

PA ENTERPRISE

DeskDemon's Magazine for Executive PAs, Office Managers and Secretaries

March 2023

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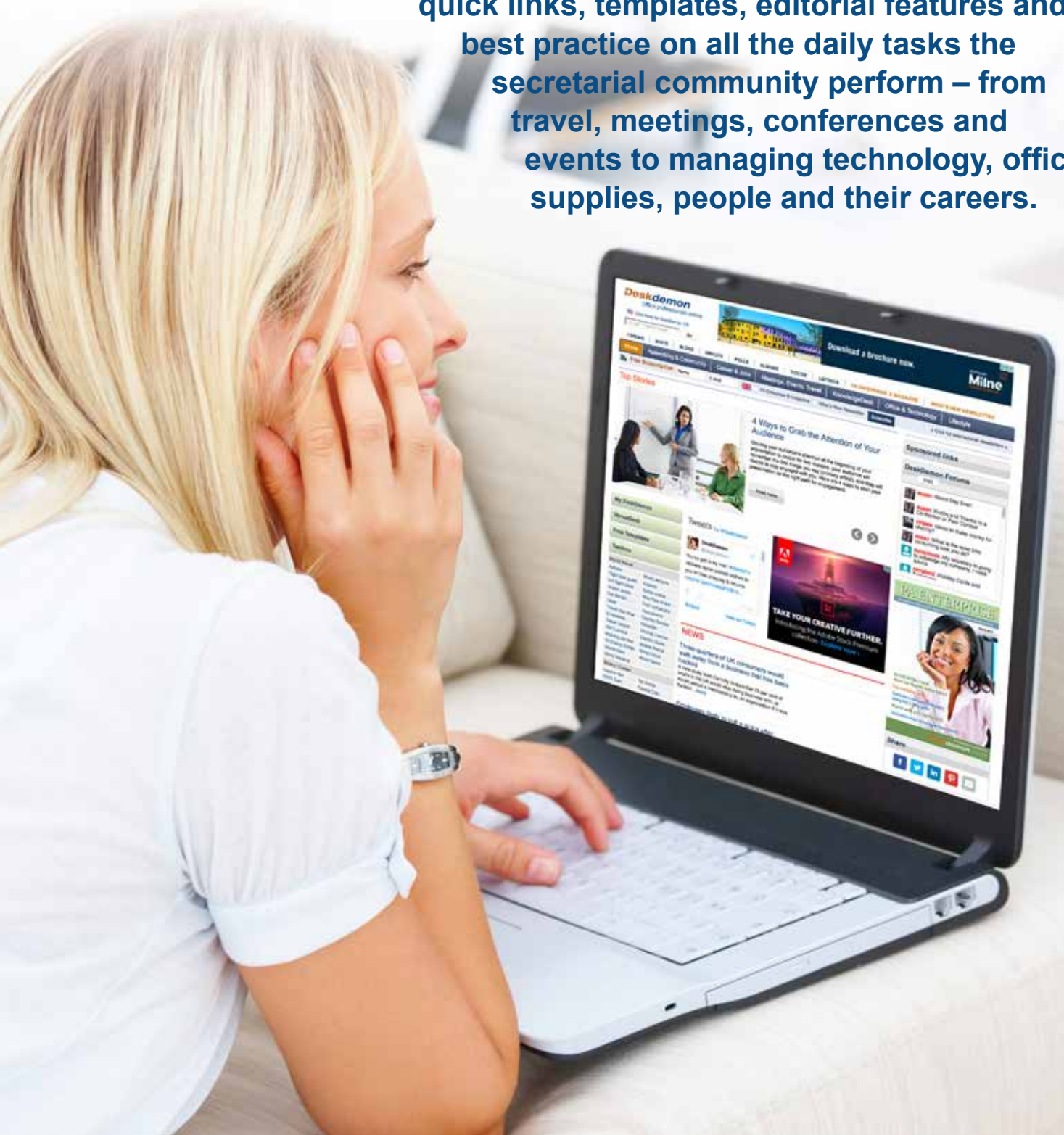
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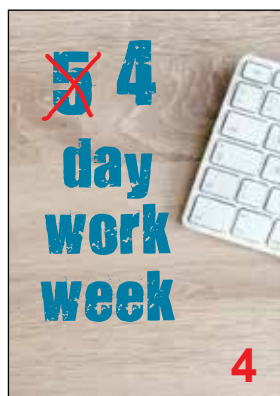
As an office worker, where do you go for information, advice, tutorials, vital tools, training and relaxation?

