

PA ENTERPRISE

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

October 2015

**Poor lifestyle
increases risk
of sight loss**

**Top reasons for
businesses to
go green**

**What do
workers
secretly think
about their
workplace?**

**New from Leitz –
wireless and app
controlled label
printer**

**Employment Law
Special: advice on
changing employees'
contracts**

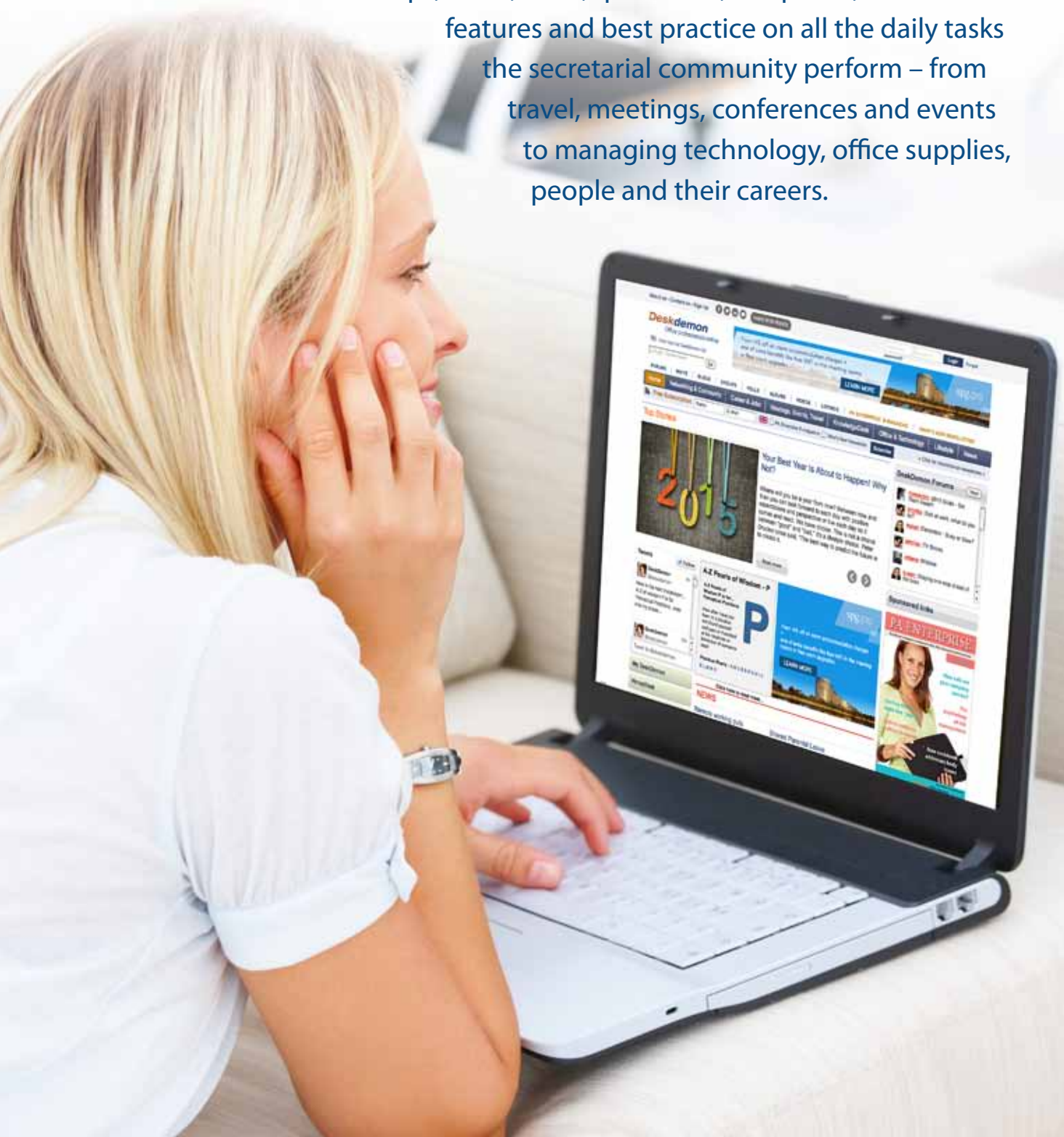
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The World's Largest Website for Executive PAs, Secretaries, Administrators & Office Managers

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Apple yet to convince customers to upgrade iPhones

In a recent survey conducted by online mobile accessory retailer MobileFun.co.uk, just 26% of existing Apple customers said they would be upgrading to the iPhone 6S or 6S Plus.

