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

## Workplace of the Future report

The only certainty we have when we emerge from the current economic turmoil is that our workplaces will be remarkably different.

Redundancies and restructuring will have created a new world of start-up's and entrepreneurs. The talent market – constrained before the credit crunch – will be deeply cynical about the allure of new roles. Corporate real estate developers will be far thinner on the ground, making for a constrained office market. Organisations will be accelerating their drive for "doing more, better and faster, with less". And competition will be emerging from previously unknown corners.

To understand what the future workplace will look like, we collaborated with Surrey University to interview over 1,100 business leaders, gaining their perspective on the new world order. When combined with our financial and statistical analysis, the resulting report aptly titled; **"The Workplace of the Future"** makes for compelling reading.

## The OfficePOD launches

We're really excited to announce the launch of the OfficePOD – a ground-breaking new concept for personal workspace. This is a place dedicated to work, wherever that's required to be – a fully serviced work place that creates a more effective working environment with significant cost, employee, environmental and productivity benefits. Details can be found at [www.officepod.co.uk](http://www.officepod.co.uk)



If you would like a personal copy of **"The Workplace of the Future"** report, or would like an invite to the launch of the OfficePOD, 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

### How to choose effective leaders...

Why is it that so many of the business leaders in whom we placed our faith, our trust and even our money, have been exposed as incompetent or (in some cases) out-and-out charlatans? How could we have picked leaders who made such bad decisions or even engaged in blatant fraud?

As Myra White explains in her latest column, it is striking that we often seem to be more concerned with social skills, likeability, and charisma in choosing our leaders than we are with their ability to be effective.

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

### Promoting consensual ways of working...

It is hard, too, not to point the finger of blame for the recession at the arrogance, risk taking, and poor decision-making of a male-dominated financial sector. Pauline Crawford certainly does, arguing that we have lost our way economically and need to draw up a new map.

But the recession also represents an opportunity, she says, to shift the dynamic of the workplace from one that is emotionally and physically masculine to one where there is a much more balanced collaboration of the masculine and the feminine.

*"The recession gives us a chance to promote more consensual ways of working to help us get us out of the mess we have got ourselves into," she writes. "If we are going to manage our way to survival, gender communication and collaboration are what counts, and co-operation (rather than competition) is going to be essential."*

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

### Can women win in a male-dominated workplace...

It often seems that whatever women do to try to rise to the top of organisations, the odds are stacked against them. Last November, for example, an [analysis of more than 65,000 people by management consultancy Hudson](#) found that the very traits that make women better suited to leading modern-day organisations are also the ones that stop many from progressing.

Now, research by academics from Newark's Rutgers University psychology department has suggested that the recruitment process is often loaded against women, putting them at a disadvantage to men irrespective of how they try to present themselves during an interview.

### Other News, comment, and Views

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

Wayne talks to Penny Power, co-founder of the business social network Ecademy, about the role social networks will play in our careers in future.

#### [Thought Leaders](#)

##### [A lesson in change management](#)

Much of the focus over the election of Barack Obama has been the hope for change that he represents. But as Bob Selden explains, there has also been a great lesson to learn from the smooth transition of power from the outgoing to the incoming president.

##### [The Super Bowl – but not the game](#)

The message Peter Vajda took away from the Super Bowl ads this year is a depressing one. They told him that disrespect, abuse, deceit, and cheating are funny, "business as usual", and that's just the way it is in our world.

#### [More News](#)

##### [Time to cheer up](#)

Believe it or not, more than nine out of 10 CEOs are upbeat about their prospects over the next three years.

##### [Mentoring your way out of recession](#)

Now, more than ever, managers need to get hands-on in the mentoring and coaching of their staff.

##### [The challenge of enforced idleness](#)

Employers on both sides of the Atlantic are looking at shorter working weeks and reduced hours as an alternative to making redundancies.

Women who come across as ambitious, competitive, and capable can put themselves at as much of a disadvantage as those who present themselves as competent yet modest in their abilities, the researchers found. So, especially in the current climate, how can women win?

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

## The Evolutionary Provocateur

### Recreating capitalism

Have we reached a point at which the total cost of industrial capitalism has outweighed its benefits? Whatever your take on this, it is hard to escape the conclusion that the world needs a new way of doing business. Dawna Jones explores one possible alternative in a thought-provoking podcast.

[Listen to the Podcast on Management-Issues »](#)

## Cutting staff does more harm than good...

It's impossible to avoid the issue of staff layoffs at the moment, as many organisations do what they always do when times are tough and the unemployment lines start to lengthen.

But in many cases, cutting staff does more harm than good. Sure, it might look good on the balance sheet, but the collapse in morale and performance that accompanies many rounds of "restructuring", "downsizing" or whatever other euphemism you care to use, will cost far more in the long run.

New research from U.S think-tank the Center for Creative Leadership has added to the raft of recent evidence highlighting that laying off workers – particularly if done haphazardly – can lead to a sharp slump in productivity and the loss of valued, experienced workers just when organisations need them most.

As management guru Tom Peters said recently, *"If you really want to kill morale, have layoffs every two months for the next two years"*. What's more, *"you are going to inflict serious mental damage on the large number of people you get rid of and stress on all the rest who may have their hours or pay cut or think that they're going to be next"*.

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

## Will your current employee ...

The real issue here, as Charles Helliwell explains in his latest missive, is that organisations need to start viewing their people as an asset, not a liability. Before making any decisions about their workforce, they must assess where their income and earnings are going to come from in the next 12-18 months and determine whether their current asset base of employees best supports the delivery of that income.

There's no mystery or silver bullet to assessing this value – it's simply a case of how interested you are to find out and how much you care.

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

## How to choose effective leaders...

But let's not pretend that the outcome of such an analysis isn't sometimes going to involve making the difficult decision to let people go. For managers, making staff redundant is probably the hardest thing they ever have to do. In companies large and small, they often handle the process of redundancy very badly.

As Gareth Chick explains in a recent piece for us, the key to handling redundancy well is recognising the psychological impact it has – both those leaving and those remaining. Losing a job or a trusted colleague suddenly is a major shock and the reaction of an individual is generally similar to the grieving process of losing a loved one.

Understanding this cycle and helping staff move through it will not only enable managers to empathise with them, but it also makes their role clearer.

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

## How to choose effective leaders...

Finally, with this year marking the 200th Anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin, Janet Howd muses not so much on the origin of species as the origin of specious presentations.

The explosion in the number of trade shows, conferences and their associated deluge of presentations only began 50 years ago with the advent of cheap air travel, she points out. And the amount of hot air spent in delivering specious presentations to audiences around the world since then is unlikely to have delivered a fair return on investment – although it will definitely have added to global warming!

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

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