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

July 2012



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Best apps for business.....

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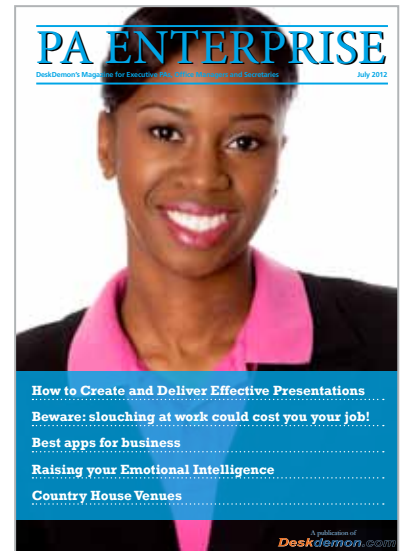


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NEWS

London 2012 Olympics: hotel prices fall

The cost of a London hotel room during the Olympic Games has dropped sharply, as an expected surge in bookings has failed to materialise.

Rooms which were being offered for an average £210 have now been cut in price to £160, according to one survey. Tourism chiefs confirmed the fall, which comes after Locog, the games' organisers, released thousands of unwanted hotel rooms in the capital and hoteliers began to abandon minimum stay rules, allowing tourists to book one or two night stays.

The average rate for rooms in London during the main Olympic period of July 27 to August 12 has fallen from £213 to £160 – a drop of 24 per cent.

However, that is still a 75 per cent increase in prices on last year's rates. Hoteliers had raised prices in anticipation of increased visitor numbers to the UK for the London 2012 Olympics.

The price cuts mean a double room at the four-star Britannia International, at Canary Wharf, will cost £259, compared to previous rates of £395, while a double room at the three-star London Ealing Hotel, on Ealing Common, will cost £121, down from around £150.



Last month the four-star Radisson New Providence Wharf Hotel, three miles from the Olympic Park, was showing the cheapest rate of £594,

for a double or twin room, for the Games period.

But similar rooms are now available during the Olympics for between £210 and £306.

London hotels rated as Britain's worst

The capital only managed tenth place behind nine other UK cities in a recent poll measuring the satisfaction of hotel guests by website Hotel.info

As London's hotels prepare to greet visitors for the Games, the poll of more than 10,000 guests suggested improvements would be welcomed.

Hotels were rated on criteria such as room quality, friendliness of staff, cleanliness, noise, value for money and quality of food.

The city with the happiest hotel guests was Sheffield, which achieved an average score of 7.6 out of ten, closely followed by Liverpool and Leeds. Edinburgh came fourth, with 7.21 out of ten. London scored only 6.58.

Other European capital cities also fared much better, with Helsinki, Bratislava, Tallinn, Berlin, Prague, Riga and Madrid - among others - beating London. Of those cities to feature in the study, Warsaw's hotels (7.9 out of ten) pleased guests the most of all – for the second year running, according to Hotel.info



One AA battery, 15 years of power - meet the SpareOne emergency phone

There's nothing worse than being stuck in traffic for hours on end and the battery of your phone dying. If anything were to happen contacting help would be impossible and could lead to a number of dangers; that's where the SpareOne Emergency Phone comes in.

Available now from Mobile Fun, the SpareOne Emergency Phone runs for 15 years from the power of a single AA battery.

The SpareOne is designed to be used in an emergency so is perfect for keeping in the glove box of your car, by the side of your bed or simply in your handbag.

The SpareOne has a sim card slot so that you can make and receive calls from your usual number. It does not have a screen, but has the ability to have nine numbers programmed in its speed dial and should you receive a text message, will automatically send a 'call me back' message to the person who texted you.

Is bad service making you miserable?

Surly staff making you furious? Hanging on the telephone stressing you out? As consumers we're dealing with more and more customer service teams, in person, on the phone and online. Most research will tell you the impact on business but not the affect it has on the consumer. A new survey launches to discover how much of our lives we're wasting on customer service and how it's making us feel.

The results of the survey, which opened on 28th June and runs until 3rd September, will be published in October to coincide with National Customer Service Week and will, for the first time, offer an insight into the effect both good and bad service on the national mood.

Bad customer service damages business and switches off consumers. Good customer service makes us feel empowered and means we keep coming back for more.

Customer service is increasingly becoming part of our day to day lives. Dealing with our bank, utilities firms, supermarkets, the post office as well as retailers, cafes and restaurants if we think about it we probably interact on average with up to five businesses a day.

The survey is launched by the organisers of the Customer at the Heart Awards. Established by retail expert Kate Hardcastle, the awards are designed to celebrate independent retailers who offer the very best in customer service. The survey aims to gather as many experiences of customer service as it can.

Kate says, "We always hear about the impact of customer service on a business or the economy. Often we forget the impact on the most important element – the customer. A lot of us walk around feeling frustrated and angry about the service we get. What we're hoping is to give people the chance to highlight the impact customer service has on them day in and day out.

We are all consumers but many of us don't feel we have any control over the way we are treated or the service we get. Hopefully, what this survey will do is provide proof that the service we get has an impact on how we behave and how we feel. This should help give a voice to every frustrated customer, every tired shopper, every one of us hanging on the telephone waiting for an answer from a call centre".



Diamond reveals Britain's speediest drivers

Diamond has revealed that drivers named Juliet and Rupert are the most likely to have been caught breaking the speed limit, according to new research.

The women's car insurance specialist looked at over three million motorists to identify the first names of drivers most likely to have points for speeding. The top five women's first names are Juliet, Susannah, Justine, Deirdre and Alexis, while for men the speediest five names are Rupert, Julian, Piers, Giles and Justin.

The research also revealed the occupations of the motorists most likely to have a motoring conviction for driving over the speed limit. Surgeons and chartered surveyors top the list of professions most likely to have been clocked speeding, followed by area sales managers, commercial chairmen and chiropractors.

