



Here's your personal copy of this week's [Workplace Effectiveness News](#) from [JBA](#).

## Avoid 'firefighting'

It's so easy in these straightened financial times to focus on last-minute crisis handling in the workplace. Such '*fire-fighting*' typically results in reduced productivity and burned-out staff.

Crisis handling is commonly down to managers deferring decisions, bowing to budget pressures, and delivering 'knee-jerk' reactions – all of which detracts from any long-term or strategic planning. Since key business objectives are strategic, rather than urgent, they are continually moved to a backburner when an organisation focuses on managing crises. Making matters worse, human nature is to gravitate towards the urgent, thereby providing us with an immediate sense of fulfilment in solving a bunch of urgent problems. This, in turn, makes it harder to remain competitive, as creativity and innovation falls to the wayside – all of which fuels the crisis.

Breaking this vicious circle demands a focus on the entire business cycle rather than tackling point activities – exactly the underpinnings of workplace effectiveness.

If you'd like to find out more, Sam Thornton ([samantha\\_thornton@jbassociates.uk.com](mailto:samantha_thornton@jbassociates.uk.com)) will happily provide you with details of our workplace effectiveness research and assessments.

### The JBA Team

## Hot Topics – in association with Management-Issues

### Flexibility in the face of adversity

In tough times, the temptation is to start cutting jobs at the first sign of trouble. Which is just what a raft of data over recent weeks suggests is beginning to happen on both sides of the Atlantic – with some signs suggesting that jobs losses will only get worse in the months to come.

But as research published last week by consultancy PricewaterhouseCoopers argues, simply slashing your headcount at the first whiff of a downturn can prove more costly - and be more damaging in the long term - than trying to hang on to your staff.

Companies that are more flexible in the way they manage their people tend to do better when it comes to sustaining their business strategy – and therefore their competitive edge – when times are hard, PwC said, adding that there are a much wider range of tactics available to the clever manager for bringing costs under control than just firing people indiscriminately.

[Read the full story on Management-Issues »](#)

### Tread carefully when cutting jobs

Organisations also need to remember that mishandling job cuts can see their reputations trashed in an instant, leading to concerns from customers and resentment, fear and disengagement among their remaining employees.

And it isn't just a moral obligation that employers have towards their workers in this situation. As a recent report from consultants Reed has pointed out, up to a quarter of top performers leave an organisation within 90 days of a major headcount announcement being made – precisely the people companies can least afford to lose.

All of which makes it vital that when employers do cut their headcounts, they do their utmost to help those being made redundant – with things like the provision of outplacement services - as well as remembering the impact on those left behind.

[Read the full story on Management-Issues »](#)

### Losing Baby Boomers...

There's another group of staff that organisations can ill afford to lose, and that's the Baby Boom generation whose are now retiring in their droves. Their skills, experience and specialised knowledge is a critical – but often forgotten – factor in what makes an organisation tick.

But as a new study by U.S research body The Conference Board has found, most American, Canadian and European businesses are woefully ill-prepared for this exodus and simply aren't doing enough to ensure that critical knowledge is

### Other News, comment, and Views

#### [The Working Week](#)

Dan Bobinski talks to Wayne about why it is that so many organisations are ignoring the transfer of critical knowledge across generations.

#### Thought Leaders

#### [Mastering failure](#)

One thing that distinguished superstars, says Myra White, is that they don't let their failures interfere with their pursuit of success.

#### [Intelligence, intellect and wisdom](#)

Whether we're aware of it or not, says Peter Vajda, our deeper voices of wisdom and intuition are continually sending us messages. The question is whether or not we are listening.

#### From the Blog

#### [Are you an office prat?](#)

Are you the guy at the office who thinks that acting like an idiot is something you should be proud of? Do you think it's funny to act like a bore to the secretary or take your kit off at company parties?

#### [Layoffs: the warning signs](#)

In the current climate, rumours regarding "downsizing" and layoffs are bound to spread. But what are the signs that the layoffs may really be coming?

#### More News

#### [Still ignoring succession planning](#)

An astonishing proportion of companies have no plan in place to replace their CEO if they should suddenly depart.

#### [Execs unhappy with their leadership development](#)

Confidence in the ability of leaders has declined steadily over the past eight years, as has senior executives dissatisfaction with their organisation's development offerings.

transferred from one generation to the next.  
[Read the full story on Management-Issues »](#)

## Facts about Gen Y workforce?

Of course, what good this knowledge transfer will do is a moot point if a survey by UK people assessment firm Talent Q is anything to go by. Because they're jumped on the "let's bash Gen-Y" bandwagon with a survey claiming that those born since 1980 are generally flighty, badly organised, poor at planning their workload and less efficient than other generations.

What's more, the poll claims, the most common assumptions about Gen-Y – that they're good at adapting to rapid change – is also a myth. In fact they show less adaptability, efficiency and dynamism than older generations.  
[Read the full story on Management-Issues »](#)

### More from the Working Week

#### Secrets of Successful Relocations

Instant communications may have made the world feel like a global village, but things often seem different for those whose jobs have taken them to live and work in a foreign country. So what makes for a successful relocation?

[Read more on Management-Issues »](#)

## What's the office for?

An interesting fact to emerge from the "2008-2009 WorldatWork Salary Budget Survey", which quizzed more than 2,700 organizations representing 13.6 million North American employees, is that teleworking has soared in popularity the U.S. and Canada over the past 12 months – largely as a result of the soaring cost of actually getting to the office.

And on the other side of the Atlantic, new survey from the UK reveals that up to half of small businesses don't work from formal business premises, with a huge upsurge in the numbers of small firms abandoning their offices in favour of working at home since the onset of the credit crisis.

This year alone, around one in ten of the companies questioned by mobile phone operator O2 have chosen not to renew an office lease, while two-thirds of those polled who were still working from an office said they were considering giving it up over the next 12 months.  
[Read the full story on Management-Issues »](#)

## No office – make sure you recognise the challenges

But as Wayne Turmel – a self-confessed GOOF (that's Gladly Out of the Office) explains – there are some down sides to working from home. It means that you're chained to the office even when there is no actual office and it means an end to be able to pop your head over a cubicle like a Meerkat and call for help from real people.

Which is pretty hard when the only other living thing to bounce ideas off during the working day has a bark, four legs and a tail...  
[Read the full story on Management-Issues »](#)

## Recognising the road to success

Finally, wherever we work from, one thing that almost everyone is looking for is success. Whether it's achieving goals, living according to one's calling, or making a difference in the world, we all want to accomplish something.

The problem is, as Dan Bobinski discusses this week, most people struggle in the effort. And that begs the question, what is needed to get past the obstacles on the road to success?  
[Read the full story on Management-Issues »](#)

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