

October 2018

A supplement by The MJ on behalf of the Public Services People Managers Association

In association with





Hello everyone. It's finally autumn after a glorious summer. I know many of us generally have a quieter summer so we can reflect on seasons past and those to come. However, this year it seems many of us have been incredibly busy. Time seems to be quickening again, which I think is partly a recognition 29 March is not that far away now.

Talking about Brexit, you'll see a short piece in this supplement edition on our Brexit Hackathon. The concept of a hackathon is a departure from our traditional ways of PPMA research, so this was both exciting and a bit 'feel the fear and do it anyway'. But Leatham Green and I had a fantastic day with colleagues across Northern Ireland and he shares some of his thoughts on the day elsewhere.

I feel I should have something worthy to share on the topic, but I'm going to focus on the practical. Not only were our colleagues wonderful, but our hosts at Craigavon were amazing. Commitment to my diet was blown by mid-morning with the wonderful homemade scones. I'm thrilled to say I will be back in Northern Ireland towards the end of November at the Local Government Staff Commission (LGSC) Conference, so I'm hoping for more

In the last three weeks I've been on work trips to France, Scotland and Northern Ireland. My view that taxi drivers are some of the most connected and networked group of people on the planet was reinforced by the inevitable conversations coming from and to various airports. You never know if there are going to be consistent themes but there were. Leadership, ethics and how useful (or otherwise) politicians and our government institutions are, were some I encountered.

I'm not going to wade into the point about politicians. Not enough space and definitely not appropriate. But what I will say is we have seen a despicable rise in the level of abuse hurled at politicians via social media. I've also noticed on twitter that Wigan MBC has been fending off some threatening tweets. I'm so pleased they have called the police in to investigate this.

As a taxpayer I confess to my view that the police have more important things to do than investigate every ill-judged comment. BUT, there is no question the level of abuse is rising, and all threats are unacceptable and potentially criminal. No-one deserves this type of abuse.

We are right to worry about the negative use of social media acting as a

barrier to discourage good people from involvement in politics and other fields. But we also need to make sure we are helping our employees to understand what good use of social media looks like. It can be the case that one of our employees will cross the line and we need to be clear about our responses to that. You can find good resources at the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) and the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS).

Despite my (admittedly small) sample size, there's a really clear idea of what poor leadership is

Back to the taxi drivers. There was a very lively analysis about leadership and ethics in politics and organisations – and more to the point, the lack of. It's interesting to me there are a good number of leadership models out there describing what's good etc (such as Beverly Alimo-Metcalfe's Engaging Leadership model which I love). In my experience the 'what does "good" look like' can generate massive debate about which particular dimension, behaviour or characteristics matters more. Not all of that debate is useful

by the way, but it's tempting to indulge in. Words matter of course, but sometimes too long a debate gets in the way of developing leadership on the ground.

Despite my (admittedly small) sample size, there's a really clear idea of what poor leadership is. And a pretty definite view that you don't need to do a tonne of research to be sure about it. Overwhelmingly poor leaders were those who didn't connect with their people, took credit for other people's work, promised and didn't deliver, demonised others, lacked authenticity and put themselves and their own gain (positional or financial) over the greater good.

I'm really pleased to say our colleagues in SOLACE and the CIPD are looking to address some of these issues. In a new professional standards framework for HR & OD, the CIPD is taking a leading role in setting out what it expects HR & OD colleagies to exemplify with respect to ethics.

I'm so pleased to see this important development and the framework will be launched at the CIPD annual conference in early November.

Our SOLACE colleagues are also setting out their view on leadership and management, with a new CPD framework being launched at their own conference (at which you might

be reading this very publication). The PPMA has been a very small part of this and we're delighted to support this moving forwards.

In closing I am going to ask for a couple of indulgences. Firstly, I'm going to revisit a PPMA article on leadership and ethics that I wrote a little earlier in summer. It feels relevant still. Secondly, I am delighted to say we have finished consulting our members on the restructure we started earlier in the year. We want to take this opportunity to share the key points in this supplement.

In future editions we are going to design our supplements around a particular theme. We think this is a helpful way of focusing attention on topics that matter to our workforces.

As ever, we want to hear from you. You can contact me at president@ ppma.org.uk and you can get in touch with (amazing) Grace at admin@ ppma.org.uk. Until the next edition, enjoy the rest of the working year and more importantly enjoy time with

family, friends and loved ones over Christmas, other holidays and the New Year.

