

# PA ENTERPRISE

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

June 2013



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**Top Ten most rewarding Celebrity Bosses**

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## British women admit that they would rather be THIN than earn more money

- 35% say they would rather lose a stone than have a £1000 salary increase
- 1 in ten said they would give up £1000 of their salary to lose weight easily
- In the run up to summer holidays a bikini body is valued above wealth

**More than a third of British women would rather lose weight than have a pay rise, according to a new survey.**

With summer holidays fast approaching it seems shedding pounds is more important than saving them for 35% of working women in the UK.

Women were asked if they would rather lose a stone in preparation for the beach or gain £1,000 on their annual salary.

Despite the recession, only 65% opted for the pay rise with the rest telling pollsters they would happily forgo the salary hike for the chance to possess a perfect bikini body like Kelly Brook's.

Almost one in ten, 8%, said they would happily give up £1000 from their salary if it meant they were assured of losing a stone effortlessly.

One respondent told pollsters: 'Money is tight at the moment but I'd still be happy to miss out on the rise if I knew I'd be dropping a stone before my holidays.'

'When you think of all the money people spend on gym membership and fad diets it would make perfect sense. I just wish it were that easy.'

Another respondent commented: 'It would be fab to be able to feel comfortable in my bikini on the beach this summer but since having my two children I've struggled to get back to my pre-pregnancy weight.'

'So it would easily be worth a grand for me if someone could guarantee me the weight loss.'



## All the words - in two languages

Invaluable for travellers or language learners of any age, the **Electronic Dictionary Bookmark** will translate words from one language into another for you at the press of a couple of buttons. All you have to do is turn it on, select your input language and type in a word, press OK and this lightweight, ultra-slim gadget will show you the word in the other language.

The device is not only convenient, but remarkably comprehensive too, as the data is taken from the reputable "Collins Gem" series.

The design of the Electronic Dictionary Bookmark Bilingual is based upon the bestselling Electronic Dictionary Bookmark that won the UK Gift of the Year Award (stationery category) 2011.

The four compact devices are available in English and German/French/Spanish or Italian in sleek colour coded packs (with batteries fitted from bookshops), gift retailers and travel hubs with a retail price of £24.99



## 70% of LGBT people fear coming out at work

70% of people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, fear coming out in the workplace; according to a new survey conducted by the local jobs website [JobsinBrightonandHove.co.uk](http://JobsinBrightonandHove.co.uk).

12% of survey respondents say they fear not being accepted as part of the group, 9% fear persecution and bullying from colleagues, 4% fear it will affect their career prospects, 2% fear losing the respect of people they like, 1% fear being talked about negatively whilst an overwhelming 43% of respondents feared a combination of all of these things.

The survey also draws attention to the fact more than a third (34%) of respondents say they have experienced some form of discrimination at work due to their sexuality. A further 8% say they are unsure if they have experienced discrimination, suggesting the figure could potentially be even higher. The significant percentage of LGBT people reporting discrimination in the workplace may go some way to explaining the high proportion of fear associated with coming out.

More positively, 71% of LGBT people say they now feel either quite positive or very positive about being out at work, with just 2% of people saying they feel that people may be against them because of their sexual orientation.

## PA's are working harder than two years ago



**But support staff still have best work-life balance in the UK  
PAs and secretarial professionals also among the most loyal  
professionals in the country**

### **Secretarial and support professionals are working longer hours than two years ago, according to the Robert Walters Career Lifestyle Survey.**

The research reveals that 12% now work 50 hours or more per week, compared to 7% in 2011.

Interestingly, the survey also highlights that team secretaries and PAs have the best work-life balance in the UK, working an average of 40.4 hours per week compared to 44.6 hours across the UK overall (for professionals working in full-time positions). Sales professionals are the hardest workers according to the survey, with these individuals working 47.9 hours on average per week. Next in line are financial services operations professionals (46.2 hours), lawyers (45.9 hours), tax specialists (45.8 hours) and marketers (45.6 hours).

These findings might explain why secretarial professionals are among the most loyal – 63% believe they should stay with each of their

employers for at least three years, compared with 58% overall. Fewer accountants (59%), compliance specialists (52%), IT workers (51%), HR professionals (48%) and risk experts (45%) think they should stay with a company this long.

Danika Jarmer, Associate Director of Secretarial & Support Recruitment at Robert Walters, comments:

“The fact that PAs and secretarial professionals are now working more hours highlights how all teams and departments are being placed under greater strain than in the past. However, the secretarial and support arena generally still offers a good work-life balance.

“The fact that secretarial professionals like to stay with their employers for a sustained periods is indicative of their loyalty. It also highlights their preference to seek career progression internally as – organisations sometimes prefer to promote support staff from within when relevant vacancies become available.”

## Distrust your boss? It's all in a day's work in the UK

- UK's second largest building society reveals report into nation's views on trust
- Results show almost half of UK workers do not trust their boss
- A quarter do not have faith in their co-workers either
- Higher earners far more likely to trust colleagues than lower earners

Almost half of people in UK do not trust their boss, a major new report reveals.

The Yorkshire Building Society Trust Study shows 48% of people do not have faith in their boss's integrity.

However, it is not only the top dog that workers are wary of – almost a quarter (24%) feel the same about the rest of their colleagues, with only 11% claiming they trusted all of their workmates.