Diamond also looked at the first names and occupations of drivers least likely to have speeding convictions. At the other end of the scale, women named Paige, Molly, Shannon, Bethany and Lily are least likely to have points on their licence and for men it's Connor, Terrence, Jake, Jordan and Joshua.

In terms of occupations, school students, au pairs, college students, typists and dinner ladies are the least likely to be caught speeding.

TRAVEL PROMOTION

Business Direct Online - the Smart Way to Book UK Rail Travel

Are you looking to save money or improve how your company's rail travel is booked? Then Business Direct Online is the perfect partner!

Need to find the best fares available to anywhere in the UK?

Business Direct Online will display a range of journey times, so the most suitable time can be selected and at the best fare. The lowest fare will always be highlighted and for return journeys it even displays single and return ticket costs to ensure you get the best price.

Save costs

With Business Direct Online there are no commission or credit card fees and the fare you see on the screen is the price you pay - no hidden fees.

24/7 access

Don't be tied to a Monday to Friday service - 24/7 access enables the ability to attend late meetings or change travel arrangements.



First  **Great Western**

First Great Western



Want to improve your travel policy compliance?

The Business Direct Online booking tool enables you to reinforce your travel policy and improve compliance. If a fare is chosen which contravenes for example a 'cheapest ticket' travel policy the system will automatically pick this up. The booker either has the option to select a more appropriate ticket or indicate the reason why a higher ticket has been selected. If a ticket has been purchased outside the travel policy the details can be shown on your Management Information for reference should the company have a follow up process in these instances.

Need a London Underground Travelcard?

Business Direct Online can provide this too.

A choice of ticket delivery

If your ticket is purchased in sufficient time it can be sent, if you prefer, by 1st class post at no extra cost. Or, just simply collect it at a self-service ticket machine at the station within two hours of booking.

NEW - Payment choices

Business Direct Online now offers a choice of payment options:

Credit/Debit Card - payment is made at the time of booking with your nominated Credit or Debit Card (there are no credit or debit card fees to pay)

Direct Debit - bookings will be invoiced every four weeks to the account holder. Payment must be made by Direct Debit within 21 days of the statement date

Business Direct Online makes life easier!

- Regular journeys can be stored to avoid re-entering each time
- Store credit/debit card details to avoid re-entering for each booking

Personalise your management information

When setting up a Business Direct Online account you can personalise your MI by adding more questions to help understand and analyse spend - set mandatory and/or free form-text questions - such as request cost centres, purchase order numbers, reason for travel, travelling with etc.

Management information when you need it

With Business Direct Online you can download your MI as and when required. The details are in an excel format so the document can be manipulated to suit your business needs.

Is there a helpline for booking queries?

Business Direct Online has a very helpful and knowledgeable team to resolve your queries.

To open a First Great Western Business Direct Online account, click here

 **PILOT**

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5 ways to write,
1 way to delete!

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The retractable one

The precise one

The highlighter

The original one

The professional one



1 • write



2 • delete



3 • repeat

Are we all mad?

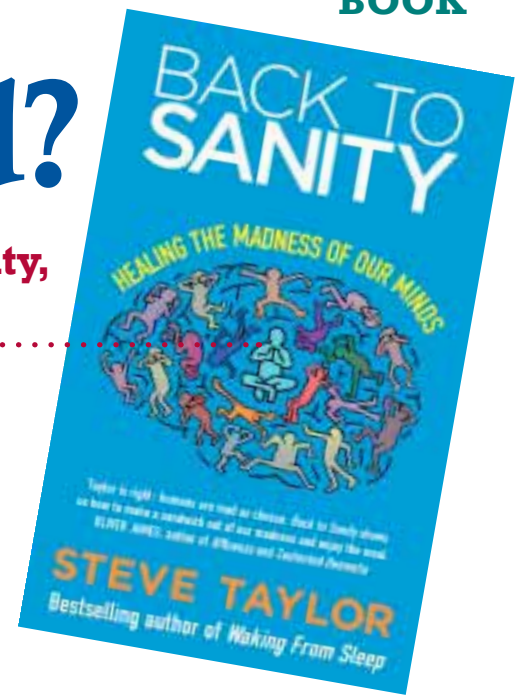
In his groundbreaking new book *Back to Sanity*, psychologist Steve Taylor claims we are...

In *Back to Sanity* Steve Taylor suggests that the human race is suffering from a psychological disorder, which he has coined 'humania'. The book provides a fascinating exploration of the madness of human beings – both as individuals and collectively – and explains how we can begin to heal this madness, and create a saner world.

Taylor argues that this madness is so intrinsic to us, we aren't even aware of it, but that when you start to examine our behaviour it isn't hard to see evidence of insanity. Why for example are so many of us driven to accumulate more and more wealth, status and success without any evidence that they provide us with contentment and fulfillment? Why are we restless or uneasy when not occupied, and constantly looking for distraction, as if we are incapable of just 'being'? And on a collective level, why is human history an endless, depressing saga of warfare, conflict and oppression? We now live in an age where the world's three richest people are wealthier than the 48 poorest countries combined, and where almost 800 million people are malnourished while millions of others are obese – as Taylor says, 'what could be more insane than this?'

Taylor argues that humania is the root cause of all our dysfunctional behaviour, both as individuals and as a species. The first part of the book looks at the symptoms of humania:

- **Living outside of ourselves:** our inability to just 'be' and our need to immerse our attention in something external – TV, radio, the internet or anything else that will distract us from that sense of 'lack' we feel when unoccupied.
- **Thought Chatter:** the constant stream of thoughts that whizz around our head, taking us away from the moment and often leaving us feeling unsettled and uneasy – that feeling that something is amiss.
- **Elsewhereness:** our inability to give our full attention to the present and really live each experience.
- **Looking forward:** we spend our lives 'looking forward' to things, not to enjoy them more but as a strategy for escaping from the present.
- **The madness of constant wanting:** our pursuit of increased status and wealth and the idea that we can buy our way into happiness.
- **The collective madness of warfare, colonialism, inequality and social oppression (including the oppression of the female half of the human race):** this collective pathological behaviour can be seen as the result of the desire for wealth and status together with a lack of ability to empathise with other groups.
- **The collective madness of**



environmental destruction:

would a sane species see the natural world as nothing more than a supply of resources to exploit, and be destroying the life-support systems of our planet with such abandon?

