

# PA ENTERPRISE

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

September 2016

**Letting go  
of anger**

**Gender pay gap  
widens**

**Half of women  
have been sexually  
harassed at work**

**How to make  
your emails more  
productive**

- **Small business owners' health under threat**
- **Cycling to work is good for employers as well as employees**

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## ***As an office worker, where do you go for information, advice, tutorials, vital tools, training and relaxation?***

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## PA ENTERPRISE MAGAZINE

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# Half of women in UK have been sexually harassed at work

*The recent headlines concerning sexual harrassment at work were in response to new research by the TUC which indicated that more than half of women say they have been sexually harassed at work and most admit to not reporting it. A survey of 1,500 women saw 52% cite the problem and also found a third had been subjected to unwelcome jokes and a quarter experienced unwanted touching.*

More than half of all women and nearly two-thirds of women aged 18 to 24 said they have experienced sexual harassment at work. This includes being subject to unwelcome sexual jokes (32%) or sexual comments about their body or clothes (28%). Nearly one in five women have experienced unwanted sexual advances – with one in eight being touched intimately or kissed against their will.

**www.safeworkers.co.uk** explains how to deal with this issue, if you are personally affected.

The law makes it clear that sexual harassment is definitely not acceptable. Whilst there is no strict definition as to what constitutes sexual harassment, the Sex Discrimination Act gives you the legal right not to be sexually harassed at work and it is also unlawful to treat women (or men) less favourably because of their sex.

### What constitutes sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment constitutes any unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature. It's not about fun or friendship but about the abuse of power. It is also worth bearing in mind that many people respond to situations in different ways. What may seem like an innocent action or remark to one person may be deemed offensive by another and the law sides with the 'victim' not the 'perpetrator'. Since there is no single definition, the test is how the recipient feels about the behaviour. Whilst men can also be subject to sexual harassment, the vast majority of cases have been by women against men. It is estimated that 50% of women in employment are, or have been, subject to sexual harassment of some form or other. It doesn't just happen to women who work in large offices or those who work within a predominantly



## Verbal

- Comments about appearance, body or clothes
- Indecent remarks
- Questions or comments about your sex life
- Requests for sexual favours
- Sexual demands made by someone of the opposite sex, or even your own sex
- Promises or threats concerning a person's employment conditions in return for sexual favours

## Non-verbal

- Looking or staring at a person's body
- Display of sexually explicit material such as calendars, pin ups or magazines

## Physical

- Physically touching, pinching, hugging, caressing, kissing
- Sexual assault
- Rape

## What can I do about sexual harassment?

In the first instance, you should try to confront the harasser. It may be that their perception of harassment is not the same as yours and they didn't realise you found their behaviour offensive.

*Continued ►*

male working environment; it can happen to people in any occupation, to any age group and from every community.

It can take place in many forms which can broadly be categorised into three groups:

## When you confront them you should:

- **Speak clearly and slowly, maintaining direct eye contact**
- **Describe the behaviour, its effects on you and that you want it to stop**
- **Ignore any attempts to trivialise or dismiss what you have to say**
- **Don't smile or apologise. This will undermine your complaint**
- **When you have finished what you want to say, walk away - the less you say, the more powerful you will be**

However, you do need to speak up straight away. It may be that you choose a confidante, a colleague or union representative to give you moral support. They could also act as a witness to any incidents of improper behaviour.

If you feel you can't confront the harasser face to face, you might prefer to write to them to explain that their behaviour is making you feel uncomfortable and that you want it to stop. Keep a copy of the letter and let them know that if their behaviour persists, you will take the matter further.

## Keep a diary

Note down all the behaviour that offends you, the dates, times and location where the behaviour took place and if there were any other people present, keep a record of their names. This will help you if you need to make an official complaint.

## What if it continues?

Once you've confronted the perpetrator, if the behaviour continues you need to tell your employer. Many employers have a procedure - follow it. Your employer should investigate your complaint and deal with it. You have the right to take someone with you to any meetings about your complaint. They can back you up if necessary. Once again, keep a written record of everything that happens.