The survey asked 80,000 previous Apple accessory customers what they thought of the new products announced at the 2015 Apple Keynote.

When asked "Will you be buying an iPhone 6S or 6S Plus?", 26% of customers said that they would be, 48% were still on the fence answering "Maybe, I'm not sure yet", while the remaining 26% felt that Apple had not done enough to persuade them to upgrade from their current device.

Customers were asked how they felt about Apple's new Rose Gold colour which has been introduced for the new iPhone models. An overwhelming 74% responded negatively, 4% of which went as far to say they "Hate it", with the other 70% opting for the more diplomatic "Not for me".

Apple does however seem to have been more successful in convincing its customers to purchase an Apple Watch. Customers were asked if the announcement of the Apple Watch OS 2 was enough to convince them to buy one. 13% said they already owned the device while 33% said that they intend to purchase one soon.

Finally, despite Steve Jobs famously saying five years ago "if you see a stylus, they blew it.", it would seem Apple's new stylus, the Apple Pencil, is in fact succeeding in exciting its loyal fans. 63% said they loved it and couldn't wait to try it with 37% seeing it as a gimmick.



The Internet gives Print Media a run for its money



The rise of the internet and our favourite social media channels is giving our once loved print publications a run for their money... and the internet is winning!

The proliferation and ease of access to the internet has revolutionised the way in which we all consume our media. After all why would you bother popping to the nearest shop to buy your go-to monthly magazine when you can open an app on your phone?

It seems that the days of littering our coffee tables and desks with magazines and newspapers are dwindling as research suggest more and more of us are ditching the hard copies of our favourite publications in favour of surfing the web.

But don't start panicking just yet, declining print sales certainly does not mean the end for glossies. Publishing houses are embracing the digital trend by replicating a selection of content online. And of course there are magazine apps where you can access your favourite titles wherever you are, with the usual subscription fee of course.

And to help you read more of your favourite titles, the **Post-it® Brand from 3M** has launched a new national promotion offering **free access to more than 700 consumer magazine titles** on smart phones, tablets and desktops with purchases of Post-it® Super Sticky Notes.

With **sales of Post-it® Super Sticky Notes growing 20% year on year**, they have become a firm favourite in the office. Using the Post-it® Super Sticky Full Adhesive Notes, your notes will hold stronger for longer even when applied to vertical surfaces, meaning they can't fail to be noticed.

The offer applies to Post-it® Super Sticky Notes, including: modern classic Post-it® Canary Yellow, contemporary Bora Bora and vibrant Cape Town colour collections.

You will receive a unique code with every qualifying purchase giving you a **month's free access** to the fabulous magazine app, up to a maximum of six times equating to six months' free access. To redeem your code and to see the full terms and conditions visit www.readly.co.uk/freemagazines. Codes must be entered by March 31 2016.

Participating stationery suppliers include Spicers, Vow, OfficeTeam, Lyreco, Staples Advantage, Office Depot and Viking.



*Throughout October the Post-it® Brand is also giving office workers the opportunity to **Win £500** to help take your career to the next level.*

To enter the Make it Happen competition and for full terms and conditions visit makeithappen.post-it.co.uk.

Applications close at midnight on Saturday 31st October.



Leitz to showcase new wireless and app controlled label printer

This autumn Leitz will be showcasing their new Icon Smart Labelling System at the Office* Show 2015. As the UK's largest event for PAs, EAs, VAs and Office Managers, this is an ideal opportunity for visitors to meet the Leitz team and experience the company's range of office products first hand.



