

# PA ENTERPRISE

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

September 2013

**Tempted by  
Temping?  
Top Tips part 2**

**What does being  
a Legal PA involve?**

**Stress and the modern PA:  
Surviving the hostile workplace**

**Boost your confidence in  
the workplace**

**A-Z Pearls of Wisdom**

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

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## PA ENTERPRISE MAGAZINE

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## New Website for Job Hunters

A new job website – directly aimed at the digital, tech and marketing industries – has launched, letting job hunters find the latest vacancies and giving employers a dedicated platform to advertise for the people they need.

HotSeats is the brainchild of Kris Barnes and Patrick Walsh, owners of Resonate, a digital marketing agency, based in Manchester and London.

HotSeats sets itself aside from its competitors by pre-screening applicants before they're even allowed to post their CV online.

Every applicant's skills and experience in the industry, along with their online profile, are checked before they're invited to register. Once registered, HotSeats gives them access to exclusive jobs not available to anyone whose details aren't on the site.

You can find out more by visiting [www.hotseats.co](http://www.hotseats.co).



**HotSeats.co**

## Struggling to stick to a diet?

**Make sure you stock up on fruit and veg – even if you don't eat it.**

Scientists have discovered that the sight and smell of healthy food can help dieters stick to their weight-loss goals.

In one test people reduced their chocolate consumption by more than half if they smelt a fresh orange first.

And diners who started with a salad instead of garlic bread went on to eat a smaller main course – because the sight of the lettuce reminded them about their diet.

Researcher Nicola Buckland said that when tempted by food, dieters should 'take a few moments to focus on the sensory properties of healthy food, such as the sight and smell of fruit or salad vegetables'.



## Cadbury Wispa Hot Chocolate drink - new for the office

Available in a 850g catering tin, Wispa Hot Chocolate drink makes it quick and easy to prepare a delicious drink, simply by adding hot water. Wispa Hot Chocolate drink is Fairtrade certified.

So if you are looking for the froth and bubbles usually experienced with your favourite coffee-shop hot chocolates, give Wispa Hot Chocolate a try - it's a delicious treat at any time of day.



## Be happy - your genes will thank you for it

**American scientists have found different types of happiness have surprisingly contrary effects on our genes.**

UCLA research found that people who derive their happiness from helping others have strong antibody genes, while people who get their kicks from self-gratification can suffer from low antiviral and antibody gene expression.

The study, which also involved the University of North Carolina, is the first of its kind to examine how positive psychology impacts human gene expression.

People who are do-gooders have high levels of 'eudaimonic well-being'.

They derive their happiness from a deep sense of purpose and meaning in life showed favourable gene-expression profiles in their immune cells.

Those studied from this happiness group had low levels of inflammatory gene



## Motorists are seeing red

Admiral has found that the main causes of road rage are being cut up by drivers (67%), drivers not indicating (65%) and the general rudeness of other motorists (61%). Driving too slowly (43%) is seen as more annoying than driving too fast (30%).

Nearly 1 in 10 have been threatened with physical violence and over half of drivers questioned agreed that road users are generally less courteous than five years ago.

Of the 3,120 drivers questioned by YouGov for the Admiral Survey of UK Motorists, nearly half admitted to experiencing road rage, with almost a third of these saying they get it more than once a week.

While both men and women get road rage, men are more likely to drive aggressively, have arguments, follow drivers and make offensive gestures as a result of their road rage.

Admiral spokesman, James Carnduff, commented, "It's bad enough letting yourself be annoyed by other road users, but following them or even worse, reverting to violence is ridiculous. Getting angry doesn't achieve anything other than raising your blood pressure and negatively impacting your driving."

expression and strong antibody and antiviral genes.

However, individuals who have high levels of 'hedonic well-being' - the type of happiness that comes from consuming goods and self-gratification - showed the opposite.

This group of people showed high inflammation and weak antibody and antiviral genes.



# Does being 'friended' by business contacts make you uncomfortable?

Here's some "friend"-ly advice for those interested in reaching out to work colleagues on Facebook: Proceed with caution. More than six in 10 senior managers surveyed by OfficeTeam said they are uncomfortable being friended by their bosses (68%) or the employees they supervise (62%), up from 47% and 48% of respondents, respectively, in a

similar survey conducted in 2009. In addition, nearly half (49%) of those recently polled prefer not to connect with colleagues on Facebook, compared to 41% in 2009.

Managers were asked, "How comfortable would you feel about being friended by the following individuals on Facebook?" Their responses:

	Your boss	Colleagues	People you manage	Clients	Vendors*
Very comfortable	11%	10%	8%	8%	6%
Somewhat comfortable	20%	40%	28%	17%	15%
Not very comfortable	22%	16%	23%	23%	21%
Not comfortable at all	46%	33%	39%	51%	57%
Don't know/no answer	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%

\*Responses do not total 100 percent due to rounding.

"People have different comfort levels when it comes to social media, so it's best not to blanket colleagues with friend requests," said Robert Hosking, executive director of OfficeTeam.

"Along with being selective about who you ask to connect with online, you should always post prudently. You don't want to share information that could reflect poorly on you."

Hosking added, "Although some people are hesitant to reach out to business contacts via social networks, there can be a benefit to doing so -- if you approach it the right way."

## OfficeTeam offers five tips for determining if you should connect with colleagues on Facebook:

- **Follow the leader.** Let your boss or those more senior than you make the first move. Proactively sending a friend request could create an awkward situation.
- **Scope it out.** Check out whether colleagues have other employees in their networks

before asking them to connect. If their lists are limited to favourite work pals, they may not be eager to friend a wider group of colleagues.