The new research highlighted that the more you earn, the more you apparently trust – with those on the lowest incomes less likely to put faith in co-workers and employers.

Across the UK, 57% of people with a household income of less than £25k don't trust work colleagues, compared to only 13% of those taking home more than £75k.

In these austere times, money is a major cause of dissatisfaction as competition and pay discrepancies fuel suspicion. Almost one in five (18%) of those surveyed admitted to feeling jealous of work colleagues, while one in 20 (5%) say issues around



earnings have fuelled their distrust.

Despite its reputation for cut-throat competitiveness, London is the place where people are happiest with their workmates, with 18% claiming to trust all of their colleagues, compared to just seven% in the East of England.

There is some room for positivity. Despite people's own lack of trust, the majority feel confident that others are happy with their performance at work – with 60% of those quizzed feeling trusted by their colleagues.

Prof Karen Pine, of the University of Hertfordshire's School of

Psychology, said: "Trust is based on the belief that another person has our interests at heart and it is not uncommon for bosses to put business needs before those of the individual.

"Within the workplace, issues about money create competition between colleagues and where there is competition there will inevitably be a loss of trust. Lower earners showed lower levels of trust because the less that people have, the greater their fear is of losing it."

Anyone who wants to see more information about the Trust Study can visit the Yorkshire's website [www.ybs.co.uk](http://www.ybs.co.uk).

## Book Review

# Lean In – Women, Work & the Will to Lead

**'Lean In – Women, Work and the Will to Lead' by Sheryl Sandberg**

**Published by WH Allen, 2013 £14.99**

**Reviewed by Alison Boler, Legal PA at ITV**

"I wrote Lean In to change the conversation from what women can't do to what they can." So says Sheryl Sandberg, the COO of Facebook and eighth on Fortune's list of 50 Most Powerful Women in Business. Before joining Facebook Sandberg was Vice President of Global Online Sales and Operations at Google and served as Chief of Staff for the US Treasury Department under President Clinton. Her book promises to offer the working woman some fascinating personal insights and brutally honest professional advice on women's position in the workplace, balancing family life and career ambitions and also to provide men with a better understanding of what they can do to support women in business.

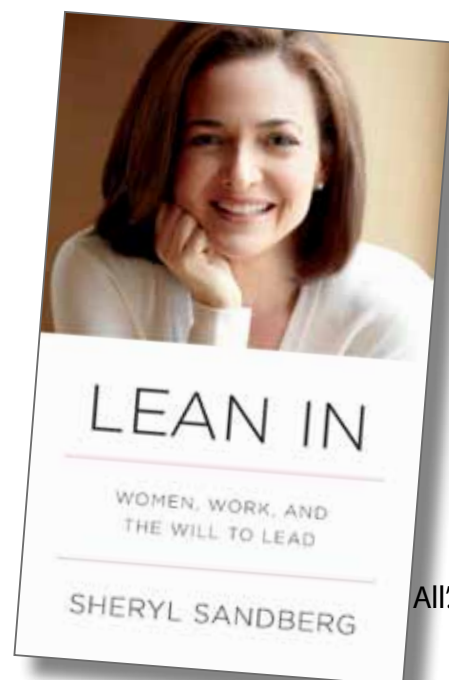
With forwards by the likes of Mark Zuckerberg, Richard Branson and Condoleezza Rice, it is clear that Sheryl Sandberg is one the most highly respected business women in today's world. We are promised to be shown a simple set of ideas about how women should see opportunities, take chances and push themselves forward so that they can achieve careers equal to men. From the outset I wondered how she was going to get the balance right between women helping themselves versus the reality of how society and business treats women.

'Lean In' is arranged neatly over eleven concise chapters, covering topics such as 'What We Could

Achieve If We Weren't Afraid', 'Success and Likeability', 'Seek and Speak Your Truth' and 'The Myth of Doing It With some startling facts

such as how only 18 of the Fortune 500 CEOs are women and currently only 29% of women hold senior-level management jobs in Europe, it is a shocking reality that even though we have been pledged equality for years, something has clearly gone wrong and Sandberg starts to ask the questions (and suggest some answers) as to what has caused women's careers to become stalled.

Our generation was raised with the knowledge and encouragement that there was increased equality in the workplace, but the reality is somewhat different when many women struggle to maintain their right to have a career and their right to have a family, especially in a world where ambitious traits in a woman can be seen as an un-attractive quality. 'Lean In' does provide some very useful chapters on the role of the working mother, particularly how women can use guilt-management to get a more healthy 50/50 balance between work



All!

and parenthood. As a working mother herself, Sandberg goes on to explain that it is fine to ignore societies expectations of women as the 'primary care givers' and that it is acceptable to be a mother who works hard and is still career ambitious. She has in fact dedicated an entire chapter of 'Lean In' to the reality that if you want to have everything: to be an ambitious career woman, wife and mother then don't expect everyone to like and respect you along the way!

From a personal point of view, as a PA, I know that it can be incredibly difficult to form a clear and ambitious career path. Being in a secretarial role doesn't allow much scope to work your way progressively up through a company nor ascend a career ladder. So I found when reading 'Lean In' that it was a little hard to relate to Sheryl Sandberg, a COO who has climbed a clear career ladder when so many women are trapped in roles that can't climb or expand anywhere. However, I still found

that I would be able to apply some of the advice that she gives into my own job, such as not letting self-doubt hold us back and that we can achieve more when we work together with a belief in our own abilities.

