

PA ENTERPRISE

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

November 2013

National PA Day Survey Results 2013

How to make your
Conference more
memorable

Pearls of Wisdom A-Z:
H is for ...Helpful

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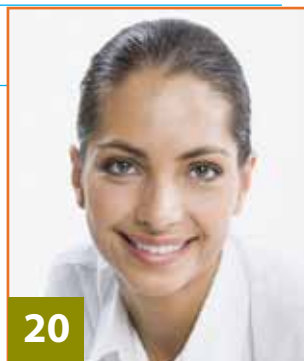
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Danger.. it's Wednesday!

Office workers have a higher chance of becoming sick, having accidents, or getting injured on Wednesdays as opposed to any other working day, according to emerging research. Physio Med, a physiotherapy company, surveyed one thousand workers across the UK that had been hurt in the last half decade. They found that twice as many workers suffered on Wednesdays more than any other day. On the other hand, Friday is the safest day to attend work.

"Moods take a dip on Wednesdays. The stress and fatigue of the working week translates into employees becoming less attentive or clumsier, and leading to a higher rate of office accidents," Physio Med's clinical director Mark Fletcher said.



The majority of injuries at work are linked to tripping, slipping, or handling and close to a fifth happen because of repetitive strain injury. The research also discovered that nearly a half of those who had been in an accident never got any medical attention and 20 percent were never shown safety training by their company. Employees are also more likely to feel a wave of depression on Wednesdays, according to an entirely different study from the University of Vermont.

Words were analysed from millions of blogs and found that free, fun, and rainbow were used more often during the weekend while betray, cruel, and suffocate were found being used halfway through the week.

Politics a no-no in the workplace



Over half of British office workers are scared to disclose their political beliefs fearing their colleagues will think less of them — a new survey has found.

The poll by money saving site SaleLand.co.uk, asked 600 office workers how comfortable they were discussing politics in front of colleagues. More than half confessed to keeping their voting habits quiet for fear of creating a row with other colleagues. Of that

57% believed that their work mates would think less of them if their political affiliations were exposed. Over a third of workers deliberately avoided political conversations in the office for fear of their views being unpopular.

One man commented: "It's never been the same with my colleagues after I told them I was voting UKIP, some really take the mick, and one or two no longer speak to me."

Another said: "I'm what you would call a swing voter. I've voted for all the main parties in my time but I would never dream of disclosing it to my colleagues."

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Left-Handers Christmas wish list

If you are looking for the perfect gift for a left-hander this Christmas, anythinglefthanded.co.uk can offer you inspiration. They have compiled a list of the most popular gifts requested by lefties at Christmas, and not surprisingly, a decent pen that solves the problems of writing left-handed tops the list.



The items most left-handers want in their Christmas stocking are:

Non-smudge Pens

With their hand following behind the pen as they write and draw, it's no wonder left-handers' masterpieces often end up a smudged mess! With nibs that flow freely when pushed with the left hand and fast drying ink, the range of left-handed cartridge pens and non-smudge rollerballs is a huge hit with left-handers of all ages.

Left-handed Scissors

With the blades reversed as well as the handles, truly left-handed scissors can be hard to find, but heaven to cut with as they follow the cutting line without tearing, and without having to squeeze the handles together so hard you bruise your thumb knuckle. Manicure, kitchen and desk scissors are the most popular.

Stationery Sets

Popular with children who love the idea of a pencil case full of tools that actually work. Gift sets of stationery items that can include pens that don't scratch or smudge, rulers they can read right to left, pencil sharpeners that rotate the correct way and scissors that cut properly make a perfect gift for little lefties.

Left handed Essentials Sets

A range of selections of the most popular left-handed products packed into a sturdy zip seal bag with full descriptions of all the items. A ready-made present and at a discount to the individual product prices.

Left handed corkscrews

With an anti-clockwise action so lefthanders can open bottles without fuss (and great to leave around to confuse right-handers).

Other items on the top 10 list are:

- Bread Knives serrated on the right of the blade so it cuts clean and straight in the left hand
- Left-handed Playing Cards marked in all four corners so everyone can see what they have got
- Children's writing aids like pencil grips, the HandiWriter wrist strap and the writing guide mat are low cost gifts that will make a real practical difference to children.