## When and why should I take my case to a Tribunal?

Employment Tribunals are external committees who assess whether employers have acted unlawfully and seek to resolve the problem. You should go to a tribunal if:

- The harassment continues after you've told the perpetrator to stop and you've reported it to your employer
- The harasser owns the company and there's no-one else to complain to
- If you are not happy with the way the investigation was handled and/or you are not satisfied with the outcome

**You MUST File Your Complaint Within 3 Months of The Incident Taking Place.**

The Employment Tribunals Commission and your local Citizen's Advice Bureau can offer you excellent guidance and advice about this type of complaint.

Sexual harassment at work threatens your confidence and self-esteem. It can stop you working effectively, undermines your dignity and it can affect your health and happiness.

Nobody should be subjected to it. Fortunately, a variety of laws exist to protect you.



# Gender pay gap widens

*The findings of an annual survey of 72,000 UK managers by the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) and salary specialist XpertHR, reveal that women working in equivalent full-time roles earn 22% less than men, meaning that they are unpaid for a total of 57 working days every year.*

For men and women of all ages and in all professional roles the gender pay gap now stands at £8,524, with men earning an average of £39,136 and women earning £30,612. In 2014, the pay gap stood at £9,069, or 23%.

The pay gap rises to £14,943 for senior or director-level staff, with men earning an average of £138,699 compared to the average for women of £123,756. Women managers are also missing out across all levels when it comes to bonuses, with the average man's bonus of £4,898 almost twice that of the average woman's bonus of £2,531.

The survey data also reveals that the pay gap becomes wider as women grow older. Women aged 26-35 are paid 6% less than their male colleagues, rising to 20% for women aged 36-45. The gap increases to 35% for women aged 46-60, equivalent to working 681 hours for free compared to their male colleagues. For women and men in their 60s the pay gap expands to 38%.

Ann Francke, chief executive of CMI, commented: "Working for free two hours a day is unacceptable. While some progress is being made, it's clear from our research that Lord Davies is right to target the executive pipeline. Having more women in senior executive roles will pave the way for others and ensure they're paid the same as their

## A BROKEN PIPELINE.

Men in management jobs are more likely to be promoted than women.

Different promotion rates for men and women are one of the main causes of the gender pay gap, according to analysis of data for more than 60,000 UK managers and professionals published by XpertHR and CMI.

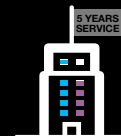
### MEN ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE PROMOTED THAN WOMEN



Male managers are  
**40%**  
more likely than female  
managers to be promoted



Between 2015 – 2016  
**14%** vs **10%**  
of men were promoted  
of women



This is part of a longer term trend.  
Amongst managers who have stayed  
with their employer for five years  
**47%** vs **39%**  
of men were promoted  
of women

male colleagues at every stage of their careers."

In other findings, the pay gap is widest for employees of organisations with between 250 and 999 staff, with women earning on average 27% less working for these employers – making them 5% worse off than even the national average.

This should be particularly alarming news for large organisations. New legislation coming into force in 2016 will require organisations with 250+ employees to report publicly on what they pay male and female staff. Over 7,850 organisations, which collectively employ more than 11.2 million staff (40% of the UK's workforce), will be affected by the new legislation.

# Employees who cycle to work good for employers

*New research reveals that cyclists cost employers up to half as much as their non-cycling colleagues in lost working hours each year*

- *Employers estimate delayed commutes from road and rail costing on average £32,000 a year in lost working hours*
- *Majority of employees take longer to get stuck in to work after a delayed commute, with employers saying almost half are noticeably less productive*
- *Research launched ahead of Cycle to Work Day shows cyclists are least likely to be late to work, with those employees taking trains costing businesses the most in lost hours*





New research reveals businesses across the UK estimate that they are losing on average over £32,000 a year in lost working hours resulting from delayed commutes by rail or road. A survey of over 100 employers finds employees that cycle to work are most likely to avoid late starts and least likely to cost the business in inefficient performance resulting from the disruption a difficult commute can cause.