'Lean In' is an intelligently written, challenging and effective study of the realities of being a modern career woman. It maintains your interest because Sandberg can draw on her own personal experiences about her life in some of the world's foremost companies. As a successful business women, wife and mother her honesty throughout the book allows her to share her experiences openly and leaves you feeling that you have been given a fascinating private insight into the real world of a high-flying industry leader.

**Have you read this book? We'd love to hear your thoughts on it - [CLICK HERE to comment.](#)**

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# Top Ten Most Rewarding Celebrity Bosses

*Would you Adam and Eve it!  
Lord Sugar is seen as one of  
the most rewarding Guv'nors*

Despite Alan Sugar's recent spat with a former Apprentice winner, in a study carried out by Jurys Inn and CrossCountry trains, Lord Sugar will be pleased to know that he is still the Guv'nor having been voted one of the most rewarding bosses in the UK, coming second to celebrity chef, Jamie Oliver.

Good news too for the Mayor of London, Boris Johnson - he also scored highly, taking joint fourth place with former Dragon's Den investor Hilary Devey. However, not such good news

for Prime Minister David Cameron who didn't fare as well, being voted one of the least rewarding bosses, along with Nick Clegg who came bottom in the poll taking only 1% of the votes.

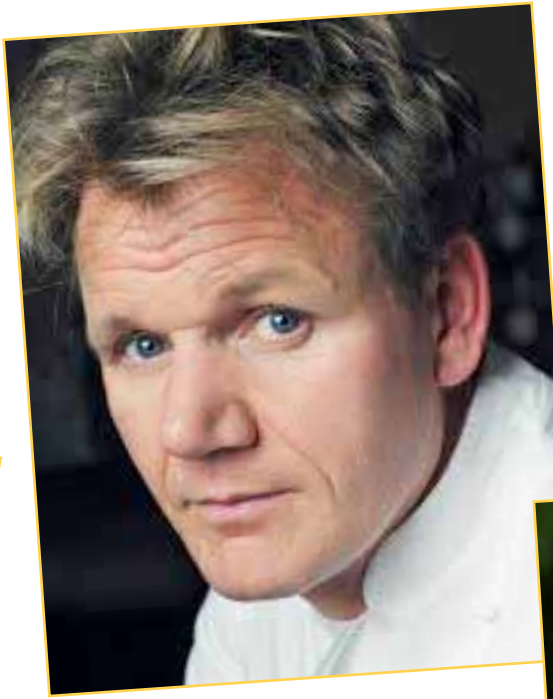
The study also found the way in which managers reward their teams' successes, such as a new business win, has changed over the years. Less than 20% of bosses will treat their team to a round of drinks at the pub, preferring to bring cakes and treats into the office.



It is also interesting to see the changes in our workplace culture, which could be attributed to tighter budgets and the recession, are also being mirrored by employees away from the office. The study showed that out of the 2,500 office workers polled, only 7% will head to the pub after work with colleagues for a drink, while 43% prefer to just head home and put their feet up, cook a meal (24%) and then watch TV or a film (29%).

So it's no wonder then that people are increasingly looking for ways to reward themselves in these leaner times. Comparison sites, money off vouchers as well





as loyalty programmes across the board are now all part of our everyday life.

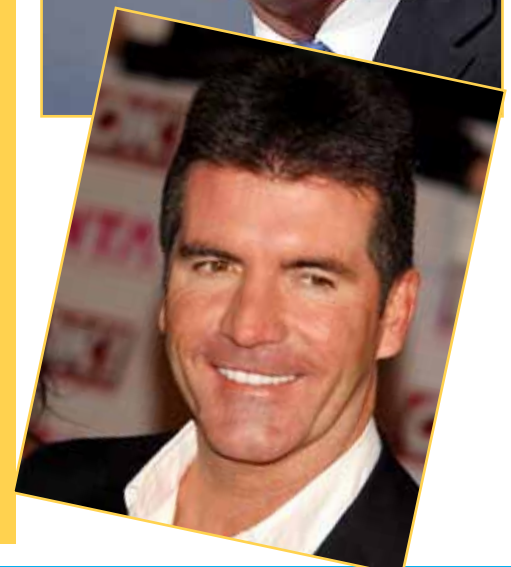
Says Suzanne Cannon, Group Marketing Manager at Jurys Inn: "We have seen a 144% rise in the number of guests signing up to our Jurys Rewards loyalty scheme over the last year. It appears that more and more people want to feel that they are being recognised for their efforts and realise they can achieve this themselves by joining up to a rewards scheme.

"Our study showed that less than 7% of people would reward their hard work by booking themselves a holiday. We feel it is so important to recognise and reward our guests' loyalty and our Jurys Rewards programme offers a wide range of gifts as well as the ability to redeem points against room nights.

"Our guests can redeem points against the things that they find most rewarding, whether it is a weekend city break or treat, the main thing is that they can reward themselves without putting their hand in their pocket and that means a lot in today's climate."