All of these items and a lot more are available for delivery worldwide from www.anythinglefthanded.co.uk

Chocolate Christmas Gifts with a message

Solving the puzzle of what to give to whom should be made easier this Christmas with personalised artisan chocolate gifts from Sent With A Loving Kiss. Beautifully styled and decorated chocolate, hand-crafted in Hampshire by a team of award-winning chocolatiers, is presented in a decorative keepsake tin bearing a personal message from the sender to the recipient, and can be delivered anywhere in the UK, starting from under £20 plus postage and packing.

There's chocolate to please all tastes – dark, milk, white and mixed, and themes to suit immediate friends and family, as well as cousins, aunts and uncles, in-laws, step relatives, or Christmas hosts and hostesses.

It's an easy way to send a personalised gift that offers a sweet treat and a tin to keep.



Let brainsparker
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up your imagination
and spark loads of
fresh new ideas

Tap into your inner genius

Brainsparker is a new creativity app for iPhone and iPad that helps spark your imagination, trigger new ideas and solve problems that crop up in your daily life, at work and with your creative projects.

Brainsparker is great to use when you're facing a challenge or have a dream and you feel stuck or need a boost of inspiration.

To get your creative juices flowing, simply pick a random brainsparker from a collection of 52 words, quotes, images, actions and questions and you'll be amazed at all the fresh new ideas you can generate.

- Pick from a collection of 52 random sparks
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- Shake to shuffle and tap to pick
- Schedule a daily brainsparker
- Share with friends and colleagues



- Have fun using it by yourself and in groups
- Enjoy the basic version for free (no adverts!)
- Expand your collections via In-App purchases

So the next time you're facing a challenge in your life, at work or with a creative project and can't decide the way forward, don't panic! Let brainsparker unblock your mind, stir up your imagination and spark loads of fresh new ideas. Brainsparker is also great for writers, designers, artists, coaches, trainers, teachers, business managers and team leaders to stimulate creativity, overcome blocks, take fresh perspectives and brainstorm new ideas and concepts.

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BLUE & GREEN



How to make your Conference more memorable

by David Stoker



Working in the events industry, I've attended countless conferences. Some of these functions have stuck in my mind. Others have merged together into one indistinguishable blur of early mornings, cold coffee and uncomfortable seats.

To help you make sure your event is memorable (for the right reasons), here are a few winning ideas I've gathered from time spent as an exhibitor, delegate and staff member.

Get clever with cupcakes

Let's face it, who doesn't like cake? When it comes to delighting delegates, cupcakes are the king of sweet treats. Not only are they a substantial snack for boosting blood sugar levels halfway through the day, cupcakes make a great marketing opportunity as they can be decorated with your company logo. If you want me to remember you, give me cake.



Embrace technology

I love it when event organisers use technology in a clever way. Tickets on smartphones, electronic business cards – there are loads of innovative ideas that make the day run smoothly and leave a lasting

impression on attendees.

Social media is a powerful marketing tool, not just before but during your



event too. Create a Twitter hashtag and join in conversations as they happen round your venue. It's also an easy way to gather feedback fast and stop any small problems developing into big headaches.

Make good use of lanyards

Lanyards adorning the necks of delegates are a common sight these days. A practical solution for holding passes, they're not the

most exciting event paraphernalia. However, with a bit of creative thinking, you can give attendees something to remember you by. Once, I attended an outdoor event where lanyards were given out with rain ponchos attached. This fantastic idea was simple yet demonstrated the organisers had thought of every eventuality. I've also seen free USB sticks dangling round necks and bottle openers.



Let your hair down

Sitting in a room listening to other people talk can get pretty dull after five hours. No one can ever recall the last two speakers and I've definitely seen a few people taking a cheeky nap mid-afternoon. The way to remedy this – and stop attendees sneaking off before the end – is having a social gathering after the main event.

Whether it's an after-party in a bar or bean bags scattered round the venue, encourage people to chat about the day in a relaxed atmosphere. I always look forward to these fun and informal gatherings. To score extra brownie points, give away a free drink with every ticket.

More About David Stoker

David Stoker is the sales director at UK badging company IDentilam, providers of conference badges, online ID cards and printed lanyards.

Brother HD Video Conferencing app



Brother has launched an iOS app for its leading web conferencing solution, **OmniJoin**, which will support agile workers by enabling the use of the software from an iPhone or iPad.

