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Innovation in the world of HR



By **Gordon McFarlane**,
PPMA President

In times of severe financial pressure and increased scrutiny of spending, is there space for innovation in HR/OD? It would be understandable if we just focused on keeping the lights on, juggling our short-term priorities. However, there's a view that we should be as innovative as possible around key workforce challenges beyond the inevitable firefighting that occupies much of our time, and that there are a number of strategic organisational benefits from doing so.

If we cast our minds briefly back to the pandemic, those in the HR/OD profession did some amazing things, were agile, innovative and solution seeking. How much of this have we captured and retained as our organisations have returned to business as usual?

We work in political organisations, we

are accountable for our spending, and there is sometimes the fear of failure, of incurring wasted expenditure, or of being constrained by the organisation's risk appetite. Whether you agree with the ethos of the South Cambridgeshire DC four day week pilot or not, their workforce innovation has rebounded on them in ways they could not have anticipated. Will this stifle future innovation? I sincerely hope not.

However, there are lots of opportunities to consider, including creating the right culture for true innovation, and adopting agile principles such as failing fast, learning lessons and adapting solutions.

As we modernise through technology and AI, we know that jobs will change, and many should become more interesting and enriched. We have an opportunity to drive lasting change for our workforces.

The world of hybrid working is still relatively new, and while it is bedding down, there are still opportunities to

evolve the working experience, combining workplaces and technology as tools.

Our focus on wellbeing and in particular mental health can create opportunities for innovation

The cost of living crisis has tested us all in terms of recruitment and retention, and again, there are opportunities (that some have taken) to modernise and demonstrate innovation around recruitment processes – moving away from traditional methods, and matching candidate expectations including their experiences in other sectors. There have been great examples of this, including approaches to induction, which have really paid off in terms of competitive advantage.

Our constant focus on wellbeing and in particular mental health can create opportunities for innovation. Our staff face many pressures, and bespoke wellbeing 'products' can help. For some, App based monitoring works, for others, it's about how we connect across the organisation so that we know what's happening.

In terms of workforce planning, Central Bedfordshire's Place Academy was an innovative but also sustainable response to a significant challenge relating the recruitment and retention of planners.

These are just a few areas where we either are now, or could in the future, innovate. There will be many more examples, and I would encourage you to share ideas via PPMA and other networks. The more we share ideas, demonstrate to others through case studies and story telling that things can work, the better positioned we all are.



INSIDE:



- **Q&A with Solace President Matt Prosser**
- **Reinventing your EVP**
- **Five top tips to attract new apprentices**





Jess Tordeur,
Payroll
Apprentice,
Basildon BC



I was studying paramedic sciences at university during Covid. After two years of remote learning, I took the brave decision to leave my university course early to look for a job. None of the career talks I had attended at school, college or university spoke about career opportunities in local government, but my mum had an apprentice on her team when she worked for a council and suggested I research apprenticeship opportunities in that sector.

Throughout the application process the hiring team gave me the strong impression that Basildon nurtures and supports its apprentices. That mattered to me having left university because I wasn't getting the support I needed, which had a negative impact on my mental health.

Following a successful application, I was hired as an apprentice in the payroll team, a function of HR services. I was offered an apprenticeship by several service lines but chose payroll because I felt the job would give me a real sense of purpose. I could see the positive impact getting pay right has on the lives of people who deliver critical services in my local community.

For the first six months, I spent four days a week with a member of the payroll team who taught me the Basildon-specific payroll. Friday was my apprenticeship course day. My course was all online, which I found challenging after my online learning experience during Covid.

A few months after I started, I was given my own set of work responsibilities and

Despite apprenticeships growing in popularity, councils are struggling to attract applicants. To help hiring teams shape their approach to attract apprentices, we asked two winners of the PPMA Apprentice of the Year to share what prompted them to apply for an apprenticeship, and how they have benefited personally and professionally

very much felt like another member of the team, owning my own area. And recently I successfully qualified as a payroll technician with the Chartered Institute of Payroll Professionals. A qualification equally valued by other public services and across the private sector.

What I love about an apprenticeship is, that rather than throwing you at the deep end to learn a role, the organisation makes a commitment to nurture and support you. Unlike university I learned workplace skills while gaining a qualification. Best of all I was paid while I learned rather than accumulating student debt.