One of the major benefits of cycling to work is that you're largely in control of your own journey, while other commuters are regularly held up by public transport delays and traffic jams. Research shows employees that commute by car are most likely to be late to work, followed closely by train and bus commuters, accumulating 60, 62 and 52 lost working hours over the year, translating to £910, £936 and £780 per employee respectively, based on the average UK annual income. In contrast, cyclists account for just 32 hours and £481 in losses per employee on average, almost half that of their train bound colleagues.

Moreover, employers cite an active commute as contributing to the positive overall performance of their employees at work, with a third believing cyclists and walkers are more productive, more efficient and more energised throughout the day. Beyond the bottom line, over one in five employers believe cycling contributes to their employees feeling happier in their jobs, and an overwhelmingly majority (98%) say cyclists are healthier than their commuting counterparts.

Stephen Holt, Commercial Director at Cyclescheme.co.uk says: "We know that an active commute can have many benefits for

employees from loss of weight to increased energy and mood levels but cycling's positive effects aren't exclusively beneficial to the individual, with employers enjoy the perks too through reduced tardiness, increased productivity and efficiency and greater job satisfaction.

With tens of thousands of commuters expected to take part in **Cycle to Work Day** on 14th September, why not help your workforce arrive on time by encouraging them to sign up to fall in love with pedal power!"

Lucie Cherrington, Head of Cycle to Work at Halfords said: "It's becoming increasingly difficult to fit exercise into our daily routines with many of us grappling with busy schedules these days. That's why using an active mode of transport to commute can be a really simple and effective way to squeeze in exercise on a daily basis and of course stay fit, as well having the added bonus of saving pounds on the daily commute.

**Cycle to Work Day** is a fantastic opportunity for employers to encourage more colleagues to join this brilliant initiative and reap the benefits of a more physically active workforce".

Cycle to Work Day was established by Cyclescheme in 2013 to encourage cyclists of all abilities to give cycle commuting a try. This year, Halfords will be partnering with Cyclescheme to get people into cycling regularly through their everyday commute.

For more information or to pledge to ride visit: **[www.cycletoworkday.org](http://www.cycletoworkday.org)**



# How to make your emails more productive

*Email is so prevalent that last year, workers worldwide collectively sent and received about 112.5 billion business emails each day, according to The Radicati Group, a technology market research firm. The average user sent and received 122 work messages daily.*

*That's why making sure your message gets read can seem almost impossible. But there are some small things you can do to make your emails more likely to get a response.*

Fast Company consulted productivity expert Chris Bailey, author of the *The Productivity Project: Accomplishing More by Managing Your Time, Attention, and Energy* for quick tips on sending emails your colleagues will actually want to read.

## 1. Keep It short and sweet

Take it from Shakespeare: "Brevity is the soul of wit." Turns out, this holds true whether you're writing Hamlet or just a note: According to a 2015 user analysis from email scheduler Boomerang, messages that fell between 50 to 125 words were most likely to get replies, with response rates a little higher than 50%.

One strategy Bailey uses is keeping his emails to three sentences or less. "If an email needs to be substantially longer than three sentences, it might be



a conversation that's better had over the phone."

"Our thoughts can usually be expressed so much more simply than the way they first come to us," he explains. "Constraints, like the three-sentence rule, force us to articulate our thoughts so that we understand them better ourselves, and in turn, others can understand us better too."

## 2. Make timing count

The Boomerang analysis determined that, in general, messages sent during lunchtime and at the start of working hours had the highest response rates, as people arriving or returning to their desks often check their messages immediately. So if you have an urgent message, sending it first thing in the morning can yield better results.

Additionally, Bailey cautions against sending emails too late in the day: "I don't like to send emails past 5 or 6 p.m.," he says. "I still sometimes type an email past those hours—but then I'll use some kind of 'send later' plug-in to send them in the morning."

Using a scheduling service to send emails later is a win-win-win: You can cross the email off your to-do list now, send it at a time in the morning when it's more likely to get read, and, Bailey adds, set appropriate time boundaries about emails.

