

## Welcome to the latest edition of the microskills™ network for participants of microskills™ training around the world.

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Work at Jelly

Since the last edition we have gained loads more readers. To acquaint you, this occasional newsletter is sent to participants of our training programmes worldwide and carries updates on our microskills™ training system together with other news and comments from our areas of work that might be of interest.

### Singapore office

We are delighted to announce the formation of our Singapore company, Training Advances Pte Ltd, located in the middle of the Central Business District. This will enable us to provide an even better service to our client companies throughout ASEAN.

### microskills™ update

We have expanded the *Giving Opinion* microskill™ into:

*GOi* giving internal opinions or expressing a view without trying to impose it on someone else and  
*GOe* giving external opinions and trying to impose them.

For example:

*GOi* “I think bananas are good for you.”

*GOe* “I think you should eat more bananas.”

*GOp* giving opinions about something that has happened in the past,

*GOc* giving opinions about something that is current and

*GOf* giving opinions about the future

*GOs* giving a supportive opinion,

*GOu* giving an unsupportive opinion and

*GOn* giving a neutral opinion.

There can be all possible combinations of these and, by far, the most esteem lowering is *GOepu*. This is the smart guy who tells you after the event, “You shouldn’t have eaten that.”

### (Lack of) curiosity

Recently we have been noticing a distinct lack of curiosity among some staff about what happens within their own companies. The ‘silo’ mentality appears to be getting worse.

We work with some of the most interesting and exciting businesses around and yet some employees seem to know little beyond what happens inside their own cubicle.

Managers should be encouraging their staff to get out a bit more. This might even help with talent retention.

## **Stress at work**

Workers will turn to alcohol, smoking and comfort eating to deal with the rising stress of their jobs, warns The Stroke Association and Siemens.

In a joint report, they found almost a quarter of staff (23%) said they would smoke more to deal with stress, while more than a third (34%) said they would drink more. The worst sector for drinking was marketing, where 59% said they were drinking more than usual to combat the stress of their job.

The recruitment sector was deemed the most stressful, with 82% of recruitment consultants reporting regular stress. The legal sector followed closely behind with 78% of employees feeling the pressure.

## **Happiness at work**

A report by Vodafone last month found that 70% of workers over the age of 50 felt fulfilled in their jobs compared with only half of 25-31 year-olds. *Do older workers make happier employees?*

## **Misery at work**

One fifth of employees are frustrated in their jobs while 46% of managers create de-motivating climates for employees.

Hay Group found half of employees do not believe they have the authority to make decisions crucial to their jobs, while more than a third (35%) believe their job does not make the best use of their skills and abilities.

The report shows only 26% of

managers achieve a high-performance climate in their workplace and less than half of employers (48%) deal effectively with staff underperformance.

## **Hours of work**

The French parliament has said 'oui' to ending the country's much-envied 35-hour week. A new law came into force at the end of August that will enable companies to strike individual deals with employees and unions on their basic working hours and overtime.

## **Honesty at work**

Graduates from lower-ranked universities are twice as likely to falsify their CVs to get jobs than those from higher-ranked ones, according to new research from employment-screening company Powerchex.

Of 3,876 financial services applications screened, only 14% of graduates from the top 20 universities submitted CVs with embellishments. This rose to just over 25% among those from universities ranked 51-100, and 43% from those outside the top 100.

Apparently those studying maths and finance were considerably more honest than those from the humanities and arts disciplines. *Perhaps those who pursue creative writing degrees extend fiction writing to their CVs.*

## **Flexibility at work**

The Cranfield School of Management and Working Families report reveals that 61% of

employees believe working flexibly has a positive impact on the quantity of work done, while 45% of managers felt the same. A similar number of managers felt that this style of working had no impact on the amount of work done.

The quality of the work improves too, with 65% of employees making this point. Nearly half (46%) the managers agree, although almost half say it makes no difference.

Stress levels are also positively affected, with half of employees saying working flexibly reduces them. However, 16% say they feel more stressed when working this way.

## **Breaks from work**

British businesses are losing £4 billion a year in lost productivity as a result of banning personal internet use, according to a new report.

The PopCap Games study involved psychometric testing of a cross section of UK businesses to compare the effect of different kinds of breaks on an employee's performance. Results show that taking an online break increased productivity levels.

Yet while results show that 57% of employees wanting to unwind would shun traditional tea breaks in favour of five minutes spent surfing the internet, 70% of employers have banned such use, according to another report (by law firm Peninsula).

Nearly half (47%) of employees feel their bosses consider cigarette breaks more acceptable than e-breaks.

## **Pants at work**

60% of interview candidates believe that lucky underwear will get them through job interviews, according to research by Peninsula.

## **Work at Jelly**

Jelly is casual co-working. They invite people to work from their home for the day. They provide chairs and sofas, wireless internet, and interesting people to talk to, collaborate with, and bounce ideas off.

You bring a laptop (or whatever you need to get work done) and a friendly disposition.

Check it out for worldwide locations at: [workatjelly.com](http://workatjelly.com).

## **Experiences, comments and questions**

We always like to hear from members with any views and experiences they have either for publication or for reply off-line.

microskills™, problem ownership™ and Supportive Manager™ are part of a stable of methods used by the Tim Russell Group to train staff around the world in interpersonal skills. User organisations come from finance, travel, hospitality, retail, manufacturing, government, education, health services and telecoms. Applications range from customer service to management development, team-building to support skills, negotiations to managing meetings interviewing to selling.

new ways of working™ is the consultancy service to work with organisations on how they will be operating in areas of staff management in the future.

## **For more information**

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