The Intelligent HD video automatically adjusts depending on the network speed, giving a clear, uninterrupted video, even on a 3G connection, ideal for working on the go.

The intuitive and easy to use app allows users to take and share photos, as well as documents, in the conference, making it ideal for mobile workers to share details and information instantly.

The iOS app is the latest update to the OmniJoin software, which is designed to offer board room quality web conferencing for businesses of all sizes at a much lower cost.

The software has the ability to deliver simultaneous HD video streams across multiple displays and allows attendees to work on documents in real time.

Users can also record meetings, and watch them later on-demand, reducing the need to create notes.



To provide complete ease of mind for meetings, OmniJoin provides secure industry standard SSL3/TSL encryption end to end for all conference data.

Businesses can rely on the software to provide a professional and reliable service; OmniJoin will find the closest, best performing server to give the optimum quality video and audio.

<http://webconferencing.brother.co.uk>



Cracking Christmas Celebrations In Canary Wharf

Hilton London Canary Wharf Offers Corporate Clients Christmas Joiner Parties

Joiner Parties are an effective way to add extra sparkle to the traditional office Christmas party, 'joining' the parties of more than one office in the same event and providing guests with a pool of new professionals to meet and celebrate with.

Priced from £39.95 per guest and without a minimum number of attendees, Christmas Joiner Parties include a spectacular three-course meal in The Larder Restaurant from 7 p.m., half a bottle of wine per person, Christmas crackers and an evening of dancing with entertainment from the hotel's resident DJ.

The Take The Lift Home package allows worn out party goers to take a short trip from party, to lift, to bed. Overnight stays start from £99.95 per room including breakfast and VAT.



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Check out www.brother.co.uk/unclutteryourmind for further details.



Labels are powerful.



Get straight to the point with Post-it Index from 3M

Ever looked at those people with an almost shock proof filing system, and wondered just how they keep everything so tidy and organised? Whether your lifestyle is totally hectic, you're a bit of a scatterbrain or you simply just wish you could find exactly what you want, right when you want it, you're not alone.

A recent survey by the **Post-it Brand** from **3M** found that 83 per cent of women have to flag up articles on a weekly basis, as they're just too busy to read them properly at the time.

Nearly nine in ten said they wish they had more time to sit and read articles of interest in their busy day-to-day lives, with recipes, offers and discounts, things to do with the kids and cleaning tips being the most sought-after.

With all this to take in and so few hours in the day, it's understandable we want to stock up ready for me-time. But more than 60 per cent of those surveyed have folded a corner over only to come back later and find it unfolded, losing their page. Unsurprisingly, one sixth found this really frustrating; with more than 40 per cent saying they resort to tearing the whole page out.

And it seems the office environment is a maze of missing documents too. With 86 per cent of workers highlighting a need for a



dedicated Index product, many are forced to opt for a scrap piece of paper when their stationery cupboard proves fruitless.

A spokesperson for the Post-it Brand said; "Whether you're a keen foodie, have a busy lifestyle or a desk abound with papers

to file, it can be hard to find the time to consume everything straightaway.

"Despite our best intention to keep track of all these things, life gets in the way and we can often find ourselves searching for that elusive article, work file or 'note-to-self'."

But how can we keep a handle on everything when there is so much to, well, handle?

Flagging a page or document doesn't have to mean dog-eared scraps of paper, hundreds of bookmarks or previously-folded-but-subsequently-lost, page corners. The **Post-it Index range** from 3M means you can be much better organised as well as saving time. Check out just some of the products that could make your home and work life a whole lot easier...