"So much of productivity is managing other people's expectations," he explains. "By sending emails only within a certain time frame, you end up managing people's expectations of when you're going to respond—so they won't expect immediate responses from you at all hours of the day."

## 3. Press pause before replying

Do you hold the world record for sprint to the "reply" button? Next time, try to take a deep breath before you hit "send."

"I've tried to make a habit of sitting on emails," Bailey says. "When you hold off on responding, you have more time to connect the dots, you can form your thoughts, and ultimately, you can communicate better."

By taking time to respond to an email, you give yourself more opportunity to craft a succinct, effective note that will get your message across. And you save yourself from having to send additional emails every time you gather a bit of new information—which makes your reader's job a lot easier.

## 4. Express yourself

Another thing that increases your response rate? Show a little emotion. A perfectly worded impersonal email can read as uninterested or boring. The Boomerang analysis found that emails that used moderately positive or moderately negative language (words like "great" or "bad") elicited 10% to 15% more responses than emails that were totally neutral.

Of course, that doesn't mean you should overload your emails with fawning praise or aggressive criticism—but using slightly more interesting language can help readers remember there's a human being behind the email and, in turn, encourage them to respond.

## 5. Create a "Waiting for" folder

When you send an important email, go to your sent box and add it to your Waiting For

*Continued ►*



folder, where you'll be able to quickly scan through everything you're waiting for a response on.

"That list helps me make sure nothing slips through the cracks, and more importantly, helps me feel less uncertainty about my work. When you have unresolved commitments all in your head, it's easy to feel overwhelmed—so something like this is a powerful way to stay on top of the unknown," Bailey says.

### 6. They Know When Email Isn't The Answer

"Email supports our work," says Bailey, "but it isn't our work. Writing reports, engineering products—those kinds of things are our work."

To that end, it's important to recognize when email might be becoming more of a nuisance than a powerful tool.

"If you're constantly drowning in long email chains when collaborating with others, that might be a cue that it's time to invest in a different system," Bailey says. That could be as simple as trying out a new project management system (Bailey likes Basecamp) or picking up the phone.

# Home workers can feel stressed and isolated

*A recent survey by Viking Direct, one of the largest office product suppliers in the world, has revealed that nearly half of people working from home in the UK are stressed and have no one to talk to about it.*

67% of office workers, on the other hand, feel like they do have someone to turn to in times of stress, whether it be a colleague, friend, or manager. However, that's not to say that people working from home are the most stressed out of the two.

Overall, when it comes to a person's working environment, the results show that office employees are in fact more stressed than those working from home, scoring their stress levels 5.39 out of 10. Factors that contributed to these stress levels included:

1. **Working overtime**
2. **Not taking enough breaks**
3. **Having no one to talk to**
4. **Job satisfaction (or lack thereof)**
5. **Pressure to succeed**

It's no surprise that a lack of breaks is causing stress, with half of office workers admitting to taking no breaks at all during the day, excluding lunch. Conversely, a massive 61% of people working from home said they took two to three breaks throughout the day.

Dr. Mariette Jansen, also known as Dr. De-Stress, [www.drdestress.co.uk](http://www.drdestress.co.uk), is a stress expert, coach, and trainer, who believes that taking breaks at work is a healthy way to deal



with stressful situations:

"Stress is the result of 'stretching' yourself too much, so any action to stop the stretching will avoid stress. If you consider that the average attention span of an adult is about 20 minutes, you can understand that it's important to have regular breaks."

45% of office workers feel like they're under an unpleasant amount of pressure on a weekly basis, whereas 30% of people working from home say that they never feel this way. This also correlates with office workers' level of job satisfaction: 60% of office workers feel

a lack of fulfilment from their jobs at least once a week.

Ruud Linders, Marketing Manager Europe at Viking, said "I think the recent findings highlight how important it is for employees and employers, whether working from home or in an office, to have someone they can speak to about any work-related problems. Having an outlet for stress can really help to ease any unpleasant pressure: this could be exercising, taking a break from your desk, meditating, or simply confiding in someone about your worries."

