

# Making People Count



## August 2021

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Compiled by John Gale, JET Library (Mid-Cheshire NHS Foundation Trust). Commissioned by Health Education England.

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## People Management

### It's not me, it's you!

Source: fistfuloftalent.com

**In a nutshell:** For every one pop song about being blissfully in love there are at least nine covering the miseries of jealousy, unrequited love and break-ups. The latter is usually softened with the bromide that “it’s not you, it’s me,” but in this article Tim Sackett outlines a number of ways in which employees leaving a company can very much be a case of “it’s not me, it’s you.”

1. You stopped showing them love. “The #1 strategy in recruitment is making people feel more wanted than where they are currently working.”
2. You’re keeping people on short-term contracts when the job is permanent
3. Your internal mobility rules make no sense. Are you stopping people moving onwards and upwards within your organisation as quickly as they’d like to
4. You’re being slow matching “market compensation.”
5. You’re allowing an idiot to manage me. “You’ve hired ten people into this group in the last year. All ten have left. One person hasn’t.”
6. You allow weak performers to make roughly the same as I make.
7. You are paying new people with less experience almost the same as me
8. You don’t treat me like an adult. “Everyone you hire wants to do great work ... [you] should give them some freedom and flexibility to do [it]”
9. You messed with something you shouldn’t have messed with – usually benefits or perk-related
10. We’ve reached the end of the road – “sometimes it’s just time for us to part ways.”

All of which makes a change from “lipstick on your collar;” no doubt it won’t be long before a latter-day Johnny Cash sets it all to music.

You can read the whole of this article at

<https://fistfuloftalent.com/2021/06/the-definitive-guide-why-are-your-employees-leaving-you.html>

### Why multi-tasking is a stupid idea

Source: The Guardian

**In a nutshell:** One of the great joys of working from home is that it gives one the opportunity of ignoring one’s boss and one’s family simultaneously. Not everyone is possessed of the requisite levels of concentration/indifference to the needs of others though and many people have found themselves multi-tasking throughout the pandemic, juggling spreadsheets, sick bowls and standing orders. In this article Emma Beddington argues that multi-tasking should come with a health warning, citing various studies that show it reduces one’s IQ and productivity, and can even make one less empathetic. One study from the University of Sussex found that higher “media multitaskers,” had less brain density in the anterior cingulate cortex, a brain region responsible for empathy, among other things. Emma Beddington argues that while we can’t avoid multi-tasking all the time (practise scowling and get a lock fitted on the home office love) “multitasking should come with a health warning, not a glow of heroism.”



You can read the whole of this article at

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/jul/05/multitasking-is-a-menace-it-should-come-with-a-health-warning>

## Getting HCAs involved in organisational improvement

**Source:** Research in Gerontological Nursing

**In a nutshell:** Even if seldom achieved organisational learning is a worthy goal. In this study Bret Lyman, from Brigham Young University in Utah, led a team of researchers looking into the motivation of certified nurse aides (CNAs). The researchers interviewed 24 of them and they described their sources of motivation as:

- I'm a natural caregiver
- Support from administration
- Working as a team
- Love for residents
- Self-care

When they were motivated the CNAs had more positive attitudes about their work, a higher level of engagement with residents, a stronger desire to accomplish extra tasks, and less desire to quit. The researchers recommended that “engaging CNAs in organizational learning may provide an opportunity to motivate CNAs and optimize their unique position and expertise to improve resident care.”

You can read the abstract of this article at

<http://dx.doi.org/10.3928/19404921-20210708-02>

## How psychological safety creates patient safety

**Source:** Journal of Nursing Scholarship

**In a nutshell:** Feeling psychologically safe – being able to express and be yourself\* at work – is recognised as increasingly important in today’s workplaces. In this study Seung Eun Lee, from Yonsei University, led a team of researchers who studied the effect of inclusive leadership on psychological safety, and via psychological safety on patient safety. The researchers found that “when leader inclusiveness helps nurses to feel psychologically safe, they are less likely to feel silenced, and more likely to speak up freely to contribute ideas and disclose errors for the purpose of improving patient safety.”