Karen Grave is PPMA President







A change will do you good

Steve Davies outlines the bold plans to restructure the PPMA in November after four decades of service to the sector

Karen Grave mentioned in our July supplement that we were working on our plans to restructure PPMA. In honouring our past 43 years or so, it's important that we ensure our structure is fit for purpose, inclusive and will enable us to response to the ongoing challenges.

The PPMA and SOCPO before it, has been going for over 43 years and to ensure we continue for another 40 years it's important that we ensure our structure is fit for purpose.

Following consultation with our members on our proposed new structure over the summer period, we are delighted to share with you the fact 90% of people voting agreed with our changes.

This is a great vote of confidence. The need for change was driven by our members, sponsors and other partners. Therefore, in undertaking this work, we focused on some key design principles:

- Build on what currently works well and create a more effective body of decision making to the benefit of our members and sponsors
- Ensure our sponsor community is professionally managed
- Create and implement a meaningful succession plan for future board members and enable positions to be drawn from our wider community of public service organisations and our unique and vibrant talent pipeline
- Create the capacity to sustainably deliver against PPMA business and future ambitions / aspirations
- Clarify the expectations for all roles including time commitments
- Create an opportunity to consolidate/develop relationships with our MOU partners (CIPD, HPMA and UHR)

To deliver this, we are making the following changes:

- We are reducing the size of our strategic board which will improve and enhance decision making
- Extending our leadership terms from a minimum of one year to a maximum of two. This will help us develop consistency and continuity and this has been particularly welcomed by our sponsors and members alike

In addition, we are delighted to announce the creation of a Challenge and Innovation Forum

- Increasing the number of Vice Presidents from one to three, thus building in additional capacity and capability to the strategic board
- Rationalise our regional structure, so we are better able to focus attention and resource and nurture the regions more

effectively. This will also ensure we can build on our emerging relationships with MOU partners. We already open events out to HPMA and UHR colleagues and we hope to see increasing collaboration in the future

- Introducing a PPMA ambassador role. We are prepared to support several ambassadors and they will be people who can provide some time to champion the work we do and the benefits of membership
- Introducing strategic theme leads who will work with other roles to ensure we are creating a range of networks that will contribute to research, content and thought leadership development.

In addition to these changes we are delighted to announce the creation of a Challenge and Innovation Forum. This is a 'critical friend' group (including MOU partners and leading sponsors) who will bring

challenge to the PPMA's vision and ambition and seek ways to learn from a broader business community.

Work to recruit to our new structure is underway with the opportunity to harness the experience of current board members who wish to participate moving forward together with the energy and ideas of people new to PPMA leadership roles.

We'll be launching our new structure from the end of November. Please view more about our plans at www.ppma.org.uk. Even better, put yourself forward for a role and come and get involved.

If you are interested in finding out more please email executivedirector@ppma.org.uk.

Steve Davies is PPMA Honorary Treasurer & London Region Chair





We're all doing the hackathon

Leatham Green reports on a research session in Northern Ireland focusing on the workforce opportunities and challenges of Brexit

The PPMA, Matrix-SCM and Local Government Staff Commission held a Brexit hackathon on 2 October in Northern Ireland as part of the PPMA's ongoing research programme.

Brexit is one of the key topics of the moment.

We didn't want to repeat previous research and commentary on the subject. Rather, we wanted to undertake some action learning work which will help us deliver some tangible recommendations and enable us to follow up in six months' time to check our progress.

Ironically, the timing of the hackathon has coincided with increased publicity around the issue of 'the border' and how it impacts on UK Government and EU negotiations. There is no doubt this is a fraught but very timely topic.

This was the first hackathon the PPMA has facilitated in Northern Ireland, and for many participants, it was a whole new experience. We tackled some of the workforcerelated Brexit challenges in a different way – with the emphasis being on collaboration, speed and practical outcomes.

The event was attended by representatives from local



government, housing and university sectors, and all professionals experienced the day-to-day realities of depending upon the 30,000 people who cross north and south of the border daily. For many of those colleagues, this was the first time they had worked together on an event like this with cross sector colleagues.

Whole system thinking is increasingly important when we are trying to access challenges and opportunities that impact many organisations and people. There was valuable learning to be had from that work together.

For some participants, it was reassuring to see other HR & OD colleagues working in different parts

of the sector are wrestling with the same challenges as them.

The event was focused on the workforce opportunities and challenges Brexit presents. The great thing about the process is that there are no right or wrong answers – rather what matters is the fact the participants define the question and develop solutions. From a PPMA

perspective we believe it is critical the voice of HR & OD practitioners on the ground is elevated.

