PA ENTERPRISE

April 2018

Boss Baby - how to work for someone much younger than yourself

The topics you should never discuss at work

What type of manager are you?

GDPR - what it means for your company

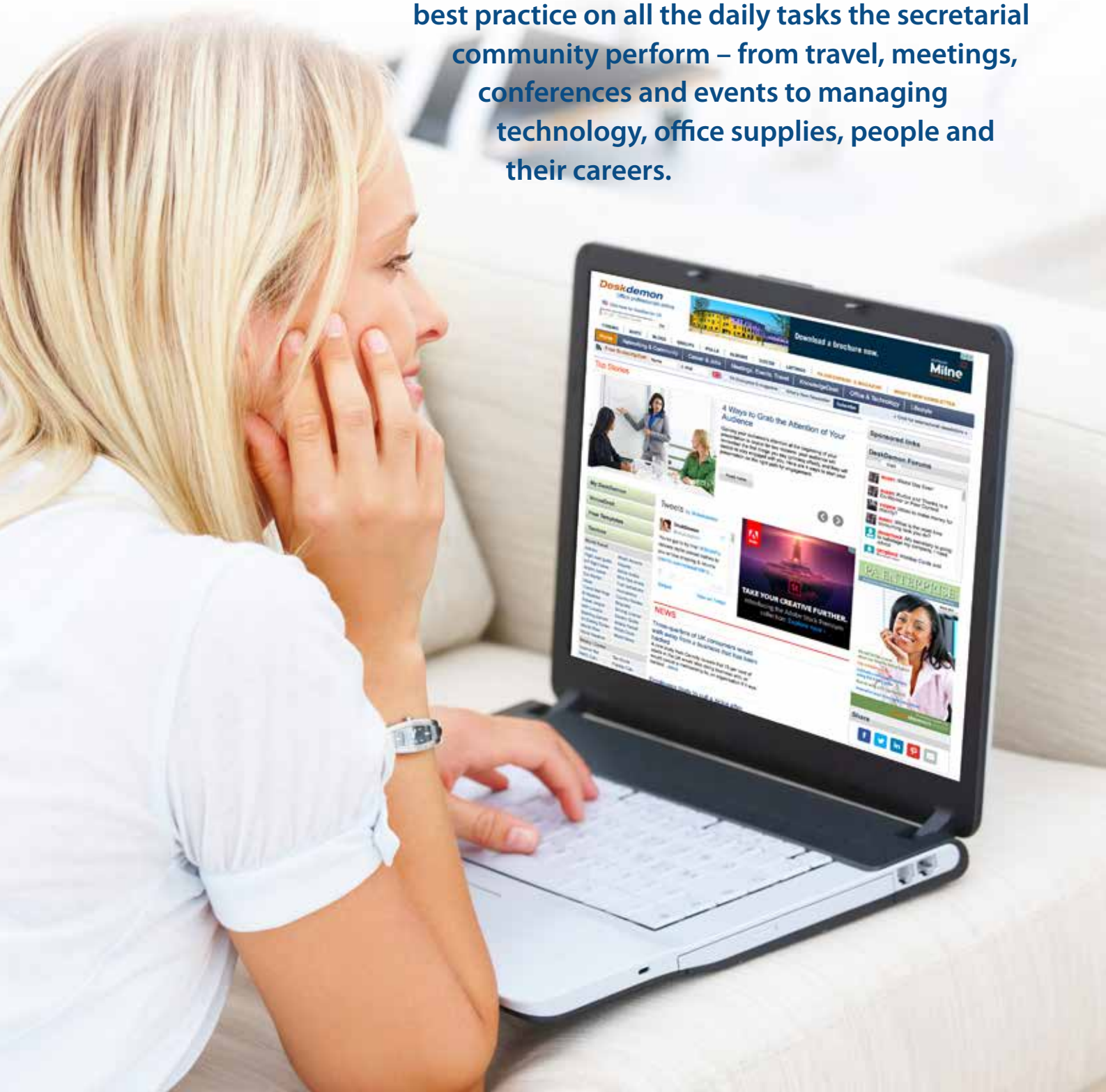**Why colour and style matter in the workplace**

Women say no to 'M' badges

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

Research reveals the five topics you should NEVER discuss at work

We spend a great deal of our time at work, so it's not surprising that we form close bonds with our colleagues, often discussing our personal lives with them. Yet despite the importance of these friendships, the majority of professionals believe there are some topics you should never discuss with your colleagues.

The study by CV-Library of 1,100 professionals explored the topic of friendships and openness at work, with over half of workers admitting that they discuss their personal lives with their colleagues. Despite this, there are some topics of conversation that professionals believe you should avoid discussing. In fact, respondents said the following topics are best left at the door:

Salaries – 67.5%

Office relationships – 65.5%

Your relationships outside of work – 57%

Why someone was let go – 52.9%

Your boss – 47.3%

When asked why they deem these types conversations to be inappropriate for the workplace, 59% said this was because they could be seen as unprofessional. What's more, one in four said they could cause tension or ill-feeling amongst the workforce.

