesses operate without staff IT security guidelines

Research by Internet Security company AVG shows that although most small businesses understand the need to protect their IT systems, fewer are willing to put it into practice. Out of 2000 SMBs surveyed in the US and UK for the "SMB Landscape Report", more than half (52%) have no IT security guidelines for their staff, while 1 in 7 have no Internet security software or solutions in place at all.

On the back of its report, AVG has launched a web based business resource center (www.avgatwork.com) that provides small and medium sized business owners and IT managers with informative guides, blog posts, videos, demos and tools to help them protect their business from internet and network security threats. The research for the SMB Landscape Report was undertaken by GFK NOP, which polled American and UK small business (less than 100 employees) owners.

AVG's research shows that:

- **83% agree that having the right level of IT security protection is critical to their business**
- **77% say that a security threat could have a significant negative impact on their business**
- **55% feel they can make IT security decisions without 3rd party influence**
- **However, only 48% have a clear IT security policy in place for their staff, leaving most at the mercy of what employees decide to download or access online**
- **As a result, perhaps not surprisingly, 1 in 4 have experienced a security breach**
- **Most worryingly, 1 in 7 have no security software or systems in place at all**

JOB SATISFACTION RISES DESPITE INSECURITY

Job satisfaction has shown a surprise increase across UK workplaces during the Autumn, according to the CIPD's quarterly **Employee Outlook survey**.

The finding illustrates what the institute has called the 'fixed grin' phenomenon, that workers in tough times are more content because they are simply pleased to have a job.

The survey of over 2,000 employees represents a bleak picture of employee attitudes throughout the UK, following the £81bn of cuts to public spending announced by the Government in the Comprehensive Spending Review. In the public sector, one in four (25%) workers believe it is likely they will lose their jobs and 63% say stress has increased as a result of the economic downturn, compared to 54% last quarter. Respondents across all sectors are also three times more likely to report their standard of living over the last six months has fallen (29%) than to say it has increased (9%).

Despite this gloomy outlook, job satisfaction has climbed across sectors to a net score of +42 from +35 for the previous quarter.

"The findings echo what happened during early Spring 2009 against

the backdrop of recession, when job satisfaction hit +46, before falling as economic and employment conditions improved," said Ben Willmott, CIPD senior public policy adviser.

"Both then and now there was talk of job losses and bleak economic commentary, suggesting that employees place more value on simply having a job than they do during more benign economic times. They are also less likely to think the grass may be greener with another employer, as two thirds of employees think it would be difficult to get a new job if they lost their current position."

Public sector workers are also most likely to report an increase in stress, conflict at work, bullying by line managers and an increase in people taking time off sick, as a result of the state of the economy.

Willmott added, "With just one-fifth of public sector staff agreeing that they trust their senior leaders compared to half disagreeing, there is a danger that employee engagement could nosedive. To counter this it is important that public sector employers look to consult and involve staff over proposed changes and ensure that managers at all levels are equipped with the people management skills needed to motivate and support staff during turbulent times."

CAREER V PAY

Career progression is more important than pay

Career progression is more important than pay when looking for a new job. That is according to a survey of 500 office support professionals undertaken by Crone Corkill, an Advantage Professional Company.

Just over half of the respondents said career progression is the most important factor, followed closely by 35% whose most important factor is money. A further 12% want a socially responsible employer and only 3% say the job title is key.

Gabrielle Drake, Associate Director at Crone Corkill comments 'Contrary to common belief money is not always the primary motivator when looking for a new job. The poll results show that individuals are more interested in career progression prospects. We are finding that more candidates are attracted to a certain role which is of interest to them, with more responsibility and the opportunity to grow; rather than a role with an attractive pay packet. Everyone has a different reason for working as we are all motivated by different things. It is also important for businesses to understand what motivates their staff in order to retain existing talent, and have a successful business.'

New retailers now accept flexecash card

Love2reward is established as one of the leading providers of cost effective and flexible reward solutions in the UK, providing services such as Gift Vouchers, Gift Cards, Online Points Systems, Employee Benefits and Corporate Gifts.