**For more of Viking's findings, along with a stress quiz and de-stress guide, visit [www.viking-direct.co.uk](http://www.viking-direct.co.uk)**

# Small business owners' health under threat

*Small business owners are working thirteen hours a week more than the UK average, negatively impacting the health of 28% small business owners, according to a survey commissioned by Bizdaq.*



## **Business owners work an additional 13 hours per week**

Small business owners work 50.5 hours per week, compared to the UK average of 37.

## **Health often sacrificed**

28% of small business owners health is negatively affected by their business.

## **Mental health a particular concern**

660,000 small business owners are currently experiencing a negative impact on their mental health due to the pressures of running a small business in the current climate.

## **Holidays are not an option for many small business owners**

More than half a million (566,000) small business owners have not taken a holiday since they started their business.

## **North-South divide a reality**

Twice as many northern small business owners (22%) say their health is negatively impacted than southern small business owners (11%).



*“The fact that so many small business owners are struggling is astonishing and really shows the need for the government to do more to support the backbone of the British economy.”*

The research found that 1.3 million small business owners are suffering health issues due to the pressures of running a small business, with 660,000 of those owners feeling that the business has a negative impact on their mental health.

Small business owners were found to be working an additional 13 hours extra per week (50 hours per week) compared to the UK average (37 hours), with 370,000 small business owners working 60+ hours a week and as many as 94,000 owners working 80+ hour weeks.

Business ownership was most likely to be a burden in the North of England, with twice as many Northern small business owners (22%) responding that their health was negatively impacted than Southern business owners (11%). The East Midlands was found to be the most negatively impacted region, with 34% of owners saying their health was affected, whilst the South East was the least affected with only 8%.

Families are feeling the effect of small business ownership too, with 87% of small business owners with children under the age of 18 not planning to take their children on holiday this year. This lack of family time isn't just felt during the summer break though, as 18% of small business owners feel their business negatively affects their family.

### **Younger small business owners more confident post-referendum**

The EU Referendum saw a historic leave vote which was vastly criticised by younger voters in particular, however younger small business owners are more confident about a post-Brexit future than any other generation.

Whilst only 20% of small business owners are more confident about the future since the referendum, this jumps to 45% of 18–34-year-old small business owners. This far-exceeds the 13% of 35–54-year-old business owners and 23% of 55+ year old small business owners who are more confident about the future since the referendum.

Sean Mallon, CEO of Bizdaq, said “The fact that so many small business owners are struggling is astonishing and really shows the need for the government to do more to support the backbone of the British economy. Now more than ever, the UK needs strong small businesses.

The abolishment of Business Link and the regional adviser program by the Coalition government in 2010 left a vacuum in small enterprise in the UK. Where small business owners previously felt the benefits of having a local support network, there are currently no services where owners can turn to when looking for support. I would call upon the new small business minister Margot James to prioritise the re-establishment of business support on a local level.”

# A candle to tease your taste buds!

For years Lisa Roukin has been concocting delicious and nutritious recipes and promoting healthy eating with the help of her cookbook *My Relationship with Food*, yet her work just got a whole lot more rewarding as she introduces her Lisa's Pantry candles that come in two tasty flavours, Apple Pie and Shortbread.



If you love to snack on home baked shortbread or digging in to a helping of apple pie after your meal, you can't go wrong with one of Lisa's Pantry candles which smell even better than the real thing!

These strongly scented candles are perfect for stamping out the smell

of less desirable foods that linger in your home. Whether you have been cooking fish, cauliflower, or even garlic you can guarantee these candles will not only remove these odours but also leave your kitchen smelling delicious.

There is nothing quite like arriving home to the smell of freshly baked food and with the help of these candles, this can be achieved in half the time. Simply light your candle and wait minutes before this splendid smell fills your home, giving off the impression you have spent hours slaving in the kitchen



creating this delicious aroma, and what's more, there are no calories involved.