The Leitz Icon is a digitally enhanced solution set to redefine the world of labelling and reinvigorate the market as well as improve the user's experience. The first and only to bring 'smart' technology to label printing, Leitz Icon brings label printing firmly into the digital generation and up to date with the rest of the modern workplace.

Icon has mobile connectivity, multiple device compatibility, drop-in label cartridges and a printing speed of up to 200 labels a minute. The system features the options of both USB and Wi-Fi connection and can be operated via an iPhone, tablet, laptop or PC.

The ease, versatility and convenience of the Leitz Icon Smart Labelling System ensures its appeal to a broad market. From online retailers, shipping businesses and office and administration professionals to home-based working environments, the Leitz Icon can adapt to its surroundings. Weighing just 1.3 kg the Leitz Icon is smaller than a shoebox and can be powered on the go for 12 hours using the Leitz Icon Battery Pack.

Leitz will be exhibiting on stand 1004 at the Office* Show 2015 on the 13th & 14th October at London Olympia. Visitors can claim an exclusive £25 Amazon voucher for Leitz Icon when visiting the stand, which will last for two weeks.

For more information on any of the Leitz products, visit www.leitz.com/en-GB.

1st October car smoking ban offers more than just health benefits



From 1st October 2015, drivers in England and Wales will be banned from smoking in their cars whilst carrying passengers under the age of 18 in a move to protect children and young people from the dangers of second-hand smoke. But, as well as the clear health benefits of the ban, BCA suggests there are clear financial advantages too.

"Presentation is absolutely key when it comes to determining the value of a used car" explained Tim Naylor, Editor of the BCA Used Car Market Report. "And lighting up behind the wheel can be seriously damaging to the resale potential of your car."

"Smoking not only leaves a lingering smell in the cabin, issues with visible damage such as cigarette burns and nicotine-staining are a real concern for used car buyers."

He concluded "Smoking in a car is not only a health risk, it is potentially detrimental to the value of that car when the time comes to sell it. So the ban will not only be good news for motorists' and passengers' health but will potentially be a positive for used car values too."

What Londoners secretly think about their workplace

The London Office Workers' Survey 2015 has uncovered what London workers really think about their colleagues, offices and what they can't live without...

When faced with the question "what is the one thing you can't live without in the office?" our shameless London office workers have no qualms in dropping their colleagues! According to the results from the survey, what we really want to get us through the 9 - 5 is simply 'coffee' (27%). The caffeine buzz is even more important than our friends (4%) and mobile phones. (We're sorry tea drinkers, you came second).

The survey carried out by Swift Office Cleaning Services Ltd presents interesting findings on office workers' perceptions of their working environment and details of their commute.

