

PA ENTERPRISE

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

AUGUST 2012

**Reviewers
Wanted**

Go to page 9

Is your Career Plan on Track?

Key Strategies for 'Perpetual Career Management'

The Silent Killer in our Workplace

How to spot an Office Fraudster

What sort of Negotiator are you?



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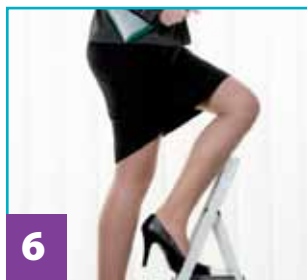
OUT OF HOME



4

4 Is your career plan on track?

UK workers fear they are falling behind in their careers as they abandon long term planning, according to a survey of over 1,000 workers by Office Angels.



6

6 Key strategies for 'Perpetual Career Management'

How to maintain an effective, long-term career strategy



8

8 Turn your Friday Pink!

Do your bit for Breast Cancer Care and have fun too

9 You got (too much) mail!

Got mail? It sounds like workers have too much of it, actually.

9 Reviewers Wanted!

We are looking for reviewers to check out venues, restaurants, hotels, products and books on our behalf

10 Busy lives beautifully organised

Be beautifully organised with the new Martha Stewart Home Office™ with Avery™ range

11 Office Labels Go Mobile

Brother UK has launched the first WiFi-enabled label printers for offices

12 The Silent Killer in Our Workplace

Poor employee health costs UK businesses over £100 billion a year

16 Special PA Networking Event!

Review of our networking Event held at the Marco Pierre White Restaurant at Chelsea's Football Club

18 How to spot an office fraudster...

Check out the behavioural red flags

22 Diplomat? Tactician? What sort of negotiator are you?

Read the latest research on the negotiation styles of people who spend their day debating, bargaining, and mediating the best deal possible



12



18



22



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Is your career plan on track?

UK workers fear they are falling behind in their careers as they abandon long term planning, according to a survey of over 1,000 workers by Office Angels. Each individual must take responsibility for their own plan, or risk falling further behind, warns the recruiter.



Nearly three quarters (71.6%) of UK workers admitted to having either no career plan (43.4%) or just a one-two year plan (28.2%). By contrast, just one in twenty (5.3%) said they had their career mapped out for the next six-ten years, according to the research by Office Angels.

Over a third (39.9%) of UK workers said they felt they were behind in their career, with one in five (19.6%) saying their career plan was not on track at all.

Workers are not the only ones who are not thinking about their long term careers. Nearly half (45.5%) said they rarely or never received help from their employers with their professional development and future career plans.

Steven Kirkpatrick, Managing Director of Office Angels said: "Many workers have taken a short term, unstructured approach to career planning in response to recent job market uncertainty, so it comes as no surprise that over a third feel

they are falling behind in their careers.

"Now we are seeing consistency in the number of roles available to UK job seekers, it can be tempting for workers to change roles. However, while this can keep things fresh, we would urge workers to think about their longer term plans: where do they want to be in several years time and how will a new role help them achieve this?

"While responsibility for career planning sits first and foremost with the individual, we believe employers can aid this planning by helping their employees develop professionally. By advising and aiding the development of their employees, employers can demonstrate the opportunities for fulfilling their long term goals within their existing job.

"Employers who invest time in the professional development of their staff will be more likely to be rewarded with dedication and loyalty from their employees."



Other findings of the study include:

- **16-24 year olds are the most dedicated to their careers, with over a fifth (21.8%) having a three-five year career plan**
- **Workers in Yorkshire are the least focussed on their professional future, with nearly two thirds (62.4%) admitting to not having any career plan**
- **Londoners feel that their employers give them the most support compared with other regions, with a fifth (20%) claiming their employer has given them a personal career development plan**
- **By contrast, over three quarters (80%) of employees in Northern Ireland professed to never or rarely getting help in their professional development from their employer.**

Key strategies for 'Perpetual Career Management'

In today's work world where jobs are readily changed or eliminated, "doing a good job" is no longer an effective, long-term career strategy.

Ford R. Myers, Career Coach and Author of *Get The Job You Want, Even When No One's Hiring*, states that every individual, regardless of career status, should consider adopting a different approach which he has termed Perpetual Career Management.

"Instead of being focused completely on your current job performance, the term 'Perpetual Career Management' means you should focus on managing your entire career - engaging continually in a variety of activities that you thought were necessary only for job seekers. This way, you'll always be prepared, no matter what happens in your company or your job," states Myers.