Lee Biggins, founder and managing director of CV-Library, comments: "The friends we make at work are understandably important to us. So it's

not surprising that topics of conversation can turn to our private lives, relationships or office gossip. As an employer, this can be a tricky situation to navigate. While you want to nurture a friendly working environment and encourage staff to get along, you need to make sure you set a good example and lay down some ground rules.

"Negative or unprofessional conversations can cause low morale. Be sure to clearly outline your policies surrounding office gossip, particularly in terms of confidential news within the business. This could be salaries, redundancies or reasons why someone was let go. And while it may seem unnecessary (and potentially impossible) to put a cap on any chatter about your employees' private lives, if you notice repeat offenders it could be time to take them to one side to discuss what's going on."

The study found that one in 10 believe that you should be able to discuss what you want with your co-workers, with 50% agreeing that because we spend a lot of time at work, it's natural to want to discuss our lives. A further 34% said it's

important that we are able to speak our mind – even when we're at work.

Biggins concludes: "While it's natural that your employees will want to discuss their private lives with their co-workers, this shouldn't come at the cost of overall productivity and certainly shouldn't cause ill-feeling amongst the workforce. Organising team social events or after work activities can be a great way for staff to catch up with one another outside of office hours and can help to boost morale."

By CV-Library.co.uk

Yes

No
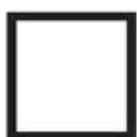
More than half of all UK employees are unhappy in the workplace, according to new survey

Half of all UK employees can recall something happening in the past month that has made them feel less positive about their working lives. Examples include pay cuts, bullying, harassment, workplace stress, and even sexual assault.

Research published today by employee benefits provider Personal Group, shows that 56% of all people surveyed are not happy in the workplace. The research is part of Personal Group's Hapi survey, which used social media to ask 1274 UK employees about their happiness at work. The results paint a clear picture of the state of happiness in UK workplace.

According to the results, both efficiency and enthusiasm are down. The number of senior managers and department heads reporting that they never or rarely feel they are working as efficiently as possible has almost doubled since 2017. With UK productivity levels falling this could be another red flag for the economy.

Enthusiasm for work has decreased across all respondent groups in the past 12 months, but the largest drop is amongst male workers. In 2017, half of male employees were enthusiastic about their work often or most of the time, only 35% share the same level of enthusiasm this year.

The Hapi survey results were also benchmarked against responses from approximately 41,000 employees working for engagement-orientated businesses (those businesses actively investing in employee engagement initiatives).

Overall levels of employee pride, enthusiasm and keenness to get to work in the morning actually increased slightly at engagement-orientated businesses between 2017 and 2018, whereas respondents to the employer agnostic Hapi survey were shown to feel much more negatively towards their work and working lives across all metrics.

Mark Scanlon, Chief Executive Officer at Personal Group said: "The results are staggering. Unhappiness, dissatisfaction, lack of pride in our work and a loss of enthusiasm are having a profound impact of employees across the UK. Much more must be done to tackle unhappiness in the workplace and to ensure employees feel valued, appreciated and safe in the workplace. There is significant proof that employees of businesses which have employee engagement initiatives implemented are more motivated and enthused in the workplace.

"As a country we need re-focus our efforts and do more to drive happiness in the workplace.

Front line workers are the engine of the UK economy, and if we can more to engage and excite these workers, the results could be phenomenal. The general decline of happiness at work could go some way to explain the UK productivity gap."

To view more details on the research, visit www.personalgroup.com/happiness

Happiness in the workplace - key findings

- More than half of frontline employees (54%) are rarely or almost never keen to get to work in the morning.

- 18-29 year olds are the unhappiest employees with over half (52%) rarely or almost never happy at work – a huge change from 2017 (20%).

- The story isn't much better for 30-49 year olds, with almost half (49%) rarely or almost never happy at work.

- Over 50s are still the happiest group of employees, but even their happiness levels have dropped significantly since last year. In 2017, 84% were happy at work at least some of the time (with 61% happy at work most of the time) but in 2018 this has dropped to 64% and 40% respectively.