I joined a cohort of apprentices and we have proved an invaluable support. We've learnt on one another for support and encouragement even though we are in different teams and had a ready-made group to socialise with.

Last year, my manager and HR director entered me for the PPMA Apprentice of the Year award (intermediate level). I'd encourage every council to nominate an apprentice from their own organisation because the application process had such a positive impact on my confidence and future career prospects.

Yes, the application process is rigorous and nerve-wracking, but it has been designed to support applicants' personal growth. I received coaching to help me

write and deliver several presentations to a judging panel, something I never had the courage to do before. The application process changed my outlook, boosting my self-confidence.

Winning the Apprentice of the Year has validated my career choice and self-belief that I am doing a good job. I've grown my network, which will be important for my future development. I'd say to any employer thinking about hiring an apprentice, they are some of most dedicated, hard working people who are driven to prove themselves and learn. Get the message out to schools, colleges, and universities about how the wide range of apprenticeship opportunities available in local government.

Apprenticeships for managers and leaders
Apprenticeships aren't just for young people leaving school or university. The higher levels 4-7 equate to a foundation degree and levels 6-7 to degree or masters. As the next case study shows, Councils use them to prepare staff for managerial and leadership positions.

Angela Jones,
Nursery
Manager,
Salford Family
Nurseries, Barton
Moss Nursery



Following 15 years working in local government I wanted to take my role, a job I love, to the next level. Mid-career, an apprenticeship appealed because it provided the opportunity to continue working and earning while learning on the job. I am extremely lucky and privileged that Salford City Council actively encourages and supports staff to develop our own learning.

In 2019 we restructured our nursery workforce to enable us to employ apprentices. As time progressed, I wanted to better support them to achieve their qualification. Although I understood the qualification, the assessment process was new to me. I completed an Assessors Coach apprenticeship, which supported me to become a qualified assessor. Today I balance managing a busy nursery with supporting and mentoring my apprentices.

An apprenticeship has given me a qualification, which could open different career paths, but more importantly to me, provides the opportunity to grow and develop my apprentices to achieve their own career goals. I have also developed empathy for anyone balancing life, a job, and an apprenticeship! An apprenticeship is hard work, and requires dedication and determination, however, these are all the qualities that employers want to see. If you can demonstrate these throughout



Apprentices

life, you will go far, and have the career that you dream of.

Winning the PPMA Apprentice of the Year (higher level) boosted my confidence and belief in my ability. I feel more equipped to face challenges and deal with them, without the fear of failure. 🌈



Reflecting on Jess and Angela's experiences, here are five tips for councils looking to attract apprentices

1. Work closely with schools, colleges, and universities to make them aware of the wide range of apprenticeship and career opportunities available to their students in local government.
2. Internally promote apprenticeships to upskill or retrain current employees and to prepare experience staff for manager and leadership positions.
3. Think carefully about your application process. Apprentices will use it to assess whether you offer a work culture they will thrive in.
4. Balancing study with work is hard, offer compassion and support and encourage apprentices to support one another.
5. Showcase your support for apprentices by entering the PPMA Apprentice of the Year award. More information can be found on their website www.ppma.org.uk/talent-programmes.

Q&A

Matt Prosser – Chief Executive Dorset Council and Solace President



I have been fortunate enough to enjoy a successful and varied career before commencing my current role at Dorset Council in 2018. I have spent time in the Royal Marines, commercial sector sales, and consultant and regional programme manager with the IDeA. I am proud to share that most of my career has been spent in local government which started out in a marketing department, before moving into a variety of senior leadership roles.

I have worked in the county of Dorset for more than a decade – initially in 2014 leading two councils – and in 2015 I had the privilege of being the first chief executive to have responsibility for three councils. In 2018, following a reorganisation of local government, I was appointed as chief of Dorset Council – one of two new unitary councils in the area.

Why did you become involved with Solace?

I have been involved with the Society for Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers for more than 20 years and initially was encouraged to engage with them by a chief executive I worked with who recognised the benefits networking with fellow professionals can have both on career development, as well as learning from the innovations taking place in other councils.