- **Ask first.** When in doubt, ask individuals whether they would be interested in connecting on social media before sending an invite.
- **Do a self-check.** Review your profile and make sure there isn't anything posted that could damage your professional image. You may prefer that your colleagues not see your holiday photos, game updates or quiz results.
- **Don't give in to peer pressure.** You aren't obligated to share social media updates with everyone in the office. If you're concerned about slighting people by turning down invites, you can accept friend requests but use privacy settings and lists to control who can view certain content.





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OUT OF HOME



# Turn your Friday pink!

*Sign up now and get planning for a Pink October!*

[www.breastcancercare.org.uk](http://www.breastcancercare.org.uk)



Dress pink, eat pink, party pink or work pink. How you turn your Friday pink is up to you.

It doesn't matter how pink you go, just join the thousands who'll be raising money during October, Breast Cancer Awareness Month. And it doesn't matter if you raise £20 or £200 at your Pink Friday as every penny will be helps to support more people affected by breast cancer today.

Sign up now to receive your free pack of Pink Fridays goodies and help make 2013 the best year yet!





Dressing in pink is the easiest way to raise money for Breast Cancer Care. All you need to do is wear a touch of pink to work or to school and ask everyone for a donation of £2. If pink's your thing, why not go the whole hog and with pink fancy dress? Dressing in pink is such an easy way to liven up your Friday at work or school and show your support.

### Ideas

- Why stop at pink clothes? Really go for it and get sponsored to dye your hair pink!
- Hold a pink themed fancy dress competition with a prize for the pinkest costume.
- Put together a pink dressing up box and ask people to make a donation to wear an item all day.

For your Pink Friday why not do some baking for your colleagues - a lovely addition to your afternoon tea break. Or serve up some pink food for friends and family to enjoy. Don't forget to ask for a donation.

### Ideas

- Ask everyone to make a donation to have tea and biscuits served by the boss.
- Fill a jar with sweets and play 'guess the amounts of sweets' in the jar. Get everyone to donate to enter. The person with the closest guess can keep the sweets!
- Hold a bake-off to see who the best baker is and then sell or raffle the treats.
- Add to your cake sale by asking your crafty friends to donate some handmade creations to sell alongside the cakes.

**Need a pink outfit?**  
**Pop into Dorothy Perkins,**  
**our official retail clothing**  
**partner for Pink Fridays**  
**during October when they**  
**are holding their own Pink**  
**Fridays events in-store.**



# New Pledge Supporting Staff Facing Domestic Violence

A new Responsibility Deal pledge appropriate for all organisations wanting to help and support staff facing domestic violence, has been launched at the Department of Health by Baroness Scotland and Dame Carol Black.

**With one in four women and one in six men affected by domestic violence during their adult lives, every workplace up and down the country is touched by this issue.**

Several organisations, including British Airways, the Charity for Civil Servants, Cornwall Council, Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA), Corporate Alliance Against Domestic Violence (CAADV), the Department of Health, Eliminate Domestic Violence Global Foundation, HMRC, Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust, Sodexo and Women's Aid are the first to sign up to the pledge.

The Department of Health, working closely





*“Domestic abuse of all kinds, including violence, is common but often hidden. It’s recognition by workplace colleagues, who are alert to the possibility of abuse and are familiar with the right actions to take, can open the way to protection and freedom from threat, fear and harm.”*



with CAADA, has developed two leaflets: one for employees ensuring they understand their rights and responsibilities within the organisation; and a separate leaflet for employers, giving guidance on how to support those who are in immediate need of help.

Health Minister, Earl Howe said: “Domestic violence can have a devastating and long term effect on a survivor’s mental health. It is probably the most prevalent cause of stress and depression in women. And children who live with domestic violence are at increased risk of behavioural problems, emotional trauma and mental health difficulties in adult life.

“The workplace can play a key role in helping to support those who are facing such problems. That is why we have launched this important new pledge, as part of the Responsibility Deal, to encourage employers to recognise the issue and put in place measures that will help alleviate the long term suffering that many people are living with.”

Dame Carol Black, Chair of the Responsibility Deal health at work network, said: “Domestic abuse of all kinds, including violence, is common but often hidden. It’s recognition by workplace colleagues, who are alert to the

possibility of abuse and are familiar with the right actions to take, can open the way to protection and freedom from threat, fear and harm.

“I hope that employers will see this as an important responsibility, ensure they and their staff are familiar with the guidance, and sign up to this pledge as a public statement of their commitment.”

The pledge, developed with the help of charities including CAADA, CAADV and Eliminate Domestic Violence, states that:

“We will treat people within our organisation with respect and dignity. We will do everything we can to prevent stalking, violence or abuse either in the workplace or that has an effect on people in the workplace, whether from a colleague, family member or anyone else. This will include having guidance in place which is suitable to the size of our organisation. The guidance will ensure that an appropriate, safe and sensitive response can be implemented and our employees supported when they raise such an issue.”

For more information on this pledge, contact the health at work team.

# Stress and the Modern PA - Part Four

## Surviving the hostile workplace

By Anel Martin, CAP-OM

*A critical factor influencing stress at work (in all professions and all countries) is bullying. A study in the US concluded that one third of all stress related illnesses diagnosed in America could be attributed directly to bullying in the workplace. In South Africa 77.8% of employees admit to being bullied at some point in their career.*

*The International Labour Organisation has indicated that workplace violence, both physical and emotional, is the single biggest threat to the workplace of the new millennium.*

### So what is Bullying?

Bullying is defined as "repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another at the place of work or in the course of employment, which would reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's rights to dignity at work" - Source Irish Government Task Force.