They have recently announced that **Boots** can now accept **Love2shop** and **Love2choose** gift cards, powered by **flexecash**. They join **Toys 'R' Us** to their growing list of accepting retailers, which also include **Babies R Us**, **Halfords**, **Iceland**, **Mothercare**, **ELC** and **TJ Hughes**.

flexecash is highly versatile and means that customers can choose from a wide range of options. Corporate users can send out the gift cards **live** (with value already loaded); **inactive** (simply requiring activation); or with **no value assigned** (requiring value to be subsequently loaded). This makes flexecash pre paid cards ideal for all types of scheme for customer and staff reward, including flexible and voluntary benefits which may require on-going regular loading of value.



GETTING TO WORK AGAINST ALL ODDS!

If you can't get to work, should you still get paid?

By Sue Evans, Lester Aldridge



Businesses have had to deal with a number of external disruptions this year. Starting with the snow, we've had airport closures and London Underground Tube strikes. Some employees do go to extraordinary lengths to get into work despite having a journey of several hours and experience considerable delays with a Dunkirk style spirit. Others take the opportunity to have longer under the duvet and take it as a good enough reason to stay at home.

Should those employees get paid?

Many businesses have taken the view that they will pay employees if they are satisfied that the employees concerned genuinely could not get into work without considerable delay and an excessively long journey.

Other employers try to arrange for people to drive to work sharing lifts or arrange for taxis to collect key employees.

However, many businesses have not paid employees who, for whatever reason, don't make it into work. They also have asked the employee to take the time as unpaid leave or annual leave (which would be paid).

Can employers do this?

In the absence of an agreement to the contrary - yes.

At first sight, this may not seem right. Is it fair that employees who take

emergency time off for dependents must take that time unpaid, but employees who cannot make it in to work because of the tube strike get paid?

Surely, consistency is the key. If employees cannot get into work, the general principle is that they do not receive pay for those days.

Employers could treat staff on a case by case basis but should

beware of any potential arguments of discrimination or less favourable treatment. For example, if all full time staff that couldn't make it in to work are paid, but not part time staff! It's far better to treat that all employees in the same way.

Advice for Employers:

- **Make sure that your key employees have the ability to work from home.**
- **You need a contingency plan in place to ensure that your business can function if a large number of your staff are affected by something, such as the Tube strike**
- **Have clear policies in place about whether you will pay employees who cannot make it to work because of the situation and be clear in what circumstances payment will or will not be made.**
- **Also, ensure that you have reporting requirements in place to ensure that staff must notify you promptly if they find the journey proves to be too long after they've started out.**
- **Unlike weather disruption, we normally have notice of a strike. Ask employees to plan alternative ways to commute, let you know where they are and their anticipated arrival time. Alternatively, they should inform you well in advance if they think it's too difficult for them to come in.**

DONGLES KNOW-HOW

Dongles have come a long way in recent years and there are some great deals now available. Here are **Broadbandchoices.co.uk's** top tips for choosing the perfect dongle:

Check your coverage - mobile broadband works all over the UK but you need to make sure you choose the right network - coverage can be patchy in some areas.

Compare costs - dongles are free for those choosing lengthy contracts, but for those giving pre-pay dongles as gifts this Christmas, the cost of the dongle can vary significantly.

A long or short memory? - many of the latest dongles double up as memory sticks but pre-pay dongles tend to be of a lower spec than those on a contract. It is important to compare any additional features such as memory storage or download limits, alongside the price.

Free Wi-fi - some mobile broadband providers offer free Wi-fi minutes, perfect for downloading or streaming programmes onto a laptop.

Returns policy - if you are buying a dongle for someone this Christmas, you need to ensure that there is enough time - from date of purchase to the recipient unwrapping it on Christmas morning - to return or exchange it if there is a problem, such as a fault or coverage proves totally inadequate despite the provider's claims.



Are jobs becoming **BORING?**

By Neil Atkinson

Roles are changing quickly and the skills required are evolving just as quickly. If you work in HR or any leadership role, it is critical that you challenge your own assumptions about what's required in a job, on a regular basis. Relying on old job descriptions and person specifications may be plain wrong. Take, for instance, call centres. Most of us do not have a love/love relationship with call centres and yet it's hard to argue the efficiencies they have brought to organisations over the past 15 years or so.

As call centres have grown in popularity and impact so the technology to support these centres has changed having a huge impact on the skills needed for these roles.

A study conducted in 1997 showed that at that time call centre jobs required sales behaviours such as being persuasive or sociable. At that time call centre employees were trained and then left to get on with it.

