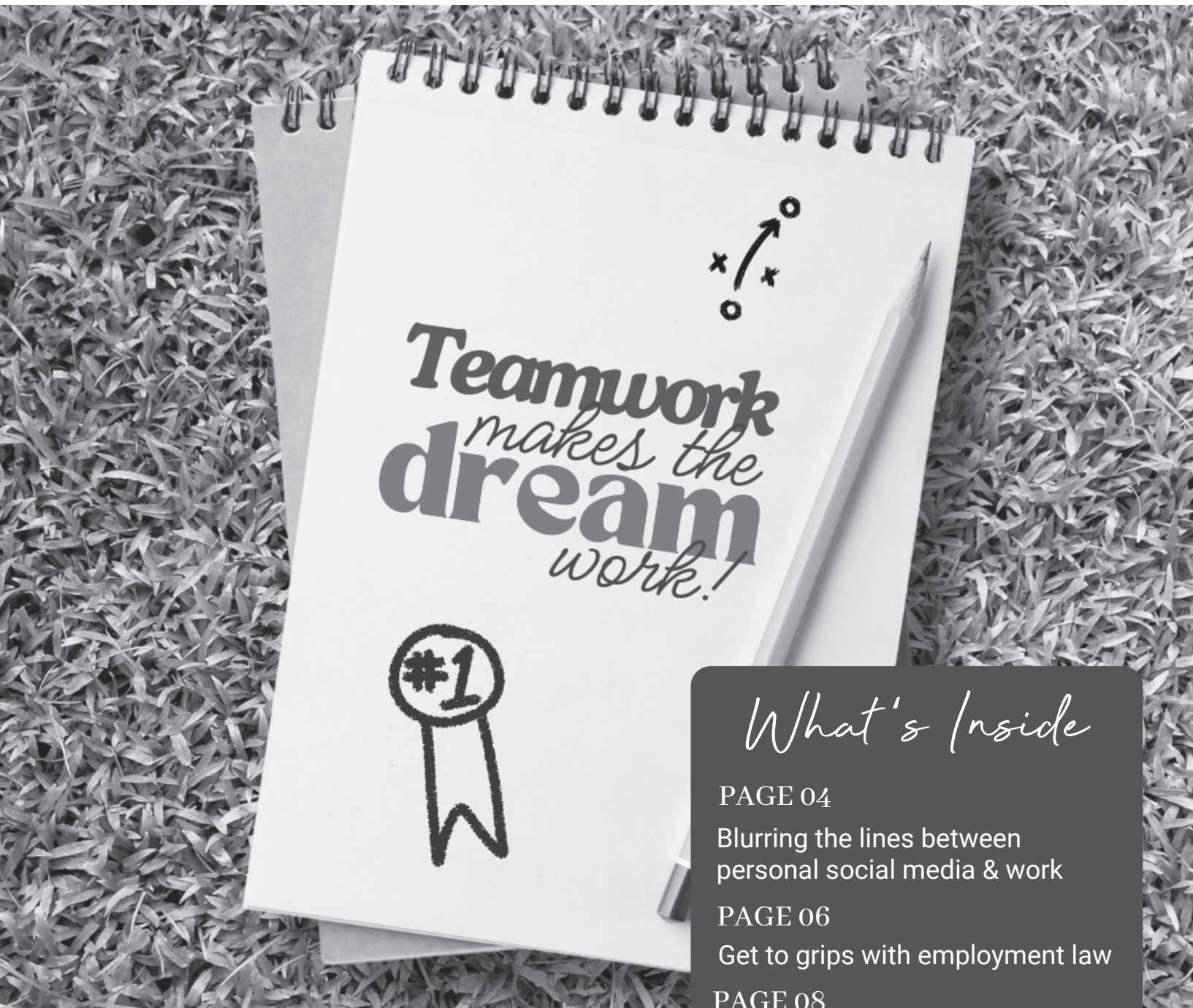


Your Business Brief

ISSUE 13 | JULY 2024



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Unlocking Your Business Potential

WELCOME to the latest issue... Enjoy!

What a summer 2024 is shaping up to be with lots happening recently. We were inspired by the Euros and the England squad, so this issue is about the importance of teamwork and ensuring your team shares your business goals.

