PA ENTERPRISE

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

May 2016

office* 2016 – preview of what's on offer

Learning a new skill is ea<mark>sier</mark> said than done

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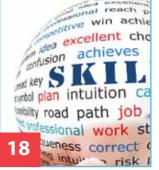






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Workplace stress piles on the pounds

More than one in four have put on weight and one in three turn to comfort eating to combat workplace stress

More than one in four of employees have put on weight in the past year as they struggle to cope with workplace stress, research from MetLife Employee Benefits shows.

Its study shows how millions are self-medicating in order to help them cope. 34% say they are turning to comfort eating to alleviate the demands of work while 23% admit they have turned to alcohol to help. The impact is not just felt by the individual – 29% of

employees questioned say they are arguing more with family as a result of work pressures.

MetLife Employee Benefits has launched a report, *Building Resilience in the Workplace*, outlining the scale of the issue and explaining how a focus on organisational resilience awareness and training can help employees overcome negative feelings and deal more effectively with stressful situations. Leading expert Dr Brian Marien of Positive Group, who writes: "The growing recognition that resilience training and strategies have a positive role to play in the workplace is a welcome development but we need to turn



up the volume on the message so that more organisations can learn about the genuine business benefits on offer."

The report shows that not all stress is bad: 23% of employees have exercised more to beat stress while 20% are opting to eat more healthily and 7% have cut back on alcohol.

Tom Gaynor, Employee Benefits Director of MetLife UK, said: "Stress has been described as 'the health

epidemic of the 21st century' but there is less awareness on how tackling stress and wellness at work can prevent it becoming a problem in the first place.

"Prevention is clearly better than cure – helping employees to build resilience is a major way for employers to tackle the problem and managers have a major role to play. Organisations which do not invest in improving resilience run the risk of having to invest heavily in recruitment as employees are likely to seek other employment if nothing is done to help them cope."

Office*



Wednesday 11 May marks the return of office* – the UK's biggest annual event for PAs, EAs, VAs, office managers, and executive support professionals. The popular two-day show, taking place at ExCeL London will feature over 100 leading exhibitors.

The following is a preview of some of the new innovations – including office equipment and supplies, business services, corporate gifts, training, recruitment, event management, activities, corporate hospitality, hotels and venues – being showcased at office* 2016.

House of Fraser For Business is showcasing its reward and incentive products, including gift cards, eGift cards and gift vouchers to spend in any one of 60 stores across the UK and Ireland or online. Visitors have the opportunity to win a £100 House of Fraser gift card at the show (stand 614).

tesa UK, a global leader in the manufacture and supply of adhesive tapes, is promoting its range of stationery items, designed to simplify everyday tasks and brighten up the workplace. Products include tesapack Pack 'n' Go, a compact, lightweight and colourful carton sealing tape dispenser, and tesa's mini stationery range, including items such as the tesa Mini Roller Correction ecoLogo (stand 126).

Millharbour Digital is promoting its print and supply graphics for offices, offering full service delivery from site surveys, print and production to installation. Some products include; window graphics, canvas frames, wallpaper graphics, floor vinyls, di-cut graphics to any shape, and size with many different materials to choose from (stand 506).

Office Pantry is promoting its new freshly roasted coffee service to companies – delivering either ground or whole bean speciality grade coffee for espresso or filter coffee machines (stand 510).

Corporate hotel booking specialists, and first time exhibitors, **Roomex.com** have recently added new supply to their worldwide hotel inventory, offering corporate rates at over 550,000 hotels worldwide. Average savings are measured at 21% for 400 corporate clients (stand 522).

Tailored Fit is providing a complete personalised health, wellness and fitness

Continued ►

Office*



service into the office environment. Its holistic approach is fully supported by individualised scientific profiling of clients, previously used for top competitive athletes, giving informed and accurate advice on how to best approach employee health. Services include metabolic and stress recovery profiling, yoga, mindfulness meditation, fitness and massage (stand 333).