- The self-employed are still the happiest workers, with 87% happy at least some of the time – only a slight dip from the 2017 results of 92%.
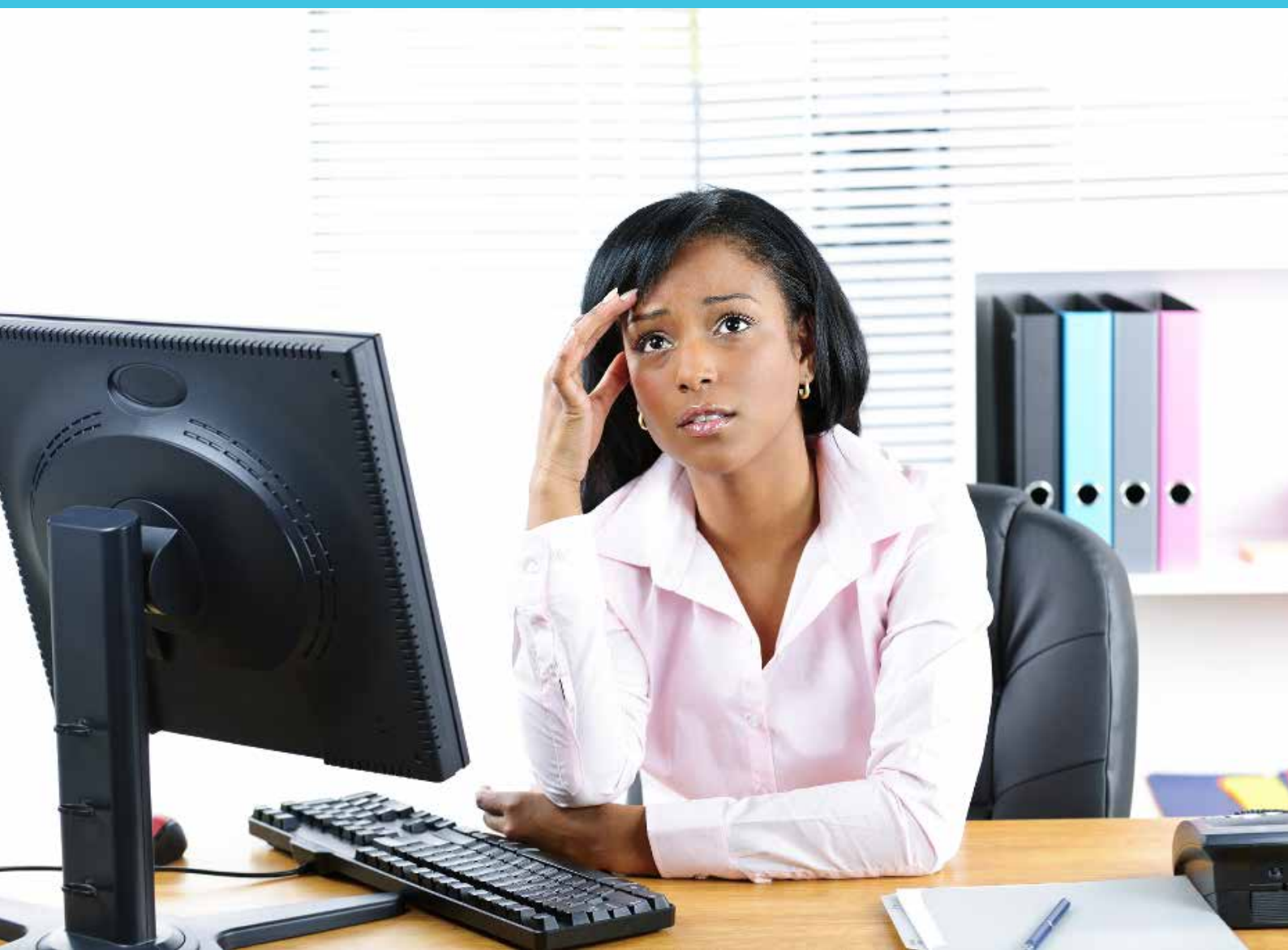
Enthusiastic about your job

- Senior managers and department heads saw the biggest drop in enthusiasm for their jobs, with those rarely or never enthusiastic about their job increasing to 23% (2017: 13%).

"As a country we need re-focus our efforts and do more to drive happiness in the workplace."

- Frontline staff are still the least enthusiastic about their jobs, with a third never or rarely feeling enthused.

Proud of what you do

- Pride in our work appears to increase with age – reflected in both the 2017 and 2018 survey results.

- Pride in our work also increases with seniority, with 77% of company owners and directors feel proud of what they do most of the time versus only 48% of frontline staff.

Working as efficiently as possible

- The number of senior managers, department heads, company owners and directors who never or rarely feel like they are working as

efficiently as possible has increased

- The number of senior managers and department heads who report never or rarely working as efficiently as possible has almost doubled since 2017 (moving from 16% in 2017 to 30% in 2018).

In the last month has anything happened to make you feel more positive about your working life?

- Only 1 in 4 UK employees can recall something from the last month that has made them feel more positive about their working life – a drop from 1 in 3 last year.

- In this year's survey only 17% of company owners or directors could recall something

What's on your employees happiness wish list this year?

When it comes to the things that create a happy workplace and engaged workers, employers and employees need to be on the same page. But as a recent study by recruitment firm Robert Half discovered, there is a significant mismatch between what employees want and what employers think they would like. Asked which of the following perks, which excluded additional pay and compensation, topped their wish lists for their jobs this year, employees responded with:

- **More holiday/annual leave 38%**
- **More flexible working hours 28%**
- **More training or professional development opportunities 16%**
- **Home office/telecommuting 12%**
- **Other corporate perks, such as ironing services or a subsidised gym 3%**

When employers were asked which of the same perks they believed would top their employees' wish lists when it came to their jobs in 2016, they responded:

- **More flexible working hours 56%**
- **More holiday/annual leave 23%**
- **Home office/telecommuting 9%**
- **More training or professional development opportunities 8%**
- **Other corporate perks, such as ironing services or a subsidised gym 5%**

High levels of employment have sharpened the focus on talent recruitment and retention sharpens, and some organisations may be undervaluing the perks that their staff actually value the most, such as additional paid time off.

from the last month that made them feel more positive about their working life (2017: 50%).

