**Making People Count: a workforce bulletin**

**December 2024**

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# Learning and Organizational Development

## Should AI join the training team?

**Source:** Personnel Today

**In a nutshell:** AI has been casting its beady eyes over HR, and in this article Elise Smith – CEO and co-founder of Praxis Labs – outlines some of the ins and outs. Elise Smith argues that “AI-powered simulations and coaching have the power to be always on. They are an affordable, at scale solution for workforces to practise difficult conversations, see different points of view, and learn crucial skills in a safe, on-demand environment.” They can create personalized learning experiences that adapt to what each person needs and give immediate feedback. AI simulations can allow managers to practise giving feedback and AI “puts learning right where you need it, so you’re more likely to remember and use what you learn.” It can also let “team members take charge of their own learning, getting training when and where they need it most.” Elise Smith concludes “for learning and HR leaders, the message is clear: it’s time to embrace AI not as a threat, but as a powerful ally in developing talent who can create workplaces where every employee can thrive and contribute their best work.”

You can read the whole of this article at

<https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/learning-teams-generative-ai/>

# People Management

## Promoted to glory, or chucking it in in the Championship?

**Source:** Journal of Vocational Behaviour

**In a nutshell:** In this study Zhen Wang, from the Central University of Finance and Economics in Beijing, led a team of researchers investigating what happened to people who *fail* to get promoted. Do they redouble their efforts to get to the Premiership, so to speak, or dial it in faced with a wet Thursday night getting lumps kicked out of them at Millwall? The researchers studied 359 IT professionals and found that those who attributed their failure to themselves were inclined to become more proactive, and redouble their efforts whereas those who attributed their failure to external circumstances – office politics, for instance – were more likely to dwell on their failure, “resulting in lower career productivity.”

You can read the abstract of this article at

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2024.104061>

## Unravelling the mysteries of mentorship

**Source:** Journal of Vocational Behaviour

**In a nutshell:** In this study Belle Rose Ragins, from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, led a team of researchers studying 355 pairs of mentors and protégés. They found that the mentors’ beliefs about how much potential, or otherwise, their protégés had affected the effectiveness and quality of their relationship with them. The mentors showed less interest in, and provided less career guidance to, protégés they felt were lacking in potential which, in turn, made these protégés feel less respected. Female protégés were seen as having less potential, and felt less respected, when they were given a male mentor. And male mentors gave more career support and felt more respected when they believed their assigned protégé had high potential.

You can read the abstract of this article at

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2024.104062>

## Positive psychology and the police

**Source:** Journal of Happiness Studies

**In a nutshell:** Positive psychology is not something one automatically associates with the police force. In this study Oi Lin Siu, from Lingnan University in Hong Kong, led a team of researchers investigating the links between psychological capital – made up of self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience – and wellbeing at work. They found that positive emotions were positively related to psychological capital. Psychological capital led to more job satisfaction, and less stress, which, in turn, reduced turnover intention.

You can read the abstract of this article at

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-014-9513-8>

## When the macho move over

**Source:** Journal of Management Studies

**In a nutshell:** In this study Matthew P. Mount, from the University of Adelaide, led a team of researchers investigating the effects of having a masculine face and voice on CEOs’ life expectancies. They studied 1,500 firms on the US stock exchange and found that boards were more likely to see CEOs’ facial and vocal masculinity as costly to the firm, because they signalled aggression, dominance, and risk-taking – traits only valued “in the narrow context of conflict.”

You can read the abstract of this article at

<https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.13159>

## When the smart speak up, and the rest stay silent

**Source:** Journal of Organizational Behaviour

**In a nutshell:** this study Jing Wu, from BI Norwegian Business School in Oslo, led a team of researchers investigating how work teams choose people to speak up for them and what the consequences of this are. The researchers studied 175 student project teams and found that “over time, voice becomes more centralized in teams, especially around members who are more competent than others.” Teams whose members were higher in conscientiousness or “openness to experience,” were better at putting more competent members in central speaking roles early on and gradually replacing less competent ones as spokespeople. Teams that chose one person as a spokesperson and stuck to them generally performed better when they gave their most competent members prominent speaking roles and worse when they did not.