Training, recruitment & networking

PA Access All Areas is introducing PA Insiders, a brand new, free online community for sharing information, support and networking. PAs know everything there is to know about everything – now it's all in one place (stand 117).

assisted.by is introducing My VA company, a new platform to support new and existing

virtual assistants launch, manage and maintain their own businesses; and are offering a free landing page to visitors at the show (stand 610).

Cornerstone42 Recruitment and Executive

Search is hosting a free 60 second CV review in a 'beat the stop watch' ice breaker at the show. Cornerstone42 aims to invest in the future of the administrative industry by supporting and assisting with the development of the administrative profession through mentoring, empowerment and developing leadership capabilities for personal and executive assistants (stand 129).

Pitman Training returns with The Headshot Guy to bring a unique opportunity for office* visitors to have a free professional headshot photograph, which can then be used across



social media and business platforms (stand 302).

SecsintheCity is promoting the launch of the 5th annual PA of the Year Awards, with categories including PA of the Year, Legal PA of the Year, Social Media PA of the Year and – a brand new category for 2016, sponsored by office* - the Outstanding Achievement Award (stand 523).

Cordant People are running a competition to find London's Top Receptionist 2016. Closing in August, exhibitors and visitors will have the chance to nominate their receptionist that they feel deserves the recognition for their hard work (stand 226).

Hotels, venues, event management & activities

Visit Brighton is promoting the launch of British Airways i360 – due for completion this summer. The British Airways i360 will be the world's first vertical cable car and tallest moving observation tower. Guests will be able to take a voyage to the skies, gliding up slowly to 450 feet in a futuristic glass viewing pod, and enjoy 360 degree views (stand 505).

Swing Patrol is promoting its vintage dance entertainment, including taster swing classes, swing performances, DJ-ing and MC-ing. They'll be showcasing their vintage dancers throughout the show, giving some inspiration to visitors for their corporate events (stand 351).

Premier Suites is offering visitors a chance to win a weekend break for two people in any one of their UK locations at the show. Guests can maintain the independence they enjoy at home in the spacious surroundings of their own living quarters, as suites and serviced apartments come with a fully fitted kitchen, living room, bedroom and modern bathroom (stand 624).

Go Ape is giving away a team building day for 10 with a picnic lunch at the new Go Ape at Battersea Park for visitors at the show. The winner can enjoy the Tree Top Adventure followed by a spot of lunch (stand 340).

Grange Hotels is promoting its guest loyalty scheme Revarew – Recognition, Value, Reward at the show. It is designed to globally reward guests who choose to give their patronage to independent hotels like Grange Hotels (stand 424).

office* will take place at the new venue of ExCeL London on the 11-12 May 2016. For further information and to register in advance, please visit www.officeshow. co.uk



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UK office workers spend two years of their lives preparing for and attending meetings



The survey of 1,005 office workers revealed that the average worker attends 3.7 meetings every week, spending one hour nine minutes preparing for each meeting and one hour 22 minutes actually attending it. In any given working week, this means that office workers are spending more than a day preparing for, and attending meetings. Across a 40 year career, this equates to a total of 17,470 hours - two entire years of someone's life or around 10 years of work time. Office workers in the UK are spending increasing amounts of time preparing for, and attending meetings – around 25% of their working week according to new research from eShare, which also reveals that 40% say at least half of those meetings are unnecessary

"Meetings are an integral part of business life, but many are inefficient, with incorrect agendas and attendees unable to locate the required background information when they need it," said Alister Esam, CEO, eShare. "With the average office worker spending more than a day every week on meetings, addressing the waste of hours resulting from ineffective and inefficient meetings could be the single biggest boost to productivity for any organisation."

eShare recently launched MeetingSquared, a new app for anyone who organises or attends meetings, and looks to bring an end to the inefficient preparation, scheduling and management of meetings. The research found that 40% of office workers feel that at least half of the meetings they attend are

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unnecessary, while 30% believe that most meetings they attend are inefficient and could be much shorter.

"With many office workers stating that most meetings they attend are inefficient and could be shorter, it is clear that the entire meeting process needs to be addressed," continued Alister Esam. "Whether it is a large corporate or an SME, too much valuable resource is being wasted in inefficient meetings, which could be better spent elsewhere. Changing this will entail a collective focus on the approach to meetings across the business world, but smaller steps can be taken such as using the appropriate digital tools for meetings instead of traditional paper-based approaches."