In the last month has anything happened to make you feel less positive about your working life?

- Half of all UK employees can recall something happening in the past month that has made them feel less positive about working life. Examples included pay cuts, bullying, harassment, workplace stress and sexual assault.
- A staggering 59% of managers and team leaders recalled incidents from the last month which made them feel less positive about working life.

pg Personal Group

Over 50's

ARE THE HAPPIEST AT WORK

BUT EVEN THEIR HAPPINESS LEVELS HAVE DROPPED FROM 84% IN 2017 TO 64% IN 2018

50%

of women are Rarely or Almost Never keen to get to work.

Up from 34% in 2017
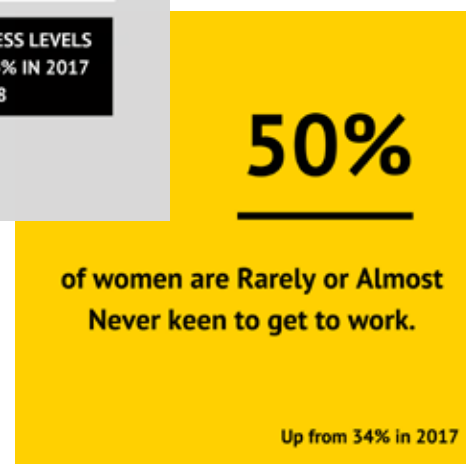
Boss Baby: how to work for someone much younger than yourself

With life expectancies rising by about three years every decade, and many more people living to see their 100th birthdays, workers are staying in their jobs longer to support themselves. As a result, employees aren't being ushered out the door with a pat on the back and a gold watch anymore. Now that some companies have as many as five generations coexisting in their workplaces, chances are high you may one day report to a boss who is significantly younger than you.

www.livecareer.com

This scenario makes some older workers feel uncomfortable. That's all the more reason why we should all be asking ourselves how we'd feel working for a younger person. It may happen to you, and it's best to be prepared.

Kim Ruyle, president of Inventive Talent Consulting, knows all about working for a younger boss. Not only has he been in the talent management space for more than 30 years, but he has also been a career coach for more than 30 years.

Here he shares his insights into how older workers can not only manage the situation, but make it a worthwhile experience for everyone involved.

Acknowledge the Elephant in the Room

Ruyle believes addressing the situation right out of the gate is important. Ultimately, the boss is responsible for establishing a smooth working relationship, but your gesture will likely be appreciated regardless of who initiates the conversation.

"A very young boss may be insecure and lack emotional intelligence," Ruyle says. "You can use your experience and maturity to set the relationship off on the right foot."

Years ago, Ruyle was offered a role as the director of talent management at a global company. The position would have placed Ruyle above an older gentleman who had been running the team for more than 20 years. Ruyle feared that given their age difference, the situation could be awkward.

Before he accepted the role, Ruyle invited the man out for lunch and spoke to him candidly about the arrangement, acknowledging that it could be uncomfortable for them both. This opened up an honest discussion and set the tone for their future working relationship.

"Both of us showing our vulnerability was important," Ruyle says. "People want to come

across as capable and confident at work, but admitting you have insecurities or fears and talking through them goes a long way toward building trust."

This simple lunch meeting between Ruyle and his colleague set in motion a strong working relationship that lasted until the older man retired several years later.

Let Go of Stereotypes

We've all read about the entitlement of millennials and the cynicism of Gen. X, but you shouldn't believe the hype. You want to be recognised for your strengths and talents as an individual. You don't want your boss to make assumptions about your abilities based on your age. Offer your new boss the same respect. Judge them according to their personality and ability, not their generational stereotype.

Avoid Resentment

If you lost out on a promotion or your younger boss was hired above you, you might have some lingering resentments. These can threaten your relationship with your younger boss if you don't deal with them.

"If you are harboring resentment toward a younger boss, or if you are set on finding fault with them, you'll never have a very constructive relationship," Ruyle says.

In turn, older workers will be able to teach their younger bosses skills such as communication and other soft skills that younger professionals may be lacking.

"Serving in a mentorship role can be very rewarding, but you have to be sincere in wanting to offer your help and knowledge," Ruyle says. "If you are sincere, you will be a trusted advisor, which is a great position to be in."

In his coaching work, Ruyle encourages clients to think of their relationships with their bosses as plays they are directing. The important question becomes: How do they want their plays to go?

"Many people live their lives in a constant state of reaction – just reacting to the things that are happening around them," Ruyle says. "If you can shift your mindset and decide to take the role of the director – rather than just an actor – in the play, the relationship is more likely to be productive."

Ruyle tells his clients to ask themselves: "If this were a play, how would I advise my actor to treat their boss?"

Embrace Mentorship

Learning does not only flow downhill. Older workers should embrace the opportunity to learn from their younger bosses.

"Workers of all ages have strengths you can learn from," Ruyle says. "Identify your younger boss's strength. Perhaps they understand social media better than you do, or maybe they deliver strong presentations. Focus on what they can teach you. You'll be a better employee for it."