Myers' ten vital activities that everyone, regardless of job level, should always be doing are:

- 1. Keep all your career documents up to date,** CV, reference list, letters of recommendation, accomplishment stories and so on – so you'll be ready to use them at any point of transition, planned or unplanned!
- 2. Put time aside every week for active networking** to maintain established relationships and develop new ones. You should always be positioned to make use of your professional and personal contacts when the need arises.
- 3. Join and take leadership roles in appropriate associations and trade organisations.** This will boost your visibility and enhance your credibility in your industry.
- 4. Write articles or do presentations focused on your area of expertise** in any venue - associations, conferences, publications, online. This type of exposure demonstrates your level of "trade skill" and expertise.

Reprinted by permission of Ford R. Myers, a nationally-known Career Coach and author of "Get The Job You Want, Even When No One's Hiring." Download your free bonuses now at www.careerbookbonuses.com

5. Continue your career education and maintain your industry credentials

through seminars, academic classes, lectures, professional events, conferences, and new certifications/degrees.

6. Research and be aware of the competition – whether it be information about other companies or other professionals in your industry. Always know who they are and what they're doing.

7. Offer to help people in your network even though they may not be in a position to "help you back" at this time. These people will remember your good will.

8. Look at other job openings and investigate other opportunities, even if you're not job hunting at this time. This will help you to know the market, gauge various aspects of your current position, and stay "plugged-in."

9. Always ask yourself, "How can I contribute more?" Doing a good job isn't good enough. The people who move-up in the organisation and get the best assignments are the ones who clearly demonstrate their value to the organisation in measurable ways - every day, every week, every month.

10. Practice your interviewing, negotiating and related skills on a regular basis. Don't wait until a career crisis arises to polish your job-seeking skills. You never know what's going to happen.

Myers adds, "By committing yourself to these 'Perpetual Career Management' strategies, and implementing these behaviors in a consistent manner, you will always be in top career form and have plenty of professional options!"



Turn your Friday Pink...

October 2012



This October Breast Cancer Care is encouraging offices to liven up their Friday by turning the day pink!

To support the 50,000 people who are diagnosed with breast cancer every year in the UK, Breast Cancer Care is encouraging people nationwide to take part in the charity's Pink Friday fundraising campaign by wearing pink, eating pink or partying pink at work.

Money raised will help fund vital services, such as the charity's helpline, information points in hospitals and support groups for people who have been diagnosed with breast cancer.

Breast Cancer Care supporter, Emilia Fox, said: "Please take part in Breast Cancer Care's Pink Fridays campaign this October – you can be as stylish, creative or decadent as you like! Anything goes from wearing a pink feather boa to sharing lots of lovely pink cupcakes with your colleagues. It's all to support the 50,000 people across the UK who are diagnosed with breast cancer every year. Breast Cancer Care needs the funding to support each and every one of them so we all need to participate and enjoy turning our Fridays pink for a very worthy cause."



Register now for a free Pink Fridays fundraising kit, full of party ideas and fundraising tips.

Visit www.breastcancercare.org.uk/pinkfridays

You got (too much) mail!

Got mail? It sounds like workers have too much of it, actually.

A new study by the McKinsey Global Institute found that employees spend about 2.6 hours a day sifting through emails. That means employees' spend about 28% of their day sending, receiving or sorting out emails instead of doing their jobs.

That means that every year workers spend some 81 working days hunched over their computers - often emailing other people in the office.

The research points towards the technology driven culture that has taken over where putting in the hours is what is important, regardless of how much work you actually do.

The poll was based on a typical working week of 46 hours. Assuming an employee spends 13 hours a week on emails, that works out as 28% of the time they are at work. By comparison employees spent just 6.4 hours per week, or 14% of their time, 'communicating and collaborating internally'.

According to McKinsey, making changes to how people use computers such as using more social media could make them up to 25 per cent more productive. The findings are the latest in a series of polls which call into question whether or not the computer revolution really is a good thing.



Reviewers Wanted!

Got an opinion and happy to share it? We are looking for reviewers to check out venues, restaurants, hotels, products, books etc on our behalf - please send your details (name, title, company, location) to review@deskdemo.com

We will give you a comprehensive brief with advice and points to consider during your visit and when writing your review. And if you have a camera and can take a few snaps at well, that would be great. Your review will feature on DeskDemon, in PA Enterprise and What's New.

