

# PA ENTERPRISE

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

January 2021

A smiling woman with blonde hair and glasses is talking on a pink phone. She is wearing a dark blue blazer over a black top. A green plant is visible in the background.

**2021 Workplace Trends:  
Predictions for the year  
ahead**

**Can employers force  
staff to have the Covid  
vaccine?**

**CV trends for 2021**

**Covid-19: Five ways to  
stay positive through  
the winter**

**Why you shouldn't make a  
2021 New Year's resolution**

**What is Unconscious Bias?**

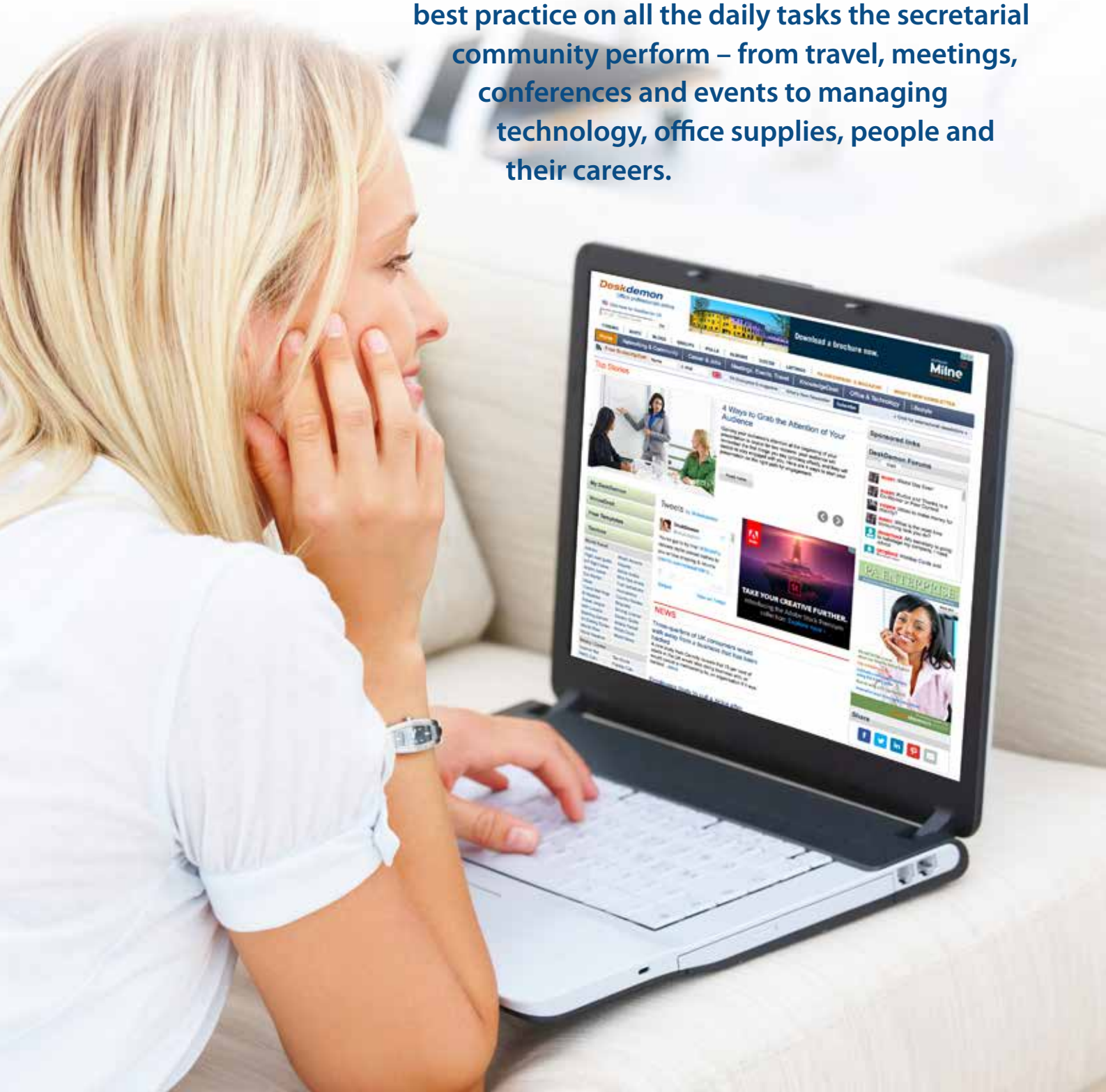
**The future of work in 2021**

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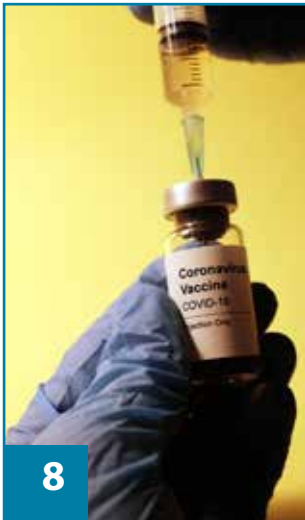
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## PA ENTERPRISE MAGAZINE

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# 2021 Workplace Trends: Predictions for the Year Ahead

*How has Covid-19 changed previous workplace trends? And what's in store for our working lives in 2021? To say that 2020 has altered our world of work would be an understatement.*



As governments and businesses around the world began to grapple with Covid-19, our working lives – as we knew them – were turned on their heads.

The UK was forced into months of working from home. Some companies considered making office-culling moves – and in doing so – sparked the age-old ‘death of the office’ debate. Pretty quickly, we got tired of living at work. And as technology replaced face to face interactions, we started getting ‘zoom fatigue’.

## **Working from home will continue**

It's safe to say that Covid-19 has accelerated the adoption of flexible working. Several lockdowns have forced many companies to work from home – even those that were reluctant to work anywhere but the office. We believe working from home, as well as other types of flexible working, such as staggered hours and working closer to home, will continue to form a part of our working lives in 2021.

While this partly comes down to our ongoing

efforts to contain the pandemic, it's also a consequence of our newfound focus on flexibility as a whole. We're beginning to see the extent to which different people, roles and tasks require different parameters for optimal performance.

To boost employee productivity, engagement and happiness, our world of work will feature a strategic blend of different environments, places, working hours and even agile working setups – such as sit-stand desks, active sitting chairs and even exercise balls.