DeskDemon is the world's largest resource, information and community site for Administrative Professionals, Executive PAs, secretaries, Administrators and Office Managers. Providing essential information, resources, tips, tricks, tools, quick links, templates, editorial features and best practice on all the daily tasks the secretarial community perform – from travel, meetings, conferences and events to managing technology, office supplies, people and their careers.



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PA ENTERPRISE MAGAZINE

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A four-day work week: is it really worth it?



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day work
week

We all love a 3-day weekend; bank holidays are always a cause for excitement. But what if you scrapped the traditional 5-day week and made this the norm? Would your business soar? Or would productivity take a hit?

So, what's the case for a four-day week?

There is an argument to be made that modern technology has significantly sped up the way we work, and that the five-day week is no longer necessary.

For example, cloud HR software means that long-winded spreadsheets are no longer needed and faffing around with paperwork is a thing of the past.

Whilst the five-day week used to be a great model that got the most out of its workers, it was born in an era where factory work was the norm. In a 19th century factory, a 5-day week was ideal. People would get up, go to work, do their jobs and go home. That was all there was to it.

However, with the evolution of technology and the increase in office jobs, the rule that longer hours equals more productivity doesn't necessarily ring true. If anything, our work-life balance has taken a hit.

Recent trials of a four-day working week in Iceland have been reportedly successful.

Microsoft's Japan offices also trialled it and saw a whopping 40% increase in productivity. It's also proved successful in countries like New Zealand and Sweden.

And with the 4-day week pilot running in countries across the world, there's a clear sense that this change in working practice could become the norm for some organisations.

FOUR-DAY WEEK: PROS AND CONS

Benefits of a four-day working week

So, how do you know if a four-day week is right for your business? To help you decide, here are some key pros and cons.

Reduced costs

A four-day week can cut costs for everyone.

The obvious one is that, given the office would be closed for one extra day a week, running costs would see a significant drop.

Additionally, employees would be paying less to commute and would see cut costs in expenses like lunch and coffees during the day, too.

Happier employees

Having a three-day weekend leaves employees with more free time and the chance to improve their work-life balance. Not many people will complain about that.

Having more time to do the things you love increases overall happiness and can help to increase loyalty to a company - it's a win-win.

Fewer health issues

According to charity Mind, 1 in 6 of us experience mental health problems in any given week.

Having a longer weekend will allow people to spend more time with their friends and family and do things that they love, which will naturally lead to an improvement in wellbeing.

It'll also give them an extra lie-in each week which will help them re-charge a little more after a busy week.

Increase in productivity levels

Discontented staff tend to distract their co-workers. The general theory behind a shorter week is that happier, more fulfilled employees are therefore more focused on their job when actually in the workplace.

Perpetual Guardian, a New Zealand firm trialled a four day week. The results found that 78% of employees could more effectively balance their work and home life. This was compared to 54% prior to the experiment.

Recruitment and retention

In the age of the millennial, being able to offer a more flexible work pattern is definitely a perk that persuades employees to stay at a company.

Research shows that 63% of businesses found it easier to attract and keep quality staff with a four-day working week. This work-life balance benefit is still a relatively rare offering and can be a great way to get the best talent through the door - and keep them engaged, too.

DISADVANTAGES OF A 4-DAY WORK WEEK

It doesn't suit every business model

Unfortunately, a four-day week model doesn't suit every business. It's an option that is only viable for companies who can re-adapt their whole business to a new way of working.

Adopting a different way of working is a big step, so you'll need to consider whether or not a four-day week is right for your company.

Longer hours and work-related stress

In reality, most employees on a four-day week will most likely be expected to work the same

40-hour weeks, but in four days instead of five. In this case, shifts might be extended to 10 hours.

Longer days could have a significant effect on your employees' stress levels and therefore their overall wellbeing and productivity. And although the theory is that more time away from work benefits an employee's work life balance, by working extra hard during their new 'working week', they may find that their work-life balance actually takes a hit.

How does a four-day week affect holiday entitlement?

One of the first things employees might ask is: how does this affect my holiday entitlement?

Well, as you probably know, an employer can set their own rules on holiday, and can choose to give more than the legal minimum should they want to.

If you switch to a four-day week and keep the standard 37.5 hour working week (i.e. you condense 5 days into 4), your employees' holiday allowance won't change. No sweat.

But, if you actually reduce the amount of hours your people are working each week, you'll need to re-calculate the holiday they're entitled to. And here's how you do it.

- **Leave allowance is calculated simply by multiplying the number of days worked a week by 5.6.**
- **A five-day week entitles 28 days' annual leave a year.**
- **So, someone working a four-day week would be entitled to: 4 days x 5.6 weeks = 22.4 days.**

Sophie Forrest, of Forrest HR has collated some thoughts on flexible working and how to create structures to manage blended working.

Should work become more flexible?

