



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

## Responding to treacherous times

It's often said that the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, but expecting a different result. A good example of this is the wave of restructuring and redundancies that follow the first hint of trouble.

However, despite restructuring being prohibitively expensive, it remains the most common knee-jerk reaction of CEO's when faced with reducing costs. However all may not be what it seems. The real cost of restructuring to UK business could be as high as £32 billion.

Our latest report, "[Responding to Treacherous Times](#)", outlines fostering enhanced productivity and organisational effectiveness as a genuine alternative to restructuring. With modern scientific methods and approaches, these new models now reliably deliver cost avoidance in excess of £0.7 to £1.1 million/ 100 employees inside a six-month timescale.

## JBA launches £100/ head business change service

Coinciding with the '[Responding to Treacherous Times](#)' report, JBA have launched a new service aimed at migrating organisations to fresh effective working practices for just £100/employee. Called "[Respond to Challenge](#)", this draws on the latest scientific methods for enhancing organisational effectiveness, and aims to identify an impressive eighty-fold ROI – equivalent to ~£8,000/ employee!

The offer is open to all organisations, irrespective of size – be it a small firm, a department in a large organisation, or an entire multi-national workforce. The bespoke service creates the business case for change in ~4-5 weeks and goes on to support benefit realisation

If you'd like a personal copy of this compelling report "[Responding to Treacherous Times](#)", or would like to find out more about "[Responding to Challenge](#)" just drop Sam Thornton ([samantha\\_thornton@jbassociates.uk.com](mailto:samantha_thornton@jbassociates.uk.com)) and we'll get straight back to you.

[The JBA Team](#)

## Hot Topics – in association with Management-Issues

### Is CEO faith in capitalism misguided...

Just a few weeks into the new year and already there's a clear theme emerging on Management-Issues, and it is one that we'll be revisiting and developing throughout the year. Perhaps best summed up by the phrase, "*we can't go on like this*", we'll leave it to Robert Heller to explain further:

*"The driving force that is supposed to animate capitalism is the profit motive. Competing bosses are meant to push their people towards stretching targets, while outside investors push along lagging CEOs – or sit back and reward the successes with bags of cash. However, it could be that there is a flaw in this method that's taken for granted across the Western world: it simply might not work."*

Although it is the bosses of America's ailing giant car makers he describes as "*colossally overpaid, professionally incompetent and hugely conceited*", Heller might as well aim his comments at a whole generation of CEOs – and particularly those in the banking sector whose hubris was directly responsible for the mess we're all in now.

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

### New, holistic management skills needed...

James Fleck, Dean of the UK's OU Business School explores a similar theme, arguing that the economic crisis highlights not just a problem with the financial underpinning of economies, but the wholesale failure of the Anglo-American model of how businesses should be managed.

At the heart of this failure has been an inability to engage with the bigger and broader issues of governance of a business operation, he says. Everything is toolkit-based, focused on the specialist activities of HR, finance, marketing etc, in order to increase efficiency and maximise financial benefits.

What's needed from people within organisations – particularly now, when faced by threats to the existence of firms – is an ability to take more of a holistic view of what the organisation is, and how it should be run.

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

### Restructuring to the death...

As far as Philip Whiteley, Chairman of the Human Capital Forum, is concerned, the fundamental problem with the Anglo-American model is its reliance on numbers. Why, he wonders, are we persisting with a business model based on a 19<sup>th</sup> Century concept of the

### Other News, comment, and Views

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

Was the financial meltdown a failure of regulation or of management? That's the question posed this week as Wayne talks to Dr Alexandra Michel, an Assistant Professor at the Marshall School of Business and author of "Bullish on Uncertainty: How Organizational Cultures Transform Participants".

#### [Thought Leaders](#)

##### [How creative thinking can help in a downturn](#)

Better thinking is never a luxury, says Edward de Bono. And better thinking is an absolute necessity when times are hard.