When I was working in Oxfordshire, I was fortunate to be asked to take on the role as branch chair, and from there quickly joined the National Policy Board initially leading on digital leadership before moving onto leadership and learning, and then finally being elected as President in 2022. I consider this as a great honour and highlight of my career.

Long before I became a chief executive, I enjoyed the good fortune of being guided and coached by a number of other chief executives who were very generous with their time and sharing the learning from their wealth of experience. This support and encouragement has played a key part in enabling me to achieve so much in my career and I am extremely grateful to them for the opportunities they afforded to me.

It is therefore important to me that I create time to give back to the next generation of public sector workers through mentoring and coaching relationships or ensuring we have resources to support our apprentices to maximise their talents across the council.

During my time as a Solace member I learned so much from outstanding chief executives such as Jo Miller, Jo Rooney, Martin Reeves and Mark Rogers – being part of this talented community, where leaders positively share and connect with each other, is so rewarding and meaningful.

There are two key outcomes I wish to achieve by the end of my presidency this year:

1. Solace membership continues to grow.
2. The range of development programmes supporting the development of current and future leaders are well embedded including the National Graduate programme, Amplify programme, Springboard, Total Leadership, and the Chief Executives Leadership programme.

What are the key challenges facing local government?

I believe there are three main challenges facing the sector in the coming years:

- Finance

Budgets continue to be challenged and as pressures grows as demand on critical services continues to rise and there is no easy answer to square this circle.

• Politics

We are facing a General Election this year, and whenever it occurs, the outcome will have a significant impact for us all as we continue to respond to the cost of living crisis and economic and policy uncertainty that an election can bring.

• People

Attracting the best people into local government continues to be a national challenge and it is very exciting that Solace and the Local Government Association have partnered to develop a pilot initiative aimed at promoting careers in local government to a wider cross section of the labour market. It is essential local government has a strong pipeline of skilled public servants and to help plug this gap, attracting people at the early stages of their career through the apprentice programme is key.

How do you see HR and organisational development Enabling you to deliver your ambitions?

The HR and OD functions are central to every local authority to maximise the talents of its workforce. I look to our HR function to:

- Provide real time data and insights to enable leaders to make informed decisions.
- Support the leadership team in shaping its strategic workforce strategy and plan – ensuring we have the right mix of workers to respond to the immediate and longer-term ambitions of the council.
- Ensure the council's terms and conditions are fit for purpose and we are recognised as a national employer of choice.
- Role model working practices that are fit for the future.
- Recruit, retain and develop best talent for the future.
- Equip our leaders with the right skills to be able to drive efficiency and productivity in an innovative way across all council services.

The recruitment challenge across local government can only be addressed by changing our approach and to this end in Dorset Council we have created a marketing team tasked with engaging with potential employees – marketing Dorset as a destination of choice and positively disrupting the way we approach recruitment both locally and nationally.

You have split the HR and OD functions in the council – why did you make this choice?

We have applied this model in a couple of areas in our support functions as we believe it enables our managers to understand the subtle difference in the services they offer – for example HR services are focused on the transactional activities whereas the OD function is supporting the change and transformation work across the council.

What does HR need to do differently to stay relevant to local government?

While it is important to ensure the day to day core activities of the HR function are delivered well, it is more important than ever for HR professionals to be aware of what is coming down the track – whether that be legislative, development in technology, financial challenges and be ready to facilitate the necessary organisational change that we require to succeed.

What skills have enabled you to succeed in your role as chief executive

Every leader must be able to create and passionately communicate a compelling vision for the future – setting clear direction with realistic optimism. This is a real skill that we all must continue to work on and improve. An area that many leaders and managers struggle with is giving and receiving feedback – both positive and respectfully challenging – again, this is always work in progress but so essential if we are to continue to improve.

A chief executive can achieve nothing alone and having the skill and creating the time to build and develop positive working relationships and networking is so important. This is where professional associations such as Solace and the PPMA are so critical. 🌈

Make wellbeing your priority!



By Marie Mettam,
Strategic HR Business
Partner, Lincolnshire CC

As a Strategic HR Business Partner, and having worked in the public sector for many years, I have seen first hand how important it is for councils to prioritise the wellbeing of their employees. This is especially true during times of economic hardship, such as a cost of living crisis.