The pandemic has proved to many businesses (that might have previously felt reluctant to allow their staff to work remotely) that a virtual workplace can be successful, prompting calls from many employees to maintain some element of remote working in future.

And it's not just employees who are leading the calls; some notable companies have also gone on the record and stated that they're going to push for a more flexible way of working.

One employer who's taken this stance is PwC, who are not only calling for a change in where we work, but also in when we work. The consultancy firm has won headlines by announcing that, once restrictions are eased, their employees will be able to dictate whether they work remotely or in-person, as well as the hours that they want to work.

However, not all businesses are on board with this new way of working. In February, the CEO of Goldman Sachs, David Soloman, dismissed the idea that the future of working will be virtual, berating it as an 'aberration that we're going to correct as soon as possible'.

The stark contrast between the two companies shows that no one is really sure what the future will look like for UK employees in a post-pandemic world.

Creating structures to manage blended working

If your area of business permits it, the likelihood is that most of your staff will opt for

a blend between office and home working when we return to the workplace. To ensure that this happens successfully, it's going to be up to business owners, managers and HR professionals to put in place the necessary structures.

This will include practicalities, such as:

- **Making sure that employees whose areas of business are heavily reliant upon each other overlap**
- **Deciding how many days per week you're going to need your staff to be in your place of work**
- **Ensuring there are enough resources available (work stations, equipment etc) for the rota that you decide on.**

Ultimately, with the right arrangements in place, as well as a collaborative approach between you and your staff and effective communication, you should be able to manage the return to work effectively to ensure an engaged, happy, productive workforce.

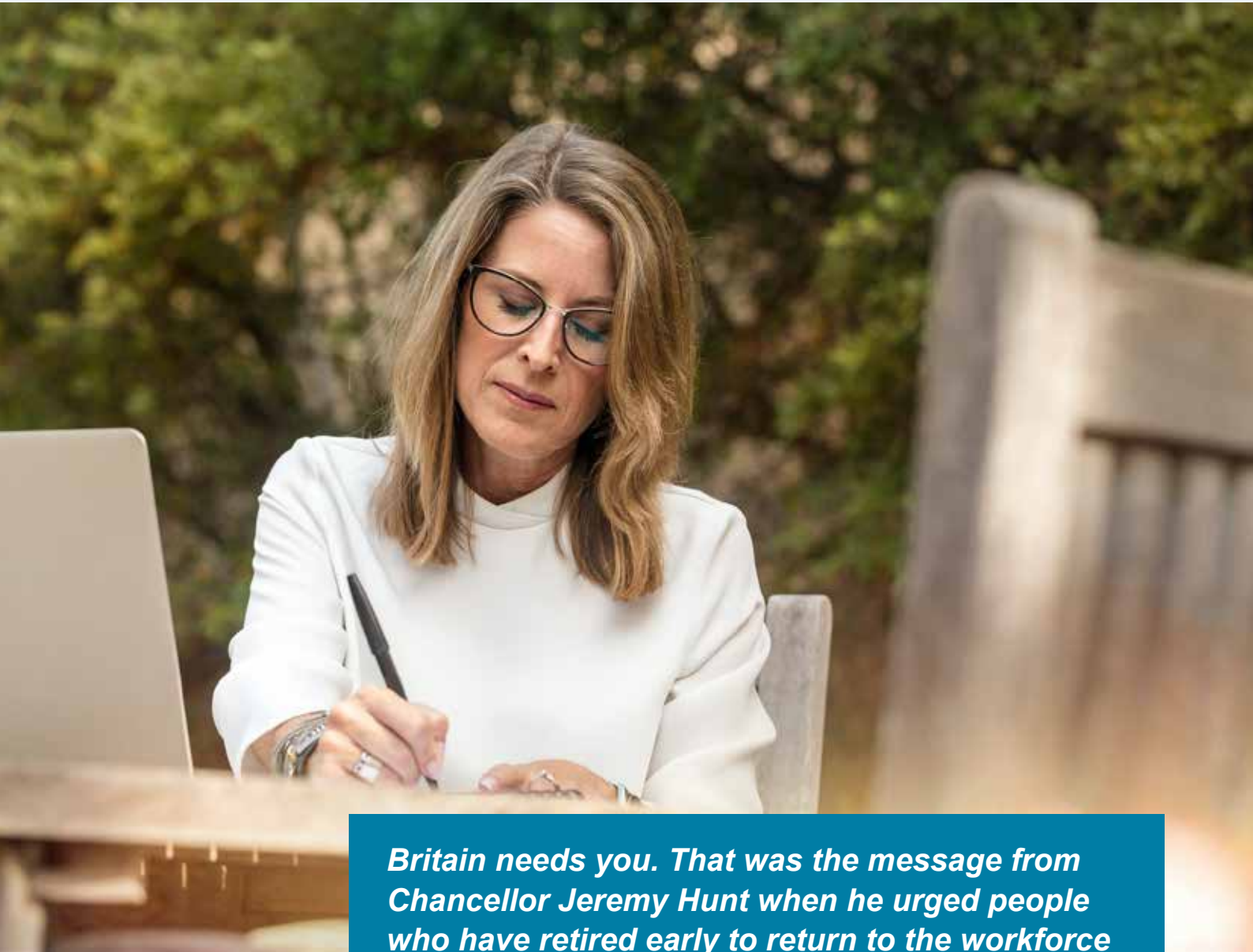
Is a four-day week right for your business?