We currently have an overnight stay at a London hotel waiting to be reviewed - so, if you have experience in managing meetings and events and business travel, please email asap.

Deskdemo.com

Busy lives beautifully organised

Juggling work and home priorities in our increasingly busy lives means we have to be super-organised.

But this doesn't mean we can't also be super-stylish.

There is a new, beautiful way to organise how we live and work today. American lifestyle expert Martha Stewart has just launched an elegant new collection of home office products here in the UK, developed with Avery and sold exclusively at Staples. Martha's fabulous new range brings harmony to our busy lives and styles us for success.

The new collection finds a way to beautifully organise even the most cluttered areas—from stackable desk products designed to create space to beautiful filing solutions that bring order to work or home documents. The whole Martha Stewart Home Office™ with Avery™ range is finished in colours and tones that bring perfect harmony to your work and living spaces. Soft blue hues and warm chocolate browns combine to add a touch of sophistication to a space that is distinctly yours.

Featuring over 130 different items, the Martha Stewart Home Office range is designed to be mixed and matched to suit your lifestyle. From textured shagreen-style journals to stylish and practical labels and tags for the home, the range includes: Stack+Fit™ Desk Accessories, Journals and Planning Binders

The Martha Stewart Home Office™ with Avery™ range is available exclusively at Staples stores across the UK and online at Staples.co.uk



Office Labels Go Mobile

Office workers can now print labels from their phones, tablets and laptops without being hardwired to a label printer, allowing improved flexibility for fast paced working environments.

Brother UK has launched the first WiFi-enabled label printers for offices – the QL-710W and the QL-720NW.

In a technology first, the printers allow workers to run off labels from almost any device wirelessly, freeing up label printing from being tied to admin teams and opening it up for the whole office.

The printers can output from Microsoft Office programmes - including Word, Excel and Outlook – as well as Android and iOS mobile operating systems. They can be powered and controlled by Brother's new iPrint & Label app, which works on most mobile devices including the iPhone and iPad.

Ideal for busy offices running to tight budgets, the new models can print almost 100 labels a minute time can also be saved with an auto-cutter function for large volumes of single labels. The feature-rich printers are less expensive to run than competitor machines; the cost of each printed label is up to 25% lower*. The new printers also include a range of pre-designed, professional looking labels, which can be used to create visitor badges, and labels for CDs, QR codes and barcodes.

The printers are simple to use and the QL-720NW can be connected to a network, so all workers in an office can use the device, without the need to install software.

The machines are priced from £149 (SRP).

www.brother.co.uk/labelling



Mars Drinks UK rebrands to connect offices

Mars Drinks UK, which specialises in providing hot drinks to the workplace, has rebranded as Mars Drinks Office Connections, in recognition of the evolving working environment.

Mars Drinks UK has always been focused on the office environment and the newly named brand will continue to provide the same popular brands, Alterra Coffee Roasters and The Bright Tea Co., through the Flavia Fresh Release System.

Jenni Morgan, trade marketing manager for Mars Drinks Office Connections has commented on the rebrand: "With changing work patterns and advances in technology, the typical office space is becoming much more than simply rows of desks and chairs. Increasingly, a visit to the coffee machine to enjoy a hot beverage is considered the perfect opportunity to step away from the computer and take the time to think, collaborate and exchange ideas."



The Silent Killer in Our Workplace



Poor employee health costs UK businesses over £100 billion a year. Fred Turok, Chairman of the Fitness Industry Association and Chairman of the Government's Public Health Responsibility Deal physical activity network, urges business to sign up to get into shape.

Most successful business leaders know instinctively that a healthy workforce is a productive workforce. But what may shock boardrooms up-and-down the country is just how harmful inactivity and being sedentary actually is to our health and well-being, and moreover just how damaging it is for your business.

Physical inactivity is a silent killer. The Chief Medical Officer ranked it as the 4th leading risk factor for global mortality – following closely behind high blood pressure, tobacco and high blood glucose.

So what's this got to do with business? I could appeal to your altruistic nature, but being a business man I'd rather talk business. As a nation we're getting lazier and fatter. At face value this may not seem critical to your top-line, but poor physical health and wellbeing actually has a huge impact on workforce efficiency and productivity. When was the last time you took a good look at the shape your employees are in?

