

# CUTTINGS...

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Compiled and edited by Geof Cox

Now we seem to be settling into some form of 'new normal' which includes a lot more remote working and lower levels of general interaction between workers, a timely article on peer support systems to assist employee wellbeing.

Other articles include a look at what L&D should be doing to respond to the new models of working that are emerging in the hybrid workplaces post pandemic; and some trends for the people profession from CIPD research.

If you would like a downloadable pdf of this edition. it is published on my website, along with copies of all past editions, [click here](#).

Enjoy, and stay healthy and safe...

**Geof Cox**

## Peer-led employee wellbeing support

Peer-led employee wellbeing support has the potential to be an impactful and cost-effective tool to help your staff grow and develop, so says clinical psychologist Dr Jo Burrell in a current article in HR Zone. With over half of working-age adults reporting that their mental health has suffered as a consequence of the COVID pandemic, levels of need for wellbeing support within the workplace are running high. Many employers are still failing, however, to set up meaningful support systems across their organisations as they, too, try to adapt to the enforced workplace changes.

Staff members delivering peer support can provide a hugely valuable service to colleagues, with the potential to improve the wellbeing and productivity of employees and the organisation. Peer-led support groups have the potential to make a real impact and reduce the need to commission external services.

### What is peer-led staff support?

Dr Burrell identifies all sorts of approaches to consider – mentoring, buddying, reflective practice, wellbeing groups... Any of these initiatives can be effective, safe and sustainable, if there is a clear structure and process which creates a sense of consistency for facilitators and participants; defined roles to form the

### In this edition

**Peer-led employee wellbeing support** with many more teams operating remotely and with lower levels of interaction, peer-led support activities could be an effective way to promote wellbeing.

**Hybrid learning for the hybrid workplace** - what L&D should be doing to facilitate learning in the emerging workplace models

**People profession 2030** - a summary of the trends from collaborative research by the CIPD

Plus, a collection of **Snippets** to further provoke your thinking and reflection and details of **Book Sales** from our online shop

## Snippets

*A collection of thought provokers and quotations...*

"What we achieve inwardly will change outer reality."

Plutarch

"Remember that not getting what you want is sometimes a wonderful stroke of luck."

HH Dalai Lama

"The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any."

Alice Walker

"The only person you are destined to become is the person you decide to be."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

boundaries of the intervention; and clear boundaries to creating a safe and emotionally containing space for participants.

#### **An example: The ten-minute pause space**

Originally created by and for NHS staff, this group intervention can be delivered both face-to-face and remotely. With a focus on self-care, the 'pause space' creates opportunity for staff to relax, reflect and show appreciation. It's structure and process has a brief mindfulness exercise, paired listening, showing appreciation for others and a winding-down activity. Staff wellbeing champions are ideal candidates to facilitate the group.

#### **Cost effective, but not free**

While peer-led initiatives can be highly cost effective, they are not without resource implications. Indeed, allocating the right resources at the right time is crucial for sustainability and success. Sufficient time and space needs to be given to scoping out, designing, delivering and evaluating the service. Facilitators need to be adequately trained and supported in their role, and some form of consistent and regular facilitator supervision/support should be provided by a suitably qualified professional. Supervision helps facilitators to remain within the limits of their competence, to manage the emotional impact of their role, to understand how to address conflict or risk issues, and to learn when to signpost colleagues to external services.

#### **Setting up a programme**

A good way to start is with a pilot project - somewhere where there is a need and support. Collect and evaluate data on participant experience and impact on wellbeing to inform any adaptations to your intervention going forward. A working party including your wellbeing champions is a good place to begin the planning process and identifying what types of peer-led support employees would find most useful. The goal is to offer meaningful, lasting support that will help staff to manage and grow through challenge and change - so re-evaluating on a regular basis will ensure that the initiative is fit for purpose and producing positive results for your staff.