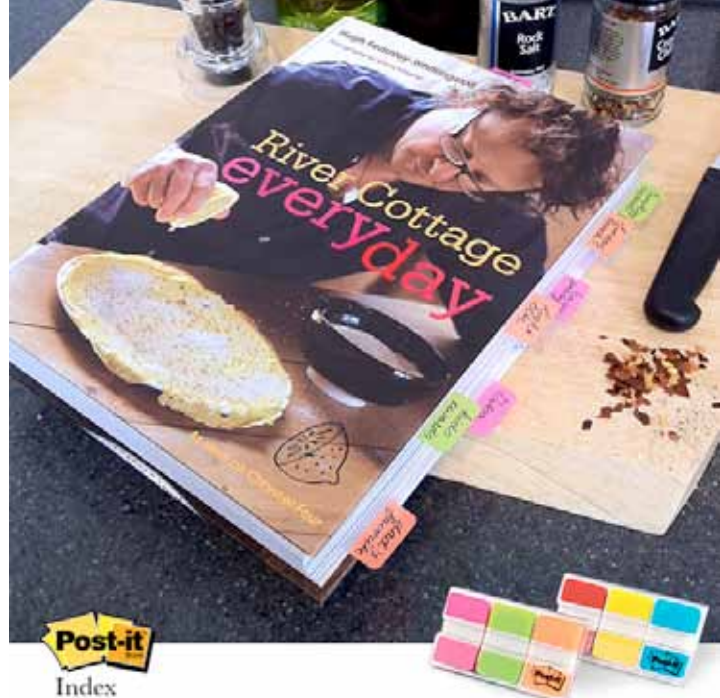
Find what matters. Fast!

Mark it...

Available in lots of bright colours and a selection of sizes, Post-it Index tabs allow you to make a big impact when you have very little time. Ideal for notepads, books, planners, portfolios and files, you can index quickly and efficiently wherever you are. Colour coding has never been so easy!

Tab it...

With Post-it Index Strong, you'll always be able to create order. Great for dividing binders, notebooks and project files or



labelling files you reference regularly, they are self stick, repositionable and easy to write on. Plus, they're extra durable, so they will last that little bit longer. Available in straight and angled, there's also a portable dispenser for tabbing on the go.

Pinpoint...

These attention-getting arrows or 'sign here' flags will certainly get you a faster reaction! Whether you're trying to emphasise a particular section, highlighting a price as a reference for yourself or looking for a colleague's signature, there's a flag or arrow for exactly that.



3M and Post-it are trademarks of 3M Company.



A-Z Pearls of Wisdom

by Lindsay Taylor

H is for ...Helpful

When I ask my clients for a skill and attribute beginning with “H”, “Helpful” always appears top of the list and that’s understandable. It’s understandable because the very nature of the role of an Executive PA is one of assisting and helping others out to ensure the manager(s), office and organisation are operating as smoothly as possible.

I know. I’ve been there. As a former EA working for a team of attorneys in a busy legal department in the US, I was Helpful-personified. I also kept an objective view that being helpful doesn’t necessarily mean we say ‘yes’ all the time.

We are not being helpful to ourselves, our sanity and wellbeing if we always say ‘yes’. We need to be really clear about where our work priorities lie – what the boundaries of our role are in order that we concentrate our time and energy on the right things. It’s okay to say ‘no’ and that, in itself, is an art form.

Helpful ways to say ‘no’ (without actually saying the word ‘no’!)

Use the ‘no’ that fits best with your situation. As general guidance, remember someone has probably asked you to help them because they believe you are capable and able to do it. Thank them for asking you. Help the other person understand your point of view and perspective by saying ‘I’m sure you will appreciate...’

1. The ‘Final Word’ no

‘Thank you for asking me. I would prefer not to do this. As I’m sure you will appreciate I have a deadline to meet for preparation of the management meeting packs’



2. The Rescheduling No

'Whilst I can't do it now - I could certainly help you later.'

Make sure you keep your promise to the person you have agreed to help out. Make a diary note or set a reminder.

3. The Problem Solving No

'I'm not in a position to help you, have you considered phoning technical support?'

Suggest an alternative solution to the person asking for your help.

4. The Negotiating No

'If I help you with x, then I would really appreciate your help with y. Is that okay?'

Get the other person's agreement to this negotiation. This is a great opportunity to help each other out by tapping in to each other's expertise, skills and love for doing a particular aspect of work.

5. The Reprioritising No

'I'm happy to do this, however I'll have to reprioritise my workload a bit. What would you suggest?'