The research revealed that many office workers (one in five) still attend meetings with agendas and supporting materials printed out on paper, but also that there is a worrying lack of diligence when the meeting is finished. 11% of research respondents admitted that after most meetings they just throw away the agenda and printed materials, which has a number of security implications.

Almost half of respondents (45.7%) said they often find their mind wondering onto other topics when in meetings, further highlighting the fact that meetings need to be more focused and goal-orientated.

"Anyone attending a meeting must have the relevant emails, documents and agenda available on their device, and be able to annotate and share those with ease," concluded Alister Esam. "Furthermore, actions should be agreed and recorded so you don't have to rely on an attendee's faulty memory to refer to what was discussed. Other areas of business have been brought up-to-date in terms of attitudes and technology, and it is high time that meetings did the same."

THE SIMPLY BETTER TIN

SEAL IN FLAVOUR CUP AFTER CUP



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A good cup of coffee can go a long way, providing a welcome break in a busy working day...

But when making coffee, sometimes - from lost lids or hard to grasp tins - it's the small things that can present the most frustrating challenges. However, thanks to NESCAFÉ[®], these frustrations may soon be a thing of the past...

The latest innovation from Nestlé Professional[®] is the NEW NESCAFÉ[®] 'Simply Better' tin, that is set to completely transform how users are able to serve, store and present

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coffee. The curvy newcomer is at the forefront of ease and convenience, with a hinged lid to seal in the flavour so that users can enjoy a great quality coffee every time, a ground-breaking 'sqround' shape that is easy to hold and pour, and a new contemporary look and feel, making the art of coffee 'simply better.'

The new NESCAFÉ® 'Simply Better' tin is available now across all the most popular ranges including NESCAFÉ® Original, NESCAFÉ® GOLD BLEND® and NESCAFÉ® AZERA®. For further information, call the NESCAFÉ® Consumer Services line on 0800 745 845 or visit www.simplybettertin.co.uk

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During WW2, NESCAFÉ® becomes a staple in American troop food rations.



In 1965 NESCAFÉ[®] creates the first freeze-dried soluble coffee with the launch of NESCAFÉ[®] GOLD BLEND



In 2010, the launch of The NESCAFÉ® Plan marks the company's commitments to innovation 'beyond the cup' - developing the sustainable supply chain, improving social conditions in farming communities, and ensuring their profitability.

In 2013, the launch of NESCAFÉ® AZERA® kick-starts a new generation of premium quality convenience. The launch of the 'Simply Better' tin in 2016 is the latest in a long line of product innovation, designed to make coffee that little bit simpler.



London recruitment agency launches Work to Recover scheme for women

Recruitment agency Sidekicks London have joined forces with the London charity Free Me to launch Work to Recover, an innovative new employment scheme. The scheme aims to help women suffering from eating disorders and addictions get back into employment.

A 2015 report commissioned by Beat estimates that more than 725,000 people in the UK are affected by an eating disorder. Anorexia nervosa affects 1 in 250 women. Bulimia is two to three times more common and 90% of people with the condition are female.

Free Me is a registered charity that provides care to women recovering from addictions and eating disorders. They offer free therapeutic groups and activities, access to a dietician as well as one-on-one therapy. One of the therapeutic services they offer is a jewellery making workshop, and all of the jewellery is then sold under the jewellery brand Sweet Cavanagh.

The Work to Recover scheme with Sidekicks London will offer guidance, support and assistance in helping affected women get back into employment and assisting in them not just becoming more financially and mentally stable but forging a meaningful career.

In particular, Sidekicks London and Work to Recover will provide:

- Free CV workshops for Free Me clients who are ready to take the first step towards reentering the world of work.
- Free practical advice to assist women finding employment that's right for them.
- Free coaching sessions before interviews.
- Sidekicks London work with employers for whom Corporate Social Responsibility is a real priority. Those employers offer work placements to Free Me clients in order to help them adjust to the world of work once more.