When employees feel supported and valued, they are more likely to be productive and engaged in their work. However, when employees are struggling to make ends meet or are dealing with other personal issues, it can be difficult for them to focus on their work.

One way that we can support employee wellbeing is by offering flexible working arrangements. This can include options such as hybrid working, flexible hours, or job sharing. By giving employees more control over their work schedule, they are better able to balance their work and personal responsibilities. This can

lead to reduced stress and improved mental health and can ultimately result in better outcomes for councils and the communities we serve.

Another way we can provide support is by offering access to mental health services. This can include mental health first aiders, counselling, mindfulness, resilience workshops or therapy. At Lincolnshire CC we have an excellent in-house employee counselling team and also work closely with our colleagues in the local mental health NHS Trust to ensure our employees can get direct support from the most appropriate place when it's needed. When employees are dealing with personal issues such as anxiety or depression, it can be difficult for them to feel they can be fully present at work. By providing access to mental health services we can help employees get the support they need to manage their mental health and be their best selves at work.

During times of economic hardship employers can help in various ways. Providing things like low-interest loans

through local credit unions, money management workshops or signposting to sources of financial assistance can all be hugely helpful for employees.

By prioritising the wellbeing of our employees we can improve productivity, reduce stress, and create a more engaged and motivated workforce

At Lincolnshire we aim to provide the best possible support to our employees as we, like most councils, want to ensure we are a supportive and compassionate employer. Not only does this help our employees, it also helps us as an organisation to provide the best possible services to our communities.

Our HR and public health-led health and wellbeing team consists of employees from right across the council to ensure

richness of input. We work proactively to ensure our workforce knows about all the support we can give them and how to access it. We regularly review what is most valued and has most impact to ensure our wellbeing offer remains current, supportive and relevant. We use organisational data and analysis to inform us and work with partner organisations including our local NHS trusts and ICB to deliver cost effective and professional solutions to public sector employees in the county helping us to ensure our workforce feels valued and looked after.

The importance of local government focusing on employee wellbeing cannot be overstated. By prioritising the wellbeing of our employees we can improve productivity, reduce stress, and create a more engaged and motivated workforce. It is also, quite simply, the right thing to do. People say they don't always remember the details of the jobs they've done in the past, but they do remember the way an organisation has made them feel, particularly in times of difficulty and stress. 🌈

The next steps to digital success



By Richard Twelvetrees,
Experience and Value Enablement
Director, de Novo Solutions

The New Year Q1 period presents an ideal opportunity for local government public sector organisations to take stock on their own digital transformation journey – reviewing 'delivery against ambition' – and (like a person's New Year's resolution after reflecting upon the

prior 365 days) asking the question of 'what is next for me?'

A team of your internal experts combining their service delivery experience is always best placed to look both backward and forward on any given operational challenge. To this end de Novo Solutions introduces the Digital Vision Roundtable (DVR) experience.

Using a set of pragmatic lenses we explore and facilitate 'what if' outcomes focused on using Oracle

Cloud technology. DVR uses a swift, low cost, low fidelity approach and is a proven way to inspire and improve communication delivering improved operational outcomes.

Collaboration and employee engagement aids both decision quality and adoption buy-in while encouraging divergent thinking behaviours.

The Forbes article *The Value of Human Connection in Shaping Business Success* features a study by emborder.com – which identified '94% of employees agreed that they're more productive when they feel connected to their colleagues, and employees who felt connected were more than four times as likely to say that they were very satisfied with their jobs and half as likely to leave within the next 12 months'.

With the total cost of resourcing and onboarding ever increasing, 94% is thought provoking. Recent headlines in the public sector have also publicised the risk and impact of a 'challenging digital transformation' – time creep, overspend, and over customisation can occur, a DVR experience day will help mitigate risk, simplify, bring transparency, and increase control.

Introducing de Novo Solutions' experience theatre: Digital Vision Roundtable

- DVR comes to your office, and is a three-step intensive configurable workshop style process for two groups of five completed over the course of a day
- DVR aligns your people and your process with standard out-of-the-box Oracle Cloud capabilities
- DVR explores value and plots a journey against four value dimensions (as used in our Value as a Service offering).