In this edition, we delve into the power of teams. Whether you're leading a startup, managing a department, or steering a multinational corporation, aligning your team around a common vision is crucial for success.

We also hear from a wonderful team at Claire House, a charity who do incredible things for children in our local area. The team at Costelloes EV are also doing their bit for charity which you can read about and perhaps it will inspire your team to undertake a charitable challenge!

Would you like to feature next time? Send us your story by 15th September to feature in our next issue or to get in touch. Call us on 01829 770895 or email hello@chesterhandbooks.co.uk.

The Chester Handbooks Team 😊

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Recommended Business Book of the Quarter

The 6 Cs of Healthy Teams

Building Teamwork Beyond Command and Control by James Culver Jr

In "The 6 Cs of Healthy Teams: Building Teamwork Beyond Command and Control," James Culver Jr. offers an enlightening guide to modern team dynamics and leadership. Culver's book transcends the conventional command-and-control management style, presenting a more human-centric approach to fostering teamwork and collaboration within organisations. His six foundational elements - Communication, Collaboration, Commitment, Compassion, Conflict Resolution, and Celebration - serve as the pillars for cultivating healthy and effective teams.

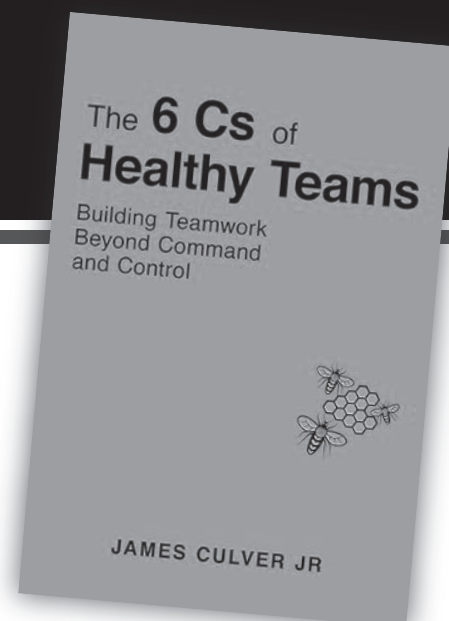
Culver's writing is both practical and inspiring, making it accessible to leaders at all levels. He uses real-world examples and provides actionable strategies that can be immediately implemented to enhance team cohesion and performance. The emphasis on emotional intelligence and mutual respect is particularly pertinent in today's increasingly diverse and fast-paced work environments.

By focusing on these core principles, Culver

illustrates how teams can achieve greater productivity, innovation, and job satisfaction.

Communication is identified as the bedrock of successful teams, ensuring that all members feel heard and understood. Collaboration fosters a sense of partnership and shared responsibility, while Commitment highlights the necessity of dedication to both team and organisational goals. Compassion is vital for building trust and morale, and effective Conflict Resolution ensures that disagreements are handled constructively. Finally, Celebration acknowledges and rewards achievements, reinforcing positive behaviours and outcomes.

"The 6 Cs of Healthy Teams" stands out for its comprehensive and well-structured approach to team building. Culver's insights are invaluable for leaders seeking to create a cohesive, motivated, and resilient team that thrives beyond traditional management paradigms.



According to Gallup, 3 out of 5 people have been disengaged at work since 2015. If you want to find out why, and what to do about it, this book is for you!

Price **£14.99** (www.amazon.co.uk)

5 WINNING WAYS TO AVOID OFFICE POLITICS

Office politics occur in most workplaces whatever the nature of the industry. When employees spend hours per day together and are aiming for the same promotions and raises, competition is inevitable.

Some people claim office politics are an essential part of the workplace, but others see it as a needless and potentially lethal part of office culture that kills morale and strains relationships.

So, what can you do to prevent your career and personal life from being damaged by office politics and gossip?

Communicate with your boss

Are you hoping to land a raise or promotion? Don't let your boss find out about it through the grapevine. Most managers are busy - they want problem-solvers. You can make a decision easier for your boss by letting him/her know you're interested in advancing. Your boss might also give you tips for improvement or steps you need to take to get promoted.

Don't gossip

Gossip is the easiest way to get in trouble or look immature. Nothing says "I'm not ready for a promotion" as much as trash talk. While it's okay to socialise, you should know this by now: everything you say will come back to get you, especially when someone else can benefit from it.