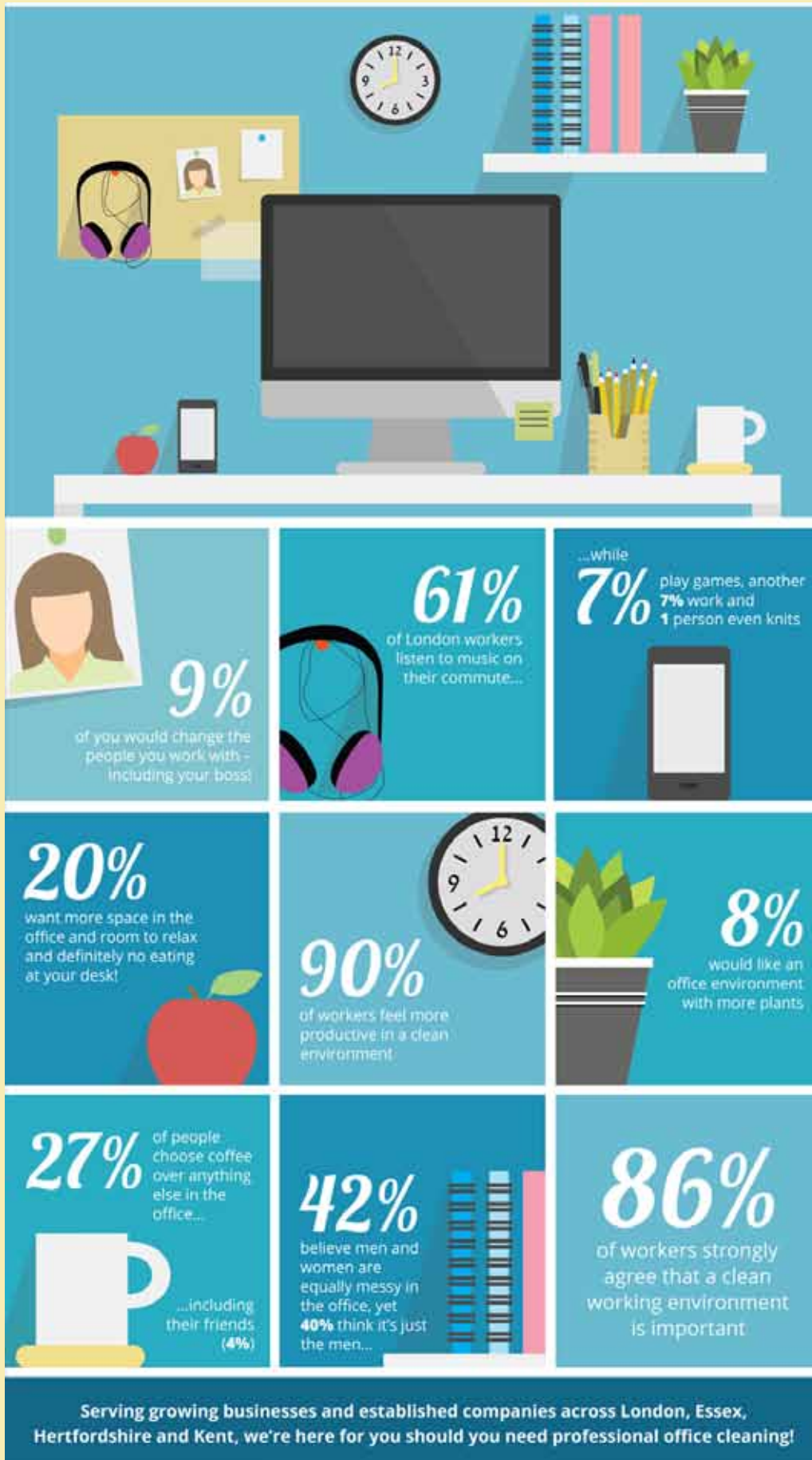
So, what about the offices we work in – how do we feel about the premises in which we spend our working week?

As the trend for companies to move towards open plan working instead of the traditional segregated office continues– results from the Survey suggest workers would actually invite the return of the individual office format. Open plan working is proving to be too noisy and cluttered for workers. 20% of people cited the space in the office to be one thing they

would change if they have the opportunity, be it having their own office, or to "have smaller office areas rather than the large open plan layout".

The minimalist design in offices is also a gripe for many London workers. 10% of survey respondents would change the look of their office saying "paint it a bright colour", "less clinical white on the walls", "more inviting décor", make it "more colourful and spacious". And the significance of office décor should not be underestimated, 66% of people questioned gave décor a mark of 4 or 5 out of 5 for importance compared with just 2% who gave it little or no value at all. And of course someone wanted a slide installed...

It's not just office décor that holds great value to workers. Companies who get the environment and cleanliness right could see their work productivity soaring as 90% of London workers say they feel more productive in a clean environment and 86% of Londoners in the survey strongly agree that a clean office is important. 9% would like to see "people be more clean around the office", have "better cleaners" and "have it cleaned on a regular basis".



42% believe men and women are equally messy in the office, yet 40% think it's just the men...

Perhaps surprisingly only 9% of London office workers taking the survey said they'd change the people they work with. Of course there were a couple of people saying they'd change "the boss", and someone simply wants "more women"! However, other people-related issues include wanting to have "better teamwork", "the best people, clean and tidy people" and to "get rid of the lazy workers".