It remains to be seen whether a four-day week is the solution to the changing 21st century workplace or not.

But, what is certain is that small businesses will have to keep an open mind.

They'll need to ensure they accommodate increasing changes in technology from a business perspective, whilst keeping the overall focus on employee health and wellbeing to maintain productivity, a healthy work-life balance and engagement.

Six tips for getting a job if you're over 50



Britain needs you. That was the message from Chancellor Jeremy Hunt when he urged people who have retired early to return to the workforce to help revive the economy. Mr Hunt promised that for anyone looking to get back to work, the government would make it worth their while.

1. Focus on ability, not age

Unfortunately ageism is still a problem, says James Reed, chief executive of recruitment firm Reed.

“Despite legislation to prevent age discrimination, older jobseekers can still face bias,” he admits.

He suggests shifting the focus away from your age and onto your ability wherever you can.

While you shouldn’t lie about your age, there’s no need to highlight it either,” he says.

“Consider streamlining your CV and taking out older experience that dates back more than 10 years, or omit dates in the section listing your education.”

Employers are allowed to ask for your date of birth, to see whether they are attracting a wide range of candidates, for example. But they should keep this separate from the application, says the charity Age UK.

2. Be open about any relevant health concerns

If health is the reason you left your last job, it can be tricky. But you don’t have to mention it at interview, unless it could affect your work in the future.

Petra Tagg, director at Manpower, says it’s up to you to decide how much information you share.

“There’s no need to disclose a history of illness if it won’t affect your ability to perform your duties,” she says.

However, she says be truthful about health concerns that may affect your ability to

perform a job or if you may need time off.

Laura Reilly, director at Taurus HR, advises keeping the reasons for leaving previous employment relatively light and positive.

“Once an offer has been received, any disclosures can be made - including if reasonable adjustments need to be made for you,” she says.

Yvonne Smyth from recruitment firm Hays says that if you are asked to complete a workplace adjustment assessment or form, that is the time to disclose any health information you feel may have an impact on your work. But that is usually a little further along in the interview process.

3. Update your skills

Older workers can often face prejudicial questions around digital literacy and skills, James Reed says.

For that reason he says it’s worthwhile polishing skills in areas valued by employers.

He says things like using news alerts to keep up with developments in any given field can help you stand out from the crowd during the interview process.

Taking voluntary opportunities can also boost your skills as you effectively get on-the-job training in whatever technology is used, says Stuart Lewis, chief executive of Rest Less, a website that provides resources for jobs and volunteering for the over-50s.

He also advises making it clear in your application that you’re interested in new challenges and learning new skills.



4. Don't be nervous about asking to work flexibly

Some older people find they don't have the energy for full-time work, or have caring responsibilities or simply prefer to work part-time.

But you shouldn't be afraid to ask for flexible work. In fact, employers may expect it.

Businesses are increasingly realising that offering flexible working helps retain older workers, according to Tracy Riddell, of the Centre for Ageing Better.

5. Reinvent yourself

James Reed says older jobseekers shouldn't rule out gaining new professional qualifications. It can demonstrate to prospective employers your ability to adapt and learn new skills, or even be the start of a whole new career.

Apprenticeships, for instance, are not just for the young. Older workers and career-switchers can do them too.

And think about your "transferable skills", says Clare McCartney from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

If you are a good communicator or have lots of leadership experience, for example, you could consider applying for jobs in different industries, she says.

The UK government has further advice on support for older workers here.

6. Don't undersell yourself

Petra Tagg from Manpower says older workers should try to avoid falling into the trap of undervaluing themselves.

She says that often the advantage for older workers is the breadth of experience they bring.

"In circumstances where other, younger candidates may seem to have more to offer, reminding yourself of what makes you stand out from the crowd is a quick and effective way to build awareness and confidence in yourself and your own worth," she says.

She says people can use a job description "to pull out all the things you can do, and give real examples, rather than focusing on those you don't have experience in".