In my research I found many definitions but the main criteria which remains consistent in all sources is that this act is done with the intention to harm, and is prolonged in nature.

### Why don't people just quit?

At the risk of stating the obvious, we live in a time where unemployment rates are high, the economy is under pressure and job security no longer exists.

The simple fact of the matter is that sometimes we are forced to stay in hostile working environments so that we can pay the bills and feed our children.





### What are the most common manifestations of Bullying in the workplace?

- Circulating gossip and half-truths
- Using positional power to humiliate, undermine and abuse others
- Taking out your moods on others
- Aggressiveness in the form of insulting remarks, swearing, ridicule, teasing, sarcasm and shouting etc.
- Sexual harassment, racial discrimination and physical violence

### Why are PAs vulnerable?

- Bullying is usually perpetrated by those in power and PAs work closely with

management

- They are in a service role and can be easily and regularly exploited
- The majority of the PAs working today are women (international research shows that they are still being targeted in higher numbers than men, especially single mothers)
- They are part of a culture in the workplace where they are expected to put on a brave face, be discreet and be tough at all times
- They generally have a hard time saying no or speaking out
- PAs are usually the closest, easiest target, much like a spouse.

### What do the bullies look like?

- They usually have two faces, the charming and charismatic one they show to the world and another darker, uglier one reserved for their victims
- They are often able to use their position, status or power to get away with bullying the target
- Research has shown that they may have been bullies even as children
- They often abuse not only their staff but their families as well
- Bullies often recruit others to join them in this activity (those recruited often fear becoming victims themselves)
- They can be bosses, other PAs or colleagues

### What is the major impact of bullying?

- Increased absenteeism and the associated cost (not only from the target but also the team at large)
- Stress related illness or depression
- Decrease in self-esteem and loss of morale
- High staff turnover and loss of talent and critical skills (A UK study conducted by Dr. Charlotte Rayner also suggested that you could lose up to 20% of staff who witness regular bullying, not only the victims of bullying)

### I am being bullied, what can I do?

Firstly, if at all possible try to find another position or try to be moved to another team within your organisation. You need to alert your HR team to the problem, not only for your own sake but for the next PA and the staff remaining behind. If you do not speak out, this situation will persist until someone

gets badly hurt. This is highly recommended in the case of physical or sexual abuse.

If leaving your current position is not an option you will need to equip yourself to cope and be safe in this situation (not an easy task at all, but achievable)

### Top ten tips to survive a hostile environment:

#### 1. Ensure that you manage the opportunities your bully has to harass you

Try to avoid being alone with your bully or creating opportunities for them to harass you. Some bullies do their thing in private and some prefer to humiliate you in front of an audience. Try to identify the situations that your bully is prone to use and take evasive measures where possible.

#### 2. Document events

Actively gather evidence on your bully. These people often project a very different public image to what you see daily. Make sure that you have proof of what is going on, keep the inappropriate emails and voicemails. It may serve you at a future junction and will at least give you a sense that this is not only happening in your mind.

#### 3. Do not onboard the negative feedback and images that this person is trying to project onto you.

Bullies in my personal experience are people with high rank and low self-esteem. They need to break others down because they themselves feel inadequate. They need to abuse their power to feel good. Remember that they need to insult, shout, be sarcastic and bombard you with negative feedback to validate themselves; you don't have to buy into it.



#### 4. Seek support and talk about it

Bullies rely on and try to ensure that you are, or become as isolated as possible. Take back your power by talking to someone (I would recommend a professional) but it can be a friend or a relative. Getting the issues out into the open and getting someone else's view on the situation often validates you and gives you a feeling of support and not being alone.

Often your HR Department already knows that your bully is a problem, there may have been high staff churn in the team or a revolving door of PAs before you. They may not want to get involved or may not be empowered to do so. This is the sad reality of the situation so don't rely on them for the answer or solution but ensure that you are on record.

#### 5. Find ways to detox from the situation

If you cannot escape the situation you will need to find ways of detoxing from it regularly. Hostile work environments will grind you down if you don't. Find something simple that you can do daily or regularly that will assist you to get back to neutral. It can be as simple as taking a long hot bath at the end of the day, talking to a friend, developing the spiritual aspect of your life or getting enough exercise. Try and not obsess about it away from work, again professional help (and self-help books) can teach you coping methods for this.

#### 6. Build up your own resilience

The happy truth of the matter is, the longer you are in the situation the easier it becomes to deal with. It is the same as developing a

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**Labels are powerful.**

callous. You do need to realise however that playing the victim will not get you there. You need to embrace the fact that you can chose. Due to your circumstances you cannot perhaps chose to leave this job but you can chose to retain your dignity and self-esteem. Your bully cannot take those things from you; they need to be given, so make a choice to grow at this time of adversity. Remember that this too shall pass!

### 7. Remember your past success

The bully may try to convince you that you are useless and incompetent, but take a moment to think back. There have been bosses who were happy with your work. You have succeeded in the past. You got this job by your own merits and skills, impressing HR and your boss. You have done good work and created things of worth. Reread emails you have received complimenting you on your work and thanking you for your help. It is part of the human condition to accept criticism more easily than a compliment. Ensure that you retain perspective by thinking back to a time when you felt like a winner.

### 8. Realise that it is not you, it is the bully who is the problem

Bullies always try to make you feel like it is your fault; you have done something to deserve this treatment. Rest assured that you have not. They are trying to justify their own behaviour. You are not the problem and no one deserves to be victimised at work.