At the end of the event the group had created and committed to the creation of the Craigavon Compact 2018 which highlights six key recommendations for consideration and action by politicians and public servants alike.

Full details from the event and the six recommendations will be launched at the Local Government Staff Commission Conference in November 2018. Irrespective of the timing of a UK:EU deal we are confident these recommendations will stand.

We'll be providing further updates on this important piece of work and hearing from the participants themselves in a future supplement edition, but in the meantime, we want to extend a warm PPMA thank you to our hosts and all those who participated in a great day.

Leatham Green is interim executive director at the PPMA and founder of The Mindful HR Centre





theguardian

- PPMA and The Guardian are pleased to announce that the Annual Excellence in People Management Awards 2019 programme is launching in October
- Please enter so we can share, learn from and celebrate the fantastic practice in our HR & OD community

- Key dates:
 - Launch materials available 26th October
 - Awards close: Monday 7th January 2019
 - Judging event: Wednesday
 23rd January 2019
 - Shortlist announcement: Wednesday 27th February 2019

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The PPMA is launching a Talent **Legacy Commitment** plan, alongside its current core HR & OD programmes, to ensure development of the sector's leaders and young prospects

We know from research undertaken by the Local Government Association (LGA) and Osborne Thomas that HR & OD professionals often de-prioritise their own learning. The PPMA feels strongly this behaviour must change.

Providing high quality and high impact development opportunities is one of the most important roles the PPMA undertakes. While we look to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development to award our professional accreditations, it's critical we ensure the complexities. nuance and downright fascinating elements of working in the public sector are a key focus of public services, HR & OD.

To do that we have developed four core programmes that early, established and executive HR & OD career leaders can access. We want our people to aspire, thrive and flourish throughout their



careers. These programmes provide not just subject matter learning, but opportunities for self-reflection. self-awareness and developing deep personal insight. Supporting our professional community so that they become more effective and resilient learners will substantially increase the capacity of our broader organisations to deliver high performing workforces.

We're very grateful to a number

of sponsors who help us with these programmes. We've spent time these last few months reviewing each of our programmes to ensure our content is current, but pushing boundaries. For example, our refreshed Peer into The Future programme has a great module on neuroscience, learning and behaviours. That promises to be fascinating and mind boggling.

Alongside

programmes, we will also be delivering webinar masterclasses. We're doing this for a number of reasons. We want to ensure our programmes are as accessible as possible. Plus we also want to make sure that we provide a development stretch to people outside the formal programmes.

We are so excited to be developing additional offerings. The PPMA is also looking to work more closely with young people who aren't even in the sector yet we all know the public sector offers the most incredible career opportunities, but not enough of our college age young people do. We're going to play our part in addressing that, it's not only the right thing to do, it is also critical if we are going to tackle recruitment pressures.

So the PPMA, sponsored by the LGA is launching a Talent Legacy Commitment plan. This will see volunteers from our four programmes mentor each other to support continuing professional development, but also work with schools and colleagues to support their development and spark what we hope will be a lifelong passion for public service.

For more information on our programmes please contact us on admin@ppma.org.uk



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The only way is ethics

Karen Grave examines the issue of ethics and values – and challenges the HR world to show leadership in these important areas

Sometimes it takes unconnected events to help you put a voice to an issue you have been musing on for some time. For me, the issue is ethics and what role HR practitioners can and should play. The unconnected events that got me thinking are the controversies around the use of non-disclosure agreements and the death of senator John McCain (pictured below), the six-term senate representative for Arizona.

Both demonstrate challenges we are all facing in our workplaces and home lives – different generations, shifts in societal norms, technology-transformed media environments and changing

expectations of politicians, public sector bodies and private sector organisations. They also profoundly contrast our very human responses to these challenges.

Recent work with a valued client has led me down the rabbit hole with them in defining ethics – particularly its relationship to values and behaviours. And that – together with concern over non-disclosure agreements (NDA) and what they have been used to silence – has had me mulling the ethics conundrum for months.

There is no question the use of NDAs in the charity sector – which kept the lid on allegations

of sexual misconduct – damaged the public perception of HR. Poor leadership decisions were made in these instances, including in HR teams. Over the last year, in talking to a range of colleagues – and, interestingly, non-HR professionals – I've seen an increasing desire to have HR speak up about these

Many leaders struggle under the ever-increasing pressures of leading complex public service organisations. HR peers are also

The corroding of trust is one of the most poisonous consequences of both poor leadership and poor HR practice

confounded by a need to challenge unreasonable use of NDAs with a need to be pragmatic about the time and cost involved in not using them.