Interactive road safety map

Collision

The worst traffic accident hotspots in the UK and the safest roads to live on, have been revealed after analysis of the latest Department for Transport collision data statistics by Collisionmap, a free interactive road safety mapping tool, developed by transport data and mapping company, Buchanan Computing. The tool is designed to improve road safety across the UK by allowing anybody to search accident rates in their postcode area.

Whilst the number of accident and casualties have increased throughout all regions, the rate of the year-on-year increase has been markedly different across the regions, resulting in a different picture. Yorkshire and Humber region fared the worst with the largest percentage increases, whilst Scotland moved to the best ranking with the smallest level of increase.

The picture changes again when the accident data is viewed as a proportion of the population for each region. London is shown to have the highest rate with 2997 casualties per million population, and Scotland with a rate just over 3 times lower, has by far the lowest rate with 939 casualties per million population. However, when it comes to fatalities, the position is reversed, with London's rate of 8, being approximately 3 times lower than Scotland's rate of 25 per million population.

CollisionMap uses the latest DfT collision data from 2021 to:

- compare region, council area and postcode revealing the roads where you are most likely to have a road accident and those which are safest.
- It is the only interactive map which allows you to search by postcode to reveal percentage change in road accidents year on year
- It is also uniquely able to adjust for population density
- It can pinpoint accident hotspots using heatmaps in particular postcodes and allows users to see visualisations down to specific roads and exactly where accidents occurred.

Alex Smith, CEO of Buchanan Computing said: "We have developed CollisionMap as a free and useful resource to improve road safety across the UK. It is available for anyone to use to track accident rates in their postcode area and compare them to the national picture and is already used by a number of Local Authorities around the country to share road safety and accident hotspots locally. CollisionMap is incredibly detailed so it will also show you with pinpoint accuracy on which roads the accidents occurred and uniquely it also adjusts the collision data according to population density, meaning that users can more accurately compare their own location with others or with the national picture."

What to do when you encounter ‘dark personality traits’ at work

Have you ever suffered through tales of greatness from a self-absorbed ‘friend’ who reminds you of Michael Scott from The Office – and not in a good way? Have you been betrayed by a colleague out of the blue, undermined on a project by the office mean girl, or had a work friendship dropped altogether without explanation?



In the workplace, at first a psychopath may seem charming. But eventually you'll likely find yourself either questioning their motivations, or becoming a victim of their destructive behaviour.

If any of these scenarios sound familiar, you may have been dealing with someone who has what psychologists term a “dark personality.” These people score higher on three socially undesirable traits: narcissism, psychopathy and Machiavellianism.

Defining the dark personalities

Narcissists have the most familiar type of dark personality. They aren't shy about letting you know exactly how highly they think of themselves. At work, you might find the narcissist bragging about their superior sales skills, even though their performance isn't much better than the average salesperson. Conservative estimates of narcissism in the general population fall around 6.2%.

While narcissistic behaviour can be annoying, it's usually more tolerable than what the other two dark traits tend to serve up.

Functional – meaning noncriminal – psychopaths are particularly disturbing. Psychologists estimate they comprise up to 4% of the general population. Psychopaths have no qualms about exploiting others for their own benefit. Stubbornly antisocial, functional psychopaths generally have little empathy for others. They're more concerned about “getting theirs” by any means necessary. Psychopaths are quick to deflect blame and throw others under the bus, even if it means telling lies.

With their impulsive tendencies, psychopaths are prone to telling lies for no particular reason at all. If you find yourself in a group water-cooler conversation and hear someone telling lies that don't seem to serve any purpose, you might have stumbled on a functional psychopath.

In the workplace, at first a psychopath may seem charming. But eventually you'll likely find yourself either questioning their motivations, or becoming a victim of their destructive behaviour. Though they can be harder to identify than narcissists with their nonstop bragging, psychopaths' egregious behaviour tends to unmask them in the end.

Machiavellians are the most prevalent of the dark personalities, estimated to be about 16% of the population. They get their name from Italian Renaissance statesman Niccolò Machiavelli, who believed the ends could justify immoral means. Less annoying than narcissists, less abrasive than functional psychopaths, Machiavellians are more subtle in the pursuit of their agendas. They forge ahead regardless of ethical considerations. Like lions, Machiavellians seem benevolent, watching their prey from afar – until they strike. They're adept at playing the long game – it's their stealth, patience and subtle manipulation that make them a particularly dangerous dark personality.

Compared with a psychopath's unnecessary lies, you're more likely to overhear the Machiavellian in the group telling little white lies that are strategically designed to further a future agenda. For example, you might hear them flattering the colleague you happen to know will be getting a big bonus in the near future – the Machiavellian may be strategically laying the groundwork for being invited to help them spend it.