### 9. Monitor your emotional and physical well being

Keep an eye on the health of your body and your mind. Seek the assistance of your doctor or a counselor if you need to. Ensure that

you get enough sleep and guard against depression and high blood pressure. No job is worth your health so make sure that you are looking after yourself!

### 10. Don't join in bullying

Bullies often get others to join in. These people are often good people but fear being bullied themselves. Don't be this person! If you can speak out or assist a target of bullying please do so. Bullying often persists and goes unchecked because good people turn a blind eye.

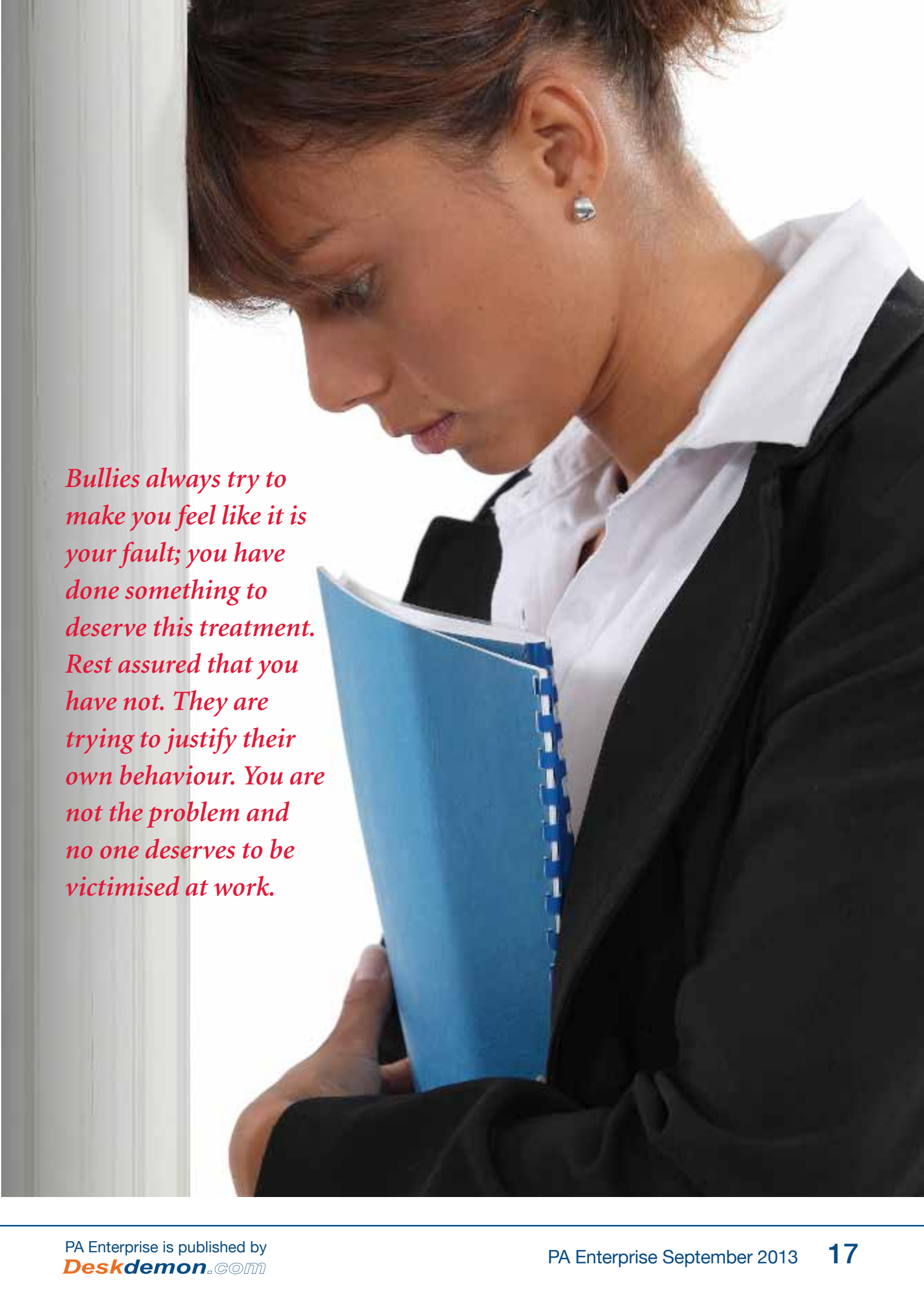
Bullying in the workplace is reality and many of us have experienced this first hand and as a survivor of intense bullying myself I can assure you that it takes time to heal but makes you a stronger, more resilient person in the long run. The most important thing is not to lose hope!

During the time I myself was being bullied I came across a blog written under the pen name of Eva James (she also wrote a book) entitled "Bullied by the Boss". I found some of the incidents so familiar and could relate to this material in so many ways. This made me realise that I am not alone, many others are going through this and many, many more have survived and thrived!

In conclusion some wonderful advice from Seth Godin:

*"The way to work with a bully is to take the ball and go home. First time, every time. When there's no ball, there's no game. Bullies hate that. So they'll either behave so they can play with you or they'll go bully someone else."*



A close-up, profile view of a woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a black blazer over a white collared shirt. She is looking down intently at a blue spiral-bound folder she is holding. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

*Bullies always try to make you feel like it is your fault; you have done something to deserve this treatment. Rest assured that you have not. They are trying to justify their own behaviour. You are not the problem and no one deserves to be victimised at work.*

# Tempted by Temping

## Top Tips: Part Two

by Dena Stephens



Dena Stephens is a senior PA with 15 years of experience working in London, the Isle of Man and the south of England. In her spare time she is a freelance writer, music band PR and blogger. We are delighted that Dena will be contributing articles for PA Enterprise and DeskDemon. If you would like to write for DeskDemon, please contact us at **editor@deskdemon.com** - and if you have any topic you would like us to explore on your behalf, we'd love to hear from you.