6. The 'One Last Time' No

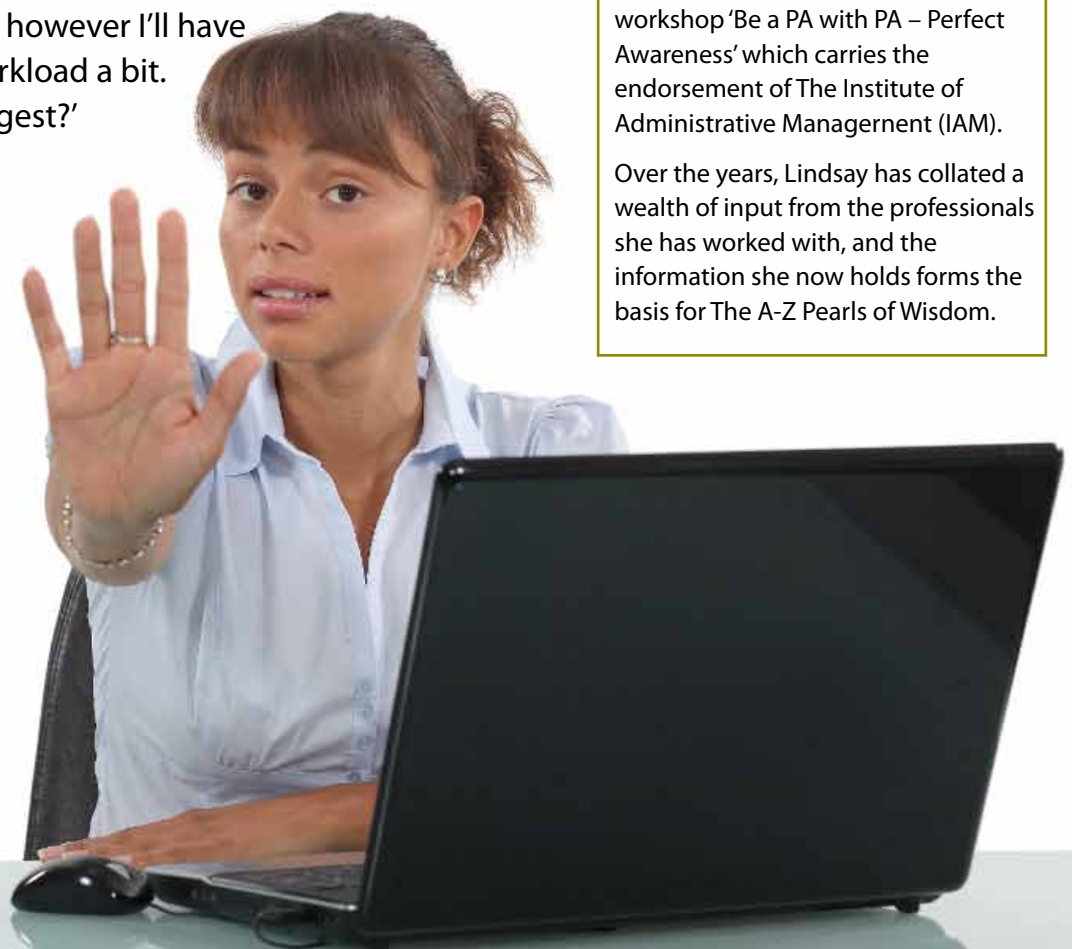
'I know I've helped you in the past and I'll help you again this time. As I'm sure you will appreciate, with my demanding workload my priorities need to be with xxxxx so from now on could I suggest you ask technical support/follow the printed procedures I've produced. Is that okay?'

Get the other person's agreement to this suggestion. In some situations you can produce an 'operators manual' or typed instructions/procedures that can easily be followed without interrupting your time and which will ensure the other person can do this themselves ongoing.

About the Author:

Lindsay Taylor grew up in Hong Kong and has worked as an Executive Assistant in both the UK and the US. She now runs Your Excellency Limited, delivering training and coaching to administrative professionals around the world. Lindsay is renowned for developing and delivering the workshop 'Be a PA with PA - Perfect Awareness' which carries the endorsement of The Institute of Administrative Management (IAM).

Over the years, Lindsay has collated a wealth of input from the professionals she has worked with, and the information she now holds forms the basis for The A-Z Pearls of Wisdom.



DISCOVER THE SEASON'S MOST EXTRAORDINARY HAMPERS

It's time to lift the lid on the most impressive hampers and gourmet gifts of Christmas 2013 – perfect for clients, colleagues, family and friends.

Wine uncorked. Fingers sticky with currants and jams. Tastes to delight the whole table. From the finest Christmas pudding to celebratory bottles of champagne – Selfridges' hampers and gift sets are bursting with a delectable selection of treats chosen by a dedicated team of food and wine experts who understand that only the best will do.