You can read the abstract of this article at

<https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2842>

## Transformation and turnover

**Source:** Journal of Nursing Management

**In a nutshell:** In this study a team of researchers, led by Jean-François Gagnon, from the University of Quebec, studied the effect of transformational leadership on employee turnover. The researchers studied 426 French Canadian nurses and found that “top management’s transformational leadership behaviours distinctly predicted organizational and occupational turnover intention through specific nurses’ states of engagement. A perception of transformational leadership led to more vigour being displayed by the nurses its effect on turnover was determined by the nurses’ “level of autonomous motivation at work.”

You can read the whole of this article at

<https://doi.org/10.1155/2024/8883038>

## Cyberskiving – when morality does battle with boredom

**Source:** Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology

**In a nutshell:** It would be a rare person who, faced with a 1,000-line spreadsheet to plough down on one hand and the limitless potential for entertainment of the internet on the other didn’t spend at least some of their working day on the latter. In this study Qingxiong Weng, from the University of Science and Technology of China, led a team of researchers looking into cyberloafing in a study of 443 Chinese workers. They found that “interest incongruence,” (doing boring work) led to ego depletion (loss of willpower) among the workers, which in turn led to more cyberloafing. However, both self-control and moral-identity internalization were linked to a reduced risk of cyberloafing.

You can read the abstract of this article at

<https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12559>

## Are we embracing AI?

**Source:** Personnel Today

**In a nutshell:** “Independent professional services,” firm LawDeb have been looking into it and found that nearly a third (29%) of workers are already using it, with one in 10 using it for large parts of their work. Men (34%) were more likely to use it than women (25%), with 25-34-year-old men in London being keenest of all. 22% said they would be comfortable using AI, but were not, and 37% said they wouldn’t feel comfortable using it at all. Reasons for not using AI included: not knowing how (19%); believing that it was unethical (14%); or thinking that they would get into trouble (6%). C-suite workers (execs) (27%) and senior managers (23%) were some of the biggest users.

You can read the whole of this article at

<https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/nearly-a-third-of-employees-use-ai-at-work/>

## Changing job – Brave New World or welcome to amateur hour?

**Source:** Research in Organizational Behaviour

**In a nutshell:** In *Twin Peaks* Special Agent Cooper calls in a former colleague [Albert Rosenfeld](https://www.dazeddigital.com/artsandculture/article/34411/1/welcome-to-amateur-hour-albert-rosenfields-best-moments) to help with some forensic pathology. Rosenfeld takes one, disdainful, look at the local pathologist’s efforts and sardonically exclaims “welcome to amateur hour.” Some people experience much the same feelings when they start a new job, unable to resist saying “when I was at [x] we did it like this.” For others a new job can represent a fresh start among people blissfully unaware – for a short time at least – of your character defects and past misdemeanours. In this article Gina Dokko, from the University of California Davis, and Winnie Y. Jiang from INSEAD in Singapore, mull over some of the issues. They introduce the concept of “career frictions, the disrupting differences felt by individuals between a new role and career attributes accumulated through their prior work experience (i.e., knowledge, social relationships, and imprints and identity).” They argue that the amount of career friction a person experiences is affected by their “cognitive fixedness,” – how difficult or easy it is for them to change their thought patterns – and the process of socialization as they get used to their new role.

You can read the abstract of this article at

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.riob.2024.100205>

## Psychological capital. Where are the cashpoints?

**Source:** Personnel Review

**In a nutshell:** Psychological capital is made up of hope, resilience, optimism, and self-efficacy (feeling up to the task in hand) and in this study Saeed Loghman, from the University of Tasmania, led a team of researchers reviewing the evidence on interventions designed to increase it. They found that the effects of such interventions were greater than those found in previous meta-analyses – with the strongest effects being on hope and optimism. The interventions were effective when it came to hope, resilience, and optimism but did not affect self-efficacy. The more frequent the interventions the more effective they were but, interestingly, the researchers found that interventions specifically designed to focus on psychological capital did not have as great an effect.

You can read the abstract of this article at

<https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-10-2023-0854>

## Can Three Good Things turn you from Travis Bickle to [Aloysius Parker](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aloysius_Parker)?

**Source:** Journal of Vocational Behaviour

**In a nutshell:** From Keith Barret in [*Marian and Geoff*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marion_and_Geoff)to Travis Bickle in [*Taxi Driver*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taxi_Driver)chauffeurs for hire haven’t always been seen as bywords for happiness and contentment. In this study Xiaoxiao Hu, from West Virginia University, led a team of researchers testing the effect of an intervention which asked taxi drivers to remember three good things about their shift before they finished for the day. Compared to a control group those who took part in the programme reported being in a better mood the next morning but only if they were higher in [promotion focus](https://www.smartliving365.com/promotion-prevention-whats-focus-matters/). For drivers with a high promotion focus the programme led to “increased extra-role service behaviour and reduced rule-breaking behaviour and passive response to entitled customer demands via positive affect.” However, “the intervention showed opposite effects for individuals with lower levels of promotion focus.”