Don't vent at work

While it can help to have a support network at work, too much complaining will leave a negative impression, especially if you complain about work.

If you feel like you're being treated unfairly or if you find a work-related issue, bring it up with your boss. The best way to get recognition for your efforts is to ask for it.

Be respectful towards other employees and their ideas

This doesn't mean you should just go along with everything everyone else says, but it does mean that you should give them the courtesy of listening to what they have to say without interrupting or dismissing them outright. You may find that some of their ideas are actually better than yours!

By taking in everyone's ideas and listening to people completely, not only makes them feel valued, but it can also lead to the generation of even better ideas and productivity.

Be a team player

This may seem obvious, but if you want to avoid office politics at work, then it is important to remember that you are part of a team. It is easy to forget this when you are trying to do your best at every task given to you by your boss or co-workers but remember - you should always try to help other members of your team whenever possible.

If someone asks for help, give it! If another member needs assistance with something that would benefit everyone, offer up your time and effort!

Blurring the lines between personal social media & work

Back in March of this year a Judge ruled unfair dismissal for a woman who was dismissed after she shared a social media meme mocking management styles.

The tribunal heard that Claire Smith was dismissed by her employer after she reposted a meme on her Facebook account that made fun of management styles and workplace cultures. But the tribunal ruled that simply sharing the post was not enough to warrant being dismissed, as:

"it was difficult to say whether anybody looking at this meme would link it directly to the claimant's working environment".

However, Judge Steward found that the Facebook post merited a discussion with Smith and possibly some action, such as a warning or a reminder of the importance of social media and internet policies, so nothing similar happened again.

The case highlighted just how prominent social media is in our lives with millennials now making up the majority of workforces and Smith was certainly not unusual in venting online about her frustrations at work.

So, what's the best approach for employers dealing with phones in the office and more importantly the office politics making its way online for the world to see?

Andrew Brown, employment partner at Anderson Strathern, advice is:

"The key message for HR in this case is to ensure that social media policies are clear and specific, that staff receive training on those policies, and that managers do not overreact."

Increasingly people are now making their social media profiles private so access is limited to content but a general rule of thumb is if you wouldn't say it out loud in public then don't put it online!

Keep your venting in the family WhatsApp group instead...



DEALING WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIOURS AT WORK

Not everyone is a team player and unfortunately we all know, or have known, someone who can be a challenge to deal with in the workplace. Sometimes they're seen as negative, disruptive and argumentative and these traits can be frustrating for other members of the team to deal with.

As an employer it's vital to employ tactics to deal with difficult coworkers which is seen as positive by the rest of the team and so their behaviour doesn't derail the positive workplace attitude you've worked hard to achieve.



LISTEN

Everyone wants to be heard and acknowledged. Try not to interrupt and be patient to truly hear where the other person is coming from.

Don't think about what you're going to say next.

REMAIN CALM

Breathing helps with managing an overly emotional response in tense situations.

SEARCH FOR THE HIDDEN NEED

Difficult behaviour is usually a coverup for an unmet need. Try to find out the deeper reason behind someone's obnoxious actions.

DON'T DOWNPLAY THEIR FEELINGS

Expressions such as "calm down" and "it's nothing" are unhelpful and can worsen the difficult situation.

ASK QUESTIONS

Instead of evaluating and judging the situation, be curious to learn more.

BE FLEXIBLE

Keep an open mind to develop a different approach for every situation.

DON'T RECIPROCATE NEGATIVE BEHAVIOURS

Easier said than done but try to keep away from reacting with anger to an angry person.

Don't mock or act with contempt. Show respect, calmness and dignity.

CREATE SPACE

Avoid knee-jerk reactions. Space between yourself and the other person is a safe container to respond to it.

A response is an emotionally mature behaviour. A reaction is a stress-driven behaviour.

DON'T BE DEFENSIVE

Taking criticism with a grain of salt is easier when you dissociate the person and the behaviour.

Don't take criticism personally. Instead, try to understand it as coming out from the other person's perspective.

TALK IT OVER WITH SOMEONE ELSE

After a challenging work clash, take some time to discuss what happened with a person you trust.

Sharing impartially is a chance to calm down and tackle the challenge with a cool head.

Business owners: Get to grips with employment law!

If you own a business, chances are you employ people. If so, it is essential to get to grips with employment law.

