



CUTTINGS...

Number 133 February 2018

Compiled and edited by Geof Cox

Welcome to 2018 - and look forward to 2030 and what that might have in store for us as people managers and workers in one of the articles in this edition of Cuttings.

I also found a useful article from Project Management which looks at managing people who are working flexible hours and work location, which equally applies to other managers and leaders in such a position. And finally a checklist of some of our common cognitive biases which both help and hinder our thinking and decision making (which hinder you?)

And at this time of year - Season's Greetings to you, wherever you read this newsletter and however you celebrate.

Enjoy

Geof Cox

Managing Locally Remote Talent

Last month in Project Management, Andy Jordan identified some ideas for managing resources that are "locally remote". These are people who are based out of the same location as the project manager but are not regularly physically present during the same business hours as a result of a flexible working arrangements.

More and more organisations and individuals are using non-traditional office locations and flexible hours—allowing employees to work wherever and whenever they like. And projects are ideal for these approaches as they don't have the restrictions that operational roles often have of requiring people to work in certain locations at certain times.

But just creating a flexible work environment does not guarantee success. The key to success in this approach to work is to create and manage a culture where everyone is committed to success, and that's where the project manager comes in. The most progressive work environment and culture can be undermined by a project manager who is unable to deliver an engaged and motivated team in such an environment, and that's where the key skills of managing locally remote teams comes in. The tendency is to focus on practical aspects—scheduling a set time when everyone will be on site for a status meeting, establishing deadlines for regular updates, etc. This may work,

In this edition

Managing locally remote talent - an insight to managing flexible working environments in project management

What will work look like in 2030 - four scenarios from PwC's futures research

Common biases - which biases affect our thinking?

Plus details of **2018 Public Courses, Book Sales, and Snippets** to further provoke your thinking and reflection

"Forget about the fast lane. If you really want to fly, just harness your power to your passion."

Oprah Winfrey

"In organisations, real power and energy is generated through relationships. The pattern of relationships and the capacities to form them are more important than tasks, functions, roles, and positions."

Margaret Wheatley

"Never lose sight of the fact that the most important yardstick of your success will be how you treat other people – your family, friends, and co-workers, and even strangers you meet along the way."

Barbara Bush

"Keep your fears to yourself, but share your courage with others."

Robert Louis Stevenson

"People who say it cannot be done should not interrupt those who are

but it's not optimally aligned with the flexible approach to working.

What is required is a shift in thinking from management to leadership. When we give employees more freedom to choose how and where they work, we are effectively allowing them to self-manage. This may not be the same level of formality as an agile team, but the concept is similar—we trust them to determine how best to work to get the job done. If a project manager restricts that freedom by establishing a management framework that the team perceives as too rigid, it undermines performance. Therefore, the project manager must focus on maintaining and optimising the environment and relationships—and that more closely aligns with leadership.

The foundation is to set realistic expectations in collaboration with the team. There should be agreement from the outset on the following items:

Will collaboration be exclusively virtual, always collocated or a combination of both? If a combination, how will that be determined?

What are the common tools that will be used, and how will they be leveraged?

How and on what frequency will progress be reviewed and adjustments made?

How will the team interact and communicate? Thought has to be given to ensuring people working different hours are included. A way to capture all decisions, report on outcomes of conversations, and keep everyone updated is important.

The project manager will have preferences on each of these items, but he or she should not seek to impose their will on the rest of the team. What is important is that the team be given the freedom to select an approach that it is comfortable with.

While the project is underway, the project manager's role is to manage to these agreed-to expectations and to help the team correct when things are off track—either with an individual or with the whole team—*managing tasks but leading people*. The project manager must also work with the team to ensure the agreed-to way of working is still appropriate. Often, the reality is different than expected—but the team may be reluctant to ask for changes because it feels that it reflects on its ability to deliver.

For many project managers, accommodating these changes may be profound. Environments and interactions will be less predictable, requiring the PM project manager to be much more actively engaged in maintaining and supporting the environment and ensuring the team and individuals are effective. They must lead a team that is much more fluid both in terms of working practices and make up, and they must do so without necessarily having the ability to connect in person. On the other hand, the project manager must be able to embrace these working practices themselves.

USEFUL LINKS

[Click here](#) to read the complete article in Project Management

New Directions offer workshops and consultancy on project

doing it."

George Bernard Shaw

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel. "

Maya Angelou

"It is what we think we know already that often prevents us from learning."

Claude Bernard

"Leadership is not defined by the exercise of power but by the capacity to increase the send of power among those led. The most essential work of the leader is to create more leaders."

Mary Parker Follett

"You can disagree without being disagreeable."

Ruth Bader Ginsburg

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire"

William Butler Yeats

"By learning you will teach, by teaching you will learn."

Latin Proverb

"I never learn anything talking. I only learn things when I ask questions."

Lou Holtz

"Being a good boss means hiring talented people and then getting out of their way."

Tina Fey

"The more passion people have for the work they do, the more likely they are to demonstrate positive energy and success in life."

Terri Funk Graham

management and leading high performance (and remote) teams. For more information [Click here](#).

What Will Work Look Like in 2030?

PwC constantly scan the future to see how it will impact on current policies and processes. A recent article summarises some scenarios for the world of work in 2030... The current megatrends such as digitization, the rise of automation, and shifting demographics are disrupting the way we work, and the way companies relate to workers. Envisioning where these trends might lead has produced four alternative future worlds of work, each named with a colour — admittedly they are extreme examples, but all possible based on the way we are currently heading. It's likely that the future will be one in which elements of all four of these worlds — Red, Blue, Green, and Yellow — are influential. So the logic behind each world holds significant implications for those in leadership roles, and for those working in the future.

The Red World

In the Red World, individualism and fragmentation reign, small is powerful. Technology allows tiny businesses to tap into the vast reservoirs of information, skills, and financing that were formerly available only to large organisations, and it gives them power and incredible reach. Innovation and people are inseparable, which will trickle down to how companies find, manage and reward workers.

Leaders rely on outsourced services and automation for people processes. Full-time “permanent” employment falls to about 10% of the workforce. Automation and digital platforms become the norm to find talent and to match workers with employers, and skills with demand. Amid ferocious competition for talent, those with in-demand skills command the highest rewards which increasingly involve factors such as the ownership of intellectual property and the freedom to work. Workers are left to themselves to identify their own skill gaps and build their expertise, and performance is judged mainly on short-term results. This is a world those who can deliver results, and fast.

The Blue World

In the Blue World, we see an individualised and integrated world with global corporations taking centre stage, becoming larger, more powerful, and more influential. Size and influence is seen as the best way to protect profit margins against intense competition.

Top talent is fiercely fought over. The best performers engage agents to negotiate and manage their careers, like the sports stars of today. HR uses advanced metrics to predict future talent demands and to measure and anticipate performance and retention issues, and deploy sensors

Common Biases

Biases are non-conscious drivers — cognitive quirks — that influence how people see the world. They appear to be almost hardwired into the brain as part of our genetic or cultural heritage, and they exert their influence outside conscious awareness. You cannot go shopping, enter a conversation, or make a decision without your biases kicking in. On the whole, biases are helpful and adaptive. They enable people to make quick, efficient judgments and decisions with minimal cognitive effort. But they can also blind a person to new information, or inhibit someone from considering valuable options when making an important decision.

Some common biases:

Ingroup Bias: Perceiving people who are similar to you more positively.

Outgroup Bias: Perceiving people who are different from you more negatively.

Belief Bias: Deciding whether an argument is strong or weak on the basis of whether you agree with its conclusion.

Confirmation Bias: Seeking and finding evidence that confirms your beliefs and ignoring evidence that does not.

Availability Bias: Making a decision based more on the information that comes to mind most quickly, rather than objective evidence.

Anchoring Bias: Relying heavily on the first piece of information offered (the “anchor”) when considering a decision.

Base Rate Fallacy: When judging how probable something is, ignoring the base rate (the overall rate of occurrence).

Planning Fallacy: Underestimating

and data analytics to continuously measure and optimise performance. Companies prize a small group of “super-workers,” who maximise their productivity with physical and medical enhancement techniques and equipment such as cognition-enhancing medication. Workers have their data, health, and performance monitored obsessively, often in real time. Those who thrive under the relentless pressure to perform will reap excellent rewards, as will in-demand contract workers with specialised skills.

The Green World

The collective and integrated Green World is driven by the need for a powerful social conscience. Companies push a strong ethical and ecological agenda. Social conscience, environmental responsibility, diversity, human rights and fairness are corporate imperatives.

The people in the organisation, their behaviours, and their role in society have a direct link to the organisation's success or failure. Success depends on creating the right culture and behaviours and on guarding against sustainability and reputational risk throughout the supply chain. Compensation strategies revolve on total rewards, which recognises corporate citizenship and good behaviours along with performance. Employees are held to high ethical standards with performance is assessed against a wide range of measures, including wellbeing. Employees enjoy family-friendly, flexible working and are encouraged to take part in socially useful projects. They trust their employers to treat them fairly in terms of pay, development, and conditions, and in return, are expected to reflect the culture of the company in their approach and behaviour.

The Yellow World

In a Yellow World collectivist impulses thrive in a fragmented world. Workers and companies seek out greater meaning and relevance. Humanness is highly valued. Workers find flexibility, autonomy, and fulfilment, working for organisations with strong social and ethical records. There's a strong desire to contribute to the common good.

The concept of fair pay predominates. Organisations and workers respect one another's needs and capabilities. Conflicts between technology and automation, on the one hand, and humanness and individuality, on the other, will usually be resolved in favour of the latter with companies offering human delivery and products made by people rather than by machines. Workers feel the strongest loyalty to other people with the same skills or cause - a breeding ground for the emergence of new worker guilds that protect, support, and connect independent workers, and often provide training and other benefits.

Imagining these four worlds offers one way to stop wondering and speculating about the future and start planning: From each world, work backward by thinking about what your workers and HR function will need. How might the characteristics of each world come together to create a scenario that is uniquely yours? In each scenario, how will your talent needs change? How can you attract, keep, and motivate the people you need? How will your organization need to evolve to stay competitive? The answers may not seem obvious today. We may not

how long it will take to complete a task, how much it will cost, and its risks, while overestimating its benefits.

Representativeness Bias: Believing that something that is more representative is necessarily more prevalent.

Hot Hand Fallacy: Believing that someone who was successful in the past has a greater chance of achieving further success.

Halo Effect: Letting someone's positive qualities in one area influence overall perception of that individual.

Blind Spot: Identifying biases in other people but not in yourself.

False Consensus Effect: Overestimating the universality of your own beliefs, habits, and opinions.

Fundamental Attribution Error: Believing that your own errors or failures are due to external circumstances, but others' errors are due to intrinsic factors like character.

Hindsight Bias: Seeing past events as having been predictable in retrospect.

Illusion of Control: Overestimating your influence over external events.

Illusion of Transparency: Overestimating the degree to which your thinking and decision making process is clear to others.

Egocentric Bias: Weighing information about yourself disproportionately in making judgments and decisions.

Endowment Effect: Expecting others to pay more for something than you would pay yourself.

Affective Forecasting: Judging your future emotional states based on how you feel now.

Temporal Discounting: Placing less value on rewards as they move further into the future.

Loss Aversion: Making a risk-averse choice if the expected outcome is positive, but making a risk-seeking choice to avoid negative outcomes.

know all the answers. But by imagining different scenarios and taking steps to plan now, we can face the future of work with a greater sense of confidence.

USEFUL LINKS

[Click here](#) to read the original article from Jeff Hesse and Scott Olsen of PwC in strategy+business

New Directions offer workshops and consultancy on future strategy development and organisation change. For more information [Click here](#).

Framing Effect: Basing a judgment on whether a decision is presented as a gain or as a loss, rather than on objective criteria.

Sunk Costs: Having a hard time giving up on something (a strategy, an employee, a process) after investing time, money, or training, even though the investment can't be recovered.

What biases are most prevalent - and most dangerous - for you and your organisation?

USEFUL LINKS

[Click here](#) to read the full article in strategy+business

Public Courses 2018

New Directions runs a small number of public training programmes in association with partners. 2018 dates are below.

Human Competency and Capability Development

A 4 day course in human resource development strategy for the oil and gas sector. Run in partnership with petroEDGE.

Kuala Lumpur [29 October - 1 November](#)

International Oil & Gas Executive Programme

An intensive 5 day workshop in strategic business management, designed specifically for managers in the oil and gas sector. Run in partnership with petroEDGE.

Kuala Lumpur [22-26 October](#)

USEFUL LINKS

[New Directions consultancy and training services](#)

Book sales

Getting Results Without Authority is available at the special price of **£10.00**

Ready-Aim-Fire Problem Solving is priced at **£7.00**

Bundle both titles for **£15.00**

Price includes p&p in the UK, for deliveries outside the UK add £1.00.

[Click here to go to the secure Online Shop.](#)

Cuttings

Cuttings is a bi-monthly collection of ideas and comments published elsewhere which have attracted my attention over the past couple of months and has been in continuous publication since 1988.

It is designed for readers who are interested in individual, organisation and management development and is free.

New Directions is an international network of consultants and trainers who work together to learn, research, design and provide consulting and training in individual, management, and organisation development.

USEFUL LINKS

[Past issues of Cuttings](#)

[New Directions website](#)

[Getting Results Without Authority](#)

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