### Office space will continue to be crucial

Undeniably, despite our newfound acceptance of remote working, there is a growing need for businesses to provide office space for their employees to develop their skills, collaborate and learn from one another.

The 'death of the office' narrative that murmured through 2020 wasn't silenced by academic rhetoric, it was silenced by people sincerely missing their office environments – and everything that came with them.

Businesses still want a central hub. In fact, only 8% of employees want to work from home five days a week, and 53% of UK businesses surveyed by Knight Frank said they wanted their offices to feature more collaboration space. So, while the demand for flexibility continues, social capital remains critical.

Employers will look for offices fit for a cycling commute, which neighbour cycleways and feature showers and secure bike racks.

### Covid-secure workplaces will prevail

As the first lockdown was lifted, flexible office space providers went to great lengths to create Covid-secure workplaces in order to comply with government guidelines and lower health risks.

They enhanced their cleaning regimes, increased airflow, added hand sanitizer stations throughout all spaces, displayed safety signage, organised one-way systems and redesigned furniture layouts to enable social distancing.

For all workplaces, this safety-first approach will prevail in 2021 and beyond as we continue to mitigate the dangers of Covid-19.

### Active commuting will rise

In the months we were encouraged to return to our workplaces, active commuting became a popular way to both avoid public transport and break up a sedentary working day.

It's likely this trend will continue, and as a result, employers will look for offices fit for a cycling commute, which neighbour cycleways and feature showers and secure bike racks.

### Businesses will try to prevent remote working loneliness

For some, remote working came with a sense of loneliness and isolation – our innate need for social interaction was barely being met. But for others, it was a dream come true.

In fact, the dichotomy of the experience was highlighted by our LinkedIn poll on World Mental Health Day; 49% of 731 respondents said that working from home had a positive impact on their mental health, while 40% said that it had a negative impact.

Ultimately, 2021 wellbeing strategies will come down to personal choice, flexibility, and an additional integrity in remote environments. What's important is that the conversation continues. Talent will look for businesses that appreciate the importance of wellbeing

*Continued* ►





and provide the right environment for it to be cultivated. Employee happiness benefits everyone, and businesses are beginning to see that.

Though dull, drab and cubicle-clad offices have been a thing of the past for some time, we're likely to see an increased focus on the office experience in 2021. As our working lives are set to feature both working from home and commuting to and from the office, the experience of the office will need to incentivise an emotional and financial investment in the journey time.

### **Quality and collaboration will take centre stage**

The office won't be what it's always been. Workplace strategies will feature a flight to quality, a focus on design and an emphasis on collaboration – especially as we try to rebuild our depleted levels of social capital.

The office will be a destination that provides

experience, connection and choice – with insta-worthy cafés, curated meet-ups that instil a sense of community and belonging, biophilic office design that boosts wellbeing, agile working strategies that encourage mobility and technology that streamlines workflows.

Knight Frank's Re-occupancy and Re-imagined Workplace Survey revealed that 36% of UK businesses believe a higher quality of space will be a core part of their workplace strategies, while 63% are planning to prioritise the design and specification of their offices.

### **Sustainable commutes will trend**

We've already witnessed the rise of active commuting – and in particular – cycling to work, but 2021 is likely to see the sustainability trend reach new heights.

In July 2020, Prime Minister Boris Johnson laid out a £2 billion cycling and walking initiative,

which outlines plans to improve infrastructure and create new protected bike lanes.

In 2021, this could inspire London-based businesses to incorporate cycle-to-work schemes into their benefits packages.

### **Green, sustainable offices will win the war for talent**

There is a growing recognition that younger generations of talent are seeking out businesses that increasingly align with their moral values across environmental, social and governance initiatives. These include efforts to reduce corporate carbon footprints, improve employee wellbeing, and ensure diversity and inclusion.

Though all are incredibly important, Covid-19 has kickstarted a new wave of green thinking among employees: 56% of 17,149 consumers feel that reducing single-use plastics, lowering carbon footprints and companies behaving more sustainability have become 'a lot more important' since the pandemic.

As businesses continue to view real estate as a strategic device and an investment, choosing to base their teams in green, sustainable offices is a clear way to demonstrate a commitment to the cause (for both employees, clients and competitors).

[www.knightfrank.co.uk](http://www.knightfrank.co.uk)





# Can employers force staff to have the Covid vaccine?



By David Sheppard  
[peoplemanagement.co.uk](http://peoplemanagement.co.uk)

## The law

There are no statutory provisions that could force individuals to become vaccinated. The Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 specifically states that members of the public should not be compelled to undergo any mandatory medical treatment, including vaccinations.

If any government of the UK were to insist on compulsory vaccination, it could feasibly give rise to objections on the grounds of individual liberty and human rights. This is owing to article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which protects people from being interfered with physically or psychologically and includes mandatory vaccinations.

## Can businesses force employees to vaccinate?

In short, no. In theory, if there is a thorough medical examinations clause in a contract of employment, it could be relied upon. However, this would still be fraught with risk, and freely given consent is required for any medical intervention.

If employers were to try to force their employees to be vaccinated, not only could it give rise to human rights concerns, but there could also be criminal implications. Forcing anyone to receive a vaccine injection under duress, under UK law, could constitute an unlawful injury. A vaccination requires an individual's informed and voluntary consent.



It may also be that someone's anti-vaccination position could amount to a protected philosophical belief under the Equality Act 2010. If a fervent anti-vaxxer could establish that their belief was genuinely held and worthy of respect, then they may find success at a tribunal.

Religious discrimination arguments could also be made. There are several religious issues at stake when it comes to vaccinations, but the main one is the fact that many vaccines use pig gelatine, which could cause problems for several religious groups, as well as vegans – all of whom are protected under the Equality Act.

### Can employers indirectly compel employees to vaccinate?

Businesses could decide to take indirect measures to pressurise vaccination of their employees, such as refusing staff entry to certain parts of the workplace or certain roles, if they cannot demonstrate that they have been vaccinated. Similarly, employers may be tempted to issue disciplinary action if an employee repeatedly refuses to be vaccinated. Any such measures should be considered very carefully before being implemented.

If an employee's refusal to be vaccinated is down to a disability/protected religious/philosophical belief, and results in disciplinary action from their employer, they may be able to issue a direct or indirect discrimination claim, and claim constructive unfair dismissal if they resign in protest. A better course of action for organisations would be to help employees to make informed decisions regarding their vaccination by sharing impartial, factual information.