You can read the abstract of this article at

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2024.104069>

## Mindfulness, emotional intelligence and work

**Source:** Journal of Happiness Studies

**In a nutshell:** Mindfulness is a bit like an intensive exercise programme – if you’ve got the concentration and wherewithal to engage in it in the first place you probably don’t need to. Those that do find it has all sorts of benefits, but these tend to be in terms of preventing things getting worse rather than instilling a bright glow of positivity – at least when it comes to work. But could emotional intelligence be the magic ingredient that makes mindfulness work when it comes to the office? In this study, a team of researchers, led by Michael D. Robinson, from North Dakota State University, attempted to find out. They studied 413 people and found that their innate mindfulness combined with emotional intelligence to predict positive feelings in employment contexts, as well as outcomes related to organizational commitment and citizenship.

You can read the abstract of this article at

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-021-00426-w>

## Strengths, attention, and performance

**Source:** Journal of Happiness Studies

**In a nutshell:** The idea that people concentrate more on things they are good at was obviously dreamt up by someone who has never seen the look of grim determination on my face as I attempt to parallel park in space big enough to be considered a brownfield site for a nuclear power station, or watched me fritter away an afternoon trying to find a pithy quote for a current-awareness bulletin. In this study, a team of researchers, led by Wei Liu, from Erasmus University in Rotterdam, examined this issue. They studied 86 people and found that “episodic strengths use,” was “not directly related to subsequent attentional performance,” but was related to higher levels of meaningfulness, personal growth, and positive mood. An experience of meaningfulness (but not personal growth or positive mood) was related to reduced concentration later on. So, whilst playing to your strengths might lead you to feel better about life, it doesn’t improve your concentration in the rest of your working life.

You can read the abstract of this article at

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-022-00522-5>

## Is there nothing like a good moan?

**Source:** Personnel Psychology

**In a nutshell:** In this study Allison [sic] S. Gabriel, from Purdue University in Indiana, led a team of researchers investigating “venting,” at work. They found that venting created feelings of both “personal distress and empathy as employees react to, and process, this social information.” Personal distress led to the other person joining in with the venting, whereas empathy “leads to helping that can promote more positive social relations.”

You can read the whole of this article at

<https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12667>

## Alienation elimination

**Source:** The International Journal of Human Resource Management

**In a nutshell:** Many of us will have experienced powerlessness, meaninglessness, social isolation, and self-estrangement at work; quite often before lunch on a Monday, after which things take a turn for the worse. Alienation from work can affect job performance and wellbeing and in this study a team of researchers, led by Mario Vafeas, from the University of the West of England, investigated it in a study of 33 people working in employee-owned businesses. They found that a number of factors could help to combat alienation. “Psychological and structural empowerment create perceptions of powerfulness. Psychological ownership, effort-reward balance, and prosocial values provide meaningfulness. Community, equality, and inclusive discourse lead to belonging, while personal development, ethic of care, and authenticity drive self-realization.”

You can read the abstract of this article at

<https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2024.2439258>

## Reflection, action, and satisfaction

**Source:** Personnel Review

**In a nutshell:** Back in the 1970s and 80s people used to worry about how we would cope with the leisure society. Would we be able to fill our time without getting bored once robots were doing all the work? Cue bitter laughter from the mothers working until 7pm, then waiting for a cancelled train while the after-school club contemplates adopting their children. How have we stretched work out so much? One of the ways is by chewing over it *post facto* aka reflective practice. In this study Makoto Matsuo, from Aoyama Gakuin University in Tokyo, examined the effects of “team reflexivity,” on employability and career satisfaction. Makoto Matsuo found that team reflexivity led to more proactive behaviour which, in turn, led to more “perceived employability,” and career satisfaction.

