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Creating high-performing workplaces for fixed office staff

New working practices are frequently touted as the panacea for delivering round-the-clock services, improving corporate performance, reducing workload stress, and improving work-life balance. However, be it through habit or convention, the majority of today's employees remain constrained to the office. Evidently, there's a shortage of solid data on what's actually happening and how this is affecting individual/ corporate performance.

Today's reality is that the majority staff constrained to working in offices consistently and repeatedly report the same problems, such as;

- dire, unreliable, and expensive journeys to work,
- uninspiring offices that are noisy, dirty, cramped, and short of quality heat, light, and air,
- dismal, unreliable, and second class ICT,
- overall lacklustre people and facilities management

Our report into "**the High Performance Workplace**" explores the facts, the fictions, the realities, and the challenges behind today's workplace. If you'd like to find out more, just drop a note to Sam Thornton (samantha_thornton@ibassociates.uk.com) and we'll happily send you a personal copy of this fascinating report.

The JBA Team

Hot Topics – in association with Management-Issues

When corporate governance fails...

There are many, many companies that are well run by effective boards and demonstrate admirable corporate stewardship. However, recent events would suggest that there are a great many company boards that don't. And sadly for all of us, many of these are the banks and financial institutions that so underpin our economic stability.

As Bob Selden explains in his latest column, the reasons for this failure of governance are two-fold. First is a lack of balance in managing the needs and expectation of all stakeholders, and second is the blurring of the boundaries between a company's board and its management.

So while Sarbanes-Oxley was supposed to usher in the greatest corporate governance improvements in history, it did nothing of the sort. Instead, it focused only on financial accounting issues, not corporate structures.

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

The dangers of prizing power over achievement...

Psychologist Myra White suggests that another explanation for the financial meltdown is that the US has become a society in which the quest for personal power is prized over the quest for achievement.

While individuals high in achievement focus on efficiency and doing things better, individuals high in the need for power are more interested in influencing others and having an impact on the world around them. As such, they like to call attention to themselves and tend to take big risks.

What's more, individuals with a high need for power who also lack social inhibition tend to channel their drive towards acquiring personal power. They aggressively seek money and prestige, want to win at all costs, and will exploit others in order to come out on top – behaviour that, as we have seen, can have disastrous consequences.

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

"Worry is not a requirement"...

With all the gloom and bad news out there, it is all too easy to be overwhelmed with worry and fear of the future. But if we choose fear, fear is what will appear. Instead, as Peter Vajda explained recently, we can equally say to ourselves "worry is not a requirement.

As Peter points out, worrying is self-perpetuating. Worry and anxiety take a huge toll on one's mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual energy. And when we're worried and feeling anxious about work, we put in less effort, perform less efficiently and lose focus. The result is that we feel an even more intense fear. So if worry solves nothing, what can we do to eliminate it?

Other News, comment, and Views

[The Working Week](#)

Wayne explores the challenges of balancing the demands of home and work lives with Kathy Sherbrooke, CEO of Circles, a company that helps employees improve their quality of life.

Thought Leaders

[Strategy and the crash](#)

Robert Heller explains why the Second Great Crash is different from the First but all too similar to lesser crashes in between – and why it was completely avoidable.

From the Blog

[Does your behaviour damage trust?](#)

In a culture characterised by mistrust, relationships suffer and when relationships suffer, performance, production and profits suffer. So, how might you be contributing to mistrust on your team?

More News

[Gender pay gap nothing to do with discrimination](#)

Men earn more money than women not because of discrimination, but because they make different lifestyle choices.

[Blame Darwin for office politics](#)

If your boss likes to strut around the office puffing out his chest or starts wearing a particularly loud tie, it may all be down to evolution.

[Why the world needs more clueless bankers](#)

If bankers had been rather less confident about what they were doing with our money over the past few years, we might not be in the financial mess we are today.

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

The Management Advice Clinic

A cultural conundrum

Robert moved from the UK to a management job in China a year ago. While things went well at first, one of his team has recently been openly challenging his working-style and being dismissive of his decisions. What should he do?

[Read more on Management-Issues »](#)

Come on business leaders, make yourself visible...

If worrying is one thing that isn't going to help us through the downturn, something that certainly will is clear communication. In fact, according to global consulting firm Watson Wyatt, it's critical that business leaders come down from their ivory towers and do what they can to help maintain employee morale.

That means confronting difficult issues, acknowledging that you don't have all the answers and telling employees what you know and what you don't. And it means being visible. Credibility, conviction, and passion are important messages that only presence can convey.

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

...and while you're at it, make sure you're passionate and credible...

And if a study by the US-based Center for Work-Life Policy is to be believed, managers are going to need all the credibility, conviction, and passion they can muster if they are going to maintain morale and engagement.

The Center's study of more than 1,500 high-income U.S workers found that far from encouraging people to work harder, uncertainty about job security and increasing pressure to deliver has sent levels of loyalty and trust plunging to new lows. Moreover, the proportion of employees who felt loyal to their company had fallen from virtually all – 95 per cent – to slightly more than half over the past year.

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

The return of the long hours culture...

For Generation Y – who have known nothing but boom years – the economic downturn is coming as a particular shock. A survey by the UK Association of Graduate Recruiters has found that half of young professionals complain that managers are cracking the whip and putting them under greater pressure to work longer hours – so much so that many would consider leaving their jobs as a result.

And while they may not find another job to go to, it's worth remembering that organisations that create a "misery culture" are likely to see and exodus in the longer term as soon staff feel it is safe to quit.

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

Adapting to today's only constant – change...

But let's leave the last word, as usual, to Dan Bobinski. While economy turmoil means that every day presents new challenges, Dan reminds us that it also presents new opportunities. We need to remember, too, that the only thing that stays the same in business is change.

How we engage change personally can make a huge difference – and how we adapt to the changing horizon can make the difference between surviving or thriving. So here are Dan's tips for adapting to change in the most positive way possible.

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

[JBA](#) Oxfordshire RG9 5LX United Kingdom Tel: +44 1491 628654 info@jbassociates.uk.com ©Copyright JBA 2008 – all rights reserved

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