*In my previous article on DeskDemon I described temping as a whole. In the (possibly unlikely!) event that you've been tempted by temping as a result, or whether you're new to the temping world here are some tips, general pointers and things you may not have considered as a new temporary worker.*

### First things first

The first hurdle is the agency. As a temp you work for an agency; they are your employer and the company you work at is the placement/contract. The agency will pay your salary (and sort your PAYE/NI) and it's them you report to if you're sick, etc. In this employer-led market, gone are the days when you could pop into an office and see a consultant on spec. Now, most agencies generally don't tend to see visitors on spec, instead, preferring to vet CVs first to see whether they're able to help the candidate with their job search.

### But there are so many agencies out there? I can't register with all of them!

As regards which agency to use, ask around your friends and colleagues, and make use of the DeskDemon forum for recommendations. Different agencies will specialise in different areas but most will cater for administration professionals. Whilst it's generally safer to aim for the established agencies, there are other smaller operations that still have a good portfolio of clients.



### What happens at registration?

Registration will generally involve lots of form filling, and be prepared to duplicate the information you have already on your CV. I recommend taking a copy of your CV with you to copy from. Agencies will also require proof of your right to work in the UK, so take your passport or other proof along with you for them to take a copy of. If you have references, letters of recommendations or qualification certificates (or anything else that may be useful for the agency) then take them along too. You'll also be asked to give the agency details of your bank account and next of kin.

This is so that whilst in their employ they can pay you or get in touch with your nearest and dearest in case of emergency.

Some agencies will insist you take typing and software tests, others don't. Personally, I've found that at senior PA level, basics such as typing ability is generally taken as read, so it's quite rare I've been asked to take any such tests; at this level your CV and experience should speak for you. Don't be offended if you are asked to take such tests, though – a small number of employers still require a minimum typing speed, for example.



Your consultant will find out the sort of work you want to do and ask your preferred rate of (hourly) pay and the locations in which you want to work. It's worth having a think about this before the meeting and doing a little research. A job that pays £20 per hour in London could potentially only pay £12 in Oxford, for example.

### What sort of questions should I be asking the agency?

- Does my rate include holiday pay?
- How does holiday pay work?
- Do I have to take you up on your recommendation of using an umbrella company?
- Do I have to opt out of the Working Time Regulations?
- Will you check with me before sending my CV to a company?
- How often should I keep in touch with you?
- Exactly how do I submit a timesheet to you?
- Exactly who should I speak to if I have a problem at work?
- Do you have a business card/contact details I can have?

### Then what?

All being well, your phone should start to ring and you should start getting job offers from agencies. They will give you brief details of the company, hours, tasks required, location, pay rate and duration of the contract and gauge your interest. Gone are the halcyon days of being able to pick and choose contracts and of being able to start

immediately. Even for (longer term) temp placements, the norm these days appears to be interview, which, even despite the nature of the placement, isn't a guarantee of getting an offer. You won't deal directly with the employer on this; the agency will act as your go-between as they would with a permanent position.

### A few things to consider prior to starting the contract...

#### Location, location, location

As a rule, try and find out whether there's parking (and whether it's paid or not) or public transport links by your new assignment. If you don't know the area, go to Google Maps and do some research; I've found Street View invaluable for such purposes. Google will also tell you how far away it is and how long your journey is likely to take. Remember, safety first – will you have to walk back streets in the dark on your own? What sort of security does the car park have? If you're able to have a recce there beforehand I recommend you do so; it not only gives you an idea as to the journey for real, but you won't be as stressed when you're on your way there because you'll know exactly where you're going. It also gives you a chance to scope out the general area.

Google is your friend – try and do lots of internet research about the company. It'll help you know what sort of culture to expect, size of company, etc.

### The first day

It's a big GO for the contract and there you are, waiting in reception to begin your first



day at work. Hurrah! Here are some things to check out:

### **Facilities**

Basic, I know, but you'll be amazed at the number of companies that will put you to work to clear a mountain of paperwork without showing you where the toilet or kitchen is. Are there vending machines or a kettle? Is tea and coffee provided? Where's the nearest printer and photocopier? First Aider (this information should be shown on a staff notice board)? Also, a handy thing to

establish (for summer months) is whether there's air conditioning. This sounds silly, but when you're a hay fever sufferer (like me), a lack of aircon coupled with open windows in the summer can be hellish, so be prepared to stock up on those antihistamines.

### **Building access**

You'll probably sign in as a visitor on your first day, but going forward, check out whether there's swipe card or code entry. What about an ID card? What's the building opening hours?

### Colleagues

You'll hopefully get shown around and introduced to colleagues so ask for a desk plan (if one is available) because you'll never remember everyone's name. A phone list will also be useful. In larger companies you'll probably find most of this detail from the Intranet, so go hunting if you can.

### Health and Safety

You may not get told, so it's prudent to find out for yourself where the fire exits are and where the muster point is. To avoid those embarrassing "jumping out of skin" moments, find out when the fire alarm is tested (if all else fails the receptionist will know). Again, larger companies should have this information on their Intranet.

### Hours

Yes, you've already established what the working hours will be with the agency, but when to take lunch can be a tricky issue to work out, so ask your assigned contact. Don't feel guilty; a well-timed question aimed towards fitting in with what everyone else does is absolutely fine.