### Top Ten Most Rewarding Celebrity Bosses

1. **Jamie Oliver**
2. **Lord Alan Sugar**
3. **Sir Alex Ferguson**
4. **Boris Johnson**
5. **Hilary Devey**
6. **Jose Mourinho**
7. **Simon Cowell**
8. **Lord Sebastian Coe**
9. **Gordon Ramsay**
10. **David Cameron**



# Top New Hotels for Meetings and Events in Europe

**From historic to ultra-modern, intimate to enormous, here are 12 new hotels throughout Europe that are ideal for meetings and events.**

## *Belgraves, A Thompson Hotel, London*

Belgraves offers a variety of spaces that can be tailored to small meetings and events. Their Room 100 is equipped with a hidden plasma screen, projector and WiFi, and can accommodate up to 22 guests, or be separated into smaller rooms for six and ten. For drinks and canapé receptions, the private dining area Snug or the rooftop terrace is available.

Described as “rough luxury,” this boutique property—the first UK opening from Thompson Hotels—should be especially attractive to foodies: HIX Belgravia, its 80-seat restaurant and bar, offers a menu inspired by chef and food writer Mark Hix’s travels around the world. The mezzanine level has Mark’s Bar,

the second of HIX’s bars, and a cigar garden. Belgraves is within easy walking distance of Hyde Park, Buckingham Palace, the British Museum, the National Gallery and upscale shopping in Knightsbridge.



Source: [www.internationalmeetingsreview.com](http://www.internationalmeetingsreview.com)

## Bulgari Hotel, London



Bulgari Hotel has an entire floor dedicated to hosting meetings and events, aptly named The Ballroom, that can seat up to 140 guests. In addition, there are two available Boardrooms for up to 16 delegates, an integrated business center with two other private offices, and a 47-seat private screening room with 2D and 3D Dolby systems.

Set discreetly on Knightsbridge Road, this hotel's lodgings include suites with butler service. The best are the Bulgari Suites, and we recommend Bulgari VI and Bulgari VII, which have terraces with views of Knightsbridge and through to Hyde Park. The Bulgari Suites have dining rooms for up to eight people and can be connected into two-bedroom suites. Good to know: Even the smallest room in the house, No. 614, has a balcony overlooking Knightsbridge.

## Café Royal, London

Café Royal has a selection of meeting rooms, the largest of which accommodates 200 people. (Bonus: Any meetings and events that include overnight stay before May 2013 will get a complimentary room for every 20 booked, an upgrade for two VIPs, and a one hour welcome Champagne reception.)

When it first opened a century ago, this erstwhile restaurant quickly became a favorite hangout for celebrities like Oscar Wilde, Sir Winston Churchill, and Diana, Princess of Wales. Now, after a historic restoration, it seems poised to become a London hot spot once again. Each room has a dressing lobby and double doors that lead into the bedrooms. All rooms include access to a private butler. The Empire Suite is the largest option and has five huge floor-to-ceiling windows for top views over Regent Street.



## Castello di Casole, Tuscany, Italy

The estate can host small, intimate events, or larger meetings of up to 200 guests. Unique to this property is the outdoor amphitheatre, which can be privately rented for lectures and other presentations.

Housed in a 10th-century castle on a 4,200-acre estate in the rolling hills not far from Florence, this boutique hotel has more than 100 acres of vineyards and olive groves, a model game reserve, a state-of-the-art wellness center and some of the region's finest cuisine. Castello di Casole is also home to 28 restored and reconstructed Casali farmhouses and 10 Hotel Villas. Best Touch: Fourteen of Castello di Casole's 41 suites have large private gardens and terraces with floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking acres of vineyards and lemon and olive trees.



## Conrad Algarve, Portugal



Conrad Algarve's Ballroom has panoramic views and private access to the hotel's gardens. It can comfortably accommodate up to 300 guests, and can be split into two rooms. Six other meeting rooms offer natural daylight. The Oliveira, the largest meeting space after The Ballroom, can be transformed into three independent rooms. To accommodate large meetings, the hotel also has a private parking area with 128 spaces.

A spa that's billed as "one of the most decadent in Europe" and an edifice designed to resemble an 18th-century palace would alone would

merit a recommendation for the Conrad Algarve. But this resort nestled in Quinta do Lago near Ria Formosa Natural Park on Portugal's popular Atlantic coast has even more extensive facilities: fitness center, tennis court, golf simulation area, outdoor swimming pool, and an array of restaurants and lounges. For indulgent clients, sell the Roof Garden Suite, which includes a plunge pool and provides direct private access to the spa.

## InterContinental London Westminster

The InterContinental London Westminster offers eight meeting rooms, each with a 35mm slide projector, DVD player, flip chart and markers, LCD projector, microphone, modem lines, stage lights, and a whiteboard.

Anglophiles and history buffs should note that this hotel occupies a venerable 19th-century building that was once Queen Anne's Chamber. Good for Foodies: The Blue Boar Smokehouse and Bar has onsite charcoal and smoking ovens to prepare classic comfort food using fresh British produce. The first new InterContinental UK to open in 36 years, this hotel is a short walk from Parliament and within sight of Westminster Abbey.



## Jumeirah Port Soller Hotel & Spa, Mallorca, Spain



The hotel offers three distinct meeting areas, all equipped with professional audiovisual, lighting and sound systems, floor to ceiling windows, and uniquely designed executive furniture.

Set atop a rugged cliff in northwest Mallorca, Spain, Jumeirah's first European resort affords views that defy description. Guests can watch the sunset while sipping cocktails on one of the resort's three terraces or in the comfort of their own room complete with large windows

overlooking the sea. The views are not lost in the hotel's Talise Spa, which hangs over the Port of Soller and the Serra de Tramuntana. The spa is extra-special, with 10 treatment suites and a thermal area equipped with a hammam, an ice room, a glass-paneled sauna overlooking the valley, a relaxation room with fireplace and an outdoor heated hydروpool. Upon arrival, guests can slip right into relaxation with a welcome hand massage and the smell of citrus wafting through the lobby.