Lisa says, allowing yourself to indulge every once in a while is an important part of living an all round healthy life style so whether you prefer relaxing to the smell of an apple pie or shortbread candle, or taking a nibble of these delicious desserts themselves, you should allow yourself to do so.

Each Lisa's Pantry candle is hand made in the UK and presented inside a kilner jar, to create a homely look inside your kitchen. For only £20, they will provide you with 50 hours worth of smells to make your mouth water. The kilner jars are reusable so once your candle has finished burning you can fill your jar with kitchen essentials such as tea bags, sugar or coffee.

[www.myrelationshipwithfood.com](http://www.myrelationshipwithfood.com)

# Report reveals shocking workplace conditions are widespread

***Unsafe and unsanitary working conditions are putting the health of millions of British workers in serious danger, according to a new report.***

Researchers for Hayward Baker carried out an in-depth study into the conditions of Britain's offices, shops, factories, warehouses and building sites – and discovered a staggering 69% of British workers – claim their workplace to be a health hazard.

The study revealed 35% of working Brits have picked up an illness from their place of work - with 18% claiming to have been struck down with food poisoning or caught a stomach bug because of dirty conditions.

35% of working Brits have picked up an illness from their place of work - with 18% claiming to have been struck down with food poisoning or caught a stomach bug because of dirty conditions.

A further 39% have even suffered an injury at work, with two in ten having been to hospital due to a work-related illness or injury.

Complaints to emerge from the study regarding the workplace include greasy and slippery floors, unhygienic work colleagues, unsanitary toilet facilities and cluttered floors.



Dirty kitchens also pose a problem, as do ripped carpets, broken chairs and unsafe wiring.

Almost half of those polled have complained to their bosses about the state of their place of work, with a further 21% saying their manager did nothing to rectify the situation.

The research was commissioned by Personal Injury Solicitors Hayward

Baker following the launch of its new interactive injury compensation calculator, which provides workers with an estimate of how much compensation they would be entitled to following an accident or injury.

A spokesperson for Hayward Baker, said: "Going to work could seriously damage your health if managers don't take working conditions seriously enough.

"Our free to injury compensation calculator gives British workers easy access to information which can really help them decide if they have a valid claim against their company."

**[www.hayward-baker.com](http://www.hayward-baker.com)**



# Letting go of Anger

By Linda Adams

[www.gordontraining.com](http://www.gordontraining.com)

***"I decided not to say anything."***

***"I didn't feel my needs were as important as his."***

***"I didn't want to hurt their feelings."***

***"I was afraid I'd lose my job/relationship/friendship if I spoke up."***

While the above statements may sound innocuous enough, in fact they signal a potential problem because implicit in each statement is the unwillingness to say what's really on your mind. In the interest of maintaining a relationship or keeping a job, the truth remains hidden the result of which is often resentment and anger—at the other person and ultimately at oneself.

Anger may be the most complicated of all our emotions and I think it's fair to say that most of us have conflicting feelings about it—whether it's our own or someone else's. Throughout our lives, we've had lots of negative experiences with it and so have developed a strong urge to deny and avoid it. Yet, we know that its presence tells us that something significant is going on inside—something that really matters.