### What if you work with vulnerable persons?

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, employers may have a duty to ensure a safe working environment by enabling vaccination of their employees in circumstances where they will have close contact with the clinically vulnerable. For example, it could be argued that requiring



a care home employee to be vaccinated, and disciplining them if they refuse, is reasonable because of the high-risk nature of the work, ultimately justifying dismissal or disciplinary action.

However, it's not quite that simple, and any employer mandating a vaccine would need to balance the proportionality of the interference with any article 8 rights, against the amount the risk is reduced by vaccination. Essentially, does the vaccine reduce transmission or does it simply suppress symptoms in a carrier? Are there any other less invasive steps that could be taken to reduce risk? It is this information that would inform an employment tribunal as to the reasonableness and proportionality of mandated vaccines in a high-risk workplace.

If the effect of the vaccine is to also suppress transmission over and above social distancing measures, it could then be possible at least in theory to justify disciplining an employee where they refuse, if their refusal is unreasonable, or relocating them to lower-risk roles, again provided this is proportionate. It is likely that such steps will be proportionate in very extreme circumstances where no other reasonable steps to protect vulnerable persons are available.

# What is Unconscious Bias?

*Unconscious bias occurs when people favour others who look like them and/or share their values. For example a person may be drawn to someone with a similar educational background, from the same area, or who is the same colour or ethnicity as them.*

A manager who wasn't successful at school may listen to, or be supportive of, an employee who left school without qualifications because, subconsciously, they are reminded of their younger self. The same can be true of a manager who is educated to degree level, favouring employees who have also been to university. This is known as affinity bias, because they feel an affinity with the person as they have similar life experiences.

Another form of unconscious bias is known as the halo effect. This is where a positive trait is transferred onto a person without anything really being known about that person. For example those who dress conservatively are often seen as more capable in an office environment, based purely on their attire.

Behaviour which reinforces the bias is noticed whilst behaviour which does not is ignored. This is how decisions based on unconscious bias are justified.

Everyone has unconscious biases. The brain receives information all the time from our own experiences and what we read, hear or see in the media and from others. The brain uses shortcuts to speed up decision making and unconscious bias is a by-product. There are times when this sort of quick decision making is useful, for example if faced with a dangerous situation, however it is not a good way to make decisions when dealing with recruiting or promoting staff.

Unconscious bias at work can influence decisions in recruitment, promotion, staff development and recognition and can lead to a less diverse

workforce. Employers can overlook talented workers and instead favour those who share their own characteristics or views.

Where unconscious bias is against a protected characteristic, it can be discriminatory. For example if during a recruitment process an employer ignores the skills and experience of a candidate who is a different race than them and appoints another candidate who is the same race, this could be discriminatory.

Conscious thoughts are controlled and well reasoned. Unconscious thoughts can be based on stereotypes and prejudices that we may not even realise we have. Stereotypes surrounding tattoos may subconsciously suggest a person is unlikely to conform and follow rules. Stereotypes surrounding mothers may lead to unconscious bias against women who apply for a role which involves regular travel away from home.

Stress or tiredness may increase the likelihood of decisions based on unconscious bias.

## How to overcome unconscious bias

- Be aware of unconscious bias.
- Don't rush decisions rather take your time and consider issues properly.
- Justify decisions by evidence and record the reasons for your decisions, for example during a recruitment exercise.
- Try to work with a wider range of people and get to know them as individuals. This could include working with different teams or colleagues based in a different location.



- Focus on the positive behaviour of people and not negative stereotypes.
- Employers should implement policies and procedures which limit the influence of individual characteristics and preferences.

### Name-blind recruitment

Name-blind recruitment is when an employer removes information such as name, gender, and age from their application form before it's shared with the person carrying out the recruitment. This will help to overcome possible discrimination or unconscious bias, and promote diversity in the workforce. Research has shown that a person's name can affect their success within the recruitment process.

Removing certain information that could unintentionally bias a manager can help under-represented groups have confidence that their application will be fairly considered. It's important for organisations to train managers on how they can recognise, and overcome their own unconscious bias.

#### Key points

- It's natural.
- It's unintended.
- It can affect decisions.
- It can be mitigated.



# 'Unconscious bias training' to be scrapped by ministers

*Unconscious bias training is being scrapped for civil servants in England, with ministers saying it does not work. The training, intended to tackle patterns of discrimination and prejudice, is used in many workplaces.*

The government says there is no evidence it changes attitudes - and is urging other public sector employers to end this type of training.

But race equality campaigner Halima Begum said the government "mustn't backtrack on anti-racism training".

## Discrimination

Lucille Thirlby, assistant general secretary of the FDA civil servants' union, called on ministers to say "what are you going to replace it with".

"How will they ensure people are not discriminated against? It's easier to attack something than do something positive about it," she said.

Unconscious bias training is an attempt to challenge prejudiced ways of thinking that could unfairly influence decisions - such as who might get a job or a promotion.

It can be prejudiced behaviour, based on assumptions about others, that people are not aware of themselves.

But the government says there is no proof that

such training changes behaviour - and that it can "backfire" and create a negative response.

A written ministerial statement from Cabinet Office minister Julia Lopez will announce "unconscious bias training does not achieve its intended aims. It will therefore be phased out in the civil service".

"We encourage other public sector employers to do likewise," she says, urging the end to training which has been widely used to address bias in race, gender and sexuality.

But it has also been caught up in "culture war" arguments and accusations over "political correctness".