You can read the abstract of this article at

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/jnu.12689>

\*As long as you agree with the Guardian on all the relevant socioeconomic issues, natch



## Recruitment

### Dulce et decorum est – how youngsters are going on the dole for their country

Source: The Guardian

**In a nutshell:** Most traditional wars involve older people hiding behind the sofa while young people bear the brunt of the fighting, risking life and limb to protect their elders. The war against Covid has followed a similar pattern with young people expected to sacrifice their social lives, health and livelihoods so granny and grandad can have a few more years reading Mills and Boon and playing golf. The Resolution Foundation have been reporting from the trenches and their recent survey of 8,000 adults found that more than one in four young people are worried that poor mental health will affect their ability to find work after the pandemic. 18-24-year-olds were two-and-a-half times more likely than any other age group to be out of work, or on furlough, at the end of May. Fewer than half of all adults (48%) said that their mental health was good, although 64% of those aged 55-64 said it was. Meanwhile the Institute for Fiscal Studies has found that under-25s accounted for two-thirds of the decline in employment in the UK during the pandemic. The proportion of youngster between 19 and 24 who did not work any hours a week rose by a quarter (400,000) from the end of 2019 to March 2021. And the IFS estimated that around half of 19-24 year-olds were still living at home with their parents.

You can read the whole of this article at

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2021/jul/05/young-people-fear-poor-mental-health-will-affect-post-covid-job-prospects>

### Why part-time is better than no time

Source: Personnel Today

**In a nutshell:** In one of the few recorded cases of people joining a sinking ship nurses and doctors still continue to, if not flood, then certainly trickle into the National Health Service; despite the voyage promising to be rather more like Géricault's [\*Raft of the Medusa\*](#) than *Swallows and Amazons*. But is this enough? The Royal College of Physicians has been trying to find out, and its survey found that more than half of the trainee doctors entering the NHS were interested in working part-time. More than a quarter of senior consultants expected to retire within three years and most of the respondents who expected problems cited "not enough medical staff." The College called for a doubling of medical school places (keep practising your colouring in Tristan, you'll get there!) to avoid staff shortages worsening. They also called for increased funding for social care and action to address health inequalities. The survey also found that nearly half of doctors (43%) had not reverted to their original working patterns from before the pandemic. Well over half of the respondents to the survey (57%) were still working from home, at least some of the time with two-thirds saying that working from home had improved their work/life balance. More than 60% wanted opportunities for remote IT access, online meetings, and remote working to be available in the future.

You can read the whole of this article at

<https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/nhs-catch-22-scenario-could-lead-to-doctor-shortage/>



## Government launches new disability strategy

**Source:** Personnel Today

**In a nutshell:** There's nothing ministers like doing more than launching a strategy. It usually gets you at least a few column inches and – even better – unlike launching a ship you might get to drink a little champagne instead of watching it splash pointlessly against the sides of a hulking, inanimate object. The government has just launched its National Disability Strategy which focuses on improving workplace inclusion and narrowing the disability employment gap – the difference between the employment rates of disabled and non-disabled people which currently stands at 28.6%. The strategy includes plans for an “Access to Work adjustments passport,” and a consultation on whether organisations with 250 or more employees should produce disability-workforce reports. The UK Disability Survey recently found that 56% of disabled people who were unemployed agreed, or strongly agreed, that they would like more support in finding a job. The strategy also includes:

The launch of a new online advice hub for disabled people and employers, which provides information and advice on disability discrimination in the workplace, flexible working and rights, and employer's obligations around reasonable adjustments

- The pilot of an Access to Work Adjustments Passport
- Moves to increase the number of disabled people employed by MI5, MI6, and GCHQ
- A review of the effectiveness of the DWP's Disability Confident scheme
- Plans to strengthen rights in the workplace, encourage flexible working, and introduce carers' leave
- An exploration of what extra help would be most useful for those wishing to start a business