With DVR your organisation stakeholders will bring their take on the 'vision', discussing what value and experience means from their perspective. Ultimately DVR helps dynamically re-invigorate where inertia

Digital Vision Roundtable
2024 - is your organisation planning to stick, twist or?
ORACLE Partner



exists and assist with re-thinking workflows while re-imagining experiences with standard Oracle Cloud capabilities.

DVR is fully facilitated, with no complex software or delegate pre-requisites required. The experience is designed to stimulate the initial conversation among peers. DVR outcomes are designed to inspire additional internal dialogue, even supporting items such as an internal business case.

Today more than ever we can all recognise the challenges in setting aside time to pause and think constructively, be that as an individual or group. In addition, post pandemic, there is also the complexity of unifying virtual workers and/or face to face workers, inspiring collaboration and supporting inclusion initiatives. It is easy to see how precious thinking time becomes too hard to arrange and the likelihood for 'stick, bust or fold' decisioning increases as inevitably other work pressures kick in.

When considering your DVR event attendees, a

diverse group is best. Perhaps including a blend of colleagues, leaders, business partners, suppliers, and end-customers (line managers, residents, citizens, directors). This blend of personalities, roles and perspectives will often make for a more interesting day. de Novo will bring experts along to help guide the conversation, sharing ideas and knowledge related to Oracle Cloud supporting the table discussions.

DVR takes a day to complete (consumed in a one-day event or broken up into multiple sessions) and results in a meaningful action plan being formed to address a contextualised organisational challenge related to Oracle Cloud.

DVR event attendees will leave with reusable skills and a selection of artefacts including 'what if' video soundbites, enabling the ideas generated to be cascaded for additional internal feedback and action.

The DVR assets your organisation generates will get your people talking about your processes leveraging standard Oracle Cloud out-of-the-box capabilities to

deliver an engaging, modern and tailored experience moving forward.

What next?

Don't stick, bust or fold. Make sure you do something else and twist. To arrange your DVR please visit www.de-novo-solutions.com, follow us on LinkedIn, X / Twitter or feel free to send an email to: contactdenovo@de-novo-solutions.com

So, who are de Novo Solutions?

We are an organisation led by experts and innovators, bringing a wealth of public sector knowledge to an engagement. Our pedigree of proven projects is based upon a partnership mindset – a trusted relationship with the joint goal of maximising a client's Oracle Cloud and ServiceNow technology investment. We partner with our clients to secure:

- Delivery excellence (ensuring our projects, people and services are fully enabled to be the best they can be)
- Experience economy (ensuring our services deliver a human-centred experience, leveraging the latest technology innovations, alongside business value).

And, how are de Novo Solutions different to other partners?

- Our industry focused specialism (Odyssey) with Oracle Cloud spans central and local government sectors alongside multi-academy trusts (education) and health
- Our proven expert Oracle Cloud knowledge in finance, planning, HR, payroll, talent acquisition, talent management and digital transformation services alongside specialist business support and managed services (Value as a Service)
- Our unique focus on the combination of Oracle Cloud and ServiceNow technology platforms along with our award-winning approach to cloud digital innovation.

We are located in Langstone, Newport, Wales (HQ) and Guildford, Surrey. ●●●●●





AI – what’s in it for me?

By **Mark Lumley**,
Director, Digital,
IT and Resilience
– Hounslow LBC



So what is this Artificial Intelligence (AI) thing really all about then? You will have seen lots about it in the press and may have even used it in your personal life. It certainly is not something of the future, it is here and now.

AI has been around for decades in various forms but is now in the hands of all of us through simple natural language inputs via website, which then generates content – ‘generative AI’.

It really has the potential to (and will) revolutionise how local government provides services. But to borrow the phrase from Spider-man: ‘With great power comes great responsibility.’

One of the uses of AI is to quickly analyse and interpret the vast amount of data that local authorities hold. This can then enable councils to be more proactive and preventative in the decision-making process.

The main use of AI now is a tool in the toolbox that local authority officers have. We should start using systems like ChatGPT or CoPilot (many others are available) now. Whether that is to assist with report writing or creating job descriptions. AI is a great tool to support officers in their day to day tasks.