As technology advanced, software was introduced that standardised certain procedures such as new product launches, products of the month until today when they've reached a level of sophistication which makes recommendations about which products suit each particular customer.

Organisations, through software and other process innovations, engineered out the need to be a naturally gifted sales person and replaced it with a need to be well organised, diligent and compliant.

So have we engineered out the interesting bit and created really boring jobs?

Call centres are not the first job and they are not the last to evolve in this way. Henry Ford famously designed his assembly lines so that automobiles could be produced by 'simple farm boys'. He was able to use technology to replace essential mechanical skills lacking in his supply of labour.

But Fordism changes the experience of work. It is a well documented fact that Fordist production lines are not always positive working experiences for the employees. The repetitive nature of the work can breed alienation, disenchantment and boredom - descriptors often associated with today's call centres.

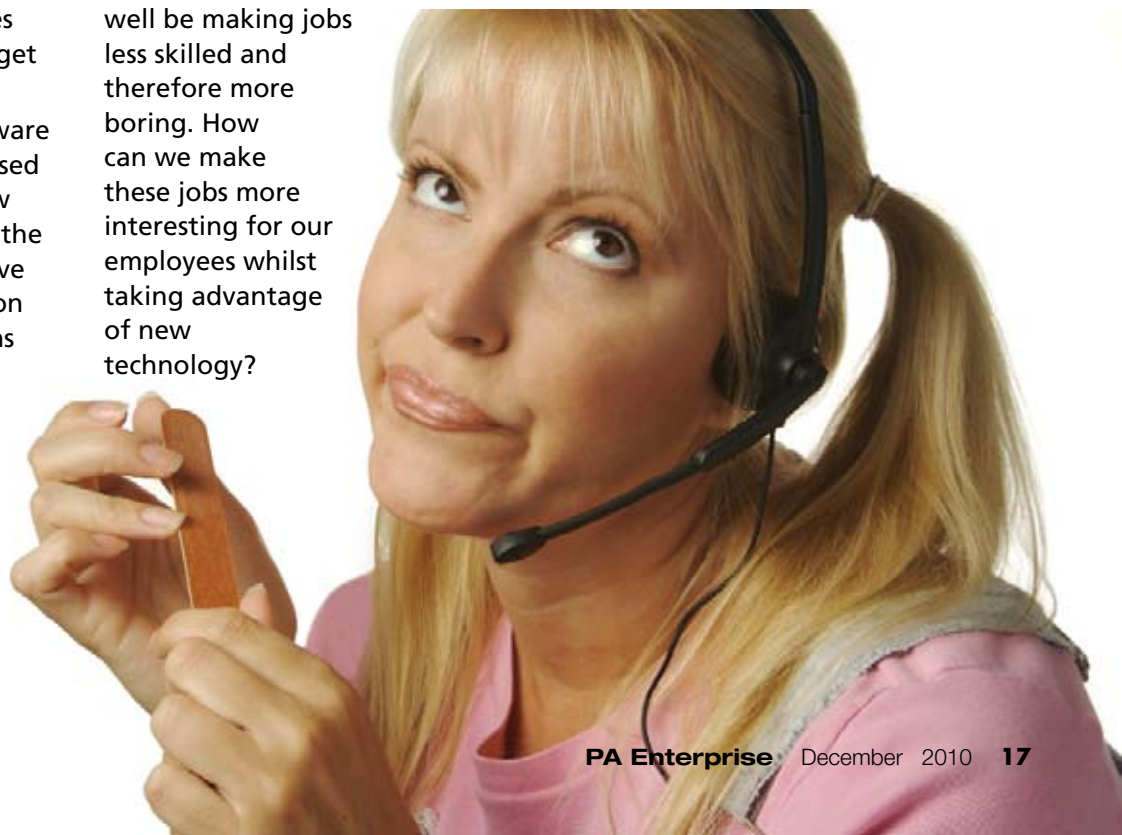
So what does that mean for us? We need to be aware that when we introduce labour saving processes and technology, we may well be making jobs less skilled and therefore more boring. How can we make these jobs more interesting for our employees whilst taking advantage of new technology?

We need to continually challenge our own thinking about what skills are needed for a particular job and, when recruiting, we must challenge and interrogate the job description and make a point of changing at least one key attribute or skill requirement (not for the sake of it but to challenge our own thinking about how the job has changed).