It would appear that our office managers need to take a good look at office provisions too. Of course there are the requests for free biscuits in the kitchen and requirements for better coffee machines (we already know this is THE most important thing in the office...) but when it comes to eating and drinking in the office, the general consensus is "not to allow staff to eat at their desks". This brings us back to the desire for "more space effective" layouts in the office and specifically areas to relax and to eat away from desks.



Six of the Best from the London Office Workers' Survey 2015

- 1 **42% believe men and women are equally messy in the office, yet 40% think it's just the men...**
- 2 **20% of commuters read the free papers**
- 3 **90% of workers feel more productive in a clean environment**
- 4 **27% of people choose coffee over anything else in the office...**
- 5 **... including their friends! 4%**
- 6 **In fact 9% of you would change the people you work with – including your boss!**



Cleanse your body with fresh juices

The Healthy Juice Company is **the** new juice company to hit the juice and healthy wellbeing market delivering organic, raw and alive juice cleansing packages.

The Healthy Juice Company focuses primarily on offering cleanse packages and your fresh, daily pressed juice cleanse will be on your doorstep by 6am each morning of your cleanse ready for when you wake up. British seasonal ingredients are featured and included as much as possible. Recipes vary daily, for a greater scope of nutrients and to keep the cleanse interesting and customers motivated.

The juices are packed responsibly too: only recycled glass bottles are used for purity, straws are lined with beeswax and juice stays perfectly chilled due to the sheep's wool insulation that is used. And when you're done, the natural packaging and used bottles, all manufactured here in the UK, are collected from you as part of the daily delivery service to be cleaned and re-used.

Each daily cleanse pack contains 4 x 480ml bottles of freshly cold pressed, 100% raw fruit and vegetable juice combinations, 1 x 480ml bottle of nut milk and a small jar of cleanse elixir which are unpreserved in any way, as nature intended. Low in fruit (natural sugars) but high in deliciousness and endorsed by Philip Weeks, a leading UK naturopath and herbalist. Enjoy the juices in the order instructed to benefit from a therapeutic balance of juice and nut milk combinations that aids the body's natural toxin elimination process whilst providing ample nutrition.



Poor lifestyle increases risk of sight loss

Eye health experts marked National Eye Health Week (which was held 21 – 27 September) with a warning that unhealthy lifestyles are fuelling an alarming increase in avoidable sight loss as a new study reveals lifestyle factors increase the risk of sight loss regardless of a person's genetic make-up.



The research, led by scientists at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, used healthy lifestyle scores based on diet, exercise patterns and smoking to assess a person's risk of suffering Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD) – the UK's leading cause of blindness.

Results of the six-year study reveal the odds for AMD associated with having both poor lifestyle scores and a high genetic predisposition to the disease was three times greater compared with people with healthy lifestyles and a high genetic predisposition whilst a healthy lifestyle alone was shown to cut your risk of suffering the condition by more than a fifth.

Smoking was found to pose the biggest modifiable risk to sight loss as the study found smokers who carry high risk genetic alleles and have smoked at least one packet of cigarettes for at least seven years and have poor exercise patterns and poor diets were four times more likely to have AMD than people who did not have genetic risk factors, ate a healthy diet, and got 10 hours/week of light exercise or eight hours of moderate activity.

Commenting on the report David Cartwright, optometrist and Chair of National Eye Health Week said: "Half of all sight loss is avoidable yet forecasters predict the number of people

living with sight loss in the UK will double to four million by 2050 and 1 in 6 of Britons will become blind or partially sighted by the age of 65. These figures are shocking when you consider that having a regular sight to identify issues early, including leafy greens and fish in your diet, being more active and quitting smoking could significantly reduce your risk of sight loss, even if you have a genetic risk of eye disease."

Six simple sight savers

1. Quit smoking. Smokers have a significantly greater risk of sight loss than non-smokers.

Toxic chemicals in tobacco smoke can damage the delicate surface and the internal structure of the eye. This can lead to an increased risk of many eye conditions including AMD; nuclear cataracts; thyroid eye disease; dry eye and poor colour vision.

2. Eat right for good sight. Most of us have no idea that what we eat can affect how well we see, however, eye-friendly nutrients found in many fruit and vegetables and fatty acids derived from fish, nuts and oils can all help protect your sight.