- **Group identity:** because of a deep-rooted sense of insecurity, human beings have a strong need for identity and belonging, which manifests itself in ethnicism, nationalism, religious fundamentalism and other types of group identity, which lead to rivalry and conflict with other groups.

In the second part of the book Taylor explains how to overcome this psychosocial discord. Taylor suggests practices and ways of living – including practical exercises – to help create a more harmonious inner state, so that we can begin to live inside ourselves, in the present and attain a real state of sanity.

*Steve Taylor is a lecturer in psychology at Leeds Metropolitan University and the bestselling author of several books on spirituality and psychology, including *The Fall*, *Waking from Sleep* and *Out of the Darkness**

PRESENTATIONS

How to Create and Deliver Effective Presentations

By Sarah J Simpson

Presenting is easy isn't it? You stand up and give a fabulous, witty, engaging delivery which the audience loves and you can't wait to do again....No?

Everyone at some point will have to prepare and deliver a presentation. This could range from a workplace meeting or demonstration up to an international conference and they can all be just as intimidating. Just as the venue and presentation type changes so do how a person reacts - I have seen everything from 'bring it on' to paralysing fear.

So, why should you be a great presenter? Surely your material will speak for itself, right?... Wrong. A well planned, practiced and executed presentation will increase the impact of your message, add to your professional reputation and credibility and ensure your key objectives are met.

"I passionately believe that it's not just what you say that counts, it's also how you say it - that the success of your argument critically depends on your manner of presenting it." (Alain de Botton).

We will all have encountered inspiring, motivational people whose presenting style and message leaves us feeling inspired and enthused. Conversely we will have experienced a lackluster style which is ineffective, demotivating and sometimes painfully embarrassing. I call these two styles the 'Nails down the Blackboard' and 'The Powerful Presenter'.

The Nails down the Blackboard

These presentations will be delivered by presenters who lack confidence and preparation or who don't have the audiences' interests at the centre. It's the "I've got a speech and I'm going to deliver it at all cost". As a result the audience isn't engaged or motivated to listen and this style will often be accompanied by a monotone voice, cluttered or inappropriate visual aids, reading verbatim and a lack of enthusiasm or passion for the subject. Audience phrases will be unforgiving and examples include:

"I need a coffee"

"I didn't think that would ever end"

"Where did they get him/her from?"

"That was painful"

The Powerful Presenter

Unlike the style above these presenters tailor their delivery to the audience. Their visual and auditory aids are appropriate, they know the experience level and needs of the audience and deliver with an engaging, enthusiastic style which flows logically from one point or theme to the next.

Audience comments will be positive and they will appreciate that their time has been well spent in attending your event. Examples of positive audience comments include:

"That was great"

"I didn't know that"

PRESENTATION



"Wow, they really knew their stuff"

"I wonder when their going to do another one?"

Quite clearly we all want to deliver the second style but this doesn't happen by chance. You need to have; great planning, knowledge of your audience and venue, clear key objectives and appropriate visual and auditory aids. This can be challenging especially when you are gripped by sheer panic and a desire to lock yourself in the bathroom and not come out!

The 'Fear Factor'

When you ask people why they are apprehensive you get the same comments regardless of age, gender or industry.

"I don't know where to start"

"I don't like people looking at me"

"I always lose where I am"

"My mouth goes dry and my brain goes blank"

"I can't stop my voice, legs and hands from shaking"

"They might laugh at me"

"Someone might ask me something I don't know the answer to"

If any of these sound familiar you are certainly not alone and this apprehension comes from a desire to portray yourself, product or organisation in the best way possible.

When people prepare a presentation they often use the title e.g. 'Presentation Skills' as the frame on which to hang their points. However, the two main premises of any delivery is to i) tell the audience something they didn't know or ii) inspire them to take action. Therefore, your presentation should be built around those main objectives. In the example above my main objective would be 'How to create and deliver effective presentations'.

In order that your presentation flows and has 'signposts' that the audience can follow its content should be designed around bite-sized chunks or themes. So, in my example my main themes would be; audience, content, presenter and venue. You can now add in the points that come under each theme. These should only be included if they support or add to your main objective, in order words they are essential. It is only if you have the luxury of time, or your presentation length is suddenly increased that you should add in points that are 'nice to have'. Each theme can now have its own introduction, main body and summary. So, that's it? Not quite! Every

PRESENTATIONS



presentation no matter how small needs a powerful introduction, conclusion, Q&A section and if audience size and situation allows you should include a learning recap which acts as a check to ensure learning transfer.

An introduction; sets the scene, tells the audience why they should listen (what's in it for them) and tells them what your going to tell them. For many it is the initial getting up and introducing themselves that they find difficult. There are two main approaches you can take here. The 'play it safe' method e.g. "good morning my name is Sarah I'd like to thank you for inviting me here today to talk to you about presentation skills". Or, there is a 'hook' method "good morning my name is Sarah and today I'm going to show you how to increase your professional reputation and make presenting an enjoyable experience".

What about your conclusion? If you used the method above your theme summaries will form your conclusion. This is the 'tell them what you've told them bit'. The conclusion should not contain anything that has

not been in the main presentation delivery.

The Q&A section should never be left out even if you find it uncomfortable. There are various methods and techniques for dealing with question concerns and many involve turning the question back to the audience. For example you are asked a question and don't know the answer. Admitting you don't know the answer (after telling them what a great question they have asked) is always preferable to making something up, only to be found out later. However, another approach might be to ask the audience what they think e.g. 'Catherine has just asked a great question about A,B&C, what does anyone else think?'. This approach engages the audience and encourages participation.