In short, targets of dark personalities likely find narcissists to be conspicuously and irritatingly self-centered, but generally innocuous. Psychopaths are less obvious in their bad behaviour, but their transgressions can be quite severe. Machiavellians are less in-your-face than narcissists, and their nefarious actions are likely to be less severe than those of psychopaths. In the long run, though, a Machiavellian can leave you reeling from an unexpected betrayal to benefit their personal agenda.

As you consider these dark traits and how they show up in interpersonal relationships, you might sense a spark of recognition. Here are five tips for avoiding dark personalities in your own life or minimising the harm they cause.

1. Don't fall for first impressions

Dark personalities are experts at making great first impressions, drawing you in with humor and charisma. So, when you meet someone new, be wary of superficial appeal. Narcissists, with their tendency to talk themselves up, are the easiest to spot.

To identify the others, ask questions about past relationships and listen carefully for clues about who this person really is. Because dark

personalities are almost always unmasked in the end, they're less likely to have long-standing friendships – an absence they may explain away by faulting others.

Just be mindful not to overcorrect and ditch a potential new work friend based only on first impressions, either.

2. Share your own (bad) experiences

When you encounter a dark personality and the outcome is unpleasant, you might feel embarrassed for allowing yourself to be fooled or manipulated, or you might feel guilt or shame when you observe someone treating someone else badly. As a result, you might not want to talk about it. Dark personalities exploit that reluctance because your silence helps keep hidden their “core of darkness” – the antagonistic traits that define them.

So to help unmask the dark personality and keep others from meeting the same fate, sharing your experience, with discretion, is critical.

3. Manage up to clue bosses in

Those with dark personalities are good at carefully managing the impressions they make on people in positions of power. So, at work, you can practice managing up to help your boss see the dark personality more clearly.

Share your experiences in a nongossipy way, such as expressing concern about incidents of incivility that you witnessed or requesting advice or guidance in dealing with a very boastful colleague who may be alienating prospects or customers. It may help your boss see through the facade and help you deal with the issue.



4. Plug into your networks

On the flip side, remember to also listen to others. To avoid falling into a manipulator's web, tap into the network of those around you who share a link to the person in question. See if you can gather references regarding their behaviour over the long term. Ideally, you can benefit from others' knowledge, without having to learn the hard way.

5. Be aware of your own biases

Don't underestimate the strength of a dark personality's machinations. When someone shares a personal story of betrayal, be wary of thinking, "that would never happen to me!" Dark personalities are experts in manipulating situations to serve their interests, and you may never notice you're ensnared until it's too late. Considering yourself too smart or savvy to ever find yourself in the same predicament is misguided.

As you apply these tips in your life, you want to be wary of becoming an armchair psychologist. Anyone can have a bad day – and everyone has. Instead of diagnosing friends, partners and colleagues based on what you think might be their underlying personality traits, focus on any bad behaviours you personally witness, and respond to the actions – not what you think underlies them. Best leave that to the professionals.

If you are in charge of organisations or teams, consider having clear guidance and pathways of communication for individuals to report any concerning behaviour they witness. By working together and sharing collective experiences, the rest of us can shine light on the workplace misdeeds of those with antagonistic personalities.

Common job scams and how to avoid them

The online world has made it easier than ever to search and apply for jobs, but the flip-side is a rise in job scams. ActionFraud claims that “young people are the most defrauded jobsters in Britain”, while figures from the City of London Police’s National Fraud Intelligence Bureau show that victims lose an average of £4,000 when scammed.

To ensure you never become a victim, we reveal some of the most popular scams out there and how to avoid them.

Advance fee fraud

This centres around scammers saying they have seen your CV and would like to offer you a job. There may be a token interview on the phone or online, then you are told the job is yours. However, they just need a small amount to cover screening checks, finders fees or admin fees. Or you might be told that your CV needs a polish, and they can help you out (for a fee).

Never part with any money. Employers pay fees associated with agencies or checks, not the employee. And if someone thinks your CV needs a brush-up, turn to a free service such as National Career Service.

Phishing scams

Personal details mean big money for scammers, and phishing scams are dedicated to stealing information from job seekers. A job seeker might be guided towards a site asking for personal details. Once the information is secured, scammers use it to steal identities or take money from accounts.

Alternatively, an individual might be encouraged to open an email attachment to retrieve a form. This attachment includes malware, which is used to map a person’s computer and discover their login details to accounts.

Avoiding these scams is easy; never open email attachments or click links in emails.

Premium rate phone scams

Some job scams involve interviews held over







the phone. Be incredibly wary of being asked to phone someone for an interview. Often these lines are premium rate and you are kept on hold for a long time, racking up an expensive bill. Genuine businesses will phone you.