Vitamins B and E can help protect against cataracts whilst Omega-3 fish oils help maintain healthy blood vessels inside the eye.

3. Watch your weight. More than half of all British adults are overweight however maintaining a healthy weight helps preserve macula pigment density, which in turn, helps protect the retina against the breakdown of cells and the onset of AMD.

Damage to blood vessels in the eye caused by excess body weight has also been linked to glaucoma.

4. Get fit. Aerobic exercise can help increase oxygen supplies to the optic nerve and lower any pressure that builds up in the eye.

Reducing intraocular 'eye' pressure can help control conditions such as glaucoma and ocular hypertension.

5. Cover up. Exposure to UV light increases your risk of developing cataracts and macular degeneration.

According to the World Health Organisation UV damage is the biggest modifiable risk factor of cataract development.

Always wear sunglasses when the UV index rises above three and check your sunglasses filter AT LEAST 99 per cent of UVA and UVB light. Look out for a CE or British Standard or UV 400 mark when choosing your sunglasses as this indicates they provide adequate UV protection.

6. Be screen smart. On average we spend a staggering 35 hours a week staring at a computer screen so it's no surprise that 90 per cent of us say we experience screen fatigue – tired or irritated eyes, blurred vision, headaches and poor colour perception.

Avoid eye strain by using the 20-20-20 rule, especially if you're using a computer for long periods of time. Look 20 feet in front of you every 20 minutes for 20 seconds.

For more information and advice about looking after your eyes visit <http://www.visionmatters.org.uk>.

Too soon to 2016 holidays

MandMDirect.com, the leading
nationwide survey investigator



Do be thinking about your holiday? Think again ...

Leading online discount retailer, reveals the results of their survey highlighting the trends of holiday spending and behaviours.

Over 1,250 participated in the survey, which looked into the spending habits of families when it comes to that big summer getaway. While we may think it's too early to think about next year, results show that over 73% of us take up to a year to save for that big break.

As a nation of holiday lovers, 98.4% of participants cite a summer holiday to be very important. MandMDirect.com reveal the full details below...

PRE TAKEOFF STRESS

Turns out that even before we have left our homes that the stress has already settled in. 76.2% find holiday packing extremely stressful despite using their very own packing list. Considering 38.9% of us pack for a week break in a day, its no wonder we feel like we are carrying extra baggage! However, 51.6% prolong the packing to a week.

AN EXTRA BAG FOR THE HOLD?

80.2% spend up to £1,500 for a week away in the sun with the family and 88.9% spend

up to £500 just on their holiday wardrobes; not forgetting the cost if you need to add extra luggage too! 77.8% are shocked about the cost of their summer holiday and always over spend on the budget.

HOLIDAY RECOVERY IS REAL

While it may be a bit of a cliché, it really is true what they say... You really do need a holiday to recover from one. While 19% of us may unpack and recover in a day, it takes 75% up to week! Talk about holiday blues...

LABEL OF LOVE

When it comes to those all-important designer names in your wardrobe, 83.3% of those surveyed like to dress their children in branded product wherever possible, making bargain hunting even more important. The majority of respondents also wear their holiday buys beyond their week get-away.

With the holidays almost half way through, 61.9% of us will jet off to Europe, while over 26% will stay right here in the UK.

Top reasons for businesses to go green

Businesses need to be doing more to put green back onto their agendas according to a whitepaper by business automation software provider, V1. A YouGov survey revealed that 80% of UK organisations print documents just to sign them, and recycling experts WRAP reported that the average office worker uses up to 45 sheets of paper a day, half of which ends up as waste.

In a new whitepaper, V1 has revealed how companies can significantly reduce their use of paper and carbon emissions by using electronic document management (EDM). The paper also highlights the other key benefits this technology can bring. These include:

- **Reduced paper usage and carbon emissions**

EDM allows documents to be captured, stored and accessed electronically enabling a significant, if not total, reduction in paper production, printing and distribution. UK soft drinks business Nichols plc calculated that it has saved 454 trees and 973.35 tonnes of carbon as a result of using the technology over the past six years.