### Dress code

Dress to impress, on your first day at least, unless you've specifically been told otherwise. You won't have a firm idea as to the dress code for the office until you're in there. You might turn up in your best Chanel suit and find everyone else in jeans but better overdressed than underdressed. You can always don your casual gear when you've settled in a bit more. With the footwear, by all means go for the killer heels, but it's a great idea to take a pair of emergency flats as well, just in case. You never know if you're going to

be asked to walk into town to pick up some coffee/lunch/printing/dry cleaning (I have roll-up ballet pumps for such occasions).

### Food for thought

What time is lunch? Is there a sandwich shop nearby? Is there a sandwich van that comes round? Is there an on-site café? It's highly unlikely that you'll get taken out to lunch and you'll probably be expected to make your own arrangements, so consider taking a packed lunch that you can keep in your bag – again, you don't even know if you'll have access to a fridge.

### Show me the money, Honey

You've completed your first week and all is good, which means that it's time to submit your timesheet. Most timesheets these days can be completed and submitted electronically; you complete your hours on a weekly basis to an agreed deadline (normally early the next week, but I complete mine on a Friday afternoon, for example) and submit it for approval by your line manager at the placement company. Their authorisation then whizzes it through to your agency who sort everything out from there. Your salary then gets paid via BACS a week in arrears minus the usual PAYE and NI, and you'll also receive a payslip. If you're temping around April time (end of the tax year) the agency will provide you with a P60. On finishing a contract and leaving an agency they'll also issue you with a P45.

I hope this article is of some help to those of you new to temping. It's by no means a comprehensive list and I'm sure there are plenty of things I haven't thought of, but it's a start.

### Happy temping!



# Top Techy Tips

## from Paul Pennant

Today's PA ([www.todaysPA.co.uk](http://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

Sending red emails

- a) Compose email
- b) Press "follow up" icon on ribbon
- c) Tick "flag for recipient" and "reminder"

### Word

CHANGE case with Shift + F3

### PowerPoint

Press W in PowerPoint to make screen white (in slideshow view)

### Windows 7

Windows key + d to go to desktop.

### Internet Explorer

Press deskdemon + ctrl + enter to enter [www.deskdemon.com](http://www.deskdemon.com)

### Excel

Get home from anywhere. Ctrl + home

### Fun One - Google

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



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

# Scotch Magic Nails

*A little known use for Scotch 3M Tape Magic Tape - an invaluable to aid to Nail Art! Follow these instructions for 2 fabulous looks*

## A Step by Step Guide to creating an Art Deco look

### What you will need:

Gold Digger varnish  
Sterling Silver Champagne varnish  
Black Magic varnish  
Scissors  
Scotch 3M Tape Magic Tape  
Base Coat  
Top Coat  
Clean up brush



- 1 Prepare some narrow strips (a variety of widths up to about 5mm), and some triangular wedges of tape using a sharp pair of scissors. Rest the strips on the edge of a clean object so that they can be easily picked up later. Also prepare a few big pieces of tape which will be used to protect your fingers from getting polish on them.
- 2 Apply a base coat.
- 3 Apply a coat of gold nail polish to each nail.
- 4 Put the large pieces of tape around the edges of the nail on the ring finger to cover the surrounding skin.
- 5 Apply some silver nail polish to one end of a flat cosmetics sponge, and gold nail polish to the other end, making the colours meet in the middle as shown. Starting at the piece of nail nearest your finger, roll the sponge on to the nail to create a colour gradient of silver into gold at the tip. Leave to dry.
- 6 When the base colour is dry, arrange the strips and triangles of tape in your chosen pattern on all of the nails. We have chosen to create a striking triangular effect along the length of the nail. Make sure they are smooth and in full contact with the nail but don't push on too hard. Use tweezers if you find it too fiddly with your fingers.
- 7 Apply a layer of black nail polish to each nail one at a time, removing the tape from each as you go, using tweezers. Have a tissue handy to put the used pieces of tape on to.
- 8 Once dry, apply a top coat to each nail
- 9 If necessary, you can dip a small makeup brush into acetone and use this to clean up around the nail to create clean smooth lines.
- 10 Admire the finished look!

## A Step by Step Guide to creating a Monochrome look

### What you will need:

Pixi White varnish  
 Black Magic varnish (model's own)  
 Scotch Magic Tape  
 Scissors  
 Base Coat  
 Top Coat  
 Tweezers  
 Clean up brush

- 1 Apply a base coat and leave to dry.
- 2 Apply a thin coat of white polish (or two depending on opacity) and leave to dry.
- 3 Prepare some narrow 2mm wide strips of Scotch Magic tape using a sharp pair of scissors. Rest the edge of the strips on the edge of a clean object so that they can be easily picked up later.
- 4 When the white polish is dry arrange the strips in your chosen pattern on all of the nails. We have chosen to use opposing diagonal lines to create a striking monochrome look. Make sure they are smooth and in full contact with the nail but don't push on too hard. Use tweezers if you find it too fiddly with your fingers.
- 5 Once the tape is applied, paint one nail in black nail polish – painting over the white undercoat and the tape.
- 6 While the black polish is still wet, slowly remove the tape on the black nail piece by piece, using tweezers. Have a tissue handy to put the used pieces of tape on to.
- 7 Repeat steps 6 and 7 for each nail one by one.
- 8 Leave until touch dry and then apply a top coat.
- 9 If necessary, you can dip a small makeup brush into acetone and use this to clean up around the nail to create clean smooth lines.
- 10 Admire the finished look!