4 STEPS TO STAY SAFE FROM JOBS SCAMS

In addition to being aware of the types of scams, ask yourself these questions to avoid

falling foul of fraud.

1. Does everything look professional?

Real businesses care about spelling, grammar and image quality. If you are sent an email that seems slap-dash, be alert. Also be wary of emails from a webmail account. Even a small business will have its own domain name.

However, some scammers are very sophisticated, setting up fake sites to phish for details. If you are directed to a website,

perform a WHOIS search of the URL to find details of the owner. If it is someone only recently registered, named as an individual, or declared as non-trading, be cautious.

2. Does everything stack up?

If you are approached by a company, or see job adverts on a non-job site (such as the fake Harrods jobs advertised on Gumtree), visit the company's website to check if the advertised job is present, or phone the HR department.

Also double-check address or phone number details. You can do this on company registration sites. Another good trick is to put the address into Google Street View and see what the premises look like.

3. Is the behaviour professional?

Genuine job offers follow a pattern. Contact is made, there is an interview (usually in person but could be via Skype); references are checked and an offer is sent out.

If you are offered a job without being asked about your experience, or without meeting anyone, be cautious.

Also be wary of jobs that offer a higher-than-average salary. And pay attention to when you were contacted. Even agencies work within normal office hours, so correspondence outside of those times could signify a fraudster.

4. Does my CV reveal too much?

Protect yourself by limiting the information on your CV. Don't include your middle name, date of birth, birthplace or full address (just put town and postcode). These are all valuable details scammers can use to nab your identity.

Other items to omit are passport number, NI number, a photograph and certainly no bank details. If an employer needs any of these, you can sort them out face-to-face with the HR manager.

Knowledge is power

All scams prey on vulnerabilities, and employment scam is no different. The scammers are relying on people being so desperate for a job that they don't question when they are asked to supply details. You don't have to be paranoid when looking for work, though. Just follow the advice given and keep a cool head. Although the internet makes it easier for scams to exist, it also makes it easy for you to double-check facts. Use this against the scammers and you can be assured of a safe job seeking experience.

However, if you think you have been approached by an employment scammer, or have given away details, there are organisations to take things further.

Report the scam to ActionFraud.

If you have received a phishing email, report the email address to the email host. Most have a dedicated fraud department – search for something like 'report Hotmail email fraud' to get details.

Contact your bank immediately if you think your details are at risk.

For further articles on employment scams, visit the SAFERjobs site. This non-profit organisation helps protect job seekers and works in partnership with various law enforcement agencies.

Mummy, I'm Home!

Capital One UK commissions new research into the financial impact of children returning home and what this means for families during the cost-of-living crisis



Back like they never left, young adult Brits are being forced to return to their childhood bedrooms according to new research by Capital One UK, which has shown that one in five have moved or are planning to move back into their family home, due to the current cost-of-living crisis.

Regressing to the rooms of yesteryear with obscenely bright wall colours and posters of now-retired boybands, previously financially independent young Brits – the aptly named ‘Generation Boomerang’ – are shacking back up with their parents, as a result of rising rents and sky-high energy and food bills, according to the study of the nation’s parents and guardians.

The trend is showing no signs of slowing, with one in three parents facing the prospect of having their older children move back in with them, if the cost-of-living crisis gets any worse – and nearly half having friends whose adult children have already moved back in.

With additional mouths to feed, this has put a strain on the pockets of parents at a time when prices are increasing. The research shows the cost implications of returning young adults are hitting families hard – with the average parent expecting their energy and food bills to rise by £272 a month. And there’s a time limit too – with the research indicating that 2 years and 3 months is the maximum time, on average, that parents can afford to financially support the return of their adult children.

However, the research shows that love really does conquer all – including a cost-of-living-crisis. With three quarters of parents and guardians stating they would welcome their children home with open arms if they were struggling financially, and two thirds view it as

their responsibility and will always be there for them.

Financial Educator and Founder of This Girl Talks Money, Ellie Austin-Williams, is working with Capital One UK to offer up her top tips to parents of boomerang children. She said: “It’s becoming increasingly common for once independent young adults to move back into the family home, and navigating the dynamics of this can be challenging for everyone involved.”

“Whether a welcomed reunion or burden, it’s important to ensure boundaries are set, and met. Consider discussing bill contributions early on to avoid any later misunderstandings, work with them to set new financial goals and break-down the taboo of “money talk” by encouraging a more open conversation around the topic.”

It’s no secret that the current economic climate is having a detrimental impact on both modern Brits and their families, with a fifth of parents admitting to worrying constantly about supporting their adult children financially through the cost-of-living crisis.