Founder of Sidekicks Jessica Williams says "The launch of Work to Recover is an incredibly proud moment for everyone in





66 Work to Recover means we can help women in a genuinely practical way.

the Sidekicks team. One of my closest friends was utterly devastated by bulimia and I saw how hard she struggled to find work. It was heartbreaking to see such a brilliant, brave, capable woman - who had devoted so much to her recovery - left unable to find work.

"Work to Recover means we can help women in a genuinely practical way. Re-entering the world of work is often the final, crucial step in the process of regaining independence.

"Work to Recover allows us to prepare Free Me's clients thoroughly to ensure that we maximise their chances of being able to find work and we won't stop until we're satisfied that we've made a real difference to these women's lives."

Founder of Free Me, Florence Norman, says "Work to Recover is an absolutely brilliant initiative that will provide a vital link in the recovery process. Building the confidence to get back out into the professional world is a key step in getting better and is often one of the biggest relapse triggers.

"I worked as a PA before I came into recovery and founded Free Me. I loved the work because it was so relationship oriented. It takes a lot to be a reliable and efficient PA, much more than people think, and even though it is hard work, it is incredibly rewarding."

Increase productivity with the latest apps



Trying to keep up with everything that needs to be done may seem like quite a task in the modern world, but technology and, more specifically, apps, can also help us completely change the way we organise our time and day. These apps are an example of how we can boost productivity and ease multitasking with a little help from technology.

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Flow Tasks



Flow Tasks is a powerful combination of form and functionality. Menus, content entries and in-app notifications are delivered in a crisp, readable manner. A smartly designed structure ensures you can get updates on projects swiftly. Core features include instant messaging between groups and individuals, set milestones for tasks, files, and deadlines, and tags to compile related entries.

SwiftKey



SwiftKey is a beloved alternative to iOS and Android's standard virtual keyboards that often cause trouble with their unhelpful and even unnecessary autocorrect functions. The smart keyboard replaces your device's built-in keyboard with one that adapts to the way you type. SwiftKey learns your typing style over time to give you more accurate autocorrect and more appropriate next-word prediction. If you're conscious of your long keystrokes, SwiftKey should help you reduce them.

Evernote



Evernote is the perfect go-to app for everything you want organised in an online collection. Be it notes, photos, audio clips or web pages, Evernote acts as a resourceful journal that not only integrates everything but also allows you to index all your entries so you have no trouble finding them later. You never have to stress out over sorting out those quick thoughts you jotted down during a presentation, and you can access them from your desktop computer, your mobile, or the web.

Asana

Asana simplifies the process of project management as well as communication between a team and synchronises all of it in one place. You can eliminate having to keep track of confusing email threads between your team, and just use this one app to assign projects, communicate and set deadlines, so

Continued ►

you can also keep an eye on what tasks have already been performed and who needs to be doing what. You can incorporate fifteen people as part of your team for free using Asana, and that cap goes up if you choose to go premium.



GoodNotes 4 - Notes & PDF



Sunrise

The combination of an elegant visual design and useful features makes this calendar app a winner. It syncs all your existing calendars and offers location tagging, reminders and time zone support as well if you're jetsetting around the world. It also pulls information about the people you're meeting straight from LinkedIn, so you can see exactly who you're connecting with.



The ability to add notes to PDF on the fly, just by using the touchscreen is a great way to not ony save paper, but also to share documents around entire teams. Everything can be synched to the cloud, whether you use Box, Google Drive, Dropbox or iCloud, so whether you're at your desk or on the move, you can have your say before a document hits the mainstream.

Workflow

Workflow forms the basis for effective time management and integrating technology to accomplish just that. Workflow allows you to customise your phone so you can skip having to perform the most time-consuming tasks, letting this app do it for you. Thus, you can create your own



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Workflow routines to automate actions like immediately uploading a picture to Facebook after you take it or calling a Uber before your calendar appointment. You can create buttons for any repetitive activity that you usually perform and get it done with a simple tap on the screen!

RescueTime

Find yourself going off-task constantly? RescueTime tracks your daily habits so you can figure out where you might be spending too much time on a distraction during work hours. It runs in the background of your computer or mobile device and gives you detailed reports on your activities.