Some interesting questions occur to me in other roles:

- Do **London taxi drivers** still need 'the knowledge' now we have satellite navigation?
- Do **air traffic controllers** still need spatial reasoning skills now computers do so much more?
- Do **accountants** still need numerical skills now computers do all the maths?

The answer to these questions may still be 'yes' if only for when technology breaks down



Redundancy -

How it Works

By Tim Bishop

How does redundancy work?

Redundancy occurs if a dismissal is linked entirely or mostly to:

- The employer ceasing, or intending to cease, carrying on business at the place the employee was employed or for the purpose which the employee was employed;
- The requirements for the employer's business having ceased or diminished for employees to carry out work of a particular kind or in the place that the employee was employed.

Who is eligible for redundancy?

An eligible employee dismissed for redundancy will be entitled to receive from his employer a statutory redundancy payment. An employee is eligible if:

- They have two or more year's continuous employment since the age of 18;
- The employee is offered an alternative position and it is reasonably refused on the grounds of suitability relating to salary, location and status and other individual circumstances. It is not common for employees to lose a redundancy entitlement for this reason.

Experienced employment solicitors usually advise employers to be cautious and stick to the correct procedures for redundancies - if they do have to make people redundant, they should be careful to have clear and fair selection process.

Failure by an employer to follow correct procedure or to establish fair selection criteria can lead to an employee bringing a claim for unfair dismissal. Such a claim, if successful, can result in an award for damages for breach of his employment contract. Employees automatically have the right not to be unfairly dismissed once they have completed one year's continuous employment. The employer must establish that any dismissal by way of redundancy is a fair dismissal.

Redundancy can, for example, be an unfair dismissal if:

- There is no genuine redundancy: i.e. the position has not truly disappeared - this could be established if say a new employee is recruited for the same role
- No consultation before redundancy: The consultation process can become involved when numerous redundancies are planned.
- Unfair selection process: employees being made

redundant must be selected through fair and transparent criteria. It is advisable to agree selections with any union and/or employee representatives.

- The employer failed to provide appropriate alternative employment.

How long does an employee have to make a claim?


Employees have three months within which to bring an Employment Tribunal claim.

How do you calculate a redundancy payment?

Employees dismissed for redundancy reasons must be given a written statement from their employer, showing a breakdown of how their redundancy pay was calculated.

In order to calculate statutory redundancy, you should use the following amounts:

- 0.5 week's pay for every complete year of service when the age during the year was under 22
- 1.0 week's pay for each full year of service where age during year is 22 or above, but less than 41
- 1.5 weeks' pay for each full year of service where age during year is 41+



Redundancy is sadly a sign of the times, and more and more people are having to face losing their job. It is important to know exactly what your legal rights are, so you know where you stand if it happens to you.

The maximum length of service that can be applied is 20 years. For statutory redundancy purposes, weekly pay is capped at a maximum of £380 [as at 1 February 2010]. Therefore, the current maximum statutory redundancy payment available is £11,400. The majority of redundancy payments up to £30,000 are not liable to income tax.

The main thing is that although your employer might tell you that you are being dismissed for redundancy purposes, this is not always the case. Depending on your circumstances, you may find you have other employment law claims against your employer. Your dismissal which may be worth considerably more than the redundancy pay being offered - so it's always good advice to check your position with experienced employment solicitors.

Bonallack and Bishop are a firm of employment solicitors with a team specialised in redundancy. Senior partner Tim Bishop is responsible for all major strategic decisions, seeing himself as a businessman who owns a law firm. He has grown the firm by 1000% in 12 years and has strong plans for continued expansion.

Article Source: http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Tim_Bishop



Choosing a Life Coach:

Ten Top Tips

By Nick James Smith

There are really only two things to consider, namely the coach's qualities (are they good at their job) and the relationship you have with them (are they a good for you to work with). These can be subdivided though as follows:

Coach qualities

1 Are they any good?

Can you get a recommendation from someone you trust who has successfully worked with a coach in the recent past? If you can't get a personal recommendation, what do other people say who have worked with this person? Ask for references or testimonials from previous clients, particularly those that you

could contact for more background information

2 What is their niche?

Many coaches specialise, either in the type of issues they help people tackle, or in the particular people they seek to help. It might be coping with divorce, tackling career change, becoming more personally effective or a plethora of other issues that people regularly face.

If a coach says they will work with anyone, it would suggest to me a lack of focus, no specialist expertise or inexperience.