Develop Your Empathy

Empathy is another important skill for managers and employees at all levels to develop, Ruyle says.

"Empathy means to listen while withholding judgement to understand another person's point of view," Ruyle says. "As an older person, I have my own lens through which I see the world. A much younger person is going to have a completely different lens through which they see the world, and their team, and their business. Older workers need to ask questions of their younger bosses, and then really listen. If you can understand where this younger person is coming from, it can help you have a much more productive relationship."

Ultimately, Ruyle's main piece of advice is to treat your boss with respect.

"As an employee, your job is to make your boss look good," Ruyle says. "Regardless of the age of your boss, you should be there to support them and learn what you can from them."

Menopausal women say no to 'M' badges

Loose Women's Andrea McLean is calling for menopausal women to wear badges identifying that they are going through menopause. But a survey of menopausal women revealed that 72% would hate wearing an 'M' Badge saying they were menopausal and 23% said it fills them with horror.

Becoming as red as a beetroot in public, feeling like you are making your own personal puddle and zoning out with brain fog is embarrassing enough for women going through menopause without choosing to be completely embarrassed in public.

But the TV presenter, Andrea McLean, new brand Ambassador for Become, is suggesting that the 'M' badge would help menopause on public transport so that other passengers cut them some slack. She likens it to pregnant women wearing 'Baby On Board' badges.

Whilst wearing an 'M' badge might seem a practical move to a cyber woman, giving her permission to open a window to get some air when she feels she's about to light up like Blackpool Illuminations, many will laugh out loud or groan in horror at this idea, giving it a huge thumbs down.

A quick poll of women in Maryon Stewart's Facebook group Natural Menopause confirmed her suspicions.

'Even in the first hour of the survey going live women were expressing their horror,' said Maryon Stewart. 'One of my group said "If that's the case why not wear a P for when you have a period as you are more likely to kill if you can't open that window!'

One of the other disappointed voices said, "We might as well wear badges stating we are about to have our periods! Where do people get off trying to stigmatise all women as cranky irrational monsters just because we're women. No! Even worse it came from a woman presenter!

Surely it would be better for Andrea McLean and Become, who make gorgeous underwear made from intelligent fabric helping to keep women cool during menopause, to suggest that women implement science-based tools to overcome their power surges including making dietary and lifestyle changes, enabling them to once more embrace life without embarrassment, rather than drawing public attention by wearing an 'M' badge."

GDPR. Excuse me, what did you say?

GDPR. No, it's not a word in another language! You may have already heard the term but not quite fully understood what it was?

By Olamalu, Web Technology Experts, Witney, Oxfordshire. www.olamalu.com

GDPR is set to become a hot topic in the next few months and, from talking to our customers, we've discovered that there is a bit of knowledge, but also a lot of confusion. We are certainly not experts in this field, but wanted to share our general knowledge of the subject in this article and will follow up with more specific areas of thought on the effect of GDPR on websites for our customers.

What is GDPR?

GDPR stands for General Data Protection Regulation and is a regulation by which the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission intend to strengthen and unify data protection for individuals within the EU. It also addresses the export of personal data outside of the EU.

In a nutshell, GDPR aims to give control back to individuals over their personal data and to simplify the regulatory environment for international business by unifying the regulation within the EU.

When will it take effect?

GDPR was adopted as a regulation on 27th April

2016 and becomes enforceable from 25th May 2018. As it is a regulation and not a directive, it does not require national governments to pass any enabling legislation and is therefore directly binding and applicable.It is useful to note that GDPR will replace the data protection directive of 1995.

What is the impact of GDPR?

It's important to highlight that GDPR applies to all personal data that all businesses (however big or small) hold on individuals and is concerned with data that you already hold as well as data that you intend to collect in the future.

The data may be in paper format, voice records

or digital records either stored on a computer, on hard drives, USB sticks or via a website.

What do you need to do?

The first thing that any business will need to do is to undertake an audit of what information you are holding on individuals. This stage may take some time as you go through filing cabinets, folders, spreadsheets, discs, USB sticks and indeed any other method you have used to store data since your business began.

The second thing you need to undertake is a data assessment. You should:

1 **Determine what information you need to hold on individuals.**

2 **Establish the purpose of the information i.e. why you need to hold it – what have you/are you going to do with it?**

3 **Identify the lawful basis for processing this data. If this is consent, demonstrate that you have consent from those individuals in order to hold and use the data for the purpose that you have set out. This includes data you already hold.**

4 **Ensure that the data is secure.**

5 **Establish a process for access requests. Individuals are entitled to access the data that you hold on them and indeed ask you to stop holding it.**

6 **Have a secure process for destroying data. Your initial audit may have led you to find data that you no longer need and individuals may also ask you to no longer hold their data. Your destruction process needs to be rigorous, secure and undertaken in a reasonable time frame.**

Personal data and your website

If you collect personal data via your website – this may be via web forms, user profiles, e-commerce or any other means - you need to perform a GDPR audit and assessment as described in the points above. As highlighted above, you must ensure

that you have adequate consent from those individuals to use the data for the purpose that you state.