But we have to be responsible, we have to consider that AI does suffer from hallucinations, essentially making up information, and we have to be even more mindful of any bias that it may introduce in it’s answers. The one major thing to be aware of is not to share any personal information in ChatGPT as this then puts it in the public domain. At Hounslow we have provided some guidance to staff in the use of AI.

For more information take a look at the research and the annual Socitm *Digital Trends* report that includes a wealth of information on AI – at <https://socitm.net/resource-hub/collections/public-sector-digital-trends-2024/>

Be bold, be inquisitive, but be mindful of the results. Have a go! 🌈

Gratitude at work

How gratitude journaling delivered using new forms influences positive well-being



By **Tejas Voralia**,
Founder and Director
of Mindfulness
Coaching

Research shows that 82% of UK office workers believe their employers should support their health and wellbeing^[1]. Despite spending millions on employee wellbeing programs, the estimated cost of poor mental health in the UK has increased by 25% since 2019, reaching an annual total of £53-56bn in 2020-21^[2].

What if there was an easy, affordable, and effective way to improve our work experience? Well there is – introducing ‘work-related gratitude’, a simple tool that can bring about a transformational change. This article will delve into a recent

study examining the positive wellbeing outcomes from a work-related gratitude journaling intervention delivered via an app over ten consecutive workdays.

What is work-related gratitude?

Work-related gratitude is ‘the intentional choice to engage in positive appraisals and feelings of thankfulness and appreciation toward the characteristics, situations, and people currently present in one’s context^[3] and encompasses:

- Grateful appraisals (positive, cognitive appraisals of work characteristics and situations)
- Gratitude toward others (social appreciation toward the contribution of others)
- Adopting an Intentional attitude of gratitude (purposefully enumerating,





enjoying, and being mindful of positive aspects of work).

How do you implement work-related gratitude?

Gratitude journaling is a commonly studied intervention that can be easily practised and incorporated into one's life, which enhances wellbeing^[4]. The simplest

form is the 'Three Good Things' exercise, where participants write down three things that went well that day, every night and their causes over a specific period. The effect depends on the participants' approach, as they need effort, motivation, and an effective intervention tool. The smartphone app is easily accessible, always available, and cost-effective, and it

is the most common health and wellbeing tool used in the UK workforce^[5].

What were the study outcomes?

Twenty-three people participated and were measured for their gratitude and wellbeing levels at pre-, post-, and two-week follow-up intervals. The participants came from diverse industries and countries, were

over-18, worked at least 20 hours per week, and interacted with organisational members. The results showed:

- A slight increase in grateful appraisals
- A slight increase in the intentional attitude of gratitude
- No change in gratitude toward others, possibly due to the study's limited duration and not accounting for workplace problems such as mistreatment
- A slight reduction in anxiety and depression
- A significant increase in enthusiasm and comfort
- A positive response to the intervention delivered by the app

What can organisations do?

By utilising the latest delivery methods, gratitude interventions can assist organisations in recognising and addressing issues related to employee well-being and organisational outcomes. This approach facilitates the proactive promotion of work gratitude, bridging the gap between employees' expressed and desired levels^[6]. Organisations can then adopt a preventative approach to address complete mental health, and one effective strategy is to support employees in developing high levels of gratitude. 🌈

References:

- [1] Deloitte (2022)
- [2] Vitality (2022)
- [3] Youssef-Morgan, van Zyl, and Ahrens (2022)
- [4] Jans-Beken, Jacobs, Janssens, Peeters, Reijnders, Lechner, and Lataster (2019)
- [5] Deloitte (2022)
- [6] Fehr, Zheng, Guo, Song, and Ni (2020)

Reinventing Your EVP: the secret to driving productivity and performance

By **Robert Peasnell**,
Head of Growth, TMP
Worldwide



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Heads of HR are facing a tough balancing act. Employees want flexibility, growth and belonging. Chief executives, members and politicians want improved resident experiences, innovation and productivity. How can you satisfy both without compromising?

One lever is to evolve your employee value proposition (EVP) into a more dynamic, human-centric personal value proposition (PVP).