## Marti Istanbul, Turkey



Measuring 3605 square feet, the Ballroom at the Marti Istanbul can accommodate banquets for over 200 guests, with a foyer area offering an additional 1076 square feet of pre-function or separate cocktail space. Mezzanine level board rooms offer, respectively, 409, 559, 516, 1302 square feet of private meeting and event space.

This luxury hotel in Turkey's Taksim district is distinguished by its elegant Turkish design and excellent service (a well-connected concierge and helpful general manager). The hotel has a terrace on the hotel's 11th floor, which reportedly offers some swank views. Also, most guest rooms have marble and glass enclosed bathrooms with separate rainforest showers. Suite guests get hammam-style basins surrounded by richly textured mosaics. Top pick is the 10th-floor Regal Suite. The 2,700-square-foot suite has views over the Bosphorus, a piano in the living room, a kitchen, a study, a walk-in closet and a hammam-style bathroom with Jacuzzi. Private butler service is also available.

## The Ritz-Carlton, Vienna

The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company's first hotel in Austria's capital comprises four historic palaces dating back to the 19th century. It has a total of 9,000 square feet of meeting space, including a Crystal Room, two permanent boardrooms, and three break rooms, offering the latest in technical standards, LCD projectors and screens, built in video and Blue Ray, AV-support, and a business center with fax and copier facilities. A daily delegate package is available for groups of 15 or more.



The hotel's accommodation includes 43 suites and a spacious Presidential Suite of rooms on the second floor. The Club Lounge is located on the seventh floor and provides guests exclusive access to a private concierge service and views of the cityscape from its windows below the eaves of the hotel. The Ritz-Carlton, Vienna, on the central Schuberting Boulevard, is the ninth hotel in Europe for the company.



## Radisson Blu Resort, Gran Canaria, Spain

The Rezidor Hotel Group opened its first hotel on the Spanish resort island of Gran Canaria this past summer. The hotel offers six meeting rooms spread over 2,100 square feet, and a business center, all with free high-speed WiFi. What makes it special: The outdoor leisure area has a garden, a boutique and supermarket for shopping, salt and freshwater swimming

pools and a kids club. Sports fans can practice their games at the tennis courts, a paddleball court and a beach tennis/volleyball court. Each of the rooms and suites has its own private balcony with views of the Atlantic Ocean, aimed to get the full effect of the sunsets. The Radisson Blu Resort is on the island's southwestern coast a little more than half-an-hour's drive from Las Palmas.

## W Paris

W landed in the French capital in a big way: A classic, Haussmann-era building near the Opera was converted into a hip destination for the W crowd. The hotel offers nearly 500 square feet of event space. Unique to the property is the Sensory Set Up, an experience package designed to help with creativity and focus by way of mood music, signature scents, and more.

Other unique perks include do-it-yourself cocktail classes (each room has its own in-room cocktail bar), a restaurant from Michelin-starred Chef Sergi Arola, and the Extreme Wow Suite with its big circular bed taking pride of place in the center of the bedroom. The smartly designed Living Room is smaller and more intimate than at other W Hotels worldwide—a successful adaptation to its Paris setting.



## The Caledonian, Edinburgh

The Caledonian can hold up to 250 guests in their meetings and events space, which includes eight flexible rooms and an on-site business center.

Hilton's Waldorf-Astoria brand has made its Scotland debut with this property, which boasts two new restaurants, the Pompadour by Galvin and the Galvin Brasserie de Luxe – the first Scottish restaurants for the Michelin-starred brothers, Chris and Jeff Galvin. The top pick at the hotel is the Caledonian Suite with three bedrooms and a separate living room. The suite also has great views of Edinburgh Castle.

*Stress and the modern PA*

# The Good, The Bad and The Ugly

By Anel Martin



Anel currently works in the office of Managing Executive for HR Business Partners (WS&N) at Telkom and she is the PA of the Year 2011/12 and was a finalist in the National Office Professional of the 2009/10.

Anel has achieved the CAP-OM certification and a Business Management Diploma. She was the Head of the Academy of Excellence Committee of PAFSA (2011/12) and a member of OPSA and the IAAP Johannesburg Chapter at Large.

She is a Task Team member of the International Year of the Secretary and Administrative Professionals taking place in 2014. She is also in charge of social media communications and the IAAP Johannesburg Chapter at Large website.

Anel has been the Webmistress and content owner of the Telkom Secretaries Toolbox for the last 5 years and is also a Telkom Brand Champion.

Anel has recently started to write for Desk Demon in the UK and has written regularly for Career Success, A-Z and Executive Secretary Magazine (UK) in the past. She has also started her first book!

In part one of this five part series on stress we explored some key concepts and side effects of stress. The purpose was to set the scene for why you need to take your own stress seriously and get a handle on it. Stress impacts your health, your relationships, your productivity – in fact, every single sphere of your existence and it has become like a chronic disease in our modern world

Stress is normal (and in some cases) essential and desirable. Without the right amount of stress (or to use the correct technical term “eustress”) we are bored, dissatisfied and lack motivation.