Consent

This is an area which, thanks to GDPR will become crystal clear for individuals. They will completely understand, before they give their consent what their data is to be used for.

This means that businesses need to be unambiguous at the stage at which they want to collect data. There will no longer be a general consent statement. Instead the exact purpose that you will be using the data for will need to be set out in order for the individual to consent to. This may need multiple consents to cover different marketing/information purposes. An individual will have to opt-in to give consent and must be able to opt-out again.

Third parties

If you use third party services for example to buy data or analyse behaviour and collect data from actions on your website, then you need to be very clear on whether the supplier is compliant with the new regulation. The first thing to do is to check the supplier's GDPR consent process. Do they have the correct consent to collect the data/ service you are buying from them?

The second thing to consider is that once you obtain the data/analytical information, GDPR responsibility for this data falls to you.

Cookies

Data collection via cookies on your website should be covered under the privacy policy on your website. You will also need to include a statement on any tracking that you do of your visitors and this should also include instructions on how a user can disable such tracking if they choose for their behaviour/actions on your website not to be collected. Be aware that embedded content and third party services can also set cookies when someone visits your website. You will need to consider how GDPR applies to these too.

What type of manager are you?

As all leaders know, there is always room for improvement. If you are a business leader, it is probably because you are a driven and dedicated individual who is constantly looking for ways to improve your leadership game. There is no one right way to lead a team, but there are some things to keep in mind in order to help your team members be the best they can be.

By Stuart Hearn is CEO of Clear Review

I've worked in the field of HR and performance management for more than twenty years. During that time, I have encountered a wide range of managerial and leadership styles. Each manager is unique and finds their own way to lead and motivate their team, but it has become clear to me that managers tend to fall into five general categories.

1. The Stuck-in-the-Mud Manager

The stuck-in-the-mud manager is also known as the "this is the way we do things around here" manager. They find a system or way of performing that works for them and they rigidly stick to it, come what may. This manager also tends to be precious about workplace processes. They are rarely willing to experiment or adapt based on new trends or ways of thinking. If they had a mantra, it would be: "This is the way things are done because this is the way they have always been done."

It is because of the stuck-in-the-mud manager that certain companies can be slow when it comes to transitioning or adapting their performance management systems. As an example, a recent study found 65 percent of companies still use annual performance appraisals, despite the fact that they are proven to be ineffective. Fear most commonly sits at the heart of resistance to change. A manager may be worried that if they were to change a given system or process, it could all go wrong, productivity could plummet — and they could get the blame. This is a natural anxiety, but if you aren't brave enough to attempt change, you can't hope to compete in modern business.

If you are worried you might be a stuck-in-the-mud manager, there are ways to get out of your rut. You can research recent HR trends and performance management tools that have been shown to inspire and motivate employees. By experimenting and trying new things, you'll soon find ways to take your team to the next level.

2. The Invisible Manager

This type of manager has an incredible superpower – they can become invisible for long stretches of time, appearing once or twice a year at most. If you only hold annual performance reviews or you can't remember the last time you had a personal catch-up with each of your employees, chances are you are an invisible manager. This is worrying for a number of reasons, not least because the relationship between a manager and employee is so critical in terms of employee engagement, motivation, and morale.

Employees want – and deserve – to see their managers regularly. They need the contact in order to exchange feedback, develop a trusting relationship, and learn about career progression. Unfortunately, an old-fashioned approach to performance management makes it all too easy for employees to feel alienated from their managers. With just one appraisal each year, there is little chance for employees and managers to develop deep relationships. This makes employee appraisals even more nerve-racking than usual – not to mention unfair. How can you objectively judge your employee's performance if you never see them in action?

To become a more visible and reliable manager, consider implementing regular performance discussions with employees. A monthly check-in is recommended as a bare minimum.

3. The Meddling Micromanager

Working for a micromanager can be exhausting. Everything needs to be done in a very particular way, which stifles creativity and out-of-the-box thinking. Why would anyone bother coming up with innovative solutions to difficult problems when they know their manager will just shut them down? On top of this, micromanagement can result in decreased job satisfaction and low levels of motivation.

I can understand why you would want to control your employees to a certain extent or have them follow a very particular approach. Once you find a tried-and-tested solution, it can be hard to deviate. However, it should be noted that not all employees work in the same way. It is important for managers to acknowledge that employees aren't robots – they are human beings. As such, you will get the most out of your employees if you allow them to leverage their own strengths, work according their own productivity rhythms, and operate with at least a little autonomy.

Continued ▶

4. The Negative Manager

No employee wants to spend time with a negative manager — nor do they want to receive feedback from one. They know they will leave that performance discussion feeling downtrodden and uninspired.

The fact that negative feedback — even when it is believed to be constructive criticism — can demotivate employees is not a new discovery. The renowned management theorist Douglas McGregor wrote about it in a 1957 Harvard Business Review article. Since then, Gallup has confirmed that constant negative feedback can be draining for an employee. In one Gallup poll, 33 percent of the employees who agreed with the statement "My supervisor focuses on

my weaknesses or negative characteristics" were not engaged; a further 22 percent were actively disengaged.

