

# Bulletin <sup>05</sup>

Spring 2020



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## The People Issue: Innovation and the people we work for and with



Media Partner



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**Spring  
thinking**

**Disruptive  
Innovators  
Network**

**It is hard to imagine a more disruptive time, when so much of what we do every day is being challenged and there are few reference points to draw upon. However if we do want to come through this challenging time with a 'we' rather than 'me' approach, people are going to be the answer.**

## Welcome

It's often said that happy staff equal happy customers. But we know that the converse is also true. How can innovation disrupt existing patterns of behaviour to generate trust rather than scepticism amongst our tenants and how can we bring out the best from our colleagues. These are the twin themes of this bulletin. That's why we are calling this the 'people' issue.

## Forthcoming research

**Cloud adoption** – we will shortly be publishing (what we think is) the most comprehensive executive briefing on the opportunities, risks and implementation of cloud adoption in the social housing sector. It's taken us longer than we planned, due to the complexity of the topic and the dynamic changes in supply and practice taking place in our sector. We hope this will become an essential guide for anyone considering the adoption of cloud computing.

**Future of Housing IT departments** – With the pace of technology and new business and customer demands, the role of the IT department is certain to change. Our forthcoming report is based on interviews with housing sector executives and out of sector thought leaders. It will cover the disappearance of some staff roles and the emergence of others and the cultural change from 'IT fixers' into 'business solution experts'.



## Farewell Clayton Christensen

I'm sad to open our first Bulletin of a new decade by noting the recent death of the founding father of Disruptive Innovation, Clay Christensen.

A real giant of a man (6ft 8in), his legacy for those of us working in this space is enormous. As his many online lectures demonstrate, he cared passionately about teaching, learning and helping others. He had that great ability to take complex issues and simplify them into language that anyone can understand. Clay always talked optimistically about how people, systems and technology could be a force for good. It would be great if we could carry that message of hope on.

Clayton Magleby Christensen (April 6, 1952 – January 23, 2020) was an American academic and business consultant who developed the theory of **disruptive innovation**, first introduced in his 1997 book *The Innovator's Dilemma*, which has been called the most influential business idea of the early 21st century, and which led The Economist to term him "the most influential management thinker of his time".

# What's that coming next?

As the Disruptive Innovators Network continues to grow, the overwhelming feedback from members is that 'we want to go further and faster!'

This aligns with a key message of David Sharp, Head of 10x Technology, Ocado when he spoke our second annual Summit last November. David argued that whilst businesses do need to focus on incremental innovation, they also need to identify those areas where they can make a 10x shift in how they do things in order to keep pace with customer expectations. So what does 10x innovation look like in the social housing space? More to come on this in our next edition.

## Disruptive Innovators Network



David Sharp, Head of 10x Technology, Ocado



## Member survey

Eighteen months on from the launch of DIN, we are planning to ask you, our valued members, for feedback on how we have done so far and what you are looking for in the future.

We will be conducting this research in two phases. Initially, we will ask you to complete a survey by email. When we have analysed the results and identified the key themes, we will conduct a second phase of the research through telephone interviews.

### We will be exploring

- member satisfaction – are you getting what you signed up for?
- member aspirations – what would you like us to focus on in future?
- member benefits – how we can apply this knowledge in shaping future events and services?
- member community – how we can support collaborative working amongst our members?

Members can expect to hear from us in the next few weeks.

**Ian Wright, Managing Director - [ian.wright@disruptiveinnovatorsnetwork.co.uk](mailto:ian.wright@disruptiveinnovatorsnetwork.co.uk)**

Founding partner



Delivery partners



# Citizen-controlled data

Imagine being able to access the personal tenant data that you need without having to store it and make it secure. Imagine the corresponding reduction in your risk profile  
 Imagine being able to ask your tenant and leaseholder customers specific questions and getting responses in a matter of hours  
 Imagine being able to help your customers to safely create social and monetary value from their personal data

**Citizen-controlled data can generate these benefits, as CitizenMe CEO and founder StJohn Deakins explains**



StJohn is CEO of CitizenMe, the identity control service that's working to help us all take back ownership of our digital selves. He is a successful serial Internet entrepreneur, digital visionary, mobile evangelist, and documentary producer. He set up CitizenMe in 2013.

His upbringing revolved around social housing.

His mother ran a housing association and his father is an architect who drew up the original plans for Grenfell Tower. He then resigned before it was built because the council cut all the money and reduced the spec - eliminating the plans for social fabric such as local leisure and shopping facilities.

This article covers one of the most radical innovations in the field of data - enabling people to take control of their personal data. It sets out our thinking on how this might work in social housing. We begin by interviewing a leader in this field to understand the thinking behind the idea.

## Our mission statement is to empower humanity with data for a sustainable digital future

Humanity is going through a huge societal shift from an industrial era to a data era. In that world, personal data becomes the most valuable commodity. In the last 10 to 15 years, personal data has driven the creation and rapid growth of companies like Google, Amazon and Facebook and (via the iPhone) Apple - all of whom provide us with amazing services.