"This Christmas our food offering is more impressive than ever." Says Selfridges Food Director Nicola Waller. "Working with British artisans and heritage producers from the continent has been key to finding the very best festive flavours around. We're proud to put our name to each and every product."

The hamper collection includes 12 different options, ranging from £65 to £1000. Each hamper is crafted from wicker and includes Selfridges' signature yellow leather buckles and luggage tags for a keepsake to enjoy long after each jar, bottle and box of delicious tastes is empty.

The range of Christmas gift boxes brings together food and home accessories for bountiful sets tailored to the things they most love. Choose from 10 sets such as The Coffee Lover (including a traditional Bialetti espresso maker, cups, coffee and sugar crystals) and The Cinema Lover (packed with a popcorn machine, kernels to pop and a notepad to jot down their favourite film quotes).



Make your selection in store at The Foodhall,
online at selfridges.com/hampers or call 0800 138 8141.

► **SHOP SELFRIDGES HAMPERS**

National PA Day Survey Results 2013

office* show organiser announces results of the National PA Day Survey 2013



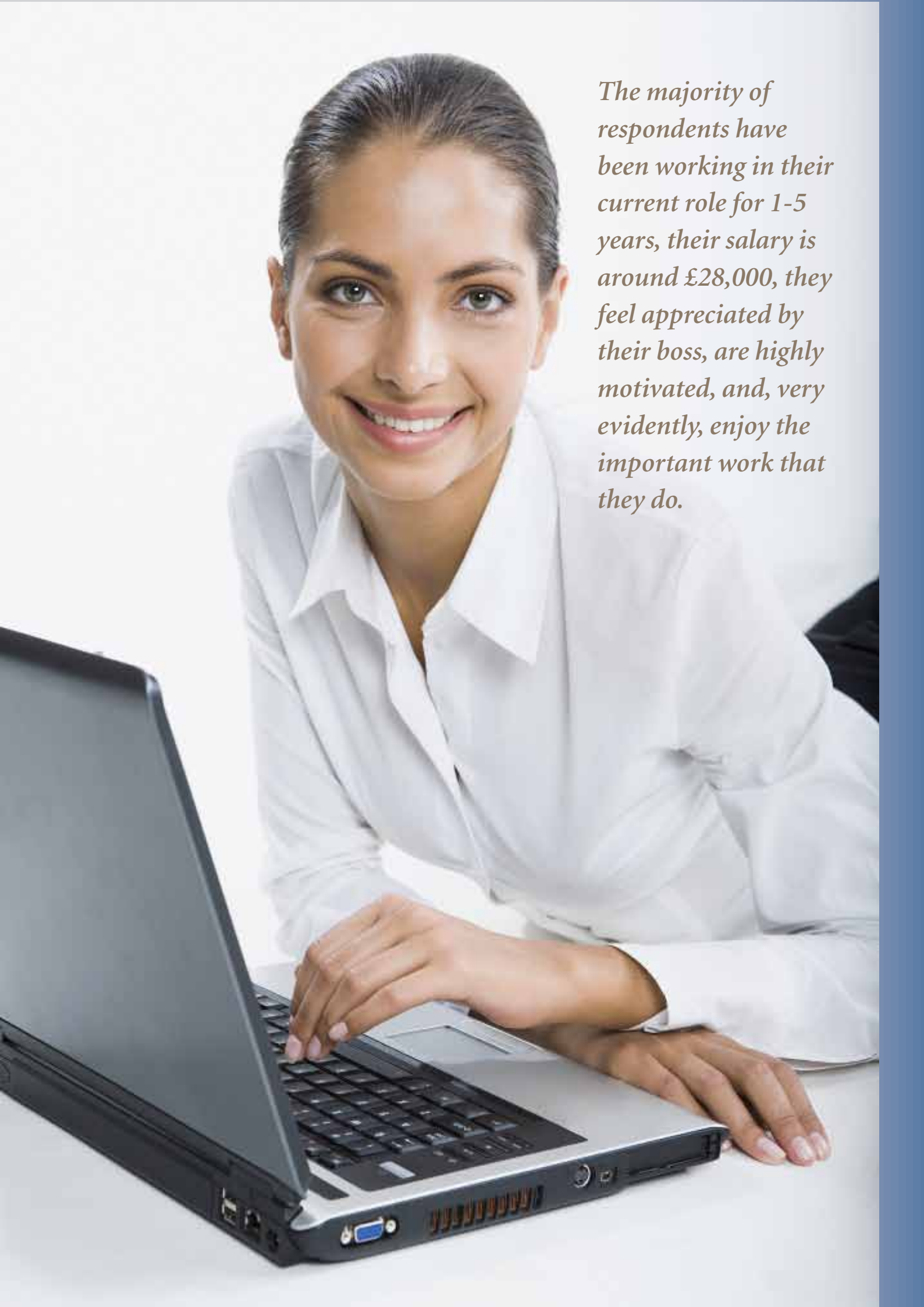
The results of this year's National PA Survey are now out. Completed by a sample of 1018 PAs working across the UK last month, the survey results provide a fascinating insight into the role of modern PAs – often the unsung heroes of the workplace.