Employment law refers to the body of legislation and other laws which regulate the relationship between you and your employees. Contracts of employment, the statutory rights of employees, health and safety and protection from discrimination are just some of the topics covered by this complex but vitally important area of law.

The consequences of getting things wrong in this space can be devastating for both you and your staff. From six-figure Employment Tribunal awards and increased admin costs to higher staff turnover, lower staff morale, and immeasurable reputational damage to your product or service.

Dealing with this technical area of law can be a minefield. Unless you are lucky enough to have an in-house HR or employment law specialist, you will probably need external professional support to help you ensure compliance. Because of this, small to medium size businesses often choose to employ employment solicitors to ensure that their paperwork and the way they deal with staffing issues are both legally watertight.

Here are just some of the bare essentials of employment law every business owner needs to know:

1. Be aware of your employees' statutory rights, including the right to:

- A written contract of employment; pay which is at least national minimum wage level (£11.44 per hour for employees aged 21 or over, as at April 2024);
- Written itemised payslips including details of gross salary, deductions and net pay
- Enrol on a workplace pension scheme if 22 years old or over, under state pension age and earning £10,000 or more
- Statutory sick pay from the fourth consecutive day of sickness absence
- 5.6 weeks paid holidays every year (28 days for full time employees, and number of days reduced pro-rata for part-time, irregular hours or part-year employees)



Geraint Edwards

**My Local
Solicitor**



2. You owe your employees a duty of care to ensure their health and safety at work. In practice, this means, where applicable, having a written health and safety policy, carrying out a thorough risk assessment and having in place a paper-trail system for recording work-related accidents and injuries.

3. You should have guidelines in place to ensure fairness and consistency at work. Have written policies and procedures in place for dismissal, disciplinary, redundancy, capability, whistleblowing and grievance situations.

4. Do not unlawfully discriminate. It is illegal to directly discriminate, i.e. treat someone less favourably because of their race/ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, disability, religion or philosophical belief, marital or civil partnership status, or for pregnancy, maternity or parental responsibility. If you impose a requirement that indirectly places people of a certain group at a disadvantage, ask yourself whether that requirement is justified in the circumstances.

My Local Solicitor can help your business stay on the right track with employment law issues every step of the way. Whether it is advice on recruitment, drafting contracts of employment, drafting internal policies, handling workplace disputes, equalities, terminating employment or handling Employment Tribunal claims, we have you covered.

Our team of solicitors provide bespoke, cost-effective legal advice to help you identify your legal requirements and grow your business the safe and legal way.

To book a free initial consultation, call us on **01244 478730**.

mls my local solicitor®

This article is for information purposes only and legal advice should be taken for individual circumstances.

TEAMWORK MATTERS

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Discover the reasons that teamwork makes a positive difference as you work out the solutions to this fun crossword puzzle.

ACROSS

1. It's good to know a helping _____ is always in reach.

4. _____ we stand, divided we fall.

6. A good team player works _____ with others.
9. Shared enthusiasm energizes _____ on the team.

10. Two (or more) _____ are better than one.

13. There is no "I" in _____ .

14. There is _____ in numbers.

DOWN

2. Together everyone _____ more.

3. Teamwork _____ the hands and halves the work.
5. The total is _____ than the sum of its parts.

7. Complete the rhyme:
Teamwork makes the _____ work.

8. Teamwork makes the impossible _____ .

11. None of us is as smart as _____ of us together.

12. Complete the rhyme:
Teamwork is less me and more _____ .



Positive impact on employee wellbeing with away days

Never before have employers been so aware of the effects of their employees' wellbeing and how it can impact productivity and ultimately a happier more efficient work force.

Clearly since COVID there are more people working from home than there were in the pre-pandemic world, but employers are also seeing the benefits of bringing their staff together with away days.

Team away days often involve outdoor activities, sports or mindfulness exercises that promote physical and mental wellbeing.

According to HR solutions software company CIPHR, one-in-14 UK adults feel stressed every single day, while 23% of adults say that work causes them stress.

By engaging in the mental and physical challenges typically experienced on team away days, employees can help reduce their stress levels, and potentially discover something new that they enjoy doing.

When employees feel that their employer cares about their wellbeing, encouraging a positive work-life balance along the way, they are more likely to remain loyal to the company.