##### [Betrayal: the ultimate trust-buster](#)

Peter Vajda explains how you can respond to matters of betrayal in a positive way.

#### [More News](#)

##### [Pen pushing saps managers' productivity](#)

Vast swathes of the average manager's working day are spent on unproductive activities.

##### [Cutting costs, not slashing jobs](#)

Many companies are taking a more intelligent and nuanced approach to cutting their costs that they might have done in the past.

##### [Managers stick with poor performers](#)

Most managers would prefer to stick with someone they know, even if they are not pulling their weight, rather than hire a new face.

corporation, using a 15<sup>th</sup> Century invention (accountancy) as the principal source of business metrics?

This fallacy is exacerbated, he argues, by the absurd pretence, cemented in MBA orthodoxy that a company consists of little more than costs and resources. The same thinking demands, in fatalistic or mechanistic terms, a lack of reference to the service staff-customer interaction. It is this myopic mindset – as much as the recession – that this pushing businesses to the wall.

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

### The Management Advice Clinic

#### When a boss crosses the line

Kate works as an assistant to eight people. All are demanding, but one crosses the line between the professional and personal and acts like a jerk when she asks him not to. Charles Helliwell has some advice on dealing with him.

[Read more on Management-Issues »](#)

### Surfing the recession...

Max McKeown has plenty to say about the recession too. First off, he suggests that [since you can't control the waves, you need to learn to surf](#).

Strategy, like surfing, sailing, or snowboarding emerges from the interaction between our choices, those of others, and the environment. Continually adjusting your balance, your direction, your speed, and your destination is the best way of surfing waves you can't control.

Max also has some advice about how you can not only survive the waves of fate, but emerge and thrive from the recession ahead of your competition. What should you focus on? Which leadership qualities do you need? How can you motivate and energise your people? How do you deal with scepticism, cynicism, and defeatism?

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

### How creative are managers...

Like Max, Bob Selden is keen to stress the value of creativity and innovation in a downturn. But, as he points out in his latest column, before they expect employees to be innovative, managers must develop their own creative mindsets.

One of the keys to doing this for the influencers in the organisation to demonstrate a positive mindset. Unfortunately, though, managers quite often look to "fix problems" rather than encourage innovation. That's exactly the wrong approach - as you'll quickly find if you try asking five or six people in an organisation what needs to be fixed. What you'll get is a list of complaints (which in fact are often minor, but start a negative discussion).

On the other hand, if you ask, "*what's working around here?*" you'll start a meaningful discussion about some of the key drivers that make the organisation successful.

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

### Is it time for women to be put in charge...

Of course, all of this poses far more questions than it answers. If the systems and structures that have grown up over the past few centuries no longer work, what should we replace them with?

Here's one suggestion to be going on with. Let's put an end to the sort of aggressive, testosterone-fuelled, risk-taking culture that played such a big part in the financial sector's meltdown, together with type of management that went with it. And ask yourself, if more women had been in senior positions in finance and big business, could much of the woe of the past year have been, if not avoided completely, then considerably reduced?

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

### Are you ready to manage...

Finally, two more questions from Dan Bobinski. If you're considering promoting somebody into a managerial or supervisory role, are you sure the person you're promoting is ready for the position? If not, are you willing to do what it takes – on an ongoing basis - to equip that person for the job?

If you answer "*no*" to both questions, you're asking for trouble. Because perhaps the worst dilemma for managers – especially new managers - is getting placed in a supervisory role without any training for how to do it well. For some reason, the idea persists that front line employees who excel can be placed in management or supervisory positions and they will do equally well. But, that's rarely the case without help.

So, here's a suggestion: Put ongoing training in place. A one-day class will not cut it. For that matter, a one-week class will not cut it. Ongoing, intermittent management training with feedback and coaching is the only way managers can learn, practice, and improve their efficiency and effectiveness as they progress.

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

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

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