In 2009/10, 23.4 million days were lost by British industry due to work-related ill health and the annual economic cost of sickness in the UK is estimated to be over £100 billion a year. On average an inactive person spends 38% more days in hospital than an active person. But that isn't the whole picture. 'Presenteeism' – being at work but not being able to function to maximum capacity – can have an even greater impact on productivity than sickness absence.

It's not rocket science. If the economy is going to flourish we need



‘It’s about enabling employees to be more active: providing showers, prioritising stairs over lifts or promoting active commuting - walking, running or cycling to work.’

to create a culture that makes physical activity everyone’s business – including employers. You only need to read the CMO report, *Start Active, Stay Active*, to see what this can achieve: regular physical activity helps to reduce the risk of many chronic conditions including heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and cancer. But further, as well as “reducing the risk of depression, physical activity can enhance psychological well-being, by improving self-perception and self-esteem, mood and sleep quality and by reducing levels of anxiety and fatigue.”

So what can employers do? Obviously it varies greatly with the size of the organisation. It’s not just about gyms at the office, but it’s about enabling employees to be more active: providing showers, prioritising stairs over lifts or promoting active commuting - walking, running or cycling to work. For most people even relatively small increases in activity can help give some protection against chronic diseases.

There is something every business can do. It just needs some creativity and commitment. Ask your staff what they want, be it a running club, discounted health club access or flexible hours to accommodate exercise classes. There is a very clear business case for investing in the health and wellbeing of your employees, and it doesn’t require a massive budget. The Work Foundation calculates that increasing spending on staff engagement by just 10% would boost profits by £1,500 per employee per year.



Last year the Government launched the Public Health Responsibility Deal to tap into the huge potential for business to influence the environment, including the workplace, and improve public health. As Chair of the Deal's physical activity network we have developed a number of simple and pragmatic pledges that can help businesses structure and deliver their approach to help staff lead healthier, more active lives.

There are some fantastic individual pledges that some companies have made as part of the Deal – many of them working in partnership with local charities and physical activity providers. Take a look on the website to see what companies like GlaxoSmithKline, Lloyds and BUPA are doing as part of their corporate social responsibility commitment, and to access our advice factsheets: <http://responsibilitydeal.dh.gov.uk/>

Signing up to the Responsibility Deal sends your staff and communities a clear message that you value them and gives your business wellbeing credentials. We currently have almost 200 organisations signed up and over 500 physical activity pledges. But I want to build on this and get over 1000 partners involved and active, especially given the socio-economic climate and the fact that it is an Olympic and Paralympic year.

Staff continue to be our most vital resource. If you're asking can you afford to invest in this - my response would be can you afford not to?

Signing up to the Responsibility Deal sends your staff and communities a clear message that you value them and gives your business wellbeing credentials.



Special PA Networking Event!

More than 100 PAs, EAs and Office Managers attended our exclusive networking event on Thursday, 5th July at the Marco Pierre White Restaurant at Chelsea's Football Club in Fulham.

The special guests were greeted with a canapé and champagne reception at the elegant Marco restaurant at 6pm. After this the group were taken on a special behind the scenes tour of Chelsea FC's comprehensive event facilities in the West Stand, as well as the exclusive music venue, Under the Bridge.

Guests were able to mingle, chat and get to know one another during the evening and were also able to hear from Macmillan Cancer Support and Kenco regarding the World's Biggest Coffee morning which takes place on 28th September and take part in a raffle to win a Kenco coffee machine.

Each PA was encouraged to bring their boss or a guest to share the evening and we are delighted that many did just that. Exciting raffle prizes including dinner for two at the Marco restaurant, tickets for a Chelsea football match were up for grabs and guests departed happy with goodie bags containing the latest gel highlighters, super smart pens, tasty coffee samples, sticky notes, and much more.