You can read the abstract of this article at

<https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-05-2024-0501>

# Recruitment and retention

## You’ve met the glass ceiling; say hello to the glass cliff

**Source:** Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology

**In a nutshell:** If breaking through the glass ceiling can lead to a headache and nasty splinters in the Quality Street spare a thought for the women faced with the glass cliff. This is defined as women being appointed to precarious positions, often taking over a department or organization at a difficult time. In this study Meir Shemla, from EBS University in Germany, led a team of researchers investigating this phenomenon. They found that while “gender quotas initially reduce the risk of women facing precarious leadership roles (the glass cliff), this effect may fade over time.” The researchers recommended that “organizations should clearly communicate the strategic reasons for appointing women to leadership roles, especially during tough times, to avoid perceptions of glass cliffs and support trust in leadership decisions.”

You can read the abstract of this article at

<https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12557>

## Could employers be facing a Black Death event?

**Source:** Personnel Today

**In a nutshell:** A new survey by “employee experience provider,” Culture Amp has found that nearly a quarter of workers in the UK plan to leave their jobs in 2025 – up 3% from in 2023 – and a further 13% do not see themselves working for their current employer beyond 2026. Culture Amp surveyed 1,000 organizations in the UK. Only Germany (24%) had a higher rate of potential departures than the UK – in excess of 19% in the US and 18% in Australia. Culture Amp estimated the cost of replacing an employee as 30% of an average worker’s salary, rising to 200% for top performers. However, “with a great manager and a great leader, employees’ commitment to stay is 94%; a good manager and a poor leader sees that commitment drop to 35%; while a poor manager and a poor leader reduces the commitment to just 19%.”

You can read the whole of this article at

<https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/attrition-rates-2025-uk-culture-amp/>

# Wellbeing

## When many work makes tired hands

**Source:** Journal of Nursing Management

**In a nutshell:** Whilst “the devil will find work for idle hands to do,” too much of it can leave you with RSI; perhaps the best approach is to cease typing at about half-past three and turn your thoughts to the warm-up exercises you might need to do before giving your digits a good work out with the remote control. In this study a team of researchers, led by Fadime Ulupinar, from Erzurum Technical University in Turkey, investigated tired hands in a sample of 34 emergency-service nurses before and after their shifts. The researchers found that after a shift there was a significant decline in the nurses’ manual dexterity, although not their handgrip and pinch strength. The nurses’ ratings of perceived exertion increased significantly after their shifts indicating “substantial perceived fatigue.” There were “significant relationships between increased physical exertion and changes in hand dexterity and strength, underscoring the physical demands placed on nurses during typical work shifts.”

You can read the abstract of this article at

<https://doi.org/10.1155/2024/8835383>

## Does work-life balance really make you happy?

**Source:** Journal of Happiness Studies

**In a nutshell:** In this study Noda Hideo, from Tokyo University of Science, compared work-life balance and levels of life satisfaction in a Europe-wide study. Hideo did find that work-life balance was related to life satisfaction and that this effect was actually stronger in men than in women.

You can read the abstract of this article at

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-019-00131-9>

## Sandwich carers struggle

**Source:** Personnel Today

**In a nutshell:** As people have children later in life and their parents live longer an increasing number find themselves looking after both children and elderly parents. “Sandwich carers,” don’t always have it easy and new figures from the Office for National Statistics lay bare the extent of their struggle. Almost one in six find it difficult to cope financially, and a high proportion are on low incomes. Those who spent more than 20 hours a week looking after people were more likely to struggle financially. A quarter of this group said they found it difficult to get by, and 17% said they had run out of food in the last 12 months because of a lack of money (compared to 8% of all sandwich carers). Around half (53%) of sandwich carers reported that they were unable to work at all or as much as they would like because of their caring responsibilities for someone they live with. Around four in 10 had an annual gross household income of £20,000 or less, compared with 32% of all adults. Those providing more hours of care had even lower incomes. Around three in 10 indicated some evidence of depression or anxiety compared with 24% of all adults. The ONS estimates that there are 1.4 million sandwich carers in the UK and that most (61%) of them are women.

You can read the whole of this article at

<https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/sandwich-carers-financial-ons/>

## All present, not correct

**Source:** Journal of Nursing Management

**In a nutshell:** In this study Wenzhen Li, from Henan University in China, led a team of researchers investigating presenteeism in a study of 256 nurse managers, and 1,424 of their subordinates. The researchers found that in the last six months 93.4% of the nurses had “experienced presenteeism.” Head nurses “cognitive preference towards presenteeism,” was positively associated with their subordinates’ presenteeism.

You can read the abstract of this article at

<https://doi.org/10.1155/2024/5522654>