You can read the whole of this article at

<https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/organisations-may-have-to-produce-disability-workforce-reports/>

## Wellbeing

### How a touch of green can make a happier office

**Source:** Personnel Today

**In a nutshell:** The most-enjoyable job this writer ever had was working for Directory Enquiries. Perhaps it was no coincidence that the big boss of the call centre I plied this trade in seemed to spend more time watering the pot plants than in his office; presumably relaxing sufficiently doing so to realise that he had no need to interfere in the activities of his perfectly-competent subordinates. Although for every lovingly-tended orchid there's a Swiss cheese plant dying a horrible, lonely death office plants can have a number of benefits and Adam McCulloch outlines a few



of them in this article. Plants can reduce stress by calming the nervous system and good-quality green spaces are linked to better mood. Even indoor plants can rid the air of carcinogens like formaldehyde and benzene and soil micro-organisms in potted plants can also play a part in cleaning the air. Getting people to choose and take care of plants is a good way to encourage them to become more engaged and productive and help them feel more valued. Tough but beautiful plants to grow include English ivy, dracaena, cacti, peace lilies, snake plants and ZZ plants.

You can read the whole of this article at

<https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/a-new-leaf-fix-the-office-with-some-foliage/>

## Junior doctors even more burnt out

**Source:** The Guardian

**In a nutshell:** It's a good idea in life never to ask a question where you don't really want to know the answer. Nothing daunted the General Medical Council asks junior doctors how they're getting on each year; a process somewhat akin to General Haig asking the troops how they felt about table settings in the canteen during the battle of the Somme. This year a third said they were feeling burnt out to a high or very-high degree. Three in five said they always, or often, felt worn out at the end of the working day and 44% felt that their work was emotionally-exhausting to a high, or very-high, degree. Although trainees and trainers reported worsening levels of burnout, the quality of training remained high with three-quarters rating the quality of their teaching as good or very-good. 81% said they were on course to meet their curriculum outcomes for the year, although one in 10 were worried about progressing through their training.

You can read the whole of this article at

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2021/jul/27/one-third-uk-trainee-doctors-feel-high-level-burnout-covid>

## Readers' top tips for the sleepless

**Source:** The Guardian

**In a nutshell:** There's nothing more infuriating for those of us who struggle to get enough sleep than to see it portrayed in the media as a lifestyle-choice caused by staying up late on Twitter rather than the reality of collapsing into bed at half-past ten to face long hours of despair wondering how much paracetamol is enough to knock you out without risking an overdose. In this article some Guardian readers share their top tips for getting a good night's sleep including:

- Stopping drinking caffeine early in the day
- Deep breathing
- Prayer
- Lavender oil
- Keeping a puzzle book beside your bed
- A weighted blanket
- Yoga nidra
- White noise



- Imagining a familiar location then making it more and more surreal
- Wearing an eye mask
- Turning on the light and studying
- Drifting off to a podcast
- Washing your feet

I've found a dash more than the manufacturer's recommended dose of Night Nurse does the trick but it's probably best not to make a habit of it – and the odd antihistamine can take the edge off too.

You can read the whole of this article at

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2021/jul/27/an-eye-mask-transformed-my-life-10-readers-on-how-to-get-a-perfect-nights-sleep>

## Five tips for becoming a more family-friendly employer

**Source:** Personnel Today

**In a nutshell:** As a father of two children (six and four) I can say that whilst babies are appalling and only vaguely tolerable when asleep children are an endless source of joy and contentment, albeit with the odd dash of exasperation thrown in occasionally. Much effort tends to be devoted to “allowing,” parents to spend time with babies -when, frankly, any sane person would be glad to escape back to work - and rather less to facilitating pretending to be a convict cooking kangaroo soup with one's four-year-old daughter. We should be grateful for any improvement though, particularly when our employers are paying for it, and in this article Rachel Sharp outlines five ways in which employers can enhance their family-friendly offering.