Paper by FiftyThree

All the creativity gurus out there are in for a treat with Paper a highly useful and equally beautiful app for note-taking. With this app, you can jot down sketches and ideas on a digital canvas, and save them for later. It is superior to other such apps with its array of pens and brushes that allow you to recreate your thoughts in detail. But alongside its excellent drawing features, you can also organise your checklists and annotated photographs, allowing you to export any of these files into PowerPoint or PDF formats.



Hootsuite

Many PAs are tasked with managing their company's social media these days, but it can get pretty tricky switching between LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Hootsuite allows you to customise a dashboard that pulls together feeds from multiple channels and even multiple accounts so you can always see what's going on without having to switch between apps or browser windows.



Learning a new skill is easier said than done

By Linda Adams

Before rolling out specific training or initiatives that are aimed at improving some facet of your business, you need to ensure that your leaders and team members are equipped with fundamental communication and relationship management skills.

Numerous studies have verified that cooperation, communication, interpersonal skills, listening and summarising skills are critical to higherorder team success. In their book, The Leadership Challenge, Kouzes and Posner write, "Every leader ought to know how to paraphrase, summarize, express feelings, disclose personal information, admit mistakes, respond non-defensively, ask for clarification, solicit different views, and so on."

These skills are at the heart of emotional intelligence. Cultivating them in managers and employees is the key to all of the benefits of training and development. An organisation that is already able to communicate across levels productively and functionally, and to manage conflicts creatively and beneficially, is prepared for higherorder training and learning that will require those skills for successful implementation.

The Four Stages for Learning Any New Skill

No matter what new skill we decide to learn, there are four learning stages each of us goes through. Being aware of these stages helps us better accept that learning can be a slow and frequently uncomfortable process.

Stage 1

Unconsciously unskilled. We don't know what we don't know. We are inept and unaware of it.

Using a recent personal example, last year after seeing the great shape a friend was in and learning that it was a result of Pilates exercise, I decided to try it out for myself. The first time I went to a class, I felt self-conscious and awkward. I knew nothing about how Pilates worked and I had never seen, much less used, any of those machines before.

Applying this principle to communication training at work, often leaders communicate in ways that interfere with or damage relationships with their team members, but they aren't aware of it.

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Stage 2

Consciously unskilled. We know what we don't know. We start to learn at this level when sudden awareness of how poorly we do something shows us how much we need to learn.

I have exercised for many years so I thought I was already pretty fit and strong. Wrong. After two or three Pilates classes, I was struck by how few of the movements I could do well. The instructor did a lot of observing and correcting. I also observed the ease

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with which she and other students did more advanced movements (and learned how long they've been doing it!).

While participating in a Leader Effectiveness Training course, leaders become aware of both ineffective and effective ways of communicating. They become conscious of the way most of us usually respond when team members signal they have a problem and the negative effects these "Roadblocks" have on the working relationship. And they become aware of the power of empathic listening. They also learn about the importance of clear and direct self-disclosure as an alternative to passive or aggressive communication. But at this stage, they aren't yet using these skills. They might feel some guilt as they realize the effects their previous communication might have had on their team members.

Stage 3

Consciously skilled. Trying the skill out, experimenting, practicing. We now know how to do the skill the right way, but need to think and work hard to do it.

In each Pilates class, I try to concentrate completely on doing the movements correctly–both to get the most benefit from them and to avoid getting corrected. It's not easy because I'm not used to these positions and haven't yet developed the core strength it takes to do them well. It's invaluable to have an instructor there to coach and help me get it right.

At this stage of learning communication skills, leaders are very conscious of using them.

They try hard to avoid unhelpful or damaging responses and to listen empathically instead. This means they bite their tongue a lot! And they are very aware of trying to speak in clear, authentic, non-blameful language when expressing their opinions, needs and problems. When conflicts arise, their goal is to try to find a solution that works for both people. Sometimes, they might feel a little phony–the use of skills seems kind of gimmicky. Other people usually perceive the leader as consciously trying to communicate differently.

Stage 4

Unconsciously skilled. If we continue to practice and apply the new skills, eventually we arrive at a stage where they become easier, and given time, even natural.