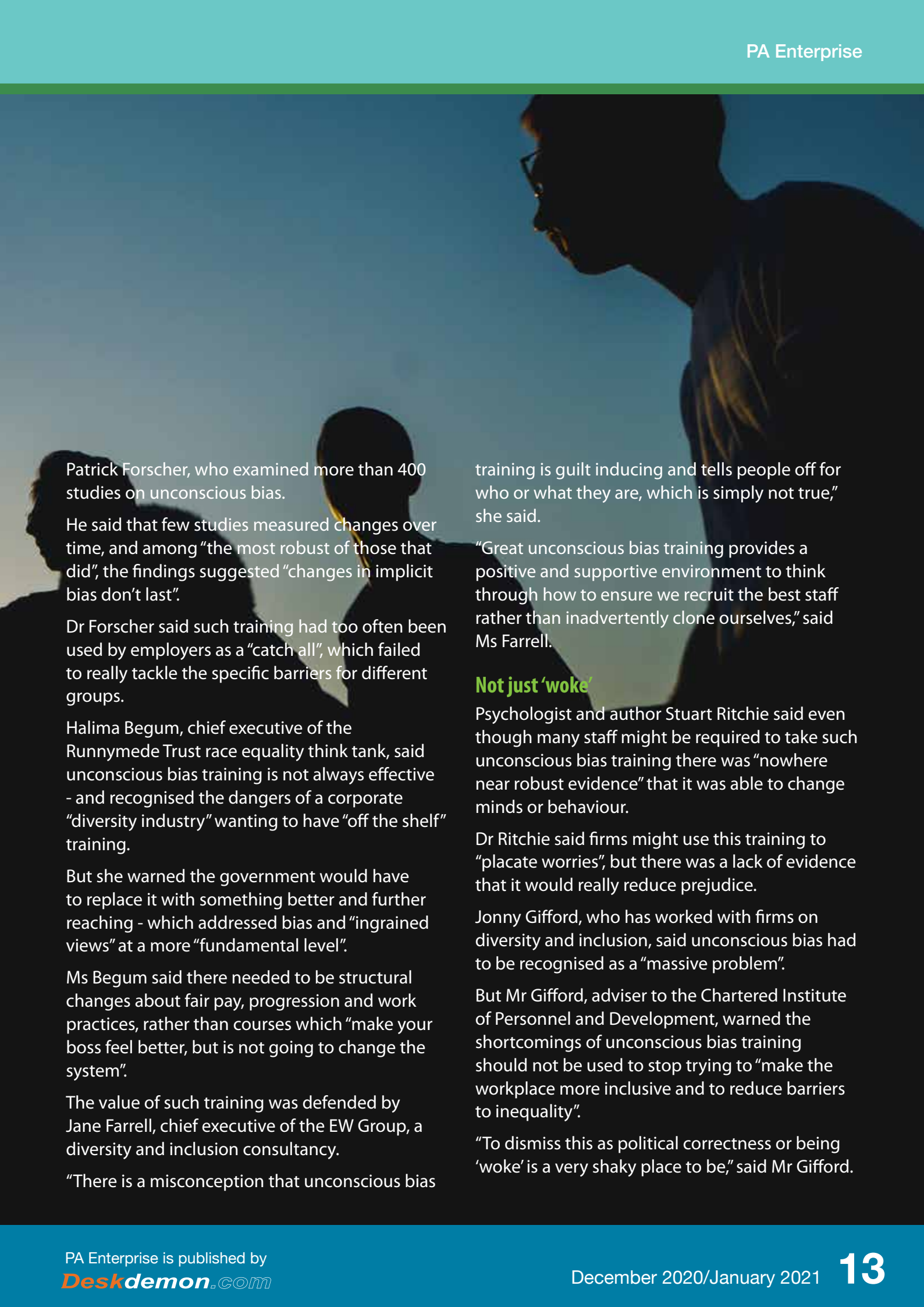
## 'No evidence'

The government says it is "determined to eliminate discrimination in the workplace", but unconscious bias training is the wrong approach.

The Government Equalities Office says there has been "no evidence" that the training improved workplace equality.

Among the researchers cited is psychologist





Patrick Forscher, who examined more than 400 studies on unconscious bias.

He said that few studies measured changes over time, and among “the most robust of those that did”, the findings suggested “changes in implicit bias don’t last”.

Dr Forscher said such training had too often been used by employers as a “catch all”, which failed to really tackle the specific barriers for different groups.

Halima Begum, chief executive of the Runnymede Trust race equality think tank, said unconscious bias training is not always effective - and recognised the dangers of a corporate “diversity industry” wanting to have “off the shelf” training.

But she warned the government would have to replace it with something better and further reaching - which addressed bias and “ingrained views” at a more “fundamental level”.

Ms Begum said there needed to be structural changes about fair pay, progression and work practices, rather than courses which “make your boss feel better, but is not going to change the system”.

The value of such training was defended by Jane Farrell, chief executive of the EW Group, a diversity and inclusion consultancy.

“There is a misconception that unconscious bias

training is guilt inducing and tells people off for who or what they are, which is simply not true,” she said.

“Great unconscious bias training provides a positive and supportive environment to think through how to ensure we recruit the best staff rather than inadvertently clone ourselves,” said Ms Farrell.

### Not just ‘woke’

Psychologist and author Stuart Ritchie said even though many staff might be required to take such unconscious bias training there was “nowhere near robust evidence” that it was able to change minds or behaviour.

Dr Ritchie said firms might use this training to “placate worries”, but there was a lack of evidence that it would really reduce prejudice.

Jonny Gifford, who has worked with firms on diversity and inclusion, said unconscious bias had to be recognised as a “massive problem”.

But Mr Gifford, adviser to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, warned the shortcomings of unconscious bias training should not be used to stop trying to “make the workplace more inclusive and to reduce barriers to inequality”.

“To dismiss this as political correctness or being ‘woke’ is a very shaky place to be,” said Mr Gifford.

# Covid-19: Five ways to stay positive through the winter

*The last few months have been awful for so many people, with millions dealing with grief, stress, financial difficulties, job losses and isolation caused by the pandemic.*

By David Brown, BBC News





Now Christmas is over and the long dark winter months are here - a time that can be tough for many people even in normal times. But the country's leading mental health experts say there are things that many of us can do to give ourselves a lift. Here are some of their tips.

### Get moving

Getting outdoors for exercise can be difficult in winter, but pretty much all experts agree that it's a great way to boost your mood. "Our minds and bodies are completely inseparable", says Dr Brendon Stubbs, of King's College London.

Exercise triggers the release of endorphins into the bloodstream, relieving pain and producing a feeling of well-being. Research by Dr Stubbs has also shown that exercise also increases electrical activity in the emotional processing areas of the brain, particularly the hippocampus and the pre-frontal cortex.

"It's vital to keep active to improve your mental health and stimulate your brain including those areas", he says. "If you don't exercise, the activity drops." That's one of the reasons why a lack of exercise increases your risk of anxiety and depression.

Exercise can also boost the production of a protein, BDNF, or Brain Derived Neurotrophic Factor, which is crucial for brain health.