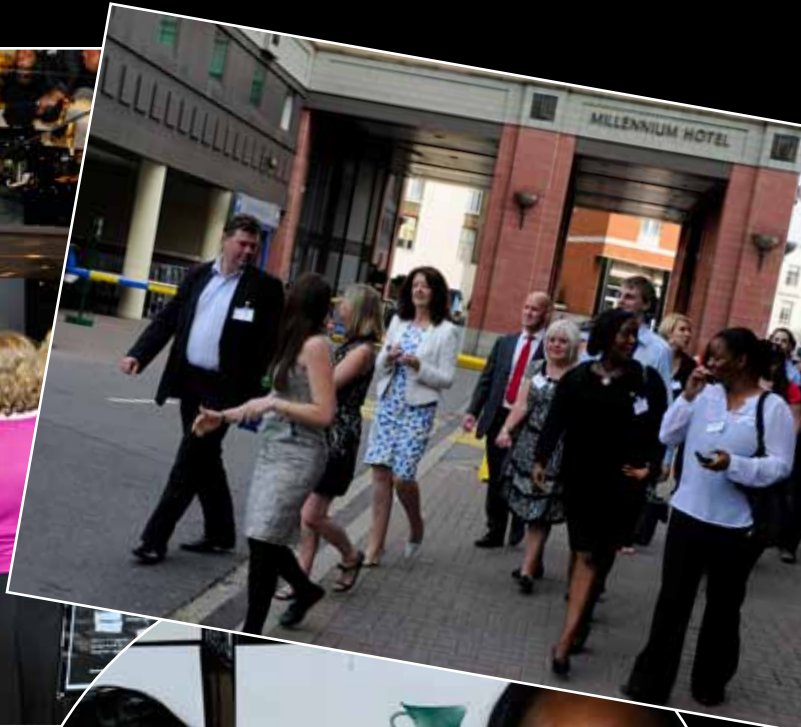


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How to spot an office fraudster.

Male, 36 - 45 years old, works in the finance function or in a finance-related role, holds a senior management position, employed by the company for more than 10 years, works in collusion with another perpetrator.



By Alex Plavsic, head of forensic at KPMG

Analysis of 348 actual fraud investigations conducted by KPMG member firms in 69 countries suggests that the above is the portrait of a typical office fraudster. But spotting fraud in your own company is not as simple as singling out all those who fit the above credentials. And nor would doing just that be either moral or appropriate.

Fraud is indeed a recurring nightmare for management, shareholders and investors. With the value of fraud perpetrated by employees on the rise, increasing 10% in the last year, here are a few warning signs to look out for which may indicate that fraud is being committed within your company:

Behavioural red flags

1 Rarely takes holidays

Whilst not taking holidays initially appears an HR or wellbeing issue, it is worth considering that this could be an indicator that an employee does not wish to leave his/her work open to the scrutiny of colleagues in his absence.

2 Refuses or does not seek promotion or rotation and gives no reasonable explanation

Career progression or work rotation is highly desirable for the majority but if an employee refuses this on more than one occasion, it could be an indicator that something is going on under the radar so to speak. Management must take the time to understand how their employees work with others in the department, if an employee insists on working in isolation when this is not always appropriate, this could be a warning sign.

3 Is suspected to have over-extended personal finances or excessive lifestyle

Greed is one of the key motivations to committing fraud. Management should be alert to the fact that overnight inheritances, newly established opulent lifestyles and excessive personal expenditure may all point to fraudulent behaviour. The recent case of a former secretary who embezzled half a million pounds from a company to spend on private jets, luxury cars and Premier League football tickets is just one such example.

4 Defensive mechanisms

Whilst this is a slightly contentious area, managers should be able to use their best judgement. There have been many cases of employees inventing illnesses as a mechanism to act as a buffer to challenge. If an employee is creating defence mechanisms to prevent questioning over transactions or performance, there may be reason to be extra vigilant. This is particularly the case where answers to straightforward questions are ever changing and inconsistent.

5 Senior managers with unusual spheres of influence

When the CFO banks cash takings or a senior manager is involved in purchasing decisions outside of his function, ask the question: why? In relation to the first of these it is important that all businesses can trace all fund inflows from source to bank with appropriate segregation of duties.

6 Expenses, expenses, expenses...

Several recent stories have appeared of significant expenses frauds. They are also a good indicator of an employee's honesty: many fraudsters overstate their expenses in addition to their main crime. Use of data analytics over expenses is to be encouraged; looking for perennial over-spenders or spikes in claims. Business indicators

7 Accounts not reconciled to underlying records

Management fraud is on the increase with fraud perpetrated at senior levels now making up 55% of cases. One common management fraud is presenting the business as performing better than it is; manipulating the financial results. It is often the case in such situations that key accounting reconciliations are suspended to enable the manipulation to go undetected.

8 Elsewhere in the industry, companies are struggling and sales and/or profits are declining. Your business appears to buck the trend

Over performance against peers is generally good news, however, independent directors and the Board must get comfortable as to how this has been achieved. Are such explanations underpinned by data and support which evidences a competitive advantage?