Reduced stress levels and a healthier work-life balance can also contribute to higher job satisfaction, lower turnover rates, and increased productivity throughout the workforce.

Most people look forward to company away days because it's a chance to let loose and break away from the confines of the office. It allows them to let their hair down and be a bit more of the person they are away from the office.

Simply being away from the office for a day can boost spirits and morale.

Hosting a corporate away day can also be a way to let your employees know you appreciate them. If you never reward them with anything or let them know they're doing a good job, they may feel undervalued or unappreciated.

They're also a good way to break the tension if you're having issues in your office or you've had a lot of stress surrounding a particular project. It allows everyone to finally breathe.

In some cases, corporate away days can even help you fix dynamic issues in your office. You can work together to solve some of the problems that create a negative environment and turn it into something positive.

When you schedule a company away day, you actually need to get away from your work. This means don't schedule an "away day" that takes place in your office but takes a break from your regular activities. That doesn't really allow your workers to have a mental delineation between work and the activities you're doing.

Many locations offer specific events catered to corporates or away days. You can centre it around an activity or an actual place, like a location that hosts retreats.

This can also push employees out of their comfort zones, which is a great way to help them adapt and build further skills.

You may even want to include an overnight getaway for your employees. For some, this may be a little bit uncomfortable, but it will force you to bond outside the norms of the office.

You don't need to confine your away days to just your group. To bring an extra element, include advice or talks from someone who doesn't work at your office.

This allows you, as well as your colleagues, to get a fresh perspective and some new ideas. It also can allow your team to consider things that may work well with your office that they may not have thought of before!



WHEN YOU WIN, CLAIRE HOUSE WINS!

Ex-Emmerdale star Samantha Giles on supporting Claire House Children's Hospice

"We've all dreamed about winning the lottery," says actress Samantha Giles. "And the Claire House lottery is a fun way that people can support seriously ill children."

"It's not just about winning, it's also about raising money and helping people, which is key."

Samantha, who played Bernice Blackstock in the ITV soap, recently starred in *The Syndicate*, a touring stage show about lottery winners, at the Floral Pavilion in New Brighton.

And given the lottery theme, Samantha was keen to chat about the Claire House lottery, which is vital to helping seriously and terminally ill children and their families.

She says: "I'm sure many people are in lottery syndicates. With the Claire House lottery, the more people that do it, the more people Claire House can help."



"It's a relatively small amount of money for people to find [£1 per week] but it can make a big difference to others. And it's a lot of money to win [whether it's £1,000 or £10,000]."

Having won money for the charity on TV game show, *Big Star's Little Star* in 2016, Samantha knows the difference Claire House makes to families – something that resonates as a mum and children's author.

She says: "We had a look around Claire House and it's an amazing place. It does lots of things for children and their families, offering respite care as well as helping children and young people at the end of life."

PLAY THE CLAIRE HOUSE LOTTERY

£1 A WEEK
TO PLAY

For your chance to win up to £10k, and support your local children's hospice like Samantha, join today.

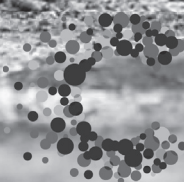
Simply scan the QR code, visit lottery.clairehouse.org.uk or call the Claire House lottery line on 0370 300 1200 to join today.



Claire House
CHILDREN'S HOSPICE

GambleAware 18+

Please see our website for full T&Cs at clairehouse.org.uk • Registered Charity No.1004058 Company No. 2620240



CANCER
RESEARCH
UK

COSTELLOES EV TEAM PUT THEIR BEST STEP FORWARD FOR CHARITY

The whole team at Costelloes EV faced a grueling 80+ mile walk along Hadrian's Wall at the beginning of July and all for Cancer Research UK.

Vickie Costelloe, Director of Costelloes EV said *"For a while now, I wanted to do something challenging for Cancer Research UK and to give back to all those people who work every day to find the next breakthrough in cancer trials – hoping that one day they will find that cure for this devastating disease that affects so many every day."*

"As a team each one of the Costelloe team have had a loved one, a family member or a dear friend go through this awful disease. We have witnessed their strength, courage and bravery in their most difficult of times."

"This challenge was nothing compared to what many people face every day."

You can still donate to the team's efforts by scanning the QR code.