"You can think of it as a kind of brain fertiliser - it helps parts of your brain regenerate," says Dr Stubbs. Even short periods of exercise - just ten minutes - can help. "Anything that leaves you slightly out of breath, like a brisk walk, or something like gardening, or a cycle ride, will do."

### Stop over-thinking

Adopting helpful habits to stop you over-thinking is one of the best things you can do, says psychologist Professor Jennifer Wild of Oxford University. She calls it "getting out of your head."

People often dwell on problems, going over and over the same negative thoughts, and Professor

Wild has some simple suggestions to stop that happening. "If you've been worrying about a problem for 30 minutes or more without coming up with a plan of action, or you've been going over questions with no answers, it's time to stop", she says.

The main thing is to shift your focus from worries to practical problem-solving. So stop and ask yourself what steps you can take to address the problem. It's not easy, of course, to stop yourself dwelling on problems. Some recommend physical activity to help yourself shift mental gears. In any case, it takes some training.

It's perfectly normal to worry, but many of our worries never materialise. One study of patients with anxiety found only around one in 10 worries ever turn out to be real problems. One explanation is the way we have evolved. It has made us highly tuned to negativity and danger, as a defence against threats which led to death or serious injury.

Danger is "over-encoded in our brains", says Professor Wild. "You can make yourself feel much calmer if you recognise that you're over-thinking, stop and focus on facts."

### Set a new target

"Setting a new goal or target, can really help pull you through," says Cardiff neuroscientist, Dr Dean Burnett. That could be a big project like learning a language or something as small as trying out a new recipe. If big ideas are too much, start small.

The point is that if it's outside your comfort zone, and it's pushing you forward, it gives you a focus and a sense of control. For many people that's hugely helpful for their mental state. "Novelty is fundamentally rewarding," says Dr Burnett.

"Learning to do new things is frequently how we acquire self-worth", he adds. "Goal-motivated behaviour is one of the most fundamental ways that we operate."

*Continued ►*



### Talk it over

Covid-19 has made it a lot harder to be with others in person, and winter can make it harder still. That's a big issue for millions of people and the mental health consequences for some will be serious. So it's a good idea to maximise the little social contact that is available.

"We're not really designed to be on our own," says Professor Emerita Elizabeth Kuipers, of King's College London. "We're socially-oriented. We feel better with social contact." Talking problems over when you can is a good idea, but the key thing is how it's done, she says.

"Going over problems again and again, just rehearsing how terrible you feel, may not help at all. Talking things through with someone who can help you reframe your problems, and help you move through them can be much more helpful."

Isolated people are more likely to focus on themselves, says Professor Kuipers, and that can make things worse. So reach out when you can, and if Covid-19 means you can't do that in person, make that phone call to a friend, or arrange to talk online.

### Do it badly

Optimists live longer, have better relationships and better immune systems, says Olivia Remes of Cambridge University. And the good news is you can cultivate optimism: an inner sense that you can make a difference to your life, and that it's not all down to things outside your control. How? Her number one tip is the principal of "do it badly".

In other words don't wait to do things perfectly at the right time on the right day. That's even more important in winter when gloomy weather might make you think twice about doing something.

"Our inner voice of criticism continually stops us from doing worthwhile things", she says. "Jump straight into action. Do things and accept that they might initially be done badly. When you do that, most of the time the results are actually are not that bad - and they're almost always better than doing nothing."

Olivia's other tips include writing down three things each day that you're grateful about, to force yourself to focus on what's gone well and why. It'll fire up the left hand side of your brain which is associated with positivity.

"Emotions are contagious", she says, so "if you can, gently steer away from negative, miserable people who are constantly complaining", because you'll find yourself becoming one of those people too.



# Announcing Horlicks Vegan!

*Iconic British brand Horlicks has launched Horlicks Vegan; a dairy free malted beverage to enjoy with your favourite alternative milk.*



The family favourite brand, which has been a staple in pantries across the country for nearly 150 years, has introduced Horlicks Vegan into Asda Vegan bays, using a vegan recipe based on the brand's signature creamy and malty characteristics.

Registered by The Vegan Society, the new formulation has been developed to cater not only to vegans, but also for those who suffer with dairy allergies. It's ideal for kids and adults, can be enjoyed hot or cold, and contains 14 key vitamins and minerals.

Ericka Durgahee at the Vegan Society said: "We're proud to register Horlicks' first-ever free-from formulation with the Vegan Trademark. It's brilliant to see a household brand demonstrating that dairy is not necessary to make a great tasting hot drink and that people can still enjoy their favourites without the use of dairy milk."

The vegan formulation is based on the flavour profile of Horlicks Original blend which requires hot milk, meaning consumers can add their favourite preference of dairy alternatives, from

almond to soy, coconut or oat milk.

Trials have shown that the new product tests particularly well with popular barista alternatives, creating the same, thick, creamy and warming hug in mug as the original favourite.

Michelle Younger, Marketing Manager at Horlicks said, "We are keen to evolve the brand by building on our unique malty taste and heritage whilst offering new varieties which appeal to different tastes, formats and diets."

An iconic British brand and a family favourite, Horlicks dates back nearly 150 years, and is the oldest malted drink brand (in fact it is older than the tea bag which dates from 1904).

Made in Britain since 1906 using British farmed wheat and barley, it has a strong British heritage, and formed part of the forces kit bag during WW2 due to its 'complete and well-balanced nourishment'.

Horlicks Vegan will be available exclusively with Asda RRP £3.49 (400g jar).



# Why you shouldn't make a 2021 New Year's resolution

Whatever you thought was the most challenging year of your life probably got challenged by the dumpster fire of a year known as 2020. This year brought so much uncertainty and fear that most of us are beyond ready to turn the page and jump headfirst into 2021.

It's a popular tradition to set New Year's resolutions at the beginning of the year. But since 2020 was a year unlike any other, do resolutions even deserve a place on your to-do list? Many people set resolutions in the name of good health or kicking some kind of vice, which seems harmless. After a year, though, when everything

got turned upside down and uncertainty is the running theme, is it time to finally ditch resolutions for something more useful?

Dr. Sophie Lazarus, a psychologist at the Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, thinks so. According to Dr. Lazarus, after a difficult year, the last thing we need to do is put more pressure on ourselves or set a goal that might not be realistic during a global pandemic.