Medical research has even found that the right amount of stress can increase immune function, improve memory and also enhance the functioning of your heart. A recent study conducted on patients pre and post-surgery, found that the ones who had moderate, healthy stress recovered a great deal faster than those who had too much or too little.

**Stress therefore is not all bad news, but as with all things in life moderation is the key!**

The title of this article is the good, the bad and the ugly but you will have to forgive me for starting with the ugly first, the reasoning is that this is the most severe and harmful form of stress. Chronic or ugly stress is excessive and prolonged stress.

## How do you know it is CHRONIC STRESS?

- It never goes away, it may recede but it is always present
- If you have nothing to stress about, you create or imagine things to stress about
- You get addicted to the “stressed out” fight or flight feeling
- Your health can deteriorate. Typical issues are insomnia, spasms, general (non-specific) aches, headaches, adrenal fatigue, burnout, diabetes and possible issues with all major organs to name but a few of



the possible health implications

- You can develop or aggravate depression or underlying psychological issues may come into play
- Your behaviour, mood and body start to change dramatically e.g. some people become extremely thin and others gain significant weight (a classic example that we have all seen)
- You lose interest in things you previously enjoyed.

### How do you escape the ugly cycle of CHRONIC STRESS?

Get help, be it counselling, getting your boss to rebalance your workload, finding a new job or joining a support group. When faced with chronic stress you need to accept that it has become a lifestyle due to choice, personality or circumstances. It is not easy to break any long term negative cycle and it may be time to get support.

Look after your health. Have regular health screenings for high blood pressure, blood sugar and any other risk factor that may emerge or be present in your family medical history.

Get a hobby, have some fun or find a purpose. Find a healthy outlet for your emotions. Laugh, spend time with friends, be outside in the fresh air. Find something that makes life worthwhile, join a club and start

to help others.

Bad stress is experienced by all of us. It can be caused by a sudden loss of a loved one, a major project at work or something as simple as the printer jamming while you are under time pressure to complete a pack for your boss

Bad stress is not open ended like chronic stress, it is more like an event than a lifestyle.

### How do you know it is BAD STRESS?

- Your brain swirls like a washing machine, you cannot take hold of any constructive solutions and the problem circles you in a murky cloud of grey water. You can focus on nothing else. It becomes compulsive and overwhelming.
- You feel panic and anxiety
- You may become withdrawn and moody

### How do you mitigate your BAD STRESS?

Take a mini break. Sit outside in the sunshine, have a quick chat with a loved one or take a nice warm bath. You will feel like you can't afford the time to do this but sometimes stepping away is the most productive thing you can do, creating a bit of space for new ideas or solutions to find you, instead of chasing them!

Eat well, exercise and get enough rest. When you are feeling stress this is the last thing that you feel

like doing, but these are the best coping tools at your disposal, especially exercise! Exercise uses up the excess adrenaline and stress chemicals that are swarming and over powering your body. If you are exercising hard you cannot maintain stressful thoughts as the focus is on physical activity, so it can give you a much needed break from the 'noise' and hectic activity taking place in your brain (a shutdown which is sometimes not even possible during sleep)

Fighting fatigue and managing energy levels are the two secret weapons in the war on stress. Distress taps you out, disrupts sleep and causes you to feel lethargic. Low energy and feeling tired makes you less and less able to cope. This cycle eventually erodes your resilience and makes you much more susceptible to acute stress. If you cannot sleep naturally or struggle with energy levels I encourage you to seek professional help this can make all the difference!

Start planning ahead, being more organised and have a plan B. In some cases we are creating bad stress through lifestyle. Use your Sunday evening to plan, map out and mentally prepare for your week ahead. Put things away properly, have a plan in case things go wrong. Look at the small things that feed your daily stress and make plans to manage them (if you can) or accept them (if you can't)



With both the negative types of stress it is absolutely essential that you manage it or seek help from your doctor, a professional counsellor, support group or family and friends if you need to.

Find someone you can talk to and find activities that help you decompress. I am not advocating that you unload on random people and spread misery and complaints in your wake, but rather that you find a friend (or even a professional) that you can talk to when you need to. Sometimes if we verbalise issues we get a handle on them or at least expel some of the toxic emotion associated with them. Another great tip is to take part in an activity that takes your mind off your stress completely, requires all your focus and is enjoyable (and no, that is NOT watching TV!).

With both the negative types of stress it is absolutely essential that you manage it or seek help from your doctor, a professional counsellor, support group or family and friends if you need to.

Now for some good news... good stress is energising and can be amazing fuel for creativity. It makes you feel fired up and ready to go! It enhances performance and gives you a thrill!

## How do you know it is GOOD STRESS?

- It gives you laser like focus
- It gives you enhanced energy levels and elevates mood
- You feel excited!

## How do you put your GOOD STRESS to work?

Once you feel the initial surge

of energy, start working immediately, good stress that is not put to work or without an effective outlet soon turns to frustration or anxiety.

Put some planning in place while you have the much needed energy boost and focus required.

Avoid too much caffeine or energy drinks as this could disrupt your eustress and push you physically along the scale to a more stressed level.

Avoid burnout. If you enjoy living from deadline to deadline (and you love cutting it close) you are putting yourself at risk of burning the candle at both ends, which is never sustainable.

Many people can become very ill directly after a big, challenging project. During the project your body is functioning in a heightened state, once those hormones and chemicals aren't there your body feels flat and tends to be much more susceptible to infections. So take care of yourself during these times (even if you feel fine), ensure that you are taking preventative steps, eating properly and getting enough sleep (if possible).