However, if you extrapolate over a 5/10/15 year timeframe, there is huge potential for dystopian scenarios. A deep understanding of your personal data can sit in an American or Chinese silo owned by someone else. Which means that you don't have control over the algorithms, the nudges and the

recommendations. The digital world happens magically around us, but if we're not in control, there is a serious danger that we humans will become manipulated for the system, working for it, rather than it working for us.

We want to provide citizens with the choice to side-step this risk by exercising greater control of their personal data, whilst leveraging cash or social value from it. The two most important tools that CitizenMe provides people with are visibility of their personal data and control over it.

## We are building a collective citizenry in control of their data

We have built a platform where anyone, anywhere, can download a simple application where they build up their data profiles. Over 250,000 people now use CitizenMe and our target is tens of millions of people. Our application is available via the Apple and Google App Stores and most of the growth is by word-of-mouth.

*The two most important tools that CitizenMe provides people with are visibility of their personal data and control over it*

Straight away, our application enables citizens to have fun and gain personal and local insight when collecting

their data. The application includes algorithms that give users insight about their personality, such as 'life satisfaction', via the data they have shared on Twitter, Facebook and directly on the CitizenMe application.

Users can gain insight into their neighbourhood by entering their postcode and populating their profile with their census information. The insights they get would include, for example, that 20% of their neighbours were born in the area, there are seven languages spoken, most people commute by bus and so on.



### The more data citizens input, the more value they create. This value can be personal, social or commercial

Citizens can donate data for charity or for medical health research, by anonymously sharing data on (for example) their psychometrics, health status or mood state over time. We are developing a programme with the University of Manchester clinical psychiatry team - who want to use the data to predict mood and anxiety. The target client group are post-diagnosis psychosis patients. If their mood changes dramatically over a 24-hour period, they are likely to have an episode over the next two to three days. Daily self-reporting can enable clinicians to privately signpost a pathway that leads to preventative treatment like

the NHS IAPT programme which includes early onset therapy such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT).

We are also working with Blue Number, an offshoot of the United Nations sustainable development goals. We have developed a sustainability scorecard for palm oil farmers in Indonesia which runs in the same CitizenMe application, translated into Bahasa Indonesian. The Indonesian Government is presenting this to the United Nations in June.

Alternatively, citizens can share their data anonymously with organisations prepared to pay cash for insight that they then use in market research, loyalty card schemes and so on. Payments are made instantly via PayPal.

We've just signed an agreement with Mastercard for market research. They are also using anonymised CitizenMe data in their loyalty programmes. Also using the data for market research are Diageo, RBS,

### CitizenMe data can also be used by housing providers to provide better services

Barclays and three or four big advertising agencies such as WPP-Geometry and Wunderman Thompson.

### The critical thing is that all that data stays on the application

Because all of the Personally Identifiable Information (PII) stays in the application, the citizen effectively becomes their own 'data controller'. The citizen also takes on much of the 'data processor' role via their smart phone. They choose what data is shared with third parties and can even apply their own AI to it in their own smartphone. Our role is to manage the flow of the data, not to hold and control it. If anyone hacks us, all they get are encrypted CSD files - which they are welcome to!

The algorithms that enable people to get insight all happen on their device. We don't hold any citizen data on our servers. If we, or any social or commercial organisation, want access then we need to seek the citizen's permission every time.

A social landlord will always need to hold a digital memory of its tenants, which makes it a data controller under GDPR. It's always the case that to become a better landlord it helps to have a better understanding of your tenants, which means finer and finer grained data, which is then increasingly sensitive in nature. As a result, any systems breach becomes far more devastating for the tenants. Consequently, GDPR compliance involves significant costs and risks involved in hosting, securing and processing tenant personal data.

*Where a social landlord accesses that data directly from the tenant, effectively streaming it for the duration of the activity for which it is required, the impact of any data systems breach will be much reduced, as will its risk profile*

Where a social landlord accesses that data directly from the tenant, effectively streaming it for the duration of the activity for which it is required, the impact of any data systems breach will be much reduced, as will its risk profile. The less personal data the landlord stores the less it needs to spend on hosting, securing and processing it.

### **Citizen-controlled data fits well with the needs of social tenants and their landlords**

Everything we do is customer-led. Consequently, our applications can operate in any sector or industry and inform consumers and producers alike.

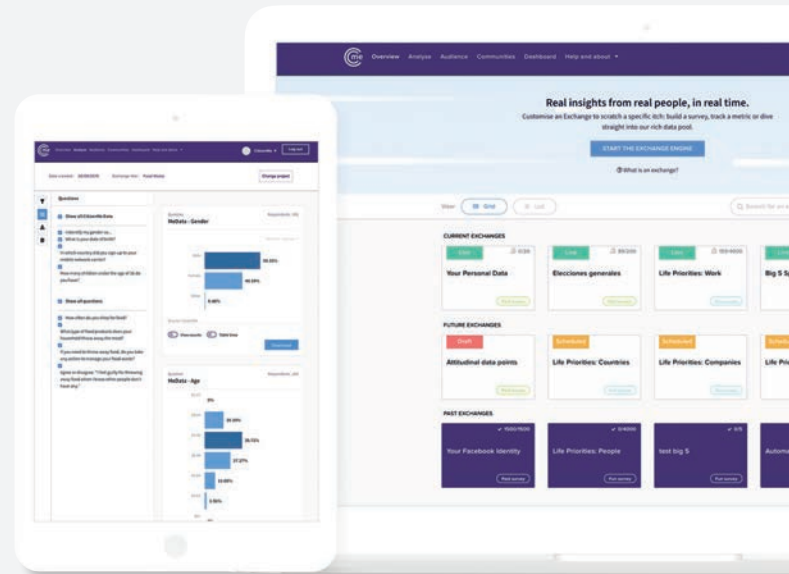
CitizenMe can provide social landlords with a constant real-time connection with their tenant communities in terms of:

- collecting tenancy-related sensitive personal data
- asking specific questions about service or property improvement
- taking the 'temperature' of a neighbourhood or estate by asking tenants to voluntarily supply anonymous attitudinal, behavioural and psychometric data

It will take the landlord literally two minutes to ask for the data and they can expect answers over 24 to 48 hours – probably within an hour if the tenants are given more value (personal insight, vouchers or a few quid) to supply it.

Although CitizenMe exists to empower individuals, there is no reason why a local tenant or neighbourhood residents' association can't set up its own private community and manage it collectively as a data trust using the platform.

CitizenMe automatically put in census data for neighbourhoods, enabling analysis of deprivation. Acting collectively, tenants could then individually overlay anonymous personal data about their tenancy, the characteristics and health and safety status of their home, smart meter data about energy use and so on. This data can then be combined to create evidence for a call for landlord action.



Citizen-controlled data can directly foster a sense of community among tenants. The local community can ask questions of each other, with the responses likely to be truthful because they are anonymous. For example, the community could gather evidence about crime, dog litter, loneliness and isolation, likely take-up for sharing economy initiatives and so on.

CitizenMe sees user education as a key aspect of its role, such as showing and explaining the terms of service of the apps on smartphones.

*Citizen-controlled data can directly foster a sense of community among tenants. The local community can ask questions of each other, with the responses likely to be truthful because they are anonymous*

### **Promoting citizen-controlled data to tenants, and achieving sustainable critical mass, requires focus on quality of 'value exchange'**

Clearly, the more tenants and leaseholders that build up their data profiles the more useful the data resource will be for landlords and local communities.

There is a key role, therefore, for landlords in promoting the opportunity. But to mitigate tenant suspicion, landlord messaging needs to reflect the fact that any

## DIN perspective: How citizen-controlled data might be applied to social housing

### Model 1 - individual participation

- Social landlord promotes CitizenMe to its tenants and leaseholders
- Take-up grows via word of mouth of the benefits of participation

#### *Advantages for tenants and leaseholders*

- Greater control over personal data – risk of unauthorised access reduced
- Ability to create value in terms of cash or social impact by allowing controlled access to their data
- Personal insights and demographic data on their neighbourhood
- Crowd (tenant) sourced improvements to services and amenities
- Social unity from a feeling of participation and co-creation of the local environment

#### *Advantages for the landlord*

- Real time sensitivity analysis now possible
- Over time, a series of data thresholds arise whereby:
  - Landlord can gain speedy insight into customer sentiment about neighbourhood, service quality, ideas for service improvement
  - Landlord can access personal data without holding it in their own systems
  - Reduced costs for hosting, securing, processing

and testing sensitive personal data

- Better, happier, neighbourhoods collaborating to improve quality of life
- Data security risk profile substantially reduced

### Model 2 - collective participation

Through their own volition or encouragement by their landlord, tenant associations create a private community in CitizenMe

#### *Advantages for tenants and leaseholders*

- Ability to conduct own research on neighbourhood issues – e.g. the mental health impact of non-compliant cladding on their homes
- Ability to leverage collective CitizenMe data to lobby landlord – e.g. the need for improvements to services and health and safety
- Means of gathering views of residents who can't/won't attend resident meetings or fill out questionnaires – enabling tenant and leaseholder groups to become more representative of whole local community
- Framework for launch of community self-help projects, for example 'sharing economy' initiatives

#### *Advantages for the landlord*

- As for model 1 – but now enhanced
- An auxiliary 'real time' communications channel to tenant associations

data sharing is explicit and voluntary, that the data stays in the application ('everything stays with you') and that the landlord is not in control of the algorithms.

The landlord would send their tenants a link in any digital format. It might say:

***"Please download data reporting app for xyz benefits. It's easy and fun to use. You will join a private community which only involves other tenants - branded with this logo. You will be in total control of your data, at all times."***

The landlord offer to CitizenMe users could include, for example, service co-creation, environmental improvements, alerts or discounted leisure centre charges.

In response, maybe 10% of the target community will download. To get to a sustainable critical mass, where the volume of available data is enough to

change the landlord's data operating model, it needs to focus on very quickly proving benefits from that download. Where that happens, word-of-mouth will raise the percentage of users.

This is where the CitizenMe application offers greater traction than any local DIY approach - it has much broader appeal than if just centred around the tenancy or neighbourhood.

Our application includes a list of activities, ranging from personal insights and fun exchanges to market researchers offering (say) £3 for an opinion on electric vehicles and tailored offers and promotions from Mastercard. This is what entices citizens to participate – knowing that they can opt in and out of everything. Data requests and offers from their landlord or will just be one stream of communication, but an incredibly valuable one for tenants and landlords alike.

