

OK – YOU KNOW YOU DIDN'T GET TO GRIPS WITH IT LAST YEAR. SO WILL YOU BE LOOKING AT WORK LIFE BALANCE IN 2006?

You know, sometimes we have to remind workaholics that we only get one life and it sure as heck was not meant to be chained to the desk. They are not helped of course by the fact that Britons put in the longest working hours in the whole of Europe and of course if your company culture reflects that, it is extremely difficult to be out of step.

It is vital to look at your own work life balance at regular intervals. Working ceaselessly without break leads to at best anxiety, depression and stress and at worse severe ill health (not to mention reduced productivity and strained relationships at both home and work).

At Qudos we practice what we preach, our team has long since recognised that having a life gives us the vitality to improve the quality of our work. We make sure we take holidays, we keep fit in the gym, or by walking the dog or going skiing or getting on our bikes. A couple of us pay more than lip service about lifelong learning by grappling with languages, another rocks to live music

Why?

Well partly we do sometimes ponder how our lives might ultimately be summarised “He was a loving supportive partner to his wife, a wise and involved parent to his two sons and an active member of his local community” or “He dealt with a lot of e-mails, caught the train home late every night and missed out on most of his sons' childhood”. Hmmm.

But mainly because re-charging our batteries makes us more productive, more creative, more rounded and happier people. It gives us energy, and by creating time out to just live and love life we gain that vital advantage of the support and new perspective from friends and family that some people never tap into.



Margaret and Dorothy taking part in the Race for Life

Need help with identifying your goals and sorting out your work life strategies? We can help. Contact margaret@qudos.net or phone 02380 668 625



What do you think?

A recent article questioned whether people still experience joy in their lives. Suddenly it seemed like a quaint old fashioned notion in a life which is work driven.

So we are asking you – is there any joy in your life?

Share your thoughts by e-mailing us at qudos@qudos.net

IIP – NOW THAT THE BAR HAS BEEN RAISED ARE YOU READY AND ABLE TO MAKE THE JUMP?

...our quick questionnaire will help you decide!



The "current" version of the Investors Standard has been updated and strengthened and has now superceded the "previous" version. All organisations new to IIP or indeed going for their reviews will need to use the current standard from 1st January 2006, so this means you need to know about the changes and give yourselves time to prepare.

1. Are you confident that all your staff understand what your business objectives and priorities are and where they can contribute? Have they contributed in some way to the business plan?
2. Does your organisation have a clear staff development plan in place that identifies the key training needs, the resources required to satisfy these needs and information about how you intend to measure the impact of this development?
3. Do your staff feel valued and appreciated for their contribution to your business?
4. Do you involve your staff in decision making that affects their work?
5. Have you defined the capabilities that your managers require to lead, manage and develop their teams? Are your managers effective?
6. Do you know how much you spend annually on direct and indirect costs related to staff development and the benefits of this expenditure?
7. Has your organisation got better at leading, managing and developing staff over the last year?

How does your organisation measure up? You might like to contact us if most of your answers are "NO". We are experienced, registered Investors Advisors and can provide all the support you need to help you achieve or maintain the IIP Standard. Contact us via dorothy@qudos.net or on 023 8066 8625

Did you know?

73% of employers carry "deadwood" - employees who consistently underperform.

39% of staff do not pull their weight

46% of employees say their employers do not take any actions to address this issue.

You.gov for IIP UK August 2005

Don't let YOUR organisation add to these statistics. IIP can address all these issues



IS COACHING STILL A DIRTY LITTLE SECRET?

It's part of the culture of course, from sole entrepreneurs to the CEO's of FTSE 100's the fiction has to be maintained that all is well. "How's business" "Great". "How are you finding the new role?" "Fantastic".

However, most managers would agree that objective support would in fact be invaluable. Why is it then that some are still less than overt about using the services of a coach, is it perhaps regarded as "a bit American"

Do you feel like that? By the way, how is your personal, professional and commercial development these days? Are you on track for where you want to be in 5 years time? Oh... you haven't had time to think about that...

Coaches really are great assets to your professional life. They will clarify your thinking and motives with challenging questions and insights; they help you to gain insight into people; they provide perspective on individual strategy and help you face the challenges of life balance issues; they also, by the way, assist in the positive perception of "your image" within the organisation and to the outside world. Crucially, during periods of personal stress or business change they will provide that sustained emotional support that gives you the strength to see things through.

From a commercial perspective many of the more enlightened organisations have long since realised that when they embrace coaching they achieve better results. There is no real mystery in this.

- Firstly, people who receive honest and constructive feedback are likely to be more productive.
- Secondly, appreciation, encouragement, acknowledgement and reward are the cornerstones of effective team management. So apart from **enhanced productivity**, you are likely to see **more effective communication, improved staff dynamics, greater focus and improved retention of staff**.
- Coaching is not about fixing poor performance, but investing in a coach demonstrates a belief that the leader's potential is greater than their current performance.

How should you go about choosing the right coach for you? Here are our top tips:

1. Select someone who is most suited to you. Perhaps think about the sort of people that have energised or inspired you in the past.
2. Look for someone who has become insightful though working with others at a similar level before, someone who has had real life experience.
3. Rapport is of course vital,
4. During any initial discussions a good would-be coach should clearly explain the difference between coaching, consulting, mentoring, psychotherapy etc and they should be unhesitating in their recommendations of other professionals if they realise a client's needs are likely to fall beyond their own areas of expertise.
5. Choose someone who you believe will allow you time to think and who you feel you can trust. Someone who you feel would seek both to understand and positively challenge back.
6. A final important inside tip is that if you are spending some time with them, your ideal coach is one who uses a sense of humour in a way that effectively lightens the proceedings and lifts the energy level.

Coaching produces a 529% return on investment alongside other significant intangible benefits to business

Metrix Global LLC

92% said that when coaching is managed effectively it can have a positive effect on an organisation's bottom line

CIPD Survey 2004

As trained and experienced coaches ourselves, we are happy to tell you more about coaching. In fact you may be entitled to some funding to support your coaching. Please contact us for further advice.

Contact us via margaret@qudos.net or on 02380 668 625

OUR TEAM ...CAN MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE TO YOUR TEAM



LEADING AND DEVELOPING PEOPLE – THE INSIDE TRACK



In response to feedback from many of you, we have developed a comprehensive and in depth programme for junior and middle management in order that they can learn more about the skills of effective leadership. Since training can be difficult to fit in one block we are offering this 5 day programme over a period of 4 months as follows:

- 1. Leadership Skills and effective communications** **22 Mar 06**
(Leadership Skills and personal communications, best practice for leading meetings)
- 2. Managing time and delegation** **12 Apr 06**
(Planning, Time Management Matrix, SMART objectives, delegation techniques)
- 3. Developing and coaching people** **3 May 06**
(Learning Styles, ILU Competence Matrix, Belbins team roles, coaching techniques)
- 4. Appraising people** **24 May 06**
(The Appraisal - Preparation, discussion and follow-up, paperwork, and case studies)
- 5. Handling difficult people and situations** **14 June 06**
(EQ relationships, five strategies to handle conflict, WASP model)

These will be held at the Lysses Hotel in Fareham. Spaces are limited so do send us your indications of interest as soon as possible. Contact tom@qudos.net or call 023 8066 8625

AND FINALLY...

Treat people as if they were what they ought to be and you help them to become what they are capable of being.

Von Goethe