"There are an estimated 650,000 people working across the UK in a PA role – and although their job titles may vary and the industries that they support can be worlds apart – together their profession contributes positively to the productivity of every single part of the economy," says office* event manager David Maguire. "By recognising – and

promoting – the achievements of PAs on National PA Day, we aim to encourage greater support and enthusiasm for the profession as a whole."

Whilst there never could or will be such a thing as an average PA, these results do provide something of a snapshot. The majority of survey respondents, for example, have been working in their current role for 1-5 years, their salary is around £28,000, they feel appreciated by their boss, are highly motivated, and, very evidently, enjoy the important work that they do.

But if they could change one thing about their roles (aside from pay), it would be

A woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing a white button-down shirt, is sitting at a desk and smiling at the camera. Her hands are on a silver laptop keyboard. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

The majority of respondents have been working in their current role for 1-5 years, their salary is around £28,000, they feel appreciated by their boss, are highly motivated, and, very evidently, enjoy the important work that they do.

National PA Day Survey Results 2013

to highlight the important contributions and commitment that they collectively make to UK businesses every day. A simple tally reveals that (after salary), long hours, their colleagues' misconceptions, and feeling undervalued, top the list of PA bugbears. That said, given the importance – and necessity – of a strong, close working relationship between a PA and their boss, over 68% of respondents stated that they felt 'appreciated' by their boss.

A taste of the results can be found below, while the full list is available by visiting www.nationalpaday.co.uk.

How well do you feel your pay reflects what is expected of you in your role?

Excellent	11.3%
Good	38.8%
Average	35.8%
Poor	14.1%

On a scale of 1-5, where 5 is the highest, how appreciated do you feel by your boss?

1	2.2%
2	5.3%
3	24.4%
4	41.0%
5	27.2%

Do you feel that being a PA is undervalued as a professional career choice?

Yes	76.3%
No	16.5%
No opinion	7.2%

Reports in the media suggest that the economy is improving. From your experience would you say your company has a more positive outlook than 5 years ago?

Much more positive	16.3%
Slightly more positive	28.3%
The same	24.6%
Slightly less positive	12.8%
Much less positive	8.2%
N/A	9.9%

Do you feel secure in your current role?

Yes	71.7%
No	28.3%

Do you stay in touch with the office when you are on holiday?

Yes, I check in daily	14.9%
Yes, I check in occasionally	29.5%
I am available if an emergency arises	33.6%
No	22.0%

Does your boss expect you to work outside of your contracted office hours?

Yes	50.2%
No	49.8%

If yes, how many additional hours a week do you work?

Under 1 hour	6.1%
1-2 hours	18.3%

2-3 hours	16.8%
3-4 hours	11.1%
4-5 hours	13.8%
5-6 hours	9.0%
6-7 hours	6.1%
More than 7 hours	18.9%
Not Answered	440

Would you lie to cover your boss?

I frequently do! 19.3%

It depends on the circumstances 71.9%

I never would 8.8%

Any comments...