## The problem with New Year's resolutions

There's nothing inherently bad about setting a New Year's resolution. Where things can get

problematic is when you're doing it from a place of pressure or obligation -- when you feel like you have to set a New Year's resolution to hop on the bandwagon like everyone else.

"It's probably more useful to look at what's going on in our lives -- and especially given everything that has been asked of us and all of the adaptation we've been doing in 2020 -- if it's a really good time to make a change," says Dr. Lazarus.

If you decide that making some type of change is a good idea, then Dr. Lazarus suggests evaluating how big the change is and if that kind of change is actually reasonable and realistic right now.

"What we don't want to do is set a really large sweeping kind of goal and resolution and not meet it and feel more stressed and discouraged," she says.

Dr. Lazarus also says that people rarely do stick to New Year's resolutions, even in a normal year. "And this is an especially difficult year that we don't really want to set ourselves up for that kind of disappointment and stress that makes it even harder to cope," she says.

The stress and disappointment we sometimes place ourselves can be counterproductive. "We sometimes think it's going to help us get more done or be more productive or make this change we really want to make. I think it really tends to just increase our stress and make things worse," says Dr. Lazarus.

"See if you can be a bit gentler with yourself or give yourself this same kind of grace that you might give to someone that you really love or care about who's in a similarly challenging situation," she says.

### What should you do (if anything)?

If there was ever a year to give yourself a break, it's this year. But if you're itching to make some type of change or adopt a "fresh start" mentality in the New Year, Dr. Lazarus suggests starting small.

"What might be more productive is to be more aware of what we're doing and how it impacts us on an ongoing basis so that we can be making adjustments in our lives to move towards what we really care about," she says. She encourages people to think in small, incremental terms instead of big changes.

If you would normally set a huge resolution to quit eating junk food in 2021, for example, make that change a bit smaller. You could think about how much junk food you eat daily, and instead of quitting it cold turkey, try limiting it to once a day or enjoying your favorite meal once a week, no matter how healthy it is.

Finally, consider why this small adjustment will make your life better. Do you know that making this change could help you feel better or happier on a daily basis? Or are you doing it because you think you "should" do it?

Also, instead of trying to focus on bad habits or fixing what's wrong in your life, Dr. Lazarus suggests focusing on mindfulness and awareness, and releasing some of the self-criticism. "So often in these times of stress, we tend to really focus on what's wrong and what is unknown and what we need to worry about," she says. "But there are ways that we can kind of try to shift our perspective and even just being more attentive, aware and grateful for the things that are going well or that are stable."

One way you can do this is by incorporating a mindfulness routine or ritual into your life. It doesn't have to be elaborate or complicated -- but if you need help figuring out where to start, meditation apps offer helpful mindfulness tools, exercises and guided meditations.

"I do think trying to be more aware overall or engaging in a practice like mindfulness that helps give us perspective on a more regular basis [is helpful]," says Dr. Lazarus.

cnet.com



# Transformation coach reveals his top tips for acing any New Year fitness resolution

*Former Men's Fitness magazine editor turned transformation guru, Jon Lipsey, shares his expert advice for getting in shape fast*

Research shows that 80% of people who make New Year resolutions will have abandoned them by the second week of February. The fix, according to former Men's Fitness magazine editor and creator of the New Body Plan fat-loss system Jon Lipsey, is to use a few simple tricks that mean you don't have to rely on grit and willpower when trying to build healthy habits.

"We all know that if you want to get fitter and healthier then eating broccoli rather than biscuits is going to help. And it's no mystery that if you want to get in shape then going for a run or working out at the gym trumps sitting on the sofa. What people are less sure about is how to curb their biscuit cravings or how to muster the motivation to turn up at the gym in the first place. The good news is that there are a few simple things you can do that take the grind out of a New Year resolution."

Here are Lipsey's top seven tips to make getting fitter and healthier in 2021 easier than ever:

## Give new habits a piggy back

Want to create a healthy new habit? Then piggy back off an existing one. Let's say that you're struggling to remember to take a multivitamin pill in the morning. If you can find something that you already do each morning without thinking, such as sticking the kettle on to make a cup of tea, you can use that automatic action to establish the new one. Just keep the vitamin



bottle next to the tea bags and take the pill when you first make a brew.

## Forget perfection

If you're chasing perfection then you're setting yourself up for failure. It's too hard and it's also not necessary. Eating healthy food about 80% of the time is likely to be enough for you to start seeing results. If you can nudge that up towards 90%, you'll be flying and feeling amazing. All you do when you shoot for perfection is pile on the pressure and make yourself feel like a failure for having one tiny square of chocolate.

## Identify patterns

You're more predictable than you realise, so there's probably a pattern behind the behaviour you're trying to change. And when you identify the pattern, you're halfway there to changing the habit. If you think about things you do that you might want to limit while you're on a fitness kick, such as eating chocolate, ordering takeaways or drinking beer, it's likely that you do them either on the same day each week or at the same time of day, or when you're in a particular emotional state.

Let's use takeaways as an example. You might be in the habit of ordering a takeaway curry every Friday night and you wash that down with a few beers. If that's the case, once you've identified the pattern you can plan in advance how you're going to adjust your behaviour. You could, for example, say to yourself that for the next eight weeks that you're following a body-transformation plan, you're going to put the cash aside that you would have spent on the meal and then buy yourself something special as a reward at the end of your workout programme. In the meantime, you could also decide to make a homemade curry on Friday nights so you still get the spice fix while simultaneously upgrading your cooking skills.

## Don't sweat slip-ups

You can't un-eat a biscuit. But you can sabotage your progress by beating yourself up about that biscuit because negative emotion will sap your motivation. Instead, dust off those biscuit crumbs and focus on a positive step that you can take towards your goal, such as completing your next workout. And once you've taken that step, celebrate the mini win, because that simple act will provoke a chemical reaction in your brain that makes it easier to repeat the positive behaviour in the future.

## Use visual cues

If I put an open packet of sweets in front of you,

you're going to be more likely to eat them than if they were tucked away in a cupboard. But this isn't about keeping your treats under lock and key. It's about visual cues influencing behaviour and you can use that to your advantage when creating positive new habits. If you intend to go to the gym, write yourself a note that says something like, 'Gym, 8am' and leave it on your desk or stick it to the fridge - basically leave it somewhere you'll see it multiple times a day because the more you see it the more likely you are to do it.