Find out more at [www.citizenme.com](http://www.citizenme.com)



# Involving customers in digital strategy: The Wokingham Way

Ross Fraser, Director of Research, Disruptive Innovators Network

Investing in digital services can transform the offer to tenant and leaseholder customers. However, the success of digital service delivery rests on the level of customer take-up. This, in turn, will depend on the ease-of-use and responsiveness of the new service delivery arrangements.

This would suggest that social landlords should involve tenants in order to maximise the impact of digital transformation. Tenants can and should be involved in **design and testing** of new approaches to service delivery before they 'go live'. A growing number of landlords are doing so – see article by Arturo Dell on pages 11 to 13. Tenants can also help devise ways to tackle digital exclusion.

And digital transformation involves issues which centre around trust, notably the increasing deployment of data analytics. Tenant data must be analysed and used in a manner consistent with GDPR. How can the landlord demonstrate that it has the systems and controls to ensure compliance? Moreover, how can the landlord demonstrate that its interpretation of tenant data and required follow-up actions is appropriate from the customer point of view?

These issues can be tackled in several ways, such as full customer consultation on the changes proposed and by co-opting involved tenants onto the transformation project board or its working groups.

*Social landlords should involve tenants in order to maximise the impact of digital transformation*

Yet, to our knowledge, this is rarely if ever done. The prevailing landlord view appears to be that digital transformation is highly complex and customers simply won't understand its technical aspects.

This is a mistake. Evidence to the contrary can be found in Berkshire, where involved tenant volunteers in Wokingham have developed the first charter which fully embraces the digital agenda.

**Tenant charters are not a new idea – but the Wokingham Borough Council Involved Tenants Charter is very different, as it:**

- sets out tenants' 21st Century vision for the future of housing services
- focuses on modern ways of working – specifically on the use of new technology and data analytics
- challenges a model council landlord to keep pace with tenant aspirations

However, landlords can go further and involve tenants and other customers in the development of the **strategy** for digital transformation. The case for doing so reflects the growing awareness in the sector, post-Grenfell, of the need to scale-back paternalism and focus on regaining customer trust.





The Wokingham BC Involved Tenants Charter is remarkably aligned to the sector agenda for digital transformation – notably the adoption of new technology to improve service choice, speed and quality and the better use of data to understand tenant needs and aspirations.

### *The Wokingham BC Involved Tenants Charter is remarkably aligned to the sector agenda for digital transformation*

#### **The Charter is very clear what tenants want from digital transformation and why:**

- the new benchmark for services is how well they match Amazon, Google Alexa etc
- tenants want services to match the speed and 24/7/365 accessibility of on-line shopping
- as tenants adopt new technology in the rest of their lives – e.g. self-service or assistive tech for elders - they expect social landlords to introduce it

#### **In terms of technology, the Charter calls upon Wokingham BC to invest in the following:**

- 24/7/365 'self-service' access to services
- Alexa-style chatbots - to help disabled tenants and improve 'out-of-hours' help for everyone
- assistive technology - to help older tenants remain in their homes and reduce hospital admissions
- reporting applications (e.g. ASB or repairs) and money management apps – all provided free to tenants
- free laptops and Wi-Fi in sheltered schemes - to help tackle loneliness and isolation
- adopting cloud computing - to speed-up digital transformation

#### **In terms of data, the Charter calls upon Wokingham BC to invest in the following:**

- a single digital customer record – which tenants can view and correct
- data analytics 'deep dive' - to better understand tenant needs and aspirations
- 'sentiment analysis' - to supplement STAR by finding out why tenants feel the way they do
- developing involved tenant capabilities to play a key role in interpreting the data
- a specific protocol for the analysis and protection of tenant data in line with GDPR

Again, these views are remarkably aligned to the sector agenda for digital transformation - but with the caveat that tenants want to be intimately involved in digital strategy and its planning and execution.

So, what happened when the Charter was presented to Wokingham Borough Council?

The Wokingham involved tenants were smart. The Charter presented their thoughts as aspirations and not as demands. They have an excellent relationship with the Housing Department and have no wish to introduce conflict. They are also realistic about the pace of change – asking for a formal review of progress every year – but they plan to refer to it at every council meeting to ensure that it doesn't slip from the corporate agenda.

The Charter was presented to full Council by Steve Bowers, Chair of the Tenant and Landlord Improvement Panel, on 19 September 2019. Steve's presentation achieved a unique standing ovation from every councillor. Leaders of all political parties queued up to commit support and congratulate Steve and colleagues on the quality and insight of their work. The Charter was unanimously approved by the Council.

*Wokingham BC tenants want to be intimately involved in digital strategy and its planning and execution*



Interview with Steve Bowers

# Steve gives his thoughts on the tenant perspective on digital transformation

**Steve Bowers is the Chair of the Wokingham BC Tenant and Landlord Improvement Panel.**

## Q How did you get interested in the digital agenda?

The specific trigger was the council deciding to develop a 21st Century modernisation programme and our realisation that digital transformation was going to be a key part of it. I thought we should develop our own ideas and present them to the council.