Finally, a word about humour. Some people will feel more comfortable leaving humour and story telling to the stand-up comedian but this isn't to say you can't deliver in a unique way that breaks down barriers and builds rapport. There is a fantastic example of this available online of a lecture on high level physics in

which the presenter uses scenes from the children's cartoon My Little Pony. It's captivating, engaging and he gets his key messages across perfectly.

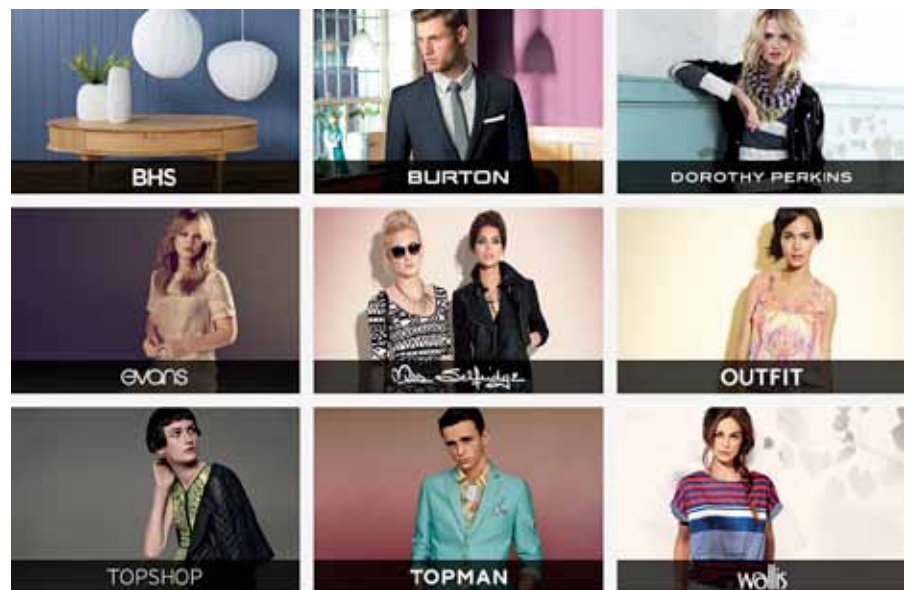
Quite clearly creating and delivering a presentation requires much more than I can cover in one article. Other considerations include; the use of stories, metaphors and analogy, slide do's and don'ts, PowerPoint, keynote, and Prezi. As well as consideration of visual and auditory aids, contingency planning, tailoring, size considerations and venue and message.

I hope this has inspired you to try something different and start building your presenting reputation and experience. Remember the only 'bad' presentation is one you don't learn from and there is always a next time.

Sarah Simpson owns Dragontooth Training and Consultancy and is the author of 'How to Create and Deliver Effective Presentations'.

Get more from the summer with great rewards from Arcadia

Arcadia



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Accepted in eight top-name high street stores, the Arcadia Group Fashion Gift Card makes getting ready for summer a breeze.

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Value	Discount
£1,000-£9,999	4%
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£20,000+	8%

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In fact, this gift card opens the door to a perfect summer. And it's the ideal reward and incentive to offer staff.

WORKPLACE

Beware: slouching at work could cost you your job!

Slouching at work could cost employees their jobs, reveals new research from UK's leading body language expert

By Judi James

New research commissioned by Ergonomic specialist Fellowes and Body Language expert, Judi James, reveals that posture in the workplace can have a distinct impact on workers' career progression and success.

After years spent working with both employers and employees, Judi reveals why our body language in the workplace could make the difference being recognised for promotion or being at risk of losing our jobs.

"Highly successful people share little in the way of traits but one thing they do tend to have in common is a sense of energy and positivity in their posture. This often marks them out as an inspirational leader as that energy is contagious, meaning people who work for them and around them will be motivated and inspired by it."

"A good singer or actor will know the effect good posture has on the power and tone of the voice and the same technique applies when we speak to colleagues or clients on the phone."

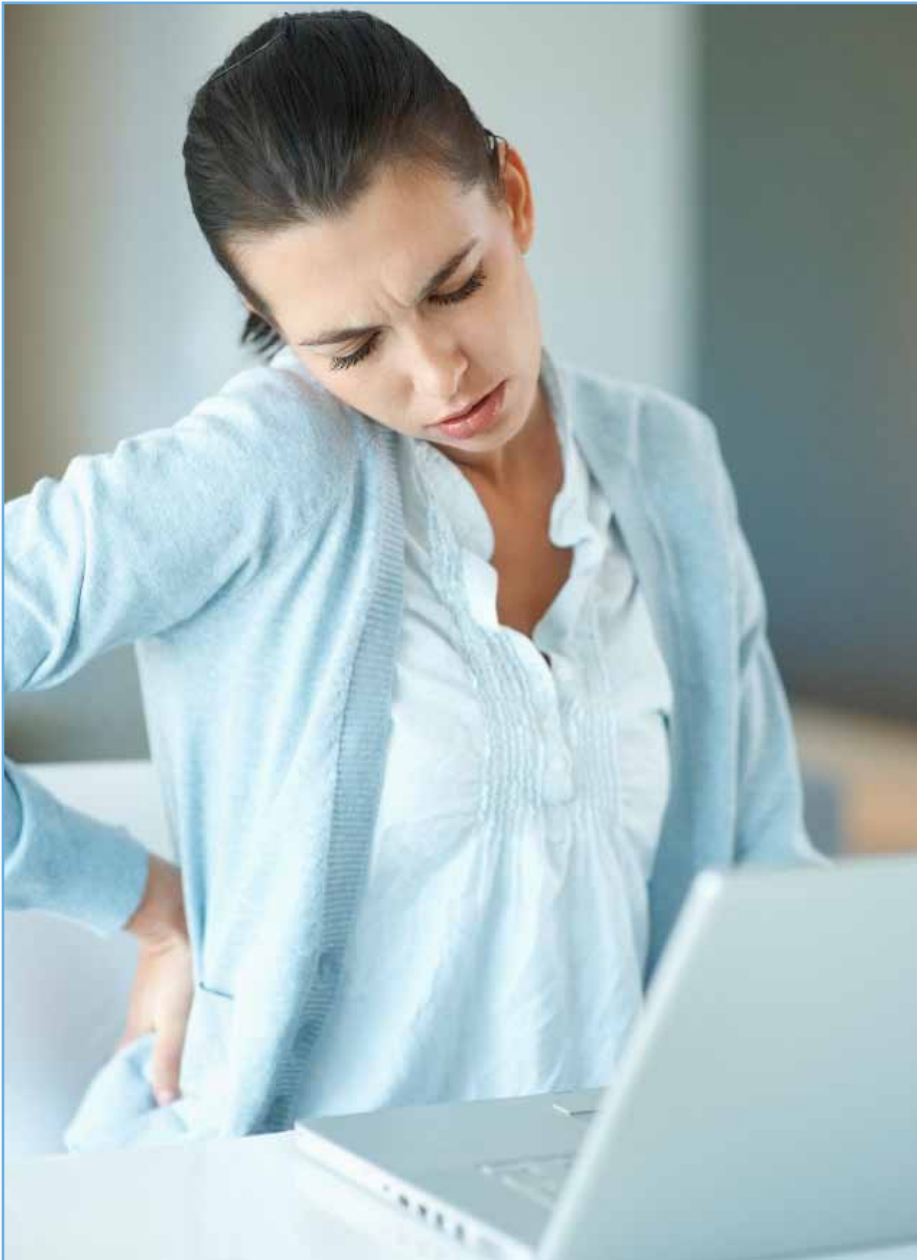
"That sense of energy can be contagious in face-to-face conversations and we associate the skills of persuasion, motivation and leadership with a dynamic physicality. In the current business climate the focus is on personal impact and presence. Sitting slumped or curled over your keyboard diminishes that impact, possibly sending out signals of low status, low morale, boredom or even hopelessness. In animal terms a slump is linked to fear, submission and low status. For humans the subliminal message can be worryingly similar."