1. **Give more than two weeks' paternity leave.** Offering fathers or partners more than the statutory two weeks off can help them to have the time that they need with their new family without leaving them short of holiday for the rest of the year. Employers can also give employees more flexibility about how the leave is taken.
2. **Enhance paternity pay.** Statutory paternity pay is paid at a weekly flat rate. For many employees, this is a significant reduction in pay just at a time when their outgoings are likely to be increasing. Employers can help to remove this financial barrier to taking paternity leave by providing some, or all, of the leave at full pay.
3. **Go beyond statutory maternity pay.** Enhancements can range from topping up to full pay for all or part of the initial six-week period, to paying an employee their full salary for six months or more. Providing generous maternity pay can boost recruitment and retention, particularly when combined with other benefits such as coaching and mentoring support for maternity returners and offering a phased return to work.
4. **Offer paid time off for partners to go to antenatal appointments.** Employers could enable partners to accompany women to antenatal appointments without losing pay. Some employers also offer staff paid time off for adoption appointments.
5. **Rethink your shared parental leave and pay offering.** Organisations could introduce a stand-alone right to a period of paid parental leave, regardless of the employee's sex or family circumstances. Another approach is to enhance shared parental pay in line with the employer's maternity pay offering.



You can read the whole of this article at

<https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/family-friendly-policies-five-ways-for-employers-to-enhance-their-offering/>

## MPs tackle the menopause

**Source:** Personnel Today

**In a nutshell:** “It was a cold, wet, wintery night when I heard a scratching sound at the window. I opened the door and found my mother-in-law standing there, wet through. “Don’t just stand there getting soaked Elsie,” I said “Go home.”” Unlike mother-in-laws the menopause is no joke and the Women and Equalities Committee of the House of Commons are launching an enquiry to see whether more can be done to stamp out menopause-related discrimination and support women to stay in work longer. According to a 2019 CIPD and Bupa survey, three in five menopausal women were negatively affected at work, and almost 900,000 had left their jobs as a result of menopause symptoms. The inquiry is open until the 17<sup>th</sup> of September and is seeking evidence about:

- The nature and extent of discrimination faced by women experiencing the menopause and how it affects wider society
- The economic impact of menopause discrimination
- How businesses should factor in the needs of employees going through the menopause
- How practices designed to address menopause discrimination at work can be implemented
- Examples of best practice
- Whether current legislation protects women from discrimination and whether it should be amended
- Whether further legislation is required to enable employers to put in place a workplace menopause policy
- How effective government action has been at addressing workplace discrimination related to the menopause
- Whether the Government Equalities Office has been effective at working across Government to embed a strategic approach

You can read the whole of this article at

<https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/mps-consider-how-tackle-menopause-discrimination/>

## Wise words from Heads Forward

**Source:** Personnel Today

**In a nutshell:** The good people at Personnel Today run a series of podcasts called “Oven-Ready HR.” They’re just about to finish the second series of these podcasts and their last episode features an interview with Dr Paola Carr-Walker. Dr Carr-Walker is a chartered clinical and forensic psychologist and has spent 20 years working across in-patient and community mental health services, including 10 years working at Broadmoor. She is the co-founder of



Heads Forward, a specialist consultancy business which combines leadership, culture, and “people-transformation expertise.” In this interview she covers – among other things:

- How effective leaders build mental fitness into their organisational culture and how important they are in breaking down the stigma of mental-health issues and giving opportunities for mental health to be discussed
- How organisations should be managing hybrid working for their employees to remove uncertainty and anxiety
- How mental fitness boosts happiness and productivity, and why prevention is better than cure

You can listen to this podcast at

<https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/changing-attitudes-to-mental-health-dr-paola-carr-walker-talks-to-oven-ready-hr/>