We are particularly concerned about the position of digitally excluded older tenants. Whilst we fully support digital transformation, we want to ensure that alternative ways of accessing the council are retained for them in the short to medium term at least.

## Q How has digital technology changed your life already?

I'm blind. My partner keeps up to date with digital tech and has encouraged me to use it. I have software called JAWS on my computer that talks to me and translates written documents (if not diagrams), spreadsheets and emails that I receive and enables me to produce my own. I couldn't work with the council or its advisers and consultants without this digital technology. I use Amazon Echo Dot which connects to the Alexa Voice Service to listen to music or the radio, to tell the time, access weather forecasts and turn off my lights. Braille isn't the way forward for me – digital technology is.

## Q What can you and other tenants bring to discussions on digital strategy?

We are the customers and we know what we want. If we don't like the results of service transformation it won't work – which is a waste of time and money. The Council recognises this and works in partnership with us on all service delivery issues.

Digital is part of our everyday lives. We have lots of experience of consuming services digitally – good and bad – which we can bring to the table. As involved tenants we use digital technology to access all our meeting agendas and minutes and to communicate

with each other. We are trying to encourage the Council to follow our lead and go paperless.

Fortunately, the Council treat us as partners and not people who are sticking their nose where it's not welcome.

## Q Why were older tenants so committed to digital transformation?

There is an assumption that older tenants don't use technology but apart from the digitally excluded that simply isn't true. They use it in all sorts of ways. Older tenants are also aware that their children and grandchildren live in a technologically connected world and future housing services need to be designed to reflect this.

*We have lots of experience of consuming services digitally – good and bad – which we can bring to the table*

## Q Were you surprised that so many involved tenants already knew about GDPR and were keen to monitor the use of their data and participate in its interpretation?

Not surprised at all - as we have already had training on it to make sure that we are ourselves compliant! For example, when publishing photos of community events in our newsletter we now know that we need to get the permission of every person in the photo.

## Q What tools do you need to make an effective contribution to this debate?

When we ask the Council to provide access to independent expert advice, they very rarely say no. For the Charter, we received two short and sharp



information sessions from an independent expert. The adviser brought us up to date about digital technology and how it's being applied elsewhere. Crucially, through our partnership working with the Council, we have a good idea of its digital objectives and we were able to come up with ideas that fit well with the council's overall plans.

*Digital technology is a great way of connecting lonely or elderly people to the community*

### Q Why did you prioritise the digital initiatives you included in the Charter?

Some of the service delivery applications were obvious – such as easy 'friction' free services for tenants. But we wanted to look at broader issues.

For example, how digital technology can help tackle other issues such as the stigmatisation of council tenants, loneliness and how to enable an ageing tenant population to remain in their homes. Digital technology is a great way of connecting lonely or elderly people to the community. We haven't worked out how it can tackle stigmatisation yet, but it remains on our agenda. We support the use of data analytics in identifying the future needs of tenants, but we want a say when the conclusions are being drawn and actions prioritised.

We also want the Council to use digital tech to improve its performance and transparency on health and safety. In the Charter, we suggest that tenants should be able to gain reassurance about the safety of their home via instant access to their property record - setting out when they can next expect (for example) boiler and gas safety testing and the dates and full results of previous inspections.

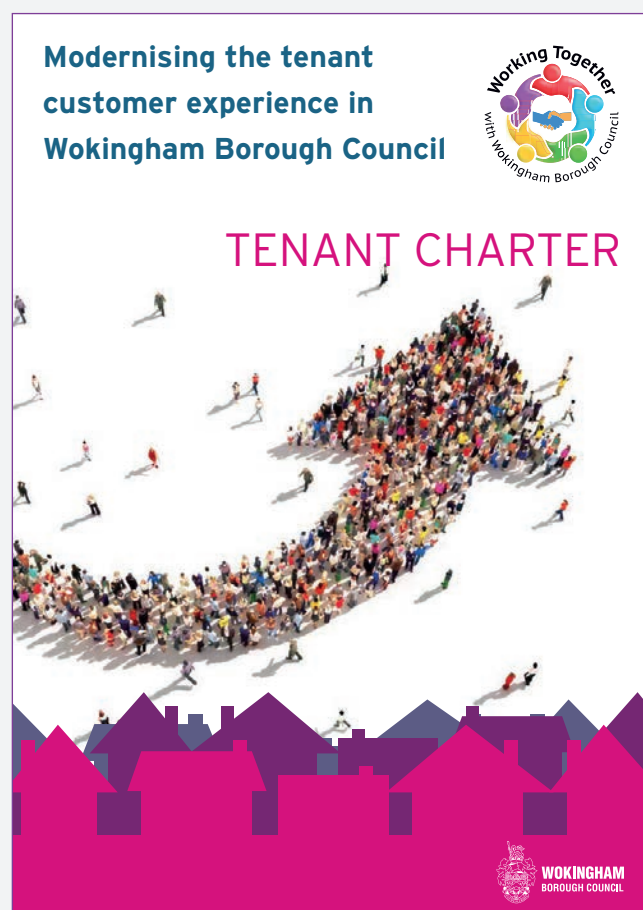
We are particularly keen that digital service delivery helps tenants help themselves in other aspects of their lives – for example via money management apps and associated training which help them manage their finances. For me personally, managing personal finances is the biggest priority, particularly with the introduction of Universal Credit. It can only help the Council to provide this assistance as they are more likely to get their rent and Council Tax paid!