"Although slumping might feel like a

state of relaxation and confidence in the workplace the signals it projects to others can be more like a lack of engagement, energy or keenness. Your posture at your desk is much like your choice of outfit: looking smart suggests professionalism but looking scruffy signals you can't be bothered to make an effort. Slumping is the body language equivalent of dressing scruffy."

Louise Shipley at Fellowes, comments; "Good posture can not only help you make a good impression on your employer and colleagues form a visual aspect but it can also make you more productive in your job."

"Taking a quick workstation assessment will help you to identify potential problem areas and give you guidance on how to create an ergonomic and comfortable workspace to improve your posture



and your productivity.”

Judi identifies the hidden messages that we might portray to our bosses when slumping at work and recommends ways of keeping our bodies safe and healthy in an ergonomically correct position when working at our desks.

The Seat-Percher

Perching on the edge of the seat and then curling forward will suggest high levels of fear and anxiety prompting a desire for flight. You look so ready to dash off

that you appear to be lacking full commitment to your job. A simple solution is you use a foot and back rest to tilt your body into an upright and ergonomically correct pose.

The Over-Splayer

Too much splaying will signal arrogance though, making it a mistake to sit in the chair with your legs stretched out in front of you and your torso slumped. Splaying signals such a lack of desire to self-protect that it tells your boss or manager you have little in the way of respect for them or the job. Use a foot rest to

train yourself out of stretching your legs and protect your back from pain through slumping.

The Horizontal Slumper

By placing your bottom on the front/middle of your seat and then leaning your torso back into the chair you create a slumped pose when sitting in front of your keyboard. It signals a cut-off, i.e. a lack of engagement with colleagues or even a lack of desire for the job. Again a foot and back rest to tilt your body into an upright pose and reduce the chance of developing pain.

The Cupped Chin Slump

When you sit with your chin cupped in the palm of your hand you might be intently thinking or reading something on your computer screen but you'll tend to look as though you're bored and disengaged. This pose suggests you're having to keep your head propped up and maybe your eyelids as well. A low-energy pose that can make it look as though you've had a string of late nights. A wrist rest would give you a comfortable place to rest your arms on the desk whilst reading and keeps your body in a relaxed and upright position without straining wrists or elbows.

To create your ideal workstation and ensure you are working comfortably, take a free assessment at www.ergo.fellowes.com/en/workstation-assessment

WORKPLACE

Tea is the nation's favourite way to start the day

British workers choose a cup of 'cha' to kick start their working day



British workers turn to tea to stay sharp in the workplace, despite the encroachment of coffee into our national culture, a new study out today has revealed. Every morning over half of the nation's workforce (53%) rely on a good cuppa, at around 8am, to get their working day moving and on average they will drink three cups of tea during their working day. Whilst just 35% of British workers said they preferred coffee.

The tea study conducted by Travelodge, surveyed 5,000 British workers to help discover the nation's hot beverage drinking habits and key findings revealed the traditional work tea-break is still alive and well across British companies; with the most popular times being 10am and 3pm. On average employees will spend 24 minutes a day bonding with colleagues by either fetching or sharing a hot beverage with them. During an average work day around 46 million mugs of tea are drunk by British workers.

Within the report 34% of respondents stated they catch up on the latest gossip in the workplace kitchen; as nowadays less workers go to the smoking shed for a cigarette.

Around four out of ten British workers reported they continue to work through their tea break due to the pressures of their working schedule whilst 18% of employees have acquired a taste for drinking cold tea due to them not breaking away

from their work to enjoy the hot beverage.

However office politics can get quite heated regarding whose turn it is to make the tea with 26% of British workers regularly keeping score of whose turn it is to do the 'tea run'. Fourteen per cent of employees surveyed reported they get annoyed by hints from colleagues that it's their turn to make the tea and even feel hostile towards fellow workers who try to dodge their turn. One in ten workers will deliberately make a poor cup of tea so that they don't have to do it again. One in ten workers surveyed reported their work colleagues don't know how to make a good cuppa.