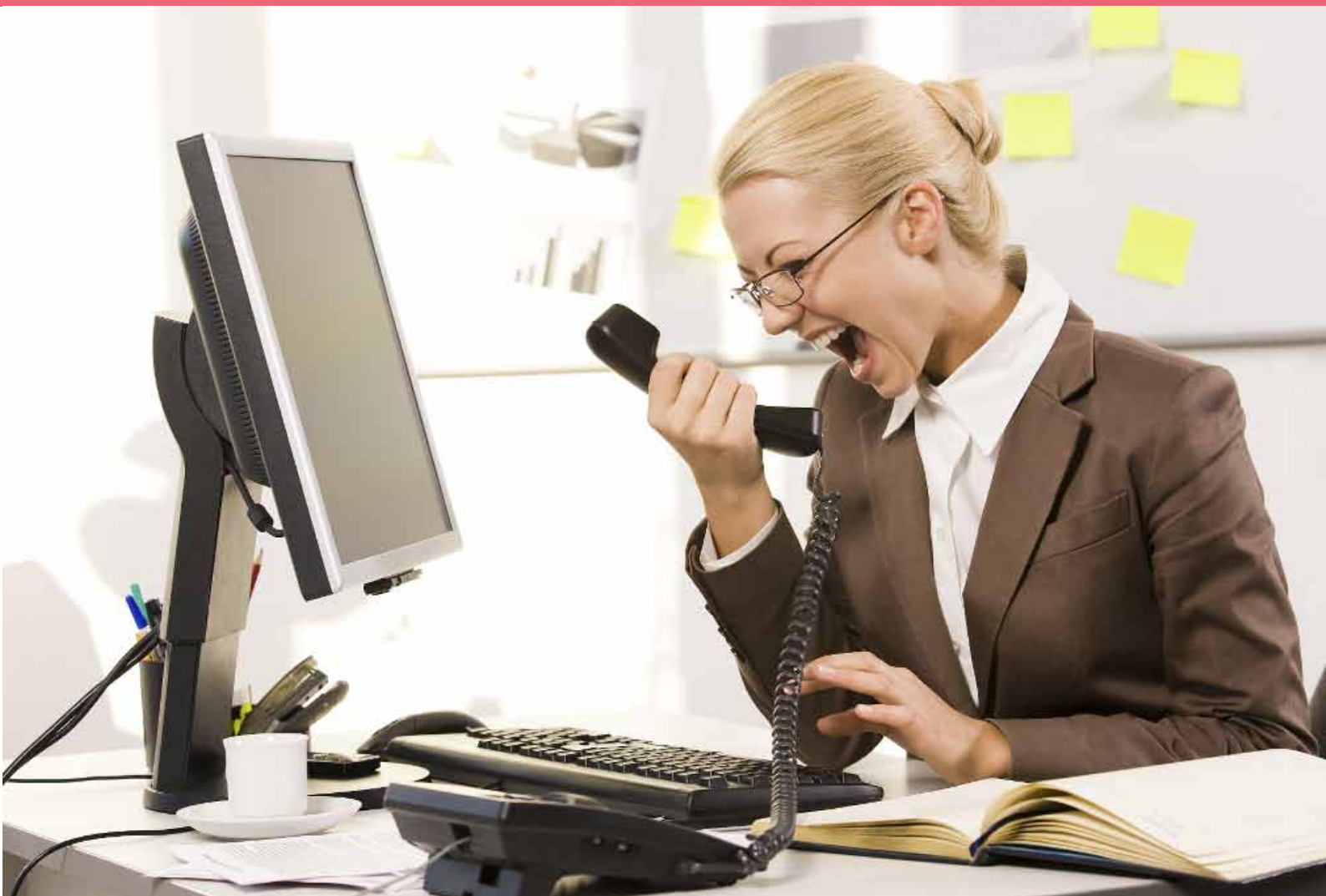
I'm not talking about the flash of anger we might feel when the person ahead of us is driving very slowly and when we finally pass them, we see that they're talking on their cell

phone. In this piece, I want to discuss the kind of anger that gets in our way of being able to fully function, prevents us from developing our unique capacities—stops us from being our authentic self.

A major reason for resentment and anger is putting our own needs on hold; abandoning our own growth often in favor of another's. This can occur in any relationship—between spouses, between parents and children, at work, with a friend.

Here are some examples:

- **Moving to another city to accommodate your spouse's new job which means leaving a job and a city you love.**
- **Putting off having a baby until your spouse "finds himself."**
- **Helping your adult child/ren financially while sacrificing your own needs.**
- **Taking care of an aging parent while your siblings carry on with their everyday lives.**
- **Devoting all your time to raising your children and not taking time to meet your other important needs.**
- **Agreeing to work many extra hours on evenings and weekends when you'd rather be spending time doing other things you enjoy.**



At the time we make such decisions, they may seem acceptable to us. We think: "I can adjust—my relationship is more important." "When the kids are older, there will be time for me." "This won't last forever."