But this conundrum matters. Fantastic work from colleagues elsewhere has helped us better understand the relationship between leadership and values on employee engagement, health and wellbeing and productivity.

Anything we do to undermine that relationship has to be a matter of huge concern. And we mustn't forget the impact on trust; the corroding of trust is one of the most poisonous consequences of both poor leadership and poor HR practice. Just ask anyone who has been on the wrong side of an NDA.

As practitioners, we all know there are times when an NDA is necessary. But the recent spotlight on the topic has shown that in some parts of public service we've gone too far. We have relied on expediency over values. We have not upheld the often implicit expectations people have that public service organisations are meant to act to a higher standard.

This brings me back to the passing of Senator McCain. To him, morals mattered – profoundly. He was a man born into a military family, spent five years as a captive in the Vietnam war, was tortured horribly, ran for President twice and served 30 years in the US Senate. He was an inspiration to many millions of people in the US and across the world, and a thorn in the side of many of his colleagues.

His implacable commitment to principles he held so dear, of

service to others, courage in the face of adversity, a willingness to argue over ideas without demonising a person, a willingness to collaborate with others who didn't share this views, his devotion to public service, his gratitude for all of his life experiences and his honest recognition that he was an imperfect public servant, resonate so loudly in current times. He was a genuine leader.

His passing is a remembrance of a time when our institutions more confidently and volubly talked about ethics and values. Of a time where there were genuine heroes; where people fought for causes based on respect, argument and integrity. The more we see scandals across institutions – and they are by no means confined to public service organisations – the greater the imperative for the praetorian guard of leadership and values to speak up.

That's us — we need to speak up and bring this debate to life. Morals matter, leadership matters, and our role in enabling and sustaining organisations that demonstrate the very best of both matters — hugely.

Karen Grave is PPMA President



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Half of HR professionals feel prevented from using technology to drive new ways of

New research found that HR functions within the public sector are struggling to realise the benefits of new technology in the workplace, with more than 50% of HR leaders feeling prevented from driving this change.

The study by the PPMA and Midland HR (MHR) looked at the ways in which technology such as analytics, automation, apps and AI are currently being used within organisations. It focused on the problems of implementing technology, as well as how effective it may be for HR teams to improve current organisational processes – taking into account the role of the 21st century public servant

With both employees and customers becoming more digitally native, expectations are changing rapidly. Many people now demand an instant 'Amazon-esque' service which is a huge change that public services need to manage.

There were a number of findings in the survey to show why HR teams are struggling to implement effective technology-led change. PPMA and MHR explored these in a white paper, offering advice to HR leaders on how to overcome technology barriers to lead change programmes.

Collaboration and communication
The research found that one of the key reasons technological change was so difficult for HR to lead was that it's not seen as their usual area of expertise.

When it comes to technology, both the organisation and HR teams lack knowledge and confidence about its effectiveness, leaving IT teams to control development. Many respondents felt powerless to lead technological change due to outdated IT infrastructure and other restrictions imposed by different departments, as well as a general

resistance to change within organisations.

One comment to emerge from the survey regarding technology was: 'We are so behind. I joined three months ago and it's like stepping back in time 10 years.'

Just under a fifth of respondents claimed to have seen no recent applications of technology having a positive impact within their organisation, despite most seeing technology such as AI as inevitable in the future.

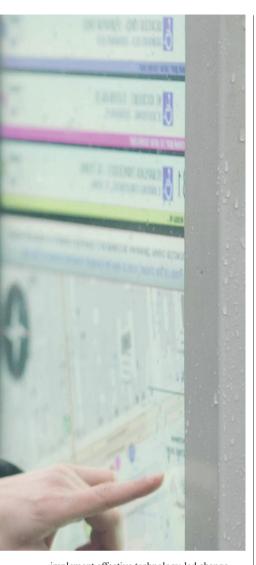
'We are so behind. I joined three months ago and it's like stepping back in time 10 years.'

Without effective communication, successful collaboration becomes almost impossible.

The research found that communicating technology changes can often create half the problems. With restrictions on time and budgets, HR teams are struggling to lead these changes, with most decisions made based on organisational rather than people needs. Even when forums or polls are put together to gather opinions, they are often too full of technical talk or business jargon for employees to engage with, leading to a lack of responses and negative bias.