Increasingly people are looking for more choice and personalisation in life. And employees (especially younger workers) now expect more from employers when it comes to meaningful work, development opportunities, work-life balance and flexibility.

Yet despite these changes, many organisations are still relying on the same transactional EVPs focused on a non-specific 'delivering positive outcomes', leading to low engagement levels and limited market differentiation.

Think of the PVP like a craft burger joint versus a fast-food chain

The productivity vacuum

According to research from Deloitte, one third of new hires begin looking for a new job within the first six months. And it takes approximately eight months for an employee to reach their full productivity.

So, if a third of employees leave their job before they've become fully productive, organisations continually experience a productivity vacuum that not only disrupts continuity and knowledge transfer but impedes innovation and business performance.

Introducing the PVP

We're seeing forward-thinking employers across the UK shifting from a generic EVP to a more personalised, human-centric strategy. The PVP is based on segmenting your employees and nuancing the EVP to address the diverse needs and aspirations of different groups of your workforce.

Think of the PVP like a craft burger joint versus a fast-food chain. You select each ingredient to suit your preferences – grilled chicken or beef, sliced avocado instead of cheese, hold the pickle – creating your perfect meal. Similarly, organisations embracing a PVP approach offer adjust their offer to highlight the aspects of greatest value to different groups.

The result? A 18% increase in productivity, according to Gallup.

Intrigued to learn more? Feel free to contact me for a copy of our new ebook *The Human Advantage: Redefining EVP to Fuel Organisational Performance*. 🌈



Hounslow LBC and Yes Futures' World of Work Days have seen positive responses from all participants

How OD can deliver social value

By **Steve Walker-Whitehead**, Director of HR and OD at Hounslow LBC and PPMA Vice President



People and organisational development teams across the public sector have long had a significant contribution to make in developing social value – and the broader corporate social responsibility agenda – across the communities that they serve. Often referred to as the conscience at the heart of the organisation, these services and the professionals within them are of course the guardians of ethics and integrity, and have a clear role in the development of their organisation's values and culture.

In recent years, the most progressive organisations have considered more imaginative and ambitious ways of securing social value, beyond ensuring that the experience of work is a happy one, and one that promotes wellness. As well as keeping a close eye on whether commissioned partners meet contractual obligations in relation to social value delivery and excellent employment practice, first class organisations ensure that – together with climate and equality goals – social value is integrated across performance and development management processes, so everyone understands what their unique contribution towards the creation of this looks like.

And these organisations will typically enable their people to engage in community-based volunteering – as a demonstration of good corporate citizenship – really seriously. This at once increases social value in a public service context, but equally provides one of the richest learning experiences available – and one which enables our people to really flourish.

One of our corporate ambitions at Hounslow LBC is, as you'd expect, that we want to see and experience a place that thrives. So, from September 2022, the charity Yes Futures and the OD team at the council have collaborated to deliver the Rising Futures Programme, which now benefits hundreds of students, many from our most unequal neighbourhoods. The intention of the programme is to empower young people to develop the skills they need to build secure, happy and fulfilling lives, and equally to develop our own people in a really powerful way.

Employees across a range of diverse professions (in a hierarchy agnostic way) have participated in a development programme that has enabled them to deliver intensive coaching and support to Hounslow's young people, deliver World of Work days at Hounslow House (our main offices), arrange two 'play your part' days at Bedfont Lakes Country Park, and lead a number of outdoor education residential weekends.

100% of Hounslow colleagues agreed they had the opportunity to thrive in a volunteering role with a high degree of responsibility

And the impact has been incredible – 88% of the young people that participated (and an impressive 100% of those from disadvantaged backgrounds) have demonstrated a measurable improvement in at least one of the Yes Futures four soft-skill areas: confidence, resilience, communication and self-awareness.

And 100% of Hounslow colleagues agreed they had the opportunity to thrive in a volunteering role with a high degree of responsibility; felt the training had prepared them for the role; felt

supported by Yes Futures, their line manager and the OD team; saw a positive change in the students as they progressed through the programme; and said they have developed as a result of volunteering on the Rising Futures

Programme. The programme has delivered beyond expectations, not least in building social value for our residents. Above all, it has shown that when we're ambitious for young people, we're ambitious for Hounslow. 🌈

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