9 Excessive secrecy about a function and its operations

Certain business leaders have an uncanny habit of avoiding or postponing scrutiny, such as internal audit reviews, for seemingly plausible reasons. Such avoidance activity should not be accepted on a repeated basis.

10 Posting to vulnerable balance sheet accounts

When funds are stolen or accounts are manipulated the perpetrator will need to process an accounting entry to disguise the underlying transaction. Invariably, certain balance sheet accounts are used such as suspense accounts or other accounts (such as VAT or PAYE) that are rarely fully reconciled. Unexpected build up of balances on such accounts requires challenge.

Diplomat? Tactician? What sort of negotiator are you?

PsychTests.com, a pioneer in online psychological assessments, has released its newest research on the negotiation styles of people who spend their day debating, bargaining, and mediating the best deal possible. The results reveal that negotiation styles can vary from the diplomatic and friendly to tactical warfare.



Who's sitting across the negotiating table from you? Do you have a persuasive charmer on your hands, who will try to schmooze you into signing on the dotted line, or a hard-hitting player who refuses to budge an inch? Negotiating is a sophisticated and complex skill. It's all in the approach. And this approach depends on many factors, including who you're negotiating with, whether your relationship with this person has to stay on good terms, and how much you're willing to lose in order to win.

PsychTests.com assessed 750 people for whom negotiating is a major part of their job. Four top negotiating styles emerged from this sample.



The Diplomat

The top style for 48% of negotiators. Diplomats are highly-skilled negotiators who can adapt to any situation or opponent. They are often sharp-witted and extremely good at building a rapport with others. Their level-headedness and good emotional control gives them an edge when dealing with even the most difficult people. Traits that stood out for the Diplomats: Good social skills, empathy, and problem solving ability; they possess a lot of integrity and approach negotiations objectively.

The Tactician

36% of negotiators had this style. These are “by the book” negotiators who always come into a negotiation well prepared. They delve deep and ask all the right questions to gain the information they need to break down the other parties’ argument or build up their own. Traits that stood out for the Tacticians: Good memory, empathy, perspective, and integrity. Compared to Diplomats, however, they are much edgier and less personable. Their empathy allows them to read you like a book - their edge keeps them cool and calculated...and lets you know that neither intimidation nor charm will sidetrack them.

The Peacekeeper

The 3rd most popular style, at 9%. People with this type have a knack for gaining people’s trust and building a strong rapport with them. They make every effort to understand their opponent’s needs and do whatever they can to ensure fairness and integrity. They may not always make headway against aggressive negotiators, but could potentially win some over with their charm and exceptional interpersonal skills. Traits that stood out for Peacekeepers: Good social skills, empathy, and amazing powers of persuasion.

The Placater

The 4th most popular style, at 7%. Hard-hitting, high-stake negotiations are not their strength, as they often tend to lack the assertiveness to go up against tougher negotiators. They’re more likely to placate opponents, because it’s not so much about winning as it is losing as little as possible. In terms of skills, they may not be as advanced as the Diplomats or Tacticians, but could hold their own in less intense negotiations, where everyone is on friendly terms. Although Placaters in PsychTests’ sample do show a bit of a feisty side, and are not totally opposed to throwing in a few dirty tactics once in a while.

But dirty dealing and intimidation, at least in most negotiations, isn’t a tactic that will fly anymore.

“These days, if you try to push and demand a lot, but refuse to give anything in return, you’re not going to make it far,” explains Dr. Ilona Jerabek, president of company. “You’ll probably end up with a stalemate, or your opponent will simply get up and walk out the door. There has to be some

give and take in negotiation, a win-win solution, and this is what top negotiators are able to do.

Although some less than scrupulous tactics may be thrown around sometimes, no one in our sample of negotiators was an all-out ‘hoodwinker’”

In terms of gender differences between male and female negotiators, PsychTests did discover a few distinct differences. Men tended to be a little more



persuasive and actually showed slightly better communication skills. Women, however, made integrity a top priority.

"It's all about people skills in the negotiating world," concludes Dr. Jerabek. Good social insight, persuasion, and the ability to problem solve and resolve conflict. You have to treat the other person fairly and honestly. This is where top negotiators separated themselves from the rest of the population.

'Dirty dealing and intimidation, at least in most negotiations, isn't a tactic that will fly anymore.'