## Focus on ability not motivation

It doesn't matter how fired up you are about getting fit, if you're not sure how to do it your motivation will soon wane. That's why it pays to follow a proven plan because a good plan, created by an expert you trust, is basically like a roadmap to your goal. The reality is that if you want to make a significant difference to your health and fitness and you're not following a plan then you're going to struggle. That may sound harsh but I can't think of a time when I've seen someone get great results without following a structured and progressive plan. To pick the right one, go for something with proof that it works, something that's aimed at your ability level, and something that feels like it was made for you.

## Schedule your workouts

The biggest thing you can do, once you have your plan, is schedule your sessions in advance. Every Sunday, spend a couple of minutes working out when you can train the following week and write those sessions into your diary as if they were immovable work commitments. If you start the week with a vague notion that you'll do three or four workouts at some point or when you get the chance, life will get in the way and those sessions will get missed. But if they're written down in your diary then they're going to happen.

[newbodyplan.co.uk](http://newbodyplan.co.uk)

# CV trends for 2021

*Have you got an easy-to-read, well-written, results-orientated CV which still isn't winning you a face-to-face interview? The problem is, that when it comes to sought-after roles, most serious candidates will have followed those very same principles. So how are you meant to make your CV stand out in a 100-deep pile of perfectly presented documents?*



Well, succeeding in winning an interview for your dream role means staying ahead of the curve and following the latest industry trends closely. Here are four major CV trends to seize upon, to get your CV ready for 2021... and beyond!

## Video CVs

It's 2021... who says your CV can only be a paper or PDF document? After sifting through a pile of predictable black and white papers, a CV which incorporates video is a sure fire way to grab a recruiter's attention.

No, you don't have to list your entire work history and education in your video. Aim to create a short, snappy and engaging one to three minute video which will work alongside your original document. You could even add a QR code to your CV to make the video easily accessible to employers.

Think of it as a video version of your personal profile. It should communicate to potential employers why you're the right person for the job. It should also highlight your most impressive skills and achievements.

Your confidence, personality and passion shine will shine through way more on a video than through text, so it's well worth the extra time and effort.

Don't forget to dress professionally and find an appropriate background, such as your home office – recruiters don't want to see your dirty laundry!

## Personal blogs

Blogging isn't just a hobby – it's also a great way



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to show off your writing and digital skills to potential employers.

Recruiters want to see candidates who are creative and passionate outside of the office walls. So if you're not yet doing so, make it your New Year's resolution, as there can be many benefits to blogging.

You could start a blog with topics or opinion pieces related to your professional industry to prove your interest and depth of knowledge.

But what if your blog isn't relevant to the role you're applying to? Well, a well-designed website full of perfectly-written, traffic-worthy SEO-optimised blogs displays some great, ultra-current, transferable skills anyway. Make sure to include it in your CV.

## YouTube channels

Content creation is one of the most in-demand skills right now. So, if you've got a successful YouTube channel, you should definitely brag about it on your CV.

Having the courage and passion to put yourself out there and build a community of followers is sure to impress recruiters. Plus, if you've garnered a following, you've probably developed some fantastic skills, too. Think video production, editing, design, public speaking, social media management and marketing.

If you do decide to list your YouTube channel on

your CV, make sure all the videos on your channel are appropriate for potential employers to see.

## Side hustles

Nowadays, it's normal for talented self-starters to have a successful side hustle alongside their full or part-time job. People often leave side-projects out of their CV. This is because they fear appearing like they have 'eggs in too many baskets' or that it somehow appears disloyal. But this couldn't be further from the truth!

Showing that you're an entrepreneur with the initiative and commitment to juggle multiple projects and earn money off your own back is sure to command attention. Make it clear that your side hustle has shaped you into a fantastic multi-tasker with a varied range of professional and business skills.

Don't forget to quantify your side-hustle achievements, too. If you made extra income by writing blogs for a local business, by how much did this boost their website traffic? Maybe you have an online business designing flyers or brochures – did these help your clients to gain more leads or make sales? Focusing on results proves your impact to potential employers.

If you want to get in the job hunting game in 2020 and beyond, may sure you keep up with these CV trends – good luck!

By Andrew Fennell [cv-library.co.uk](http://cv-library.co.uk)

# The future of work in 2021

*As 2020 comes to an end, business leaders should reflect on the challenges they've had to tackle, and the innovative solutions that have helped them navigate through the struggles caused by the ongoing pandemic.*



Businesses spanning all sectors have accelerated their digital transformation and turned to the latest technologies to get them through.

fenews.co.uk have compiled four predictions from leaders in technology, who have shared their insights on what the year ahead holds for businesses:

## **More support for upskilling and personal growth**

**Anna Brailsford, CEO, Code First Girls**

Today, women make up only 17% of IT specialists in the UK, and a mere 35% of women pursuing STEM at higher education level - but this is changing. As we transition into 2021, companies globally will take the opportunity to reshape the way we work and fight to achieve gender parity in the workplace. By empowering women to upskill in technology, businesses across industries can establish a work culture that enables women to thrive.

At a time when businesses are facing increased uncertainty, a highly-skilled diverse team is invaluable and such a workforce doesn't need to be solely outsourced. Instead, forward-looking organisations will look to their existing employees and provide opportunities to support upskilling and personal growth. Whether in person or through the use of a video-conferencing tool, businesses can partner with organisations dedicated to creating tailored training sessions - empowering attendees with new skills and perspectives. Not only does this help futureproof the business, but this also demonstrates a commitment to a company culture that values its employees.

In the new year, don't rest on your laurels. Take the





initiative to set an industry example for 2021, educate and upskill women. The businesses that get this right, and build a diverse and inclusive workplace for women, will thrive.

### **Flexibility will become the norm as businesses start to rethink nine to five working hours**

*Sacha Michaud, Co-founder, Glovo:*

2020 has already seen drastic changes in the gig economy. From the passing of California's Proposition 22, to the latest rulings in Spain classifying food delivery couriers as employees, this year has challenged businesses in the space more than ever. It has and will change the way we work forever. Looking ahead to 2021, there will be even more of an emphasis on the legislation around the gig economy as more people turn to the sector for work as a result of the pandemic.