If you tend toward the negative rather than the positive, you may be a negative manager. Rather than looking backward and chastising employees for performing below expectations, try to motivate employees by discussing the areas where they have performed well. You can also cover areas for improvement in a positive, uplifting way that shows you are supportive keen to encourage employees in their career progressions.

5. The Modern Manager

Otherwise known as the "supermanager," the modern manager is forward-thinking and willing to take chances on new technologies, processes, and strategies. They make time for their employees on a regular basis, and they are willing to give their workers autonomy so they can grow and flourish. They provide opportunities for career development while meeting with employees to set clear SMART objectives and expectations. Employees love to work with this kind of manager. As such, the teams led by modern managers tend to have lower levels of voluntary turnover and higher levels of morale.

As a word of caution, it should be noted that the modern manager can sometimes take things too far. It is one thing to give employees flexibility and autonomy, but it is quite another to turn a blind eye completely to your employees' day-to-day activities. Managers still have an important role to play in team performance, and they should keep up to date with the progress and performance of all their employees. Underperformance needs to be addressed, and it needs to be addressed quickly in order to prevent it from continuing.

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Pets really DO make us happier according to research

Nearly half of us believe that our four-legged friends make us feel 'pawsitively' happy and have serious mood-lifting powers according to research released today to mark National Pet Month

A study of UK pet owners commissioned by raw and natural food experts, Natures Menu has revealed that more than four fifths (83%) think that having a pet really does improve our general wellbeing.

Dogs come out on top as the best creature to make us feel the happiest (47%), followed by our feline friends (24%. Pets also topped the board for making men feel consistently happy (43%), followed by family and friends.

If we've had a bad day at work, spending time with your dog or cat can instantly soothe us and reduce anxiety levels with nearly 60% of us believing that they can make us feel more relaxed, and less stressed. Other ways they positively impact our health and happiness include their unconditional love and the fact that they are always happy to see us (54%), their cuddliness and enjoyment they provide outside of work (43%), and the sense of purpose and self-worth they give us (34%).

A pooch can also be good for our health as one in three of us (33%) admit that our furry-friends encourage us to go out for a walk and enjoy the great outdoors.

With 12 million UK households owning a pet, here are the top five reasons why we decide to get a pet in the first place:

1. I've just always had a pet and can't imagine not having one – 45%
2. The companionship and love that they give – 42%

3. My children or family wanted one – I gave in! – 31%
4. I wanted to rescue one from a local centre – 19%
5. The security and support they provide – 19%

Claire Miller, Head Vet at Natures Menu, said: "It's widely known that animals do wonders for our emotional and physical health, so it's great to see that as a nation we really do believe that they are great for our overall happiness. Whilst pets can help to boost our mood, of course, we also need to ensure that they are happy too. A diet that's high in nutritional value and is balanced, combined with plenty of exercise will ensure that they thrive.

"Look out for a wagging tail in response to human contact from your pooch or a kitty settling on your lap. These are clear indications that you make your pet as happy as they make you!"

Why colour and style matter in the workplace

Could the colours and styles you wear help you achieve more in the workplace? Brian Coyle thinks so. A colour and style class with House of Colour meant his subsequent wardrobe changes led to more compliments, conversations, confidence and inclusivity in his work life. Much greater visibility to senior management followed, which lead to two promotions in three years at BT. He was so bowled over by the impact of colour and style in his working life that he became a colour and style consultant himself.

House of Colour is now over 30 years old but has recently fine-tuned its focus to include the burgeoning corporate market. Helen Venables, MD of House of Colour says: "At a time when the workplace is increasingly competitive, many of our clients are business men and women who are fed up of looking stuffy, ordinary and anonymous. They need to make their mark in the workplace and they want to be confident about what suits them, and know how to put a capsule corporate wardrobe together in their wow colours and best style to showcase their very own, authentic personal brand."

Coyle agrees: "Whether we like it or not, how we present ourselves in the workplace can alter how people see your personal and your company brand. A new boss should aim to exude authority but also be approachable; a manager presenting to a new client needs to look professional and memorable for the right reasons. Given we make up our minds about someone within the first few seconds of meeting them, it follows that our first impressions alone can alter future relationships between client and service provider, boss and employee, or colleagues. However, it's also never too late to change!"

So are employers additionally buying into the importance of personal presence through colour and style? Venables says: "Employers are increasingly offering their employees style and colour away days to build loyalty and employee confidence but also to ensure their employees are also fitting in well with the company brand. Your brand exists through the people who deliver it. Employers are increasingly valuing that employee confidence is key; as is enabling individual personalities to shine through as long as they are congruent with the company product, brand or service."

We know that colour is influential. Research participants who wore red in one study reported feeling more physically attractive, which is interesting because primary red is the only colour that suits absolutely everyone according to House of Colour. In a study published in the Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, subjects who donned white coats that they thought belonged to doctors did better on tests than those who wore casual clothes, or those

who thought the coats belonged to artists.