Now, nine months later, after going to Pilates twice each week, I can do many more moves and no longer feel so awkward. I look forward to going to the classes; they're energizing, challenging and rewarding, and no longer scary. I've gotten stronger and more fit and other people notice the difference, too! Still, I see how far I have to go.

When leaders persist in using the skills they start to be comfortable with them. Now active listening, congruent self-disclosure and no-lose conflict resolution seem more natural. Team members and others respond favorably because they feel heard, understood, appreciated, satisfied. Leaders find that they can apply these skills in all areas of their lives and gradually they become integrated into all of their interactions and become the natural way of being with others.

Herbs that can boost your mood and memory

The herbs peppermint, chamomile, rosemary and lavender have been proven to have an impact on mood and memory, with significant benefits displayed for older people, according to new research from Northumbria University.

Researchers have found that drinking peppermint tea improves alertness, while chamomile tea has a calming effect. They also found that smelling the aromas of rosemary and lavender impacted on memory in people over 65, with the scent of rosemary enhancing their memory, while lavender impaired it.

The researchers asked 180 volunteers to consume either a chamomile or peppermint tea drink and tested their cognition and mood before and after drinking. A control group drank hot water for comparison. They found that peppermint enhanced and aroused both mood and cognition, helping to improve long term memory, working memory and alertness, while chamomile had a calming and sedative effect which significantly slowed memory and attention speed.

In a separate study, 150 healthy people aged 65 and over were placed in rooms which had been scented with rosemary and lavender essential oils, or a control room which had no scent. They were asked to undertake tests that assessed their prospective memory – the ability to remember to do something at a



given time, such as taking medication, or after receiving a prompt, such as posting a letter after seeing a post box. They also completed a mood assessment test.

Those who had been in the rosemary scented room displayed significantly enhanced prospective memory, with test scores 15% higher than those who had been in the room with no aroma. They were also more alert.

In contrast, those who had spent time in the lavender scented room displayed significantly increased calmness and contentedness, with a decrease in their ability to remember to do something at a given time. Holiday

Top 10 holiday money-saving ideas

If your thoughts have turned to booking a holiday but you're on a budget, help is here. Go North East has teamed-up with frugal guru Ashleigh Money Saver to bring you these top holiday money-saving tips.



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Booking with The Sun

Have you ever thought about booking a holiday through The Sun? You can choose from a number of locations across the UK and Europe for less than £100 for a family for a week! Plus they have a price promise so you know your holiday will be the best price.

Research flights

If you plan on traveling abroad then do some research into flights. It may be cheaper to fly from an airport in the next city rather than the one closest to you. Scottish school holidays are at different times to those in England so flights from Scotland can be cheaper in our school breaks.

All inclusive

If you're holidaying with children, it is often miles cheaper to go all inclusive. Children are always wanting a drink or an ice cream and if you find a package which includes unlimited free treats for the kids then this could save you ££'s and you won't feel guilty saying no!

Coupons

Pick up as many local maps and leaflets as you can when you're on holiday. These often have coupons and vouchers on to save you money in local restaurants or attractions.

Book on Christmas Day

Booking a holiday on Christmas Day is the best time to book. Prices are reduced dramatically on Christmas Day as the demand is low because everyone is too busy with the festivities.

Online

Book your attraction tickets online and in advance to make sure you get the best price for the whole family.

Flight Comparison

Use a flight comparison tool such as Sky Scanner to find the best prices on flights.

Split the cost

Invite the family! It can often be cheaper to invite some family or friends and split the cost of a villa - this can reduce accommodation prices.

UK holiday

Looking for a UK holiday, why not look at budget hotel chains such as Travelodge or Holiday Inn Express? You can get rooms from £20 a night and they can be found in all popular destinations around the UK and apparently the beds are really comfy!

Call costs

Find out how much it will cost to use your phone if you are heading abroad. In some countries, making a phonecall home could cost you as much as £1.50 per minute. You could come home to a nasty phone bill.

Head over to ashleighmoneysaver.co.uk for more money saving tips. Happy holidays!