### Q How do you see things progressing in terms of the delivery of your aspirations?

Wokingham Borough Council has now formally adopted our Charter. A partnership action plan, including delivery timescales, has now been agreed with the housing department. A business case for recruiting a digital apprentice is being developed. Their role will be to provide tech support, to tenants and the council, on delivering the Charter's digital aspirations. Involved tenants will update full Council on Charter progress, one year on, in September 2020.

A communications plan has also been developed for the Tenants Charter. We want to involve all Wokingham BC tenants in digital transformation, not just those formally involved in engaging with the council. We are discussing our plans with all tenants on our own YouTube channel and through our podcasts. We have also commissioned TPAS to provide digital engagement training for tenants.

I encourage other tenants and landlords to read the charter because, even if I say it myself, it's a good and innovative piece of work. To access the Charter please click [here](#).





# The impossible equation and participatory design

Arturo Dell, Director of Innovation and Technology at HouseMark



The 2010 earthquake and tsunami in my home country of Chile caused massive flooding. One of the most damaged areas in the country was a city called Constitución. Restoring the ravaged city required not only a rebuild programme but also a fundamental rethink and redesign. The government called on **Alejandro Aravena** and his company **Elemental** for this job, primarily because of his participatory design methods.

The government tender was ultimately an impossible challenge as it required the winning bidder to resolve the following equation:

$$X = \frac{100 \text{ families} \times 430 \text{ square feet} \times \text{US\$10,000}}{1 \text{ acre of land}}$$

The government funding was capped at US\$10K for each family which must include the cost of buying the land, providing the infrastructure and building the homes which must be of at least 430 square feet. Since the land was in the centre of the city, the cost of it was three times what social housing project in Chile could afford. Under any normal evaluation process, this tender could have only been resolved by moving the families to the periphery or building a tower block.

*Alejandro Aravena's model for housing projects is based on involving communities in developing solutions via participatory design*

Aravena had already solved an urban challenge common in 3rd world countries like Chile. In 2004, his company won a government tender to create a **housing project in the city of Iquique** in the north of the country. A one-acre plot of land in the centre of the city had been illegally occupied by 100 families who had built temporary dwellings and were fighting any attempts by the government to relocate them to the periphery.

*Learning how participatory design is being used to solve third world housing problems is as valuable as learning from 'best in class' global enterprises*

Aravena's winning bid did not propose a specific solution but a process of participatory design with the families which would involve them directly in solving the seemingly impossible equation. The process involved looking at the constraints and compromises needed. The only 'viable' option of building a tower block was quickly discarded when the families threatened to go on hunger strike. The reason was that the 430 square feet property size was not big enough for any growing family. What was the solution they designed together?

## Build half of a good house!



Figure 1: Half of a good house. A co-created solution to a difficult problem

The solution used the government money for buying the land and building the components of the home which the residents couldn't build, such as infrastructure, sewage, plumbing, etc. The design met the needs of the families by offering an expandable house in a high land value location. Because the families were able to stay in the centre, they were able to participate in the wealth creation which happens in cities, maintain their natural networks and thus to start building 'the other half' of the house very soon after completion.

This example may seem literally miles away from the social housing issues in the UK but learning how participatory design is being used to solve third world housing problems is as valuable as learning from 'best in class' global enterprises.



Figure 2: The completed houses finished off by the residents

Applying the lessons of participatory design to digital transformation is about ensuring residents are co-creators of the services they will use online. This is **not** how most of the social housing sector goes about designing and developing digital services. As a result of current 'top down' digital design, online services are not always used by residents and sometimes have unintended consequences like an increase in the volume of calls or duplication of issues reported.

HouseMark has been working over the last three years to support our sector in digital transformation. We have observed that something about the culture and operations of housing providers is preventing them from adopting the user centred design approaches which are second nature to 'best in class' digital organisations.

And it seems that the sector is beginning to recognise the issue.

*Participatory design is equally applicable to our sector. It can, for example, be applied when engaging in service co-creation with residents and empowering them to use their own resources to solve common problems*

At the closing session of HouseMark's 2019/20 digital transformation programme, we asked participants to share with us what they had learned from taking part. Most organisations said the same things:

- working through user centred design methods had forced them to take a long look at their culture and question some deeply rooted beliefs about digital transformation and how it should be done
- the critical change they needed to make was spending more time doing research with users to understand the problem and not jumping into solutions

It's all about learning to fall in love with the problem and not the solution. Following this principle will lead to closer working with residents and ultimately better digital solutions.

*As a result of current 'top down' digital design, online services are not always used by residents and sometimes have unintended consequences like an increase in the volume of calls or duplication of issues reported*

HouseMark has changed its approach significantly in response. Our **digital transformation programme** has evolved from assimilating the lessons from 'best in class' digital organisations. This can work but it also may feel like **NHS managers working with Disneyland to solve their queue management issues**. Instead, we now offer a 'hands-on' learning experience on how to apply design thinking to understand the key service delivery problems and solutions from the resident's perspective. In 2020 we will introduce co-creation and participatory design approaches into the digital transformation programme. We are very excited to bring the considerable insight of residents into the programme. This will have a significant impact on the quality of the solutions we produce together. We will be releasing the dates and sharing some exciting news shortly, so please stay tuned!