However, Helen Venables is quick to point out that workplace attire has changed: "In the past, we were always told to stay away from bright colours, patterns and prints at work for the risk of it looking too unprofessional and showy! Now, we are blessed with a more accepting workplace where we are venturing away from a sensible black, blue, white and grey 'uniform' and opting for smart designs and splashes of colour paired with gorgeous neutrals.

"The right colours make us feel positive about ourselves, appear healthy and vibrant and means we are more likely to buy into your confidence and leadership qualities which gives you a competitive edge. The wrong colours can make us look drained and typecast and can alter our moods negatively which affects the way we behave and the impression we give to everyone around us. If you look like you take care of yourself and have thought about your appearance, you are more likely to win new business, do well in presentations and build successful work relationships.

"The truth is it is harder these days to get a job and progress in your career. We are needing to work harder and smarter, and part of that is by standing out in positive way and being noticed for all the right reasons. When we liaise, present, network and manage we need to look and feel good."

Helen Venables' Top Tips for Making The Right Impression At Work

Wear clothes that fit you. Very baggy shirts and oversized jackets may look slouchy and un-kempt. In the same way, tight fitting dresses, skirts and shirts could give your colleagues and clients the wrong impression.

Get to know your red. Red in the workplace is so powerful and can be worked with any seasonal palate. For example, if you are a Winter, opt for deep burgundy and blue based reds. If you are a Summer, try Cherry red variations. Autumns are best in fiery brick reds and Springs in bright and warm Geranium reds. Alternatively keep it subtle with just one item of red, like a bold red lip, or a scarf or tie for a man.

Pair bold shirts or blouses with neutral jackets or vice versa. Work clothes don't have to be boring, but you don't want to dazzle and distract with a rainbow of colours. One impact colour and two neutrals are a good rule of thumb. Add an extra colour with your blouse, belt, scarf, bag or shoes to make your outfit 'pop', it will make you more memorable to everyone you meet.

Quality speaks loudly, so pay attention to getting good quality shirts, blouses, jackets, accessories etc. for work, that extra investment will send the message that you are worth it!

Accessorise! A silk scarf will soften an otherwise harsh tailored suit, or layering necklaces could give an edge to your outfit dependent on your ideal style.

www.houseofcolour.co.uk

Do you support the Mind Your Back Manifesto?

Mind Your Back is a simple strategy and its five S.T.E.P.S. aim to help people manage back pain and avoid future problems.

- **It is estimated that low back pain is responsible for 37% of all chronic pain in men and 44% in women and the total cost of low back pain to the UK economy is reckoned to be over £12 billion per year.**

- **Most cases of back pain resolve themselves within a few days or weeks and can be managed at home.**

- **Back pain experts writing a series of papers for The Lancet advise that most back pain is best managed by keeping active.**

- **You can take action to manage muscular back pain and help avoid future problems in five simple S.T.E.P.S. with Mind Your Back, the program developed by the muscle and jointcare experts at Mentholatum.**

Mentholatum, the company behind brands such as Deep Heat and Deep Freeze recognises that more sedentary lifestyles, increasing levels of obesity, an ageing population and more and more time spent hunched over laptops, tablets and Smartphones all add up to a rise in muscular back problems.

And its Mind Your Back Manifesto is calling on the people of Britain to take a stand and take five S.T.E.P.S. to healthier, stronger backs.

#mindyourback has been designed to fit into busy lifestyles – it takes little time and you don't need special equipment or the latest sports gear.

The S.T.E.P.S. are:

STRETCH
Five easy to follow stretches to help ease tight back muscles and keep you mobile.

THERAPY
When life gets in the way and you can't fit in all the S.T.E.P.S. use hot or cold therapy to ease those stiff, tense, tired out muscles

EXERCISE
Go for a walk, a swim or a cycle ride, just start slowly and build up gradually

POSTURE
Could you draw a straight line between your ear, shoulder and hip when sitting down or ear, shoulder, hip, knee and ankle when standing? No? Then it's time to pay attention to posture

STRENGTHEN
Five more exercises, this time to strengthen your core muscles and prevent back pain. A strong core means a stronger back.

The stretches can be done anywhere. No need to travel to the gym, you can stretch at home, in the office or in the park at lunchtime, wherever it suits you. Just listen to your body and take it slowly at the start, never over-extending or pushing yourself too hard and stop at once if you feel any pain. Back care's a step-by-step marathon, not a sprint!

You'll find more information and videos featuring physiotherapist and yoga instructor Celest Pereira showing the five S.T.E.P.S. at www.mindyourbackuk.com

Jillian Watt, director of Marketing and New Product Development at Mentholatum, herself a qualified Pilates instructor, says: "Exercise is now widely recognised as the first treatment to recommend to relieve back pain and sciatica. It is a key recommendation in the latest advice from NICE (the National Institute for Clinical Excellence). .

"We have developed #mindyourback to give back pain suffers a one-stop shop for clear, key advice to help them manage their back pain in five simple S.T.E.P.S. which can fit into the busiest lives. We are delighted to have the support of health and exercise professionals including physiotherapist and yoga instructor Celest Pereira.

"You may be 'getting your five a day' – now it's time to 'do your five a day' with #mindyourback."