- **Elimination of paper handling costs**

Printer maintenance, paper and toner, envelopes and postage costs can all be drastically reduced. Research by the AIIM

(Association for Information and Image Management) revealed that two-thirds of organisations that adopt paper-free processes see return on investment within 18 months, and 50% do so within a year.

- **Processing efficiencies and greater reliability**

EDM extensively reduces the time taken to search, archive and distribute documents, and the need to input information manually. This leads to reduced errors, omissions and content loss. Research by business consultants PwC showed that around 7.5% of paper documents are lost and 3.5% are mis-filed.

- **Remote and mobile access**

With documents available online via the cloud, staff no longer need to travel to the office or meetings to access them, saving on mileage. It also supports flexible/home-



admitted the need to incorporate electronic document storage into their disaster recovery plans is either 'critical' or 'very important' to maintain business continuity.

Janette Martin, Managing Director, V1, says, "Supporting sustainability should no longer be viewed as a cost and many companies have recognised that investing in green technologies makes sound business sense through gaining tangible efficiency savings.

"With increasing numbers of customers now demanding environmentally-friendly goods and services, there is no reason for organisations to be printing and storing documents. Implementing document management software is a simple step that will boost green credentials, modernise working practices, save costs and time in addition to future-proofing a business from natural disasters."

working which is increasing – 2014 saw the highest number of staff working from home since records began.

● Disaster recovery support

Digital documents can be quickly and automatically replicated in the case of a disaster, enabling a business to continue providing a consistent service to customers. In a V1 survey earlier this year 82% of senior IT and finance professionals

Advice on changing employees' terms and conditions



David Parry, a specialist in Employment Law, offers his advice on the issue of how to change an employees' contract

The fundamental principle

You can't change the terms of a contract without the other side's agreement. That principle applies to commercial contracts (agreements between you and clients or suppliers, for example) and to agreements with your employees. Contracts are made up of legally enforceable promises, so each side knows where it stands. And you're protected if the other breaks their side of the deal.

But contracts can become outdated. From time to time you'll have to think about making a few changes.

Some changes will be small and may seem inconsequential. Others will radically affect the employee's day-to-day work or their entitlements. Perhaps they've been promoted, so their contract must be brought in line with their new status and responsibilities. Maybe you are relocating your business. Or perhaps

you're having to look at costs savings and need to cut back on employee benefits.

And there's always the changing face of employment law to consider, as well as evolving custom and practice.

Step 1: Is the change beneficial to the employee?

There are some changes which you will be able to implement very quickly and without much fuss or disruption. What employee is going to object to a pay rise, for example? Where the employee stands to gain from the change, you'll probably have an easy ride. By agreeing the change between yourselves, you'll be able to update the contract by mutual consent - by far the safest and simplest way. It cuts out a lot of technical contractual and employment law issues.

Don't forget to get the employee's consent



Step 2: Check whether you need to change the contract

The wording of the employee's contract is always the starting point.

Not every change will affect the express, implied, incorporated or statutory terms of the agreement. (This sounds complicated, and it can be, so it's worth running this past me.) If it doesn't affect those terms, then great – you should be able to introduce the change without having to get the employee to agree to it.

A word of caution about being too bullish here. Even if the change you want to make isn't a contractual one (ie you are technically able to make it because it doesn't affect the contract), you still owe the employee – as you do all employees – a duty of trust and confidence. Tell them about the change and why you're planning to introduce it. Listen to what they have to say; it's not

in writing. You'll need to issue written notification of the change within one month of it taking effect. The easiest way is to simply issue a new contract, or a written addendum, and get it signed by the employee.

Not all proposed changes will be welcomed, and this is where employment law and contract law claims lurk.

uncommon for employees to come up with some useful new ideas relating to the change.

Ultimately this all reinforces good employer/employee relations. They'll respect your honesty and they'll appreciate that you've taken time to explain things to them. At least, that's the plan!

Step 3: Does the employment contract allow the change?

The contract may contain a 'variation clause', which allows you to make certain changes.