The solution to these problems, according to the white paper, is to ensure HR teams become more proactive, integrate with other departments to learn, make suggestions and create joint strategies. With new technology such as apps and cloud-based systems, there are ways to avoid using current IT infrastructure to implement change. However, collaborating with IT to form transformational teams provides better support and more resources to assist business objectives. Using a shared language among teams to form a common vision, consisting of simple English, can help to get everyone on the same page to





implement effective technology-led change.
Additionally, communicating with all
employees in advance of any technology
changes ensures HR teams can understand the
full effects on the workforce, find solutions to
any problems, and help employees accept new
processes rather than resenting them.

Evidence

In the last 18 months 56% of the survey's respondents said they had implemented new ways of working with people data. The white paper was clear to highlight its importance for HR leaders to assist business objectives.

To get support from senior management, employees and other department leaders, it is crucial any ideas are backed up by evidence of the benefits; this can be easy using existing organisational and people data. With HR functions becoming more involved in understanding this data using analytics, they will be in a better position to learn and push for technology changes to improve the organisation's processes and goals.

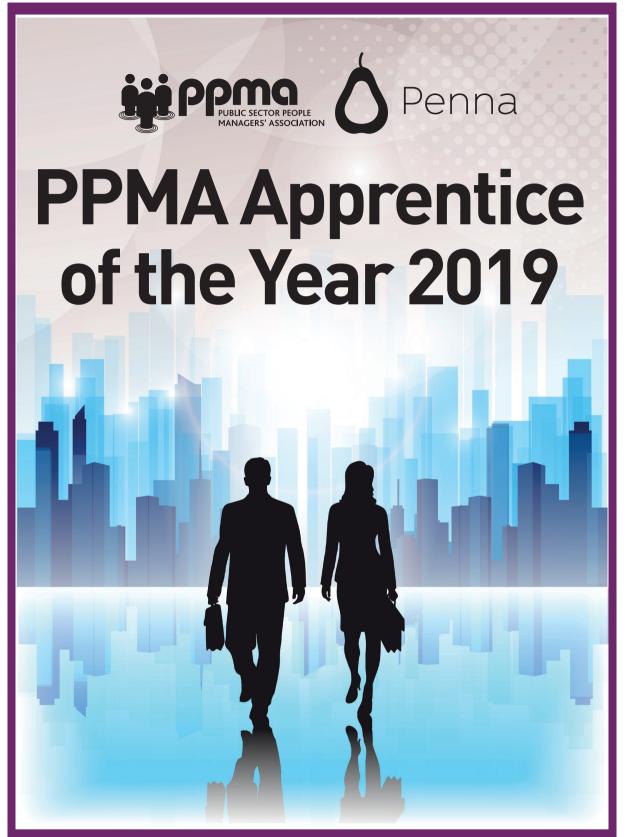
Analytics can be implemented easily and don't have to be complicated. Dashboards and pre-programmed reporting software can help HR teams to understand their people data, which can then be used to support new ideas.

Changing the focus to digital

One of the key takeaways from the research was that any organisational changes must now be focused on digital in order to avoid being left with outdated processes.

With 95% of respondents stating that HR should be driving change and new ways of working, the PPMA and MHR white paper offers a guide on how to start thinking digital to improve the internal implementation of new technology.

Paul Sandey is Commercial Director at MHR and Helen Grantham is Director at Entwyne Ltd



We are delighted to announce that we once again be running the very popular Public Sector Apprentice of the Year development programme which will be held at Warwick Business School on 7-8 March 2019.

This is our fifth year of running the initiative which is an integral part of the PPMA Talent Development Programme. Each year we seek to work with a different partner who can bring something new to share with our budding leaders of the future and we are very excited to be working this year with Penna who have generously supported our talent offering over many years.

This great development opportunity is open to all apprentices who currently work in any area of public service and for the first time we will be opening up applications to apprentices in health and the university sector as part of our drive for stronger collaboration. The event has a strong focus on personal growth and development, access to a number of intensive workshops and backed up by skilled professional coaches. The event is free for organisations who are members of the PPMA, and £149.00 plus VAT for non-members.

Last year we had for the first time joint winners of the event - Kara Sutton representing Bradford City Council and Josh Pimm representing Somerset CC – we are confident this event will once again show case the breadth of talent we have in the apprenticeship community.