To make the work tea break more pleasurable, a quarter of workers regularly bring in biscuits, cakes and chocolates to share amongst colleagues. The digestive biscuit (plain and chocolate) is British workers top choice. A 'builders brew' is the preferred way to drink tea in the office however in today's calorie conscious world, 51% of workers take their tea without sugar. Just 15% of adults enjoy a milky tea.

The survey also revealed that British workers love to drink their tea out of a mug rather than a traditional dainty cup and saucer. Forty six per cent of tea-drinking workers reported their tea tastes better when drunk from a mug as it stays warmer for longer and you also get a good measure.

Eleven per cent of British workers reported they drink more tea when they are stressed at work and 27% of workers reported they will go and make a cup of tea to help them make an important decision at work.

Further findings revealed after a long day at work, 64% of workers turn to a good cuppa when they

get home from work to help them unwind. Forty three per cent of adults stated they find a good brew comforting and it feels like a good hug in a mug.

Simon Beattie, Head of Food and Beverage for Travelodge said: "On average, over 12 million cups of tea are drunk in our rooms and Bar Cafes in a year. In the last year we have seen a significant increase in requests for additional teabags from our customers. We know the first thing customers do when they check into their room is make a cup of tea. To address this growing demand for a good cuppa we have extended the range of teas we offer in our Bar Cafés so that we can accommodate all tastes. In addition we only serve tea in mugs across all of our hotels."

Shayne House, Co-Founder and Director of the Tea Appreciation Society, said: "I'm not surprised at the popularity of tea, especially among the younger generation. Those of us that are familiar with the liquid jade are well aware that there is a tea renaissance the world over. Hip and fashionable, and underlined by a move towards a healthier lifestyle, tea has replaced coffee as the drink of choice for young urbanites everywhere. Celebrities including Lady Gaga and Padma Lakshmi now have their own tea lines and high-end tea lounges are springing up across the globe.

"Tea has and always will be an occasion for friendship for each new generation – it offers us an opportunity for shared moments of intimacy. It enables us to reflect, to be inspired and to create. Tea is a way of life."

Further research findings revealed the nation has some room for improvement when it comes to

making the perfect cup of tea; as just one in ten respondents actually brews their tea for the recommended three minutes. Forty per cent of adults just dip the teabag into hot water for less than a minute.

Shayne House recommends this technique for brewing the perfect cuppa:

Whether making a cuppa with a tea bag or with loose leaf (which is far superior in taste), one should use boiling water. (Use boiled water that has cooled lightly for green and white tea)

If making tea in a pot, warm the pot with some boiling water first. Pour on the boiled water and leave to infuse for three minutes. Left longer to steep and it can 'bolt' creating a distinctly sour sharpness.

Then add milk.

TECHNOLOGY

Best apps for business

From productivity to presentations, travel to time management, these apps for business are like the perfect PA - in your pocket

It's now possible to run a small empire from your smartphone, from downloading documents to editing in Excel to holding a meeting via Skype in the back of a taxi. And there's new apps released every day to help you squeeze more minutes out the day, find the best business travel deals and build a killer network.

Best apps for productivity

Dragon Dictation

A voice recognition app, ideal for transcribing meetings. Dictations can be posted straight to social networking sites - though the accuracy is a bit suspect, so probably best check first. Free; iOS.



Task

Tasks keeps a note of your appointments, meetings, notes, to-do lists and other things more typically consigned to Post-It notes. £0.69; iOS.

Astrid

A personal assistant without the salary, Astrid is an organisation app with reminders, subtasks, lists, and widgets that synch across phones, tablets and Astrid.com. Free; iOS and Android.



Locale

Always forget to turn your phone off before meetings? Locale lets you set up quiet zones so that whenever your phone is in a certain location it automatically switches to silent - and turns the ringer back on as soon as you move on. Free; Android.

Best apps for virtual meetings

Google Voices

Styled after Google's Gmail service, Google Voices is a Skype-like system for PC-to-phone and PC-to-PC voice and video calling, which also lets you read voicemail as email. Free; iOS and Android.

Skype

Perfect for smooth business calls over wireless connection - cutting costs and letting you see the whites of your colleague's eyes. Free; iOS and Android.

Best apps for document sharing and editing

Quickoffice

Creating, editing and sharing of Microsoft Office documents, spreadsheets and presentations from anywhere. £9.20; Android.

Dropbox

Promises to "simplify your life", which may be out of the reach of an online hard disk that stores and transfers your photos, documents and videos, but very useful nonetheless. Free; iOS and Android.

Documents To Go

Allows you to view and edit docs with an all-in-one application with support for Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint, PDF, Apple iWork and other files and attachments. £6.99; iOS.



GoDocs

Another full suite that allows you to read a variety of document formats on the move, sync your videos and music to Google cloud and enjoy them while you're away. Edit and share documents and spreadsheets, download for offline use. £2.99; iOS.

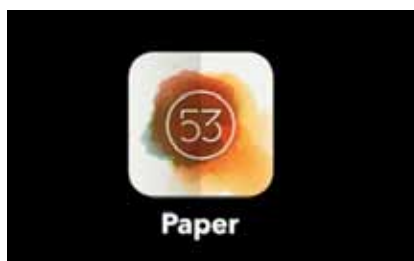
Best apps for ideas on the go

AK Notepad

Text-based and supposedly "hassle-free" notepad and reminder system, which lets you jot down bright ideas in the pub - and send them to your boss via SMS. Free; Android.

Evernote

A multimedia scrapbook - lets you take down snippets of text, photos, voice memos, files or handwritten "ink" notes and organise them into files. Includes synchronisation and backup. Free; iOS and Android.



Paper by fifty three

Specially designed for the iPad, Paper is an intuitive use of the touchscreen interface to let you take notes, sketch diagrams and doodle - great for creative meetings (and dull ones). Free; iOS.

Best apps for presentations and pitches

Scatterslides

Lets you view and control PowerPoint and Open Office slideshows from your phone, unshackling you from the projector. Free; iOS and Android.