The research shows that some things never change, and we do regress when we return home. According to the nation’s parents some of the weird and wonderful worries include:

- Constant mess around the house
- Not helping out with family chores
- Arguing about generational differences
- Cluttering up the house
- Using up all the hot water (23%)

In fact, nearly half of parents admitted to worrying that they will always have to financially support their grown-up children.

The most common work dreams and what they actually mean



DREAM

Whether you're dreaming about being fired or getting a promotion, work dreams can have a tendency to play on our minds.

Are they premonitions? Let's face it we don't need anymore added stresses in our lives.

Wonder no more, because here's the low down on what the most popular work-related dreams mean for you.

From going to work without pants to racy encounters with colleagues, work-related dreams can tell us how we really feel about our jobs.

A fifth of employees dream about being in a relationship with their colleague, according to a recent study by Totaljobs.

In fact, more than half of employees admit to dreaming about work regularly, so what does it all mean? Dreams expert Inbaal Honigman weighs in.

Dreaming about being late for work

The most common work-related dream is about being late for work and it turns out it's an anxiety dream.

People will experience this dream, when they feel they're not good enough at their job or no matter how much effort they put in, they still can't fulfil the minimum expected standard.

This doesn't mean that the person experiencing these dreams is really incapable of performing their work well, it is simply an expression of their worry that they might not be.

Another reason for this can be if their work isn't praised by their superiors, especially if they work hard on achieving results.

Dreaming about getting into trouble at work

The second most searched work dream is again anxiety related.

It's a way to vent your anger about how things are handled in the workplace.

Inbaal said: 'In the dream, we say awful stuff, the boss says awful stuff, and we find ourselves in trouble.'

The brain is trying to play out arguments that would otherwise threaten our position or career, in the safe environment of our dream.

The reason for this anxiety dream is most likely that you are not being heard at the workplace, which is important to tackle in real life.

Dreaming about a promotion at work

This dream is less of a nightmare. It's about being promoted at work.

'A promotion dream could be a prophetic dream,' said Inbaal.

If you're having this dream, it could mean that your subconscious has picked up positive signals, such as that you're doing very well at your tasks, or that perhaps promotions were talked about at work.

Whatever happens in the workplace, this dream is a sign that you're doing great at your job.

Dreaming about old work colleagues

This dream is not necessarily what you expect. Dreaming about workmates in days gone by can be either positive or negative.

If you're happy to see your old colleagues,





Inbaal said ‘it’s probably a sign that you’re missing how you used to feel about yourself in the old job’.

Inbaal said: ‘Work colleagues represent the way you used to solve problems, so if you’re excited to see those old workmates in your dream, you probably miss the way you used to deal with challenges.’

On the other hand, if you’re not very happy to see your old colleagues, you probably are more content in your current job than you were then.

Dreaming about going to work without pants

The no-pants dream is a bit of a cliché but it’s talked about for a reason. It’s a common dream.

‘Many people dream about having no pants on at school, while giving a talk or even at their own wedding,’ Inbaal said.

This anxiety dream ranks fifth among the most common work-related dreams worldwide.

It is often a way for the brain to express how



frightening your work situation is to you subconsciously. Like with the other work-related nightmares, the best way to stop this is to address the problem in real life.

You probably really need a break from work, or at least some reassurance from your colleagues that you're doing well.

Dreaming about being replaced at work

If you're dreaming about being replaced at work it's probably due to the fact that some workplaces regularly remind their employees that they're replaceable.

These superiors or employers believe this to be motivating, when in fact, it has the opposite effect.

The resulting insecurity, which your subconscious experiences and displays in a dream, more often motivates workers to find a different job before it's too late.

If you are repeatedly dreaming about being replaced, then your brain is probably right in telling you to do just that: replace the job before your employer replaces you.

Dreaming about getting robbed at work

This nightmare is of a more serious nature, Inbaal warns.

She said employees can be made to feel insecure or unsafe at work 'if there's a toxic culture of 'banter' for example, where it's fair game to ridicule a colleague.'

This kind of toxic work environment will cause such nightmares as getting robbed at work, and it definitely needs addressing with HR.

Dreaming about falling asleep at work

If you're having this anxiety dream, chances are you are worried this could really happen to you.

Either your work is very dull to you, or you are chronically under-slept.

More generally, this could mean you feel uneasy in your work environment and your sleeping habits or day-to-day tasks in your work might need to change to make you feel safer.

Romantic dreams about work

While you might think that this shows subconscious urges of a racier nature, Inbaal said, these dreams actually mainly suggest you are comfortable in your job.

'If the dream is a little more passionate, then it could show that you're a little bored at work and need to spice up your working day,' she said.

Research on the most popular work dreams was published by CVApp.