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Graphic Designer
Emily Peters

How to nurture teamwork in the office



It's estimated that we spend an average of 90,000 hours at work in a lifetime with some of us feeling like we spend more time with colleagues than our family!

Because of the amount of time we spend working together it's vital to have as good a team as possible in place and nurture the relationships in a way that's positive for the business.

Here's the Chester Handbooks top tips for the best strategies to achieve the business's goals and leaves no one feeling like they've been left on the bench.

Set Clear Goals and Objectives

Ensure that all team members understand the team's goals and their individual roles and regularly communicate these goals and track progress.

Promote Open Communication

Encourage team members to share ideas, feedback and concerns openly. Use various communication channels, such as team meetings, emails and collaborative tools.

Build Trust

Foster a culture of trust by being reliable, honest and transparent. Encourage team members to trust each other by promoting integrity and accountability.

Encourage Collaboration

Create opportunities for team members to work together on projects and tasks.

Use collaborative tools and technologies to facilitate teamwork.

Recognise and Reward Team Efforts

Acknowledge and celebrate team achievements and milestones. Provide incentives and rewards for collaborative efforts and successful teamwork.

Provide Training and Development

Offer training programs to enhance team members' skills, including teamwork and communication skills.

Encourage continuous learning and development.

Lead by Example

Demonstrate teamwork and collaboration in your actions and decisions.

Show appreciation for team efforts and model the behaviour you want to see.

Encourage Problem-Solving and Innovation

Allow team members to brainstorm and develop creative solutions together.

Provide the resources and support needed for innovation.

Hold Regular Team Meetings

Schedule regular meetings to discuss progress, challenges and updates.

Use these meetings as opportunities for team bonding and sharing information.

Resolve Conflicts Promptly

Address conflicts and misunderstandings quickly and fairly. Encourage open dialogue and find mutually beneficial solutions.

Define Roles and Responsibilities Clearly

Ensure that each team member knows their responsibilities and how they contribute to the team's success. Avoid overlapping roles to prevent confusion and inefficiency.

By implementing these strategies, you can create a work environment that nurtures teamwork, enhances collaboration and leads to increased productivity and job satisfaction.

Let us introduce you to our Team



David Layder

Founder and business owner David Layder remains as committed to delivering high quality publications as well as exemplary customer service to our advertisers today as he was in 2005. With 38,500 magazines, 43,500 leaflets and a team of 40 distributors to manage each month, David's priority is to ensure delivery to readers across Chester and Ellesmere Port. In his spare time David is a keen rugby union coach and enjoys a cracking pork pie, sampling real ales and spending time with his family.



Anne Jennings

Director of Sales & Marketing with 35 years' experience in advertising, Anne leads the sales and marketing strategies and is available for free 'one to ones' to get the most out of your advertising campaigns. When she's not hard at work helping our clients, Anne is a keen gardener and loves spending her weekends in Conwy, with Reg the dog.



Marianne Paterson

Marianne has over 30 years of experience in sales and marketing working with newspapers, magazines and digital advertising. Her extensive business knowledge and attention to detail ensure our customers receive the best possible advice when promoting their business with us. Marianne is a keen restaurant goer and has an interest in interior design.



Emily Peters

Emily, our in-house graphic designer can tailor designs to fit your business needs, from branding to banners and leaflets. Beyond her design prowess, Emily juggles the joys of motherhood with her two spirited daughters, who keep her just as busy outside the office as she is inside it.



Caroline Evans

With over 16 years' experience in Marketing and PR, Caroline manages all our digital channels. She has worked in numerous sectors including Police, Law and private education and brings a variety of ideas to the table. Caroline juggles her part time role with two young children and loves days out with her family and Doug the dog.



Diane Smith

Diane has a wealth of experience in sales & marketing and is here to help promote your business, whether you're a one man band or a CEO. She loves to travel (and brandy) and did a 10 day charity walk along the Great Wall of China back in 2016 raising money for her local Cancer charity. Diane loves meeting up with friends at the weekend and if there's a cooked breakfast involved, even better.

You can reach any one of us on 01829 770895 (we all work alongside each other in our studio at Hatton Heath), or by prefixing the email address @chesterhandbooks.co.uk with our Christian names. Alternatively, you can fill out our contact form online at www.chesterhandbooks.co.uk

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