There is an interesting area of research which amplifies these housing sector insights.

**Algorithmic aversion** looks at how **people judge decisions** made by humans versus decisions made by machines. This is particularly important when online services replace activities previously carried out by staff.



Figure 3: Sharing the findings from HouseMark's digital transformation programme

The outcome from many studies in this field is that people judge machines by outcomes and humans by intention. This is particularly important when systems get it wrong as users will only be able to judge a poor transaction or a failed appointment and lose trust. In the past, where such services were provided by humans, errors could be forgiven more easily because the intention of the member of staff was well understood even when the outcome was still a poor transaction or a failed appointment. As systems grow in complexity and more decisions are made by machines, the importance of engaging with users to understand the problem becomes critical.

*Probably the only way to ensure success going forward is to co-create solutions with users*

Probably the only way to ensure success going forward is to co-create solutions with users. The involvement of residents in the design of the solution weaves in the intention of all stakeholders into the service, building a shared narrative around it. Being able to design services with the right mix of human and machine elements will be a critical set of skills for transformation leaders going forward. And the way to get this balance right is to get closer to the people using the service.

The lesson from the 100 families in the north of Chile who solved their impossible equation is that complex problems need radical solutions which can only be designed together with users.



# Innovation Management – Doing It Right

Rob Hoehn - CEO, IdeaScale

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## The most important things to get right in your innovation management programme

Innovation departments are still defining their specific set of tasks and duties. And when I talk about innovation departments, sometimes that means ad hoc groups of people who come together to bring structure to strategic change at an organisation.

We've found team members in various departments: like product, research and development, IT, communications, HR, and others, which means there are a huge variety of skill sets and backgrounds that you have to coordinate. So as the innovation discipline begins to develop its own best practices and expectations, we're trying to learn: how do they use their time, what are their duties, what roles do they need on the team and what sorts of tasks do they complete?

Well, **our customers have provided us with answers** to these questions and although the list of duties and responsibilities is considerably longer and more complex than this, we've boiled it down to a list of five things that an innovation management programme should do, with a particular emphasis on the one thing you **MUST** get right.

## 1) Create a resource database of ideas

That means collecting ideas and becoming responsible for them. Not every idea, of course, is high quality or ready for production, but the collection is not just about finding the best ideas. It's about nurturing ideas into bigger and better concepts or keeping not-quite-ready ideas in a place where they can be leveraged when the time is right.

Maintaining this database and making it valuable is the place from which many other duties stem. Obviously, customers who use idea management software have this virtual idea location easily defined, but the teams themselves need to put in some work to maintain it. Having some always open, ongoing campaigns for blue sky ideation as well as time limited, focused campaigns helps drive urgency and participation to get a mix of ideas.

For example, the **innovation team at NASA** solicits problems from across the organisation and turns to the crowd for solutions. But after nearly eight years of running these challenges, even the ideas that aren't selected are searchable and sortable so that anyone who has a challenge can first explore the living database of ideas and if they don't find a solution, they can launch a new challenge question.

## 2) Define and align KPIs

If you're asking team members to be responsible for innovation, you have to make sure that they know when they're doing it and that their contributions are being tracked. For example, how are you going to get someone in your marketing department (whose KPIs are associated with lead gen) to care about contributing their ideas to your programme? You have to make sure that participating in the innovation programme is one of the criteria that they are evaluated by.

One of our healthcare customers, TriHealth, did this by putting idea contribution and development into every employee's annual review. Programme participation in that initiative was nearly 100 per cent. But doing this right also means recognising and rewarding those who generate value, in this space as well and reporting on the success of good ideas over time.

## 3) Communications is absolutely imperative

In fact, after ten years at IdeaScale, one of our most downloaded resources is still our innovation communications plan infographic. And communications is a big job. It means articulating the value of participating in the innovation process and socialising good ideas that are happening in one part of an organisation with the entire organisation, so that everyone can get better together.

This means celebrating successes publicly and also talking about failures so that everyone can learn from them. Our best customers are experts at multi-channel communication and inspiring the crowd to participate. One of our more creative financial services customers, Banchile Inversiones, hired a live comedian to visit their offices to encourage team members to share their ideas.

Western Australia Police made the default computer background for their employees an invitation to view their idea database. A military customer nominated their best ideators to the [Smithsonian invention exhibit](#) – their employee won, so now even the general public can learn from their creation. But one thing is for sure – when it comes to communications, email must be part of your strategy. Not your whole strategy.

## 4) Research and train team members

One of the most shocking findings from our annual customer discovery is that more than half of innovation teams have trained less than ten per cent of their workforce in any sort of innovation best practices. This seems like one of the biggest opportunities for supercharging an innovation programme.

Innovation training empowers team members, because it offers a shared language for innovation,

sharing their research findings, tools for brainstorming best practices, mentoring them in developing a business case for a fresh idea and more. The more you invest in your intrapreneurs, the more likely they are to help you co develop valuable solutions.