#### **USEFUL LINKS**

[Click here](#) to read the complete article in **HR Zone**

**New Directions** offer consultancy and training on coaching and facilitating. For more information [Click here](#)

"Nothing will work unless you do."  
*Maya Angelou*

"My why defines my how. Let your why be your guide."  
*Rhett Power*

"Success usually comes to those who are too busy to be looking for it."  
*Henry David Thoreau*

"When dealing with fast, unexpected change the key skill everyone needs right is the ability to move and adapt"  
*Joe Nellis*

"The difference between education and experience: education is what you get from reading the small print, experience is what you get from not reading it."  
*Pete Seeger*

"The only kind of learning which significantly influences behaviour is self-discovery or self-appropriated learning – truth that has been assimilated in experience."  
*Carl Rogers*

"Retention is best when the learner is involved."  
*Edward Gibbon*

"An idea is salvation by imagination."  
*Frank Lloyd Wright*

"There are no rules here - we're trying to accomplish something".  
*Thomas Edison*

#### **People Profession 2030**

Drawing on collaborative research, a new report from the CIPD explores the key trends influencing the future of work and how they will shape the people profession, derived from an eight-day investigation by people professionals worldwide. The research identified five key trends that

## **Hybrid Learning for the Hybrid Workplace**

How and where we work has fundamentally shifted since the pandemic. As offices re-open, some people will be returning to the workplace for at least part of the week, many will be choosing their own timetables about how and when they work - completely remotely, in the office or a combination of the two. It means that there will be little or no consistency in working patterns

<p>within and between teams. We may have had flexible working before, but never on this scale.</p> <p>A couple of recent articles on Training Zone highlight the issues and some pointers for L&amp;D in looking forward to a more hybrid system of learning that reflects the new hybrid working environment.</p> <p>Most training providers have been using blended learning and providing a mix of in-person and online solutions for some years. But for many of us, the early days of the pandemic meant waiting for things to 'get back to normal'. As there has been no return to 'normal' we need to look at the new reality of hybrid working and create a different kind of learning experience that works in this new context.</p> <p>Some things that have worked during the pandemic should form part of a hybrid learning strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short and sharp live online sessions packed with ideas, tips, research and content that is exactly fitted to what people need.</li> <li>• Dynamic delivery with the facilitator(s) connecting with the remote group and encouraging interaction through breakout rooms, chats, whiteboard and feedback.</li> <li>• Pre and post touch points with participants to connect them to the theme and link to issues raised.</li> <li>• Good use of online resources and learning management design that allows for self-learning and follow up.</li> <li>• Focus on outcomes for participants.</li> <li>• Face-to-face is likely to be focused on very specific and highly tailored facilitated sessions for teams or one-to-one coaching as part of a blended learning approach.</li> </ul> <p>Looking forward, organisations need to think through what work now is - what is best remotely, what is best in the office - and then build systems that play to the strengths of each. The probable reality is that some people will be physically present in a shared space, while others join virtually at the same time; and L&amp;D will need to develop a learning system to replicate the same conditions.</p> <p><b>How might we best design and facilitate hybrid training?</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Think of the people joining remotely first, rather than the other way round. Plan all collaborative work like brainstorming, answering questions, and submitting tasks to be done digitally, on the same platform – whether people are in the classroom or joining remotely.</li> <li>2. Plan ongoing asynchronous activities that are integrated into participants' day-to-day work to help the learning stick.</li> <li>3. Pair up with another facilitator - as pointed out in <i>Cuttings 147 and 150</i>, having two facilitators in the digital arena can be very beneficial - not to divide in-person and remote groups, but rather ensure they have a shared learning experience and feel equally supported.</li> <li>4. Rethink face-to-face learning methods and don't be afraid to let go of content that worked for exclusively in-person sessions. Think of what will work best in the hybrid environment and design for that.</li> </ol>	<p>will drive change and shape the future for the people profession.</p> <p><b>Internal change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop future-fit skills like agility and autonomy.</li> <li>• Make horizon-scanning a priority to anticipate shifts within the workplace.</li> <li>• Adapt people functions for the context they are working in.</li> <li>• Lead strategic change and developments.</li> </ul> <p><b>Technological and digital transformation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop skills for a digital world.</li> <li>• Develop analytical and data skills and build credibility in this area.</li> <li>• Bring people expertise to digital transformation.</li> <li>• Challenge other business areas to consider the impact of digital transformation on people and their work.</li> <li>• Address ethical considerations when it comes to data, privacy</li> </ul> <p><b>Changing demographics and Diversity &amp; Inclusion strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use expertise on people and people management practices to develop effective D&amp;I strategy.</li> <li>• Be curious and keep knowledge on D&amp;I and demographic shifts up to date.</li> <li>• Look outwards to understand the systemic barriers to D&amp;I.</li> <li>• Prioritise and dedicate resource to taking action on D&amp;I.</li> <li>• Take an evidence-based approach to forecasting and understanding demographics.</li> </ul> <p><b>Diversity of employment relationships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop line managers for a complex environment with multiple types of employment.</li> <li>• Balance stakeholder and employee expectations, ethical considerations and customer demands with what is appropriate for business context.</li> <li>• Pay attention to fairness, equality and potential misalignments of power in working practices and relationships.</li> </ul>
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5. Consider how to run breakout groups - separate in-person and virtual groups with both groups recording learning points on the same online platform could make things a lot easier; however mixed groups would replicate the workplace

Whatever we do, it is important that we engage with the new hybrid model of work and design to be fit for purpose in that environment. This means rethinking our workshops and trainings and using the technologies available to best effect. Speaking personally, I have been encouraged and even amazed by the success of a lot of the online training over the past 16 months, even where we have just adapted the existing face-to-face designs. We now need to embrace those successes and create new L&D design for the emerging workplace.

## USEFUL LINKS

[Click here](#) to read the full articles from **Training Zone**

**New Directions** offers consultancy on training design and strategy. For more information [Click here](#)

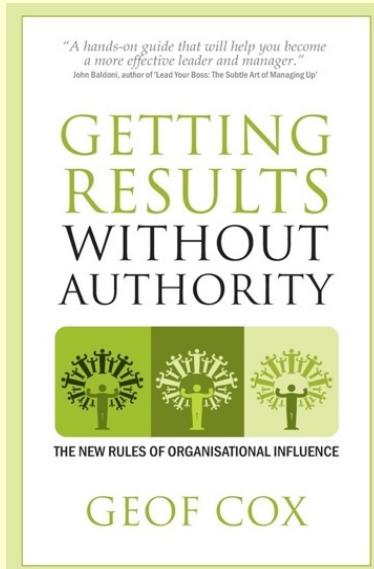
## Sustainability, purpose and responsible business

- Adapt people functions to reflect a widening remit on corporate social responsibility and increased demand in areas like sustainability, responsible business and organisational purpose and values.
- Take the lead in building responsible business practices.
- Weave social value and purpose through the entire employee lifecycle.
- Champion a strategic approach to responsible business.

## USEFUL LINKS

[Click here](#) to read the full report from CIPD

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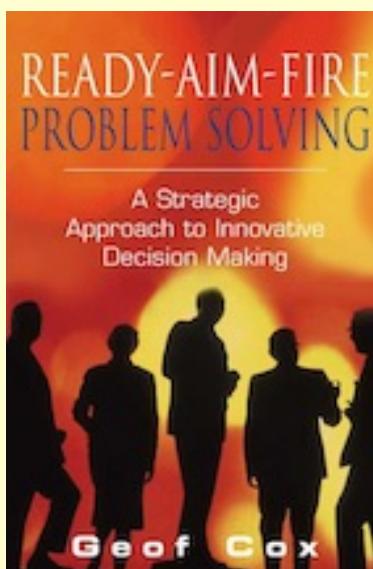
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## Cuttings

**Cuttings** is a bi-monthly collection of ideas and comments published elsewhere which have attracted my attention over the past couple of months. It is designed for readers who are interested in individual, organisation and management development and is free.

It has been published continuously for more than 30 years by *New Directions*, 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](#)

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