For more Magic Nail's art ideas and designs, visit the Scotch UK Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/ScotchUK](http://www.facebook.com/ScotchUK)



# What's it Like Working as a Legal PA?

By Alison Boler

PA to three Heads of Legal & Business Affairs at ITV

*Having a career as a Legal PA was not something that I had planned. In fact, when I first started out as a PA in the Entertainment industry fifteen years ago, I didn't even know that a Legal PA role existed let alone what was involved, the skills required, what was expected of you day-to-day and how different it would be from a 'typical' PA job.*

When I was offered my first Legal PA job at MTV in 1999, I learned quickly that the role has a strong secretarial responsibility at its core: diary management, travel arrangements, correspondence, meetings, phone calls and presentations. But surrounding that core is a complex realm of contract work, highly confidential practice and the pressurised reality of working quickly and accurately to hard-hitting deadlines. I realised that being a Legal PA is all about being flexible, organised and in control.

One thing you can guarantee is that no two days are going to be the same. In my current role in ITV's Legal & Business Affairs team, I find that every day I am working on a different set of contracts and managing varying volumes of agreements, across all television genres such as Drama, Factual and Sport. At the same time I am carefully balancing the PA side of my role by working on my boss's meeting calendars, booking travel, responding to emails and answering phone queries. So for me, having the ability to multi-task and prioritise quickly and effectively are some of the most important skills to have.

## What type of roles could I have as a Legal PA?

There are many types of job that you can have, such as an In-House Legal PA, a Private Practice Legal Secretary and a Paralegal PA role. It has become clear that Legal PA's are expanding their primary duties to take on more contract drafting and negotiation work so creating a wholly unique and exciting job. Of course the exact role is going to vary depending on the industry, sector and business that you work in. Being a Legal Secretary in a law firm is a very different role to being a Legal PA in an in-house Business Affairs



*One thing you can guarantee is that no two days are going to be the same.*

department, but you will find that there is common ground in the type of work and skills that you are expected to do and to be able to do to an exceptionally high standard.

### **What work is involved?**

You will be working on agreements, contracts and legal documents. Some Legal PAs and Paralegal PAs negotiate some aspects of deals and prepare draft contracts as well as making complex amendments to them. You would also be expected to prepare contracts for signature and maintain records, status sheets and databases for all agreements and documents that you and your team

are working on. In a law firm you could be preparing papers and compiling evidence for an upcoming court case, in a media company you could be drafting and amending licensing deals and in the financial sector you could be working on multi-million pound investment deals; the contracts you are working on may be different, but the skills you need will be the same.

### **What skills are employers looking for?**

For all contract work you would be expected to know how to use Track-Changes: this is where amendments to contracts are shown as red-lined and you can accept and reject



*Employers are looking for Legal PAs who can work quickly and accurately under pressure with complete discretion at all times*

changes as necessary. You also need to know how to compare and merge documents. All these tools sit in every standard Word document (Track Changes sits in the 'Review' section and Compare/Merge sits under 'Tools'), so you can easily learn and practice how to do this. It is absolutely guaranteed that in an interview for any Legal PA role that the employer will ask you if you know how to use Track Changes and how to use compare/merge tools.

You will find that some contract software and document management systems will vary by industry and company but you would no doubt receive applicable training when you start your new role (you can always ask in your

first interview if there is any specific software and systems they use so you can do your research in time for your second interview!). Employers are also looking for Legal PAs who can work quickly and accurately under pressure whilst working with complete discretion at all times. With legal work there is absolutely no room for error, so you always make sure that while you are working quickly, that you are working accurately and that you double-check everything.

### **Will my career get stuck in one legal sector?**

I found that I could move relatively easily across industries as a Legal PA, through the Entertainment fields of Music, Film and TV into



the City of London as a Legal Secretary temp in a number of large international law firms. The companies and sectors are different but the skills I'd learned and worked hard to develop were transferable. There is a growing number of recruitment agencies that specify in Legal Secretary/Legal PA work so they can advise you on your career options.

### **But I don't know any legal jargon!**

Don't be put off that you don't know anything about law; the Internet is a great resource for learning quickly about the industry and sector you want to work in. But it is what

you learn on the job that will really stand you in good stead; you just need to keep your ears and eyes open and listen to what is going on. Don't just sit and type amendments into a contract, think about what it is you are typing and get to learn and understand the deals and how they work, so that when you are speaking to clients you can give confident reassurance that you know what you are talking about. If you don't understand something important then have the confidence to ask. I have always found that the lawyers that I have worked with are more than happy to answer questions of "Why is that type of contract done?" or "What does this wording mean?" It is just up to your own discretion to know when it is an appropriate time to ask questions.

Being a Legal PA allows you to develop your role and take on as

much or as little extra work as you want. If you'd like to take the opportunity to attend legal courses, workshops or learn how to draft a contract then just ask - you never know where it might lead! The reality of being a Legal PA is that you have to work in a more demanding environment and deal with a significantly higher volume of work than other PA roles. But being a Legal PA is a great career choice; it is challenging and stimulating and allows your job to grow and develop outside of the boundaries that a standard PA role can have.

### **Top Five skills you need to be a Legal PA:**

#### **1. DISCRETION**

leads to trust from the people you work with; you never repeat anything you hear.

#### **2. ORGANISATION**

being ordered, methodical and planning your work gives your role a positive structure.

#### **3. CONFIDENCE**

being strong and confident gives reassurance to your boss and your clients that you are in control and you know what you are doing.

#### **4. SPEED & ACCURACY**

a legal document or contract will have your boss's name on it and should always reflect the quality of your work.