But courts are always reluctant to allow employers to use variation clauses in a way which impacts negatively on employees' rights. The bigger the impact, the more a court will look for a reason to declare the variation clause invalid. So it's worth checking with me first.

Step 4: Impose the change

Remember that it's unlawful – a breach of contract – to change the terms without the employee's consent. But it's not that difficult if you know what you're doing. You have options, but you'll need to tread carefully.

Option 1 – get the employee's agreement

You can't force the employee to agree to the change, so steer very clear of duress. You should consult with the employee. There are obligations to enter into collective consultation – a specific legal process - if the change will affect 20 or more of your employees.

Explain the change and why you want or need to make it. Depending on the effect the change would have on the employee, you might need to think about offering some benefit in exchange for their agreement: a pay rise, a better bonus, or a few days' extra holiday, for example. This sort of "consideration", as well as being an attractive incentive, is sometimes needed to make the change legally enforceable.

If this option works and you get the employee's agreement, make sure to put this in writing.

Option 2 - implement the change without agreement

This carries risk because it's not what the employee wants. You don't have the legal right to do this and so you are exposing yourself to potential claims.

In reality, deciding whether to do this involves a traditional cost/benefit analysis. Are the benefits of making the change outweighed by the risk and cost of a successful claim (or claims) against you?

The employee upon whom change is forced will have to make a serious decision.

Many, and often most won't do anything – they'll grumble a bit but put up with the change.

Some will choose to 'stand and sue'. It means they carry on working for you, but make it very clear that they are not happy about what you've done. In doing this, they keep open their options for bringing claims against you.

And finally, some employees may decide to resign in response to a breach, and (if they've been working for two years) bring a claim for constructive dismissal.

Here are some of the potential claims you could face when you impose change:

Breach of contract

An employee could issue a claim for direct financial loss caused by your breach. In theory, they could also get an injunction to make you do, or stop you doing, the thing that breaches their contract. But the value of these claims is small – it's always limited to their direct financial losses suffered during the period equivalent to their notice period.

Unlawful deductions from wages

Employees' wages are protected in law. If the change you have imposed results in a pay cut for the employee, they could bring an unlawful deductions from wages claim (going back a maximum of two years).

Unfair dismissal

Some contractual changes are so significant that they are deemed to be a dismissal. If that's the case, the employee could bring an unfair dismissal claim against you. Generally, the employee needs to resign quickly in response to the change.

Bear in mind too, however, that where your action is the 'last straw' – in other words, there has been a series of events culminating in something that's not a fundamental breach but which pushes the employee over the edge – then that could be enough for a constructive dismissal claim.

Option 3 - Dismiss and then re-employ the employee

This is where you terminate the employment contract, but immediately offer the employee a new contract containing the terms you've been wanting to introduce (but which they wouldn't agree to).

It's the cleanest and safest way to impose contractual changes, but it's not entirely simple. It's still a dismissal, so if the employee has more than two years' employment, they can claim unfair dismissal. If they don't accept the new role (ie their old job with the new terms), they

are entitled to be paid for their full notice period.

To comply with employment law, you need to be fair, reasonable and procedurally correct if you are going to defeat an unfair dismissal claim. That involves quite a bit of consultation before you dismiss, and keeping the 'new' job open for them in case they change their mind during the notice period.

If you can establish a good business reason for imposing the changes, and you have consulted properly, a tribunal is likely to say the dismissal is fair. What amounts to a 'good business reason' varies, but if it has a negative financial impact on the workforce, a tribunal will normally expect to see the directors/owners sharing the pain by also taking paycuts, and doing everything they can to minimise the impact on the workforce.

The big message in all of this is that, while terms and conditions in any context are a protection mechanism for both parties, they're not set in stone. If there are sound commercial or operational reasons for needing to bring about change, it's time to look at your options. Some options carry more risk than others, and it's the level of risk you're prepared to accept that will determine the route you take.

ABOUT DAVID PARRY EMPLOYMENT LAW

David Parry Employment Law is a law firm that advises employers and individuals in all aspects of employment law.

www.parryemploymentlaw.com