The flexibility provided by the gig economy will gradually become the norm among businesses globally. Whether it's moving away from rigid working hours, or giving teams new responsibilities, the trend is set to continue. Flexibility is essential to survive the pandemic as people need to ensure they have a good work

life balance - not only for their mental wellbeing but for productivity and work satisfaction. To successfully thrive in 2021, businesses should start to rethink the nine to five working hours and allow teams the autonomy to uncover how they work most productively. With good regulation in place organisations can provide maximum flexibility for workers and at the same time giving them solid social rights.

With the gig economy being an option many workers are turning to during the pandemic, it is imperative that industry players, governments and labour unions create new agreements to protect our essential workers while providing flexible work. As a European company it's extremely important to us to face the challenges of the future of work head on and ensure workers can retain flexibility while still being protected.

### **More businesses will recognise the value of hiring freelancers**

*Liron Smadja, Senior Director of Global Brand Marketing & International Expansion, Fiverr:*

Whilst the pandemic has been incredibly hard

*Continued ►*



on small businesses - one key learning has been the proof that many employees can work from anywhere, any time. Even as vaccines become available, it's unlikely we will go back to the office full time. The demand for full-time office work simply isn't there. Business leaders therefore need to ensure they are equipping their staff with the skills to manage and operate in a hybrid team.

The workforce structure itself is also changing, and we'll see this coming to fruition in 2021. Many businesses don't want to take the risk of hiring full-time employees to meet spikes in work that may prove transient - so we believe the year ahead will bring with it a continued trend towards agility. Bringing freelance specialists in to fully digitised workflows to help cope with this extra demand is something we've seen many businesses doing through 2020 - and expect the trend to continue to grow through 2021.

More businesses will recognise the value of hiring freelancers as a solution to filling in the skills gap they may have in their immediate teams. Opting to hire freelancers rather than full-time employees will help small businesses be able to acquire an agile, on-demand workforce which can help with their wider business goals without affecting their cash flow.

### More support to help employees manage their wellbeing

*Dean Sadler, CEO and Founder at Tribepad, said:*

The one trend we cannot ignore is our new style of working. Remote working is here to stay. For many, it brings that work / life balance we have come to appreciate. However, whilst lockdown has taken away the commute, it has also taken us away from basic human interactions. The cornerstone of successful working relationships.

Looking forward, we will try to get the best of both worlds. The option of working from home, with the reassurance of having an assigned desk in the office. But times are tough, and money needs to be spent wisely, which is why we will see a rise in hub offices next year. With fewer

employees in the office, business owners don't need to pay for an office that holds capacity for the whole team.

"Looking at the wider recruitment strategy for businesses in 2021, by spring - when we will hopefully begin to see it pick up - there will be a huge influx of job applications. As businesses will start to open their recruiting doors again. While we have seen mass job losses, we will likely, and hopefully, witness a mass hiring spree.

A recent report has suggested that throughout COVID-19, firms have been spurred to look inwards for appropriate talent. And this will most likely be the case for larger businesses throughout 2021. They have the capability and funds to invest in wider learning and development programmes; building up their current employees' skills, rather than them having to outsource for new talent.

However, SMEs that are suffering financially, may have to adopt new recruitment strategies. Either paying less in the long-run by outsourcing talent - which may take far more time and money than they ideally would like to spend. Or automating inefficient processes and utilising the skills they currently have in their current workforce. Each business is different, and will need to do what is right for them.

"The success, or failure, of managing employee health and wellbeing will also be a massive trend in 2021. 2020 has put a huge amount of pressure on employees' mental state, with the impact of COVID-19 putting a pause on many career goals. It will be HR teams and line managers' roles to help employees manage the implications the crisis has had on their wellbeing. Especially those who were put on furlough, who haven't been working for months on end. It has been an uncertain time for all, but there are plenty of ways businesses can help employees maintain positive mental health. Regular one-to-one catch ups, or mental health first aiders and support groups, will go a long way in supporting those in need during this challenging time.

**fenews.co.uk**

# Feng Shui Your Home for the New Year

*Placing emphasis on our surroundings and wellbeing, Rebecca Snowden, Interior Style Advisor at FurnitureChoice.co.uk shares three ways to bring balance and harmony to your home to your home the new year.*

## Declutter the home for balance and good flow of energy

Directly translated as 'wind-water' in English, feng shui is an ancient Chinese practice that helps align external surroundings with inner wellbeing and emotional needs. By inviting good energy flow into the home, good health, luck and wealth are set to follow. The first step to starting this process is by decluttering as much as possible.

"Tidying up is a great way to start the new year with a clean slate," Rebecca explains. "A neat home works wonders for our mental clarity and overall health. In feng shui, each space is connected to each other and allows positive energy to flow throughout the house. Add a decorative mirror to the living room to make the space feel larger and multiply the positive energy flow. Meanwhile, closets or drawers overloaded with old items block the chi (energy) so it's best to discard any clutter."

Aside from decluttering, incorporate the yin and yang concept into the décor. Yin (feminine) and yang (masculine) is a belief that two contrasting forces cannot exist without each other. "Apply this concept by mixing different shapes together," Rebecca suggests. "For example, contrast the sharp edges of wall hangings with the soft curves of a sofa or mirror in the living room. This will balance out the room and give it a more relaxing feel."



## Create a calming space in the bedroom

A bedroom is a place of rest so it is important to create a calm and soothing ambience. To maintain a relaxing atmosphere, remove or hide mirrors to avoid an overload of energy in one space.

When it comes to furniture placement, the bed should be the main focus of the room. "In feng

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shui, this symbolises a commanding position that allows you to take charge and handle life's many challenges," Rebecca explains. "The bed is best positioned diagonally away from your door as you will still be able to see it clearly while not being in a direct line to it."

"Placing your bed up against the wall will also give you a sense of security and ground you when you sleep. And for extra strength and stability, a bed with a headboard will represent this with its solid support and build."



### Channel productivity in the home office

Similar to the bedroom, the home office should be decorated to match its purpose. "Since this room places emphasis on productivity, the desk should be the main focus here," Rebecca says. "It's also important to accessorise thoughtfully to maintain a neat space."

"Use plants to invite positive energy and freshen up the home. In feng shui, they are commonly associated as a life force and bring in growth, prosperity and luck. Common indoor plants that are said to attract these good elements include the pothos (money plant), lucky bamboo and peace lily."