But any time we make a decision to set aside our own important needs to accommodate someone else's, we run a risk. This is particularly true the longer the situation continues. The longer needs and desires remain unmet, the more likely it is that resentment and anger will result. And the more likely that we will blame the other person for our decision, i.e. "If it weren't for you, I could've..."

If we choose (and it is a choice) to stay stuck in anger and resentment, the status quo

remains—we don't need to face what we're feeling at a deeper level. It is very likely when we choose to deal with anger and resentment in this way that we will feel increasingly helpless, like a victim, blaming others for what happens to us, taking little responsibility for our own lives. Just as a muscle atrophies because of lack of use, so does the ability to act in our own behalf. If we make the choice to maintain the unsatisfying status quo over and over again, we will have less and less ability and courage to make changes that could vastly improve the quality of our lives.

Being willing to feel anger and admit to having it can be very cathartic. Anger can bring clarity. It can make us keenly aware of

*Continued* ►

what's wrong—and let us see that we're too unhappy or dissatisfied with the status quo to live with it any longer. It can motivate us to take action. Then the challenge becomes expressing it in a way that has the best chance of being heard and the least chance of damaging either our relationships or ourselves. In order to do that, we need to go deeper to find out what's beneath it.

## What's Under the Anger?

Very often, anger is a secondary emotion—there's another more basic, primary feeling beneath it and that's fear. Fear that expressing your feelings would end the relationship, fear of hurting the other person or of being hurt, fear of not meeting others' expectations, fear of changing the status quo, fear of exploring your own needs and having the courage to follow through to meet them.

Being willing to discover what's beneath the anger, acknowledge it, accept it, and ultimately act on it, takes courage. It also takes skill. Listening to yourself without judgment or evaluation or asking a close friend to active listen to you is essential in discovering, acknowledging and accepting how and what you feel. On closer examination, you may be quite surprised to discover that your deeper feelings and needs are quite different than you believed them to be. Getting down to your core feelings can cause anger to dissipate and dissolve, an experience that can be relieving, calming, healing, motivating, even exhilarating.

Being self-disclosing then comes easier because you are in touch with your innermost feelings and needs. When you are keenly aware of how you feel, the tendency to blame others with "You-Messages" or come across aggressively is greatly reduced.

You need not be afraid of your anger and need not think of it as abnormal or unhealthy. It's natural to feel angry when your needs are blocked. Learning to accept anger as a valid emotion or reaction is the first step in coming to terms with it.





# More productive working from home?

***57% of workers believe they get more done when working from home, compared to the workplace, while only 12% report that it makes them more distracted. 30% of the UK workforce currently works from home.***

A study of 1,096 British workers, including those who work from home and those who work from the office, carried out by CartridgePeople.com in their SOHO (Small Office/Home Office) Workers Report, revealed that 57% believe they manage to get more work done when they are based at home, compared to when they are at their place of work.

Home working is championed by business leaders including Virgin's Richard Branson and is offered by many leading companies including Amazon, Dell, Apple, Salesforce and more.

The data shows 30.5% of UK employees work from home every day, whilst 14% do so every week. 38% of workers admit they work from home outside office hours.

However, research by Virgin Media Business estimates that these figures are set to drastically increase - with the proportion of home workers set to increase to 60% of the workforce over the next decade.



Andrew Davies, spokesperson for CartridgePeople.com, commented: "When people think about home working, it is easy to wrongly assume that many home workers spend their days getting easily distracted or procrastinating by watching TV or chatting to family members. This data has proven the opposite is actually true - home working clearly allows workers to focus more, with fewer distractions such as the temptation to join in on tea rounds or having unnecessary meetings with colleagues.

"This data suggests that employers could face worse requests from staff than queries about more flexible hours, which would see them working from home. Obviously processes and parameters need to be put in place so that both sides agree how and what will be achieved when staff work outside of the office, but clearly there is an argument that this can actually result in productivity increases."