In all cases, be it the GOOD, the BAD or the UGLY the main tools we have at our disposal are knowledge of ourselves, our own attitudes and responses.

Knowing what stresses you and why will assist you greatly in managing any type of stress that comes your way.

Choosing how you respond and feel about your circumstances and stressors gives you power and releases you from the victim mentality that keeps you in stress mode.

Sometimes all you need to do it take a few moments and ask yourself, will this matter in five years, five months, five weeks or even five minutes from now? Don't let temporary irritations or insignificant events steal your joy! Ask yourself if this thing you are stressing about is really important and worth the cost to your body and soul.

Think about and appreciate the things you do have in your life, what are you grateful for? Start living in an attitude of gratitude. When you focus on what is good in your world you tend to attract (or simply notice) more positives in your environment.

I hope that part two has given you some insights into good, bad and chronic stress and stimulated some ideas of your own on how you can manage stress in your life. In part three we are exploring what causes stress for PAs and I will be sharing some of my own experiences with you.

The challenge till then is to identify what type of stress you are experiencing and start working with it!

## AF International Reveals Survey Results: how clean are our iPhones?



**Computer and office equipment cleaning experts, AF International, have recently polled 2,000 UK iPhone users to find out more about mobile phone ownership and cleaning. The survey of 51% females and 49% males has gathered interesting data about how the British public use and treat their iPhone. AF International commissioned the research to assist with further development of the company's established range of mobile phone cleaning products.**

In total, 31.6% of the survey cleaned their iPhone screen a few times a week with 26% cleaning their screen once a day. Owners from the North East were most likely to clean their iPhones once a week whilst owners from Scotland were more inclined to clean their iPhone screen more than once a day. A further 12% admitted cleaning their screens only once a month, mostly from the over 55 age group. The 18-24 year olds were the most cleaning conscious iPhone users, maintaining the cleanliness of their iPhones on a daily basis. The methods used by the survey for cleaning their iPhone varied greatly from 2.3% using their fingers, 13% wiping the screen on their trousers, 29.6% using their sleeves and 21.4% using a specially formulated screen cleaning wipe such as AF International's Multi-Screen Clene.

The survey indicated that men were most likely to use a screen cleaning wipe whilst women were more likely to wipe the iPhone screen with their sleeve. 13% of the survey was concerned about the germs on their iPhone, whilst the majority of users at 46% were not, a staggering 41% never even think about the germs on their iPhone. This was a particularly surprising statistic, when considering that we regularly purchase appropriate detergents to clean and sanitise items in our homes but do not consider the cleanliness or make the same effort to keep expensive, frequently handled smartphones clean and hygienic.

AF International has been developing item-specific cleaning solutions for technology and office equipment for over forty years. To find out more about smart phone cleaning and the right products to use go to [www.af-net.com](http://www.af-net.com).

News updates, competitions and giveaways can be found on the facebook page, AF International, at [www.facebook.com/AFInternational](https://www.facebook.com/AFInternational) and on twitter @AFInternational.



Say Hello to a PA...

# Meet Dena Stephens



*What is your job title, your role and who do you work for?*

I'm currently temping and am working as an Executive Assistant to Chief Executive and Senior Management Team. Right now I'm on the lookout for a permanent position.

*How did you get this position?*

A total stroke of luck, I think! I was approaching my last day in another company and called a colleague of mine at a local recruitment firm, who I'd dealt with previously when I was taking on staff. As I called, he was going through his available temps for a job that had just come up, and he thought I was perfect for it. I went for the interview the next day and was successful!

*What do you like most about your job?*

My current role is at a great company where my colleagues are lovely, so I'm very lucky. Generally, however, my favourite element is the event management/organising, and being able to network and help out with the marketing side of things.

*What do you think makes a good boss?*

It's important to support your staff and earn trust and respect in the workplace. Communication and effective delegation are paramount, as is having an effective support network and a true understanding of what REALLY goes on.

*What are the three most important skills you use at work?*

Discretion, communication, organisation.

*If there is one, what does a 'typical' day look like for you?*

I'm not sure there is a typical day. One day I can be preparing or attending a Board meeting, the next I can be sorting out a new supplier or even conducting a fire drill!

*What was the biggest challenge you have faced and how did you tackle it?*

I was made redundant (for the third time) last year, which was completely unexpected. I live alone and have to support myself, so it was a worrying time, especially in the current financial climate. It's essential to stay as positive as possible and maintain a healthy frame of mind. Job hunting can be a full-time job in itself, and I was lucky enough to secure alternative employment fairly quickly.

*How have you got to where you are today in your career?*

From the very bottom! Although I wasn't originally planning on working in admin, I ended up getting a job as an Office Junior during my A-level study leave. I've moved up from there, over the last 20 years. I've spent the last 10 years as a PA.

*Do you have any career plans for the future, what are they and do you need to learn new skills?*

I'd love to move more into the PR/Marketing/Copywriting side of things. Although I don't need to learn new skills per se (due to doing this in my spare time), I do need to build a decent portfolio to show experience.

## Say Hello to a PA...

*What one piece of advice would you give to someone beginning their PA career?*

Be resilient. It can sometimes be a thankless job being a PA!

*What would you look for in a PA?*

Loyalty, organisation, ability to multi-task, absolute trust and oodles of common sense.