- Once had no choice as my boss involved me in covering for him with his family when he was having an affair. Not happy about it, and I told him I wasn't comfortable with it, but I didn't want to lose my job.
- That's part of the role at times and is to be expected
- Any good PA does!
- I find I can always find a way to avoid the truth... this is not a lie in my book...
- If my boss is unable to make an event or meeting at short notice, I may tell a white lie to cover this to keep his reputation.
- Only little lies that don't really hurt anyone, it is part of the role but I wouldn't never do it if it hurt the company or any people.
- A small 'He is out of the office' occasionally!
- It would be a rare occasion were I to

actually tell a lie - but I would have no qualms in withholding the truth if it weren't pertinent.

- My job includes duty to protect my boss's reputation
- It isn't always appropriate for the chief executive to speak to all callers who ask for him: he wouldn't have any time to do any proper work!

What has been your career highlight so far?

- Being the founder of the NHS PA network bringing 300 PAs together. Now in its 5th year and going from strength to strength!
- Gaining the respect of my colleagues and knowing that I am an important part of the business.
- Finding the job I am in now. It is everything I want, I feel appreciated and respected for what I achieve.
- Being head hunted for a very senior position.
- My boss telling me that our peers (his and mine) see us as two halves of a whole, that we are nearly interchangeable.
- Making my boss a third more productive in his role because of me doing my role!
- When I got my first PA role to the MD after working my way up from office junior. I was at that company for eleven years.
- One of the people I support telling me that I was the first person who made him realise what a PA could do.
- Being recognised as a member of the management team rather than just the person who organises things.

- My boss telling me how much I am missed when I have been on holiday – it makes everything seem worthwhile
- For the past 5 years I now get to travel to destinations I probably would never of thought of going to (Budapest and Berlin etc).
- I have enjoyed every role I've been fortunate to be a PA in.

If you could change one thing about your role, what would it be?

- Greater awareness of depth and strength of the PA role, sadly the role is still widely misunderstood and undervalued.
- To have the skills that I possess recognised and put to good use.
- Recognition from others of the importance of the role within the management structure.
- Reward and recognition in society overall that a PA does more than type and answer the phone!
- Nothing I would change, I love the role!
- Change people understanding of the role. Educate them. Most management couldn't do what the PA does for any length of time.
- Less hours...we do a basic 45 hour week.
- Receiving a salary that shows the company recognises the effort I put into my work would be good. Apart from that I wouldn't change a thing.
- To be given more of an opportunity to contribute in meetings – rather than the person just there to take notes.

- Currently around 30% pro-active and 70% reactive – I would like to create more of a balance between the two.
- Nothing really, just wish there were more hours in the day!
- I'd prefer to work for 1 or 2 people instead of 4. I'm a very organised person, and not easily flappable, but I struggle to find enough hours in the day.
- To spend a bit more time with my boss on a 1-1 basis. And be a mind-reader!
- To have time to complete a job before having to start another.
- Quite happy with my role. If I wanted it to change I would actively go about changing it.
- The salary – it needs to reflect what we do and the knowledge that we hold.
- I love it just the way it is and wouldn't change a thing.
- To have more time with the boss to understand his role more fully so that I can assist more.
- I'm in the very fortunate position that I'm in a role which I totally enjoy and have the respect of my boss – very rare these days.
- People's impression that you are a glorified receptionist; when the chips are down and an emergency arises they soon realise that you are a linchpin holding an awful lot of the company together.
- For other people to stress less around me, I am a PA – I know what I am doing and until I stress no one else needs to!

Top Techy Tips

from Paul Pennant

Today's PA (www.todaysPA.co.uk) is the biggest news in Personal Assistant, Executive Assistant and Office Professional training, thanks to the inspirational vision and leadership of the company's founder, Paul Pennant, himself one of those rarities - even today: a male former executive PA. Paul's wide communications experience really helps his students engage in what he teaches whether it be assertiveness, time management, presentation or IT skills.

Here Paul shares with us some of his favourite IT tips. Watch out for more coming next month!

Outlook

Flagging emails:

a) Press "insert"

Word

Split your page using Alt + ctrl + s

PowerPoint

Press ctrl + m to enter a new slide

Excel

Quick totals. Highlight cells and see status bar for total amongst other calculations.

Fun One - Google

Type "google underwater" and "I'm feeling lucky"

so, have you tried any of these -
or the ones we published previously?
what are your favourite IT tips?
email editor@deskdemo.com



More coming soon – if you have any tips which we can share with your peers, please send them through to editor@deskdemo.com – and you might find your tips in print and on DeskDemon!