Keynote

Lets you create presentations with easy-to-use tools and a range of effects using the touchscreen on an iPad or iPhone, then save and send them as PowerPoint files. £6.99; iOS.

mbPointer

No more frantic hand signals to get the next slide up - mbPointer turns your iPhone into a wireless remote control for a PowerPoint slide show. £1.99; iOS.



TECHNOLOGY

Best apps for marketing

Quicklytics

Who's watching you? Provides information on realtime data about the sites on your Google analytics account from your iPhone. You can check out visitor information for multiple websites in a matter of seconds. £2.99; iOS.

Instagram

Not just for Hipsters, major fashion and consumer brands are picking up this social photo app - now owned by Facebook - as a marketing channel. Free; iOS and Android.



Twitter

Not only for 140 character updates on what you're reading or eating, Twitter is a bona fide newswire, recommendation service and marketing channel. Free; iOS and Android.

Best apps for networking (online and offline)

Meebo

Promises to "cut through the clutter" by allowing you to create a single profile across a number of social networking and instant messaging sites. Free; iOS and Android.



Bump

Share contact information and photos by simply bumping two phones together. Just open Bump, hold your phones, and gently bump to share information. Free; iOS and Android.

LinkedIn

The classic tool for networking, seeking job opportunities, participating in discussion groups and connecting with old colleagues, presented with an intuitive interface for smartphones and tablets. Free; iOS and Android.



ScanBizCards

Does what it says on the tin - allowing you to scan cards in a seconds onto your phone. The reader has cloud backup and syncs across multiple devices, so you can access the card details from your browser. £4.99; iOS and Android.

Best apps for finance and business news

Bloomberg Anywhere

The gold standard in finance and



business news, Bloomberg's app gives subscribers access to breaking news, market data and tools that let you track your portfolio on the bus or in the limo. Free, iOS.

XE currency converter

One of the most popular currency converter sites in app form - gives access to live currency rates and charts, with a clever swipe-and-type interface that makes it easy to see how many pesos you get for your shilling. Free; iOS.

CNBC PRO

Capitalism to takeaway - the US TV channel has an app that pumps out real-time global stock quotes, currency data and market-moving headlines in brash primary colours before, during and after market hours. Free; iOS.

Best apps for doing business on the go

iTerminal

Turns your iPhone into a credit card terminal, allowing you to take payments pretty much anywhere. While the app is free, there are pretty steep monthly and per-transaction fees. Free; iOS.



Best apps for business travel

FlightTrack

Perfect for frequent flyers or plane spotters. Lets you see live departures and arrivals, gate numbers as well as information on delays and alternative routes to where you want to go. £2.99; iOS.



LiveCarHire.com

Need a hatchback in Malaga tomorrow morning? LiveCarHire.com's app lets you search more than 500 suppliers worldwide, arrange pick-ups and pay online by credit card. Free; iOS.

Cab4me

Uses the GPS on your iPhone or Android device to search a worldwide database of registered cabbies who can rush to your aid. Great if you're running late at the office or the pub. £1.49; iOS and Android.



BUSINESS APPS

Raising your Emotional Intelligence

When it comes to happiness and success in life, emotional intelligence (EQ) matters just as much as intellectual ability (IQ). Emotional intelligence helps you build stronger relationships, succeed at work, and achieve your career and personal goals. Learn more about why emotional intelligence is so important and how you can boost your own EQ by mastering five core skills.

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What is emotional intelligence?

Emotional intelligence is the ability to identify, use, understand, and manage emotions in positive ways to relieve stress, communicate effectively, empathise with others, overcome challenges, and diffuse conflict. Emotional intelligence impacts many different aspects of your daily life, such as the way you behave and the way you interact with others.

If you have a high emotional intelligence you are able to recognise your own emotional state and the emotional states of others and engage with people in a way that draws them to you. You can use this understanding of emotions to relate better to other people, form healthier relationships, achieve greater success at work, and lead a more fulfilling life.

Emotional intelligence consists of four attributes:

Self-awareness

You recognise your own emotions and how they affect your thoughts and behaviour, know your strengths and weaknesses, and have self-confidence.

Self-management

You're able to control impulsive feelings and behaviours, manage your emotions in healthy ways, take initiative, follow through on commitments, and adapt to changing circumstances.

Social awareness

You can understand the emotions, needs, and concerns of other people, pick up on emotional cues, feel comfortable socially, and recognise the power dynamics in a group or organisation.

Relationship management

You know how to develop and maintain good relationships, communicate clearly, inspire and influence others, work well in a team, and manage conflict.

Why is emotional intelligence so important?

As we know, it's not the smartest people that are the most successful or the most fulfilled in life. You probably know people who are academically brilliant and yet are socially inept and unsuccessful at work or in their

personal relationships. Intellectual intelligence or IQ isn't enough on its own to be successful in life. IQ can help you get into college but it's EQ that will help you manage the stress and emotions of sitting your final exams.

Emotional intelligence affects:

Your performance at work

Emotional intelligence can help you navigate the social complexities of the workplace, lead and motivate others, and excel in your career. In fact, when it comes to gauging job candidates, many companies now view emotional intelligence as being as important as technical ability and require EQ testing before hiring.

Your physical health

If you're unable to manage your stress levels, it can lead to serious health problems. Uncontrolled stress can raise blood pressure, suppress the immune system, increase the risk of heart attack and stroke, contribute to infertility, and speed up the aging process. The first step to improving emotional intelligence is to learn how to relieve stress.

Your mental health

Uncontrolled stress can also impact your mental health, making



CAREER

you vulnerable to anxiety and depression. If you are unable to understand and manage your emotions, you'll also be open to mood swings, while an inability to form strong relationships can leave you feeling lonely and isolated.

Your relationships

By understanding your emotions and how to control them, you're better able to express how you feel and understand how others are feeling. This allows you to communicate more effectively and forge stronger relationships, both at work and in your personal life.

How to raise your emotional intelligence

All information to the brain comes through our senses and when this information is overwhelmingly stressful or emotional, instinct will take over and our ability to act will be limited to the flight, fight, or flee response. Therefore, to have access to the wide range of choices and make good decisions, we need to be able to bring our emotions into balance at will.