*Do you have any tips that you can share with your peers?*

Keep a "to do" list. It not only helps you remember your tasks but there's a small feeling of smugness when you can tick off what you've done.

*What superpower would you love to have to help you do your job better?*

It would have to be the ability to read minds, as it seems to be a pre-requisite for a PA!

*If you were offered a 30% salary increase, but you would never again be thanked during your time at that company and you would never receive another rise, would you take it?*

Yes – I've worked at many organisations that I was never thanked, so I know I can live with that if I have to. A 30% salary increase would make it easier to bear. Besides, if it all got too much then I could go get something else.

*What would be your dream job?*

Either working as a PR or Copywriter in the record industry, or filthy rich and retired!

## Say Hello to a PA...

### What is your best holiday memory?

I don't take holidays as such as I don't enjoy travelling alone. However, I'm lucky enough to (a) work for a band in my spare time, and (b) have some great friends who are fans of theirs, so I've had some great times travelling and spending time with them when the band are on tour. The best memory would be from about this time last year when we were lucky enough to have a mini heatwave. We travelled from gig to gig in my friend's convertible (with the roof down) and we enjoyed some brilliant gigs, we drank and we just laughed. Fantastic experiences with some lovely people that I'll never forget.

### If you could spend a year on a remote island with any four people (living or not) who would they be and why?

Oscar Wilde – for the sheer wit  
Freddy Mercury – because he's the coolest man in rock  
Ray Mears – for his ability to build my dream home so that I could live in comfort  
James Martin – for his ability to cook. And he's a bit gorgeous as well.

### What is your proudest moment?

I've had a lot of proud moments in my life, I'm lucky to say. I've achieved things that I thought I couldn't, such as passing my motorcycle test and also gaining membership of Mensa. I've also moved around different areas (alone) and have managed to carve out a life and career in each place. I'm really proud of that, as I've managed that all by myself.

### What would you still like to achieve?

A bigger salary...!

### Any other information you would like to add...

Not only am I working for a high profile progressive rock band as PR/Copywriter/forum admin, but I've recently written some copy for a large progressive rock festival and hope to expand on that, hopefully by providing some further band PR. I'm a secret blogger (it appears to have turned into a Carrie Bradshaw-type affair, which explains why I'm keeping it secret), plus I'm also DeskDemon's newest writer, so you'll undoubtedly see some articles from me very soon!

**CLICK HERE to read Dena's blogs**



Rarely does Delegation take the limelight – the starring role as an important "technique" for your overall success (and the overall success of your team). So in this article (drum-roll please), I'd like to welcome to the stage:

# D is for...Delegation!

By Lindsay Taylor

**"What is an Executive PA?" and "What skills and attributes are needed to be an effective and efficient Executive PA?". These two questions are posed at many of Lindsay Taylor's workshops and training courses, along with an A-Z structure to help organise thinking.**

**Lindsay is a former PA and now Director of Executive Coaching & Training organisation Your Excellency Ltd. Over the years Lindsay has collated a wealth of input from admin professionals worldwide. The resulting "A-Z" list that Lindsay now holds forms the basis for our new ongoing article - A-Z Pearls of Wisdom.**

I've called Delegation a "technique". In my opinion, that is what it is and, as with any technique it takes practice. Let's think about Delegation in terms of the following:

- What are the reasons people don't delegate?
- What's important about delegating?
- The "when" of delegation
- The "who" of delegation
- The "how" of delegation

## What are the reasons people don't delegate?

So, I put my hands up. Here I am writing an article on delegation and I own up to the fact that, in the past, I haven't delegated because that little voice in my head is saying "I like doing things my way. I know how to do this – so it's easy just to do it myself rather than to take the time and effort to explain it all to someone else. Anyway they might not do it the same way as me – and, of course, my way is the best".

Sound familiar?! We need to understand that delegation is important. So, what's Important about delegation?

1. You can free up your time to develop skills in other areas
2. You can develop other people's skills and abilities

So, there's another D word that skips hand-in-hand across the stage with Delegation.



## Development

In essence, delegation allows you to make the best use of your time and skills and it helps other people in the team grow and develop to reach their full potential.

and answers, opportunities to check progress and rework if necessary. Keep thinking long-term. This might take some time and effort now however in the long-term you could be freeing up your time and ultimately aiding development.

## The "When" of Delegation

The power of questioning comes into being here! Ask yourself:

- Is this a task that only I can do – or can someone else do it?
- Does the task provide an opportunity to grow and develop another person's skills?
- Is this a recurring task? By delegating now, will I be saving time in the long term?
- Do I have enough time to delegate the task effectively? You need to think about the time involved in any training provision, questions

## The "Who" of Delegation

Think about the person you are delegating to. What skills, knowledge and experience do they have in relation to the task? Are they going to need training (and do you have the time and resources available to provide this)? What do you know about the way this person likes to work? How independent are they? What do they want from their job? What is their current workload like and do they have time to take on more work?

## The "How" of Delegation

Firstly, as with any situation, you need to be really clear about your desired outcome – what is it you

Get the balance right between giving enough space for people to use their abilities whilst still monitoring and supporting them to ensure the job is done effectively. Only accept work you are satisfied with – if you accept work you are not satisfied with the team member will not learn to do a task properly. Share the Belief that “There is no failure, only feedback” and that the best feedback is given for someone’s development.

[illegible]