3 What are their qualifications?

Anyone can set up in business as a life coach so what qualifies the person you are considering to help you? What makes them a specialist in their niche? It is also worth asking what qualifications they have in life coaching - have they merely read a book a few years ago or have they attended a recognised course?

4 What tools do they use?

Any reputable coach will have a number of professional tools and techniques that they can call upon to assist your development. The CIPD, in their report on hiring coaches, says coaches should be able to adapt their approach to fit your unique needs, using your tools where necessary -- be wary of coaches who only push one particular framework or methodology. However, as my friend Mark Watkins of Natural Assets always says, it is worth looking for someone who uses aspects of Neuro-Linguistic Programming to help you.

5 How experienced are they?

Have they just started out or have they coached hundreds of people before? The more people they have worked with, the more of the subtle aspects of your particular situation they will have already seen and worked through with other people. However, experience also links to cost, which is mentioned below.

Coach-client relationship

There are other aspects to choosing a coach that are less about who the coach is and has more to do with how well they fit you, your needs and expectations. Kate Ludeman

describes it as a 'collaborative partnership'.

6 Rapport:

Coaches are trained in establishing rapport, so if you don't feel a connection with the person, then you should be concerned that the relational aspect may not be strong enough. You need to be able to trust them, accept their help and be committed to carrying out their suggestions, which won't be the case if you feel, for whatever reason, that they don't relate well to you.

7 Values:

If you come from a particular culture, religion or value-basis it would be wise to seek out someone from a similar position. Coaches are able to work in an unbiased way with anyone, however you may have less explaining to do with someone who has similar values to you, thus saving time and misunderstandings as you seek to describe your goals.

8 Personal qualities:

If you want a coach to help you achieve goals, then you also want them to be direct, tenacious and strong enough to hold you accountable if necessary. Skills like listening, questioning and comprehension should be common to all coaches. These things, along with a gauge of the rapport between you can usually be judged from an initial meeting which many coaches offer on a free, no-obligation basis.

9 Location:

Do you want to physically meet with your coach or will telephone conversations be sufficient? If the latter, then location is not an issue. Telephone coaching can be a cost-effective and efficient way for you to work with someone who you can relate well to but who lives

remotely. If however, you want face to face sessions, then consider where the coach is based, as well as who is expected to do (and pay for) the travelling.

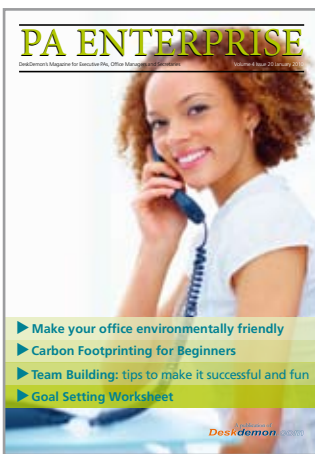
10 Cost:

Some people say that coaching is too expensive, but they have not fully investigated the priceless payback of more happiness/wealth/success/effectiveness or whatever else is sought. If you want a well-qualified, experienced life coach who has assisted many people in the past, you will need to pay for that. However, coaches who are just starting in their practices may charge as little as £50 per hour.

And finally...

If the relationship aspect is not brilliant then the coaching will be less successful. If you have concerns, it pays to voice them early, before getting tied in to a process you are not convinced about. A reputable coach will not push you into working with them if that is not going to be successful; you should avoid any that do. A coach should be able to refer you to a friend or colleague where the relationship may work better. Likewise, a coach should pass you to other people who are better placed to help you if your issues are beyond their particular expertise. However a relationship that works, with an effective coach, can turn your life around. Go out and find the one that suits you!

Nick is an Outdoor Life Coach and Trainer. Within his company, Square Pegs Coaching, he uses outdoor experiences to help people develop themselves. To understand better what this means in practice and to take greater advantage of his expertise, go to <http://www.squarepegcoaching.com> or read his blog at www.nickjs.co.uk
Article Source: EzineArticles.com



A big thankyou to all our readers!

*We hope you have enjoyed
PA ENTERPRISE during 2010 and
wish you a very Happy Christmas
and New Year*



Please keep your ideas coming - we love to hear what you like about **PA Enterprise** and really value your feedback. We're here to help **YOU** - so let us know which topics you'd like us to explore.

Email janebigos@deskdemo.com

See you again in January 2011