Memory is also strongly linked to emotion. By learning to use the emotional part of your brain as well as the rational, you'll not only expand your range of choices when it comes to responding to a new event, you'll also factor emotional memory into your decision-making. This will help prevent you from continually repeating earlier mistakes.

To improve your emotional intelligence—and your decision-making abilities—you need to understand and control the emotional side of your brain. This is



done by developing five key skills. By mastering the first two skills, you'll find skills 3, 4, and 5 much easier to learn.

Developing emotional intelligence through five key skills:

Emotional intelligence consists of five key skills, each building on the last:

Emotional intelligence skill 1:

The ability to quickly reduce stress.

Emotional intelligence skill 2:

The ability to recognise and manage your emotions.

Emotional intelligence skill 3:

The ability to connect with others using nonverbal communication.

Emotional intelligence skill 4:

The ability to use humour and play to deal with challenges.

Emotional intelligence skill 5:

The ability to resolve conflicts positively and with confidence.

How to learn the five key skills of emotional intelligence

The five skills of emotional intelligence can be learned by anyone, at any time. But there is a difference between learning about emotional intelligence and applying that knowledge to your life. Just because you know you should do something doesn't mean you will—especially when you become overwhelmed by stress, which can hijack your best intentions.

In order to permanently change behavior in ways that stand up under pressure, you need to learn how to take advantage of the powerful emotional parts of the brain that remain active and accessible even in times of stress. This means that you can't simply read about emotional intelligence in order to master it. You have to experience and practice the skills in your everyday life.



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84%[#]
less packaging

*vs Kenco Smooth composite packs

Make a positive impact on your business



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OUT OF HOME

VENUES

Hanbury Manor A Marriott Hotel & Country Club

Guests can anticipate warm hospitality, 5-star service, comfortable accommodation, quality dining and extensive leisure facilities with indoor swimming pool, jacuzzi, sauna & steam with a variety of spa treatments available. Hanbury Manor also has a 18 hole championship golf course designed by Jack Nicklaus II that is an exciting experience for all golfers.

Its impressive conference and meeting rooms feature period details such as rich oak panneling and open fires, all equipped with the latest technology. Our signature room Poles Hall is the original chapel to the manor house that is truly a stunnign venue or the exclusive garden court set in walled gardens offers the opportunity for some great outdoor team building activities.

Within easy reach of Stansted, Heathrow, Luton and Gatwick airports. 40 minute journey to London Liverpool street via train and major motorway links to London and Cambridge.

Ware, Hertfordshire, England SG12 0SD www.marriott.co.uk



Burn Hall Hotel & Conference Centre

Burn Hall Hotel is a premier training and conference centre in North Yorkshire and a major venue for weddings and events. The hotel provides an excellent base for the surrounding areas.

Only 11 miles north of York on the A19 and 13 miles south of Thirsk, its situation and magnificent backdrop make it the perfect venue for celebrating your special occasion and corporate events.

A warm atmosphere and friendly staff await visitors and outstanding, state of the art facilities complement the stately building without compromising on style. The hotel boasts 94 high-

specification rooms and an award-winning restaurant with two bars which allow guests to enjoy refreshments in the lounge or overlook the landscaped gardens.

With 7 conference rooms, a main function suite which can accommodate 250 guests theatre style, private dinning facilities, a fitness suite combine to make this venue a venue you will want to visit.

Tollerton Road, Huby, York YO61 1JB www.burn-hall.co.uk



Stoke Place

Stoke Place Hotel is only thirty minutes away from the bustle of London and yet enjoys all the benefits of a rural English landscape. Unlike your standard corporate venue, Stoke Place inspires creativity. Take colleagues out of the office and into a modern country house, offering modern and vintage design within architecturally stunning rooms, all surrounded by 26 acres of beautiful grounds and abundant wildlife. Hosting conferences, boardroom meetings, exhibitions and private business functions within 6 individually designed rooms; Stoke Place houses meetings of between 10 and 200 delegates. For 24 hour delegates, Stoke Place has 40 bedrooms ranging from bolt hole to spacious, all offering contemporary British design, wonderful beds, some with baths and some with showers. Located only 30 minutes from central London and 15 minutes from Heathrow, with complimentary wifi through-out. There is also a state of the art gym located in the old stable block, open to all residents.

Stoke Green, Stoke Poges, Bucks, SL2 4HT www.stokeplace.co.uk



Four Seasons Hotel Hampshire

Located 1 hour from central London and 35 minutes from Heathrow Airport, Four Seasons hotel Hampshire is very accessible yet a great country retreat. Positioned in 500 acres, the Hotel has 133 bedrooms, including 22 suites. With extensive meeting and private dining facilities the property has the ability to accommodate a wide range of clients and events, from a high profile business meeting to an exclusive incentive programme. 6 function rooms in total - the largest can accommodate up to 120 cabaret style or 200 for a dinner. The smaller rooms can accommodate between 10-25 boardroom style. In addition, the Hotel features a luxurious spa, together with a

wealth of recreational activities including: fishing, horse riding, tennis, clay pigeon shooting and boating on the Basingstoke Canal on Four Seasons' custom built canal boat.

Dogmersfield Park, Chalky Lane, Dogmersfield Hampshire RG27 8TD
www.fourseasons.com/hampshire

Eynsham Hall

Situated in the heart of a 3000 acre estate, Eynsham Hall is one of the country's premier conference and training centres, only 12 miles from Oxford. The Grade II listed Jacobean-style mansion offers traditional charm and character, as well as modern facilities. It has 126 bedrooms and 40 meeting room combinations, incorporating Eynsham Court, The Lindsay Building and The Assessment and Development Centre which are all modern and purpose-built, giving the opportunity to choose whichever setting lends the right ambience to your event. There is also an Activity Centre which offers a wide range of programmes for you to choose from for training or corporate away days.

Park Road, North Leigh, OX29 6SL
www.eynshamhall.com