Here is a reflection from Josh on what participating in the event meant to him:

Becoming joint apprentice of the year has been such a fantastic opportunity from the start, it has opened doors for me and allowed me to progress my career, it has given me confidence when working and tips that I use in everyday life. I went in not knowing what to expect, an open mind, but the experience has set me up and allowed me to progress faster than I ever thought I would.

We will be sharing the line up of this year's talent coaches and judging panel over the next couple of weeks and announcing the opening of applications at the beginning of November. In the meantime give some thought to who in your organisation you consider would benefit from this opportunity to develop their personal confidence and shine the spotlight on their unique talents.

Full details will be available at www.ppma.org.uk from the beginning of November

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Five ways to help employees fix their broken budgets

Heidi Allan gives her tips on how employers can aid staff facing financial shortfalls at a time when more people are struggling to make ends meet

Recent analysis from the National Debtline offers some interesting insights into personal debt in the UK. Half of the calls the service receives are from people struggling to repay what it describes as 'smaller but trickier' debts of £5,000 or less. In 2008, just 22% of its callers fell into that category.

The size of individual debts might be comparatively small, but the number of people who are struggling to make ends meet is on the rise. The National Debtline expects that by the end of this year it will have fielded 189,000 calls – its highest volume for five years.

The Money Advice Trust, which runs the National Debtline, identified 'broken budgets' as the reason why so many are finding it hard to eliminate smaller debts. People have a shortfall of money every month driven by everyday factors such as rent, council tax or utility bills, and they are borrowing to cover those essentials.

Neyber's *DNA of Financial Wellbeing 2018* research backs up the National Debtline's findings. Our survey of 10,000 UK employees found workers are regularly borrowing money to cover day-to-day expenses. Half (50%) said they have borrowed within the last year, and a quarter have used credit cards to do so. Personal savings (14%), bank overdrafts (13%) and family or friends (13%) are other sources of lending employees use to cover regular shortfalls. Younger staff in particular are struggling, with 70% of 18-24 year olds and 69% of 25-34-year-olds saying they borrow to make ends meet.

It's clear from the National Debtline's analysis that reckless over-spending isn't the reason why many staff need to borrow – but the struggle to make ends meet day-to-day is widespread and persistent.

What can employers do to help

Businesses are aware their staff are facing financial shortfalls. Seventy-seven per cent of the 500 employers Neyber surveyed said they know employees borrow money. But perceptions about borrowing patterns differ from reality. Half (50%) believe their employees are using credit cards, compared to 25% of employees who say they use cards to get by. There are similar disparities between borrowing from friends and family (36% of employers believe employees do this, compared to 13% in reality), and bank overdrafts (41%, compared to 13%).

While employers might not have the full picture of employees' borrowing patterns, businesses are in a great position to help staff with a combination of financial wellbeing, education and employee benefits.

There are five easy ways to get started

Find out what is really keeping your employees awake at night financially. The more you know about your staff's financial situation, the easier it is to help them. Not everyone will want to give their employer details about their debt situation but anonymised surveys, aggregated data from an



employee assistance programme or feedback from financial advice and education programmes can all belo

Help staff reduce their regular outgoings.

Many household costs, such as utility bills, credit cards and loan arrangements can be reduced either by shopping around for better deals or by offering benefits through the workplace. Giving staff the time and tools to review their everyday expenditure and find ways of lowering their outgoings can be a real help, as can workplace deals on mobile phones or other services.

Use workplace loans to reduce borrowing.

It can be tempting to see workplace affordable loans as enticing employees to take on more debt. But for employees with small persistent debts,

a low-cost loan could be the difference between enabling an employee to fix a broken budget and continuing to fall into the red each month.

Educate staff about debt.

Not all debt is dangerous debt. Having a mortgage, for example, is a low-cost, long-term form of borrowing that makes sense. In contrast, borrowing on a credit card is costly making it harder to reduce or eliminate debt. Neyber's survey also showed that 4% of staff are using payday lenders, and 3% turn to loan sharks. Both charge excessively high rates of interest that make it very difficult indeed for individuals to free themselves from borrowing. The more employees understand about cost-effective ways of borrowing, the better equipped they will be if they do need to take on debt.

Be supportive.

While £5,000 might be classified as a relatively small debt, it can be overwhelming for the individual who owes that money – especially if it's not obvious how he or she will pay it off. Building a supportive work environment where workers feel confident that they can fix a broken budget offers huge advantages in terms of broader wellbeing, staff engagement and employee

Heidi Allan is Head of Financial Wellbeing at Neyber

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