#### **5. KEEPING CALM**

being un-flappable under pressure or while working to extremely tight deadlines shows you are in control.

# Top 3 Ways to Boost Your Confidence in the Workplace

*Confidence is one of the most essential qualities that every professional needs to succeed. When you are confident in the workplace, you have the self-trust and assurance to achieve your goals effectively and with ease - from minor daily accomplishments to big challenges and long-term achievements.*

*That said, no one is simply born with confidence: it is built over time. Be proactive about building your confidence and take a few steps to boost it now.*

By Diane Craig

## **Prepare in Advance: Develop Your Idea**

You will feel more confident sharing your own work when you have taken time to develop your ideas properly and have enough knowledge to speak securely on them.

- **Research first:** Have a great idea for a project, but don't have the stats or evidence to back it up? Before bringing your proposals to the table, conduct a market analysis and background research to support why you think your idea will work.
- **Become the expert:** Even if you don't share all your research and plans with colleagues, create brainstorming pages, outlines and even reports longer than what you will use - so you can be sure you will pare out the best of your ideas.







- **Organise your thoughts:** Arranging your ideas into an easy-to-read format, such as a handout or a presentation, in turn will help you arrange your thoughts in your head and allow you to speak with ease and confidence.

### Refine Your Posture and Body Language

The way you carry yourself is incredibly influential: it can determine how you set a first impression and can influence how others perceive what you say. Let your first

impression be a confident one with good posture and strong body language.

- **The basics:** Good posture is a basic need, both for your self-presentation and for your health. Maintain good posture by being mindful of how you sit at your desk, taking standing and stretching breaks, or practicing posture-based exercises such as yoga.
- **Power posing:** Once you have the basics down, think about how you can use your posture and body language to project



confidence. In “power posing” to appear confident, studies show you actually may be boosting your confidence by feeling more powerful in your own stance!

- **Body language:** How you use your arms, facial expressions, and stance in a conversation can hold as much weight as your words. It can reveal your attitude and influence how receptive others are to what you say. Be aware of your own body

language so you can use it to your advantage.

## Confidence in Public Speaking

One of the most common fears is the fear of public speaking. This is no surprise: when we begin to imagine what could happen in front of a large group of people with all eyes on us, our fears can multiply. To boost your confidence, tackle that fear head-on.

- **Practice in private:** First get comfortable with your speech or presentation in front of the mirror at home. If you know well what you plan to say, and how you look saying it - you can worry less when you're in front of a group.
- **Push yourself:** Challenge yourself by finding situations outside of work that involve public speaking. Join a conversation group or a speaking club. The more you do it, the more confident you will be.
- **Know your audience:** When you know more about the context of your audience, such as who they are, their age group, their positions in an organisation, etc. - you will become more comfortable speaking in front of them when you feel you can connect or relate to the individuals in the crowd.

Building confidence takes time, and it's not always easy. But once you have confidence in yourself and in your work, what you can achieve may surprise you!

### More About Diane Craig

Diane Craig, President of Corporate Class Inc., is a leading image and etiquette consultant. For over 20 years she has provided corporate consultations, helping hundreds of men and women realise their professional and personal goals. She is a sought after speaker at national business meetings, regularly gives comprehensive workshops to corporate groups, and offers private consultations on business etiquette, dress and dining.



By Lindsay Taylor

# Feedback-to-Self & Focus (not Flibbertigibbet)

I really do like the sound of that word.

## ***Flibbertigibbet.***

It's eccentric and flighty and has an onomatopoeic quality

However, I most certainly do not like it when I become that word - a flibbertigibbet flitting from one thing to the next, a bit of this, a bit of that (without completing or achieving anything in full!).

I know when it happens too....when my "to do" list extends to more than one A4 page, when my inbox is full of unopened and unread messages, when I have deadlines to meet, when I glance at my watch and see that I'm "running out of time"...then.

My flitting, scatterbrained and unfocused flibbertigibbet self is far from productive.

For me, this is a prime "Feedback -to-Self and Focus" moment.

My first bit of Feedback to Self is "well done"! Well done for recognising that this is what is happening (and for being honest with myself!). Having awareness of what's going on in a situation - what's happening for you - is a Great Thing. Because once you have

awareness you can then take ownership of the situation and you have choice and opportunity available to you to change the situation (for the better of course!). So with awareness comes opportunity. And with opportunity comes change.

A great model to use for Feedback-to-Self and Focus is the ABC model, the basis of which lies in asking great questions of yourself (and answering them honestly!). As ever, I would be interested to hear how useful you find this model and article!

"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.



## A Antagonist

What specifically is it that has happened to make me behave this way?

What can I do to eliminate or change this Antagonist in the future? (and remember that belief "if you can't change something, change the way you think about it"!)

## B Behaviour

What behaviour am I exhibiting?

How helpful is this behaviour?

What could I be doing more of?

What could I be focusing more on?

What could I be doing less of?

What could I be focusing less on?

What could I stop doing?

What could I stop focusing on?

What could I start doing?

What could I start focusing on?

What could I continue doing?

What could I continue focusing on?

What have I done in the past that has worked in a similar situation?

What have I focused on in the past that has worked in a similar situation?

What resources do I have available to me?

What do I need to Focus on that is Urgent?

What do I need to Focus on that is Important? (Thank you Stephen Covey!)

What do I need right now?

## C Consequence

What is it I want (or need) to achieve?

What is the consequence of my current behaviour?

How useful is this consequence?

What would a better consequence be?

What do I want (or need) the consequence to be?