One of our integrated services customers, who excels at mentoring ideators, brings the idea suggester through the entire development process (building a business case, prototyping, testing, re-working)... even including helping them prepare a final pitch for the highest level executives in their company. This empowerment not only improves innovation outcomes as the entire workforce starts to learn about how to develop ideas, it helps advance employee engagement, as well.

*Define a repeatable process that aligns good ideas to resources. In other words, spend time developing a process that surfaces good ideas to decision makers with influence*

## The most important thing...

And what's that number one thing innovation management programmes must get right? They must define a repeatable process that aligns good ideas to resources. In other words, spend time developing a process that surfaces good ideas to decision makers with influence.

In an assessment of our most successful customers (those who stated that they had met or exceeded all of their innovation goals), 81 per cent said that they did have a formal process for idea management, but only 30 per cent had a dedicated budget for implementing ideas.

How is it possible that they successfully achieved their goals without any budget?

They were experts at taking institutional energy and using it to influence leaders who already had budget. For example, one of our process superstars had a defined innovation funnel that helped them source advocates and feed ideas to the appropriate parties. After an initial assessment of idea desirability, a small team would analyse the idea for an appropriate team member to investigate the idea in more depth or attach it to a larger concept.

Monthly meetings to check in on each stage kept this whole process on track, and they implemented hundreds of ideas without any defined budget, because the best ideas were helping to solve problems that those departments already had (or would have on the horizon).





Interview with Bruce Daisley

# Recapturing the Joy of Work

Bruce formerly ran Twitter's business in Europe, Middle East and Africa. He also runs the top business podcast, Eat Sleep Work Repeat. His book, *The Joy Of Work* was a Sunday Times #1 bestseller and it has now been translated into 14 languages.

As Bruce was one of the stand out speakers at the 2019 DIN annual summit, we have taken the opportunity to interview him and take an in-depth look into his advice for improving the culture of work.

## This article contains:

- 12 performance-enhancing actions to improve the culture of work
- 8 key fixes to make teams work more closely
- 10 secrets of energised teams

We begin by interviewing author Bruce Daisley on how he came up with these ideas

I started from the perspective of thinking how we can improve work cultures, how we can make work better.

### The three key concepts in the book are recharge, synchronisation and buzz

The first section of the book is about **recharge** - how to remediate against our own personal exhaustion and how can we get ourselves back into a positive zone.

A lot of us might think that I'm going to change the organisation's work culture by modelling different behaviours and values. But people are suffering from burnout at epidemic levels. If you tell people who are suffering from burnout that they need to change the way they are working, you often don't get a welcoming response.

The second part is just this wonderful thing that we often neglect - the importance of human synchronisation, which I call **sync**.

When mankind embarked on rapid evolution, what seems to have propelled this extraordinary pace of development and change seems to have been the ability to work, collaborate and connect with other people.

Today, human beings seem to be 'disbanding the tribes.' Often when we consider the future of work, we imagine scenes of workers sitting at laptops, scattered around the lakes and shores of the world, dialling into the internet, doing their work remotely. But we can't neglect the importance of human beings feeling connected often by proximity to each other rather than by technology. Humans get a lot more energy from being in 'tribes' than we sometimes give credit.

And the final part is **buzz**.

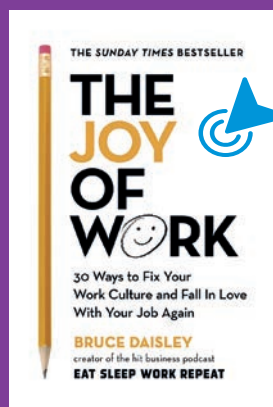
This is about achieving an elevated state where work appears motivated, engaged and connected. If you have ever worked in an organisation that's been in that happy 'buzz' state, you will recall it fondly as you maybe sit now at a miserable organisation's workplace eating your cheese sandwich.

### Extrinsic and extrinsic motivation run at the heart of human motivation

Intrinsic motivation is where we derive pleasure from the mere act of doing something. We feel satisfied by the feedback loop that we get from it. Extrinsic motivation is where we do something for other reasons such as for money or to win favour.

There are fascinating case studies of when you give children of four or five years old the opportunity to draw - something that they love doing at that age because they first discover their latent creativity. You find a group of kids who love drawing and then you say to them that I'm going to award a prize for the best drawings. Very quickly the creativity of their work declines. It seems that by encouraging them to do something that they previously loved doing and by rewarding them then that love disappears.

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That gets to the heart of how we work. Don't align your passions and your work, otherwise you might lose the mojo of what you love about them.

It gets to the heart of motivation. Dan Cable has brilliantly demonstrated that if extrinsic motivation is the defining reason why we do a job it appears to have a negative impact on our psychology. Cable says that "the employees who receive rewards for doing boring work are set up to make themselves ill". Scientifically, it appears that we inflame our immune system when we are going against what our body wants but we are doing it for reward. In this day, this concept of management by algorithm is particularly pernicious.

So, this raises the question of how we can get the joy back in our jobs.



## Maslow's hierarchy of needs neglects the importance of belongingness

When Maslow came up with his hierarchy of needs, it seems that a good deal of thought went into it. Subsequently, the two most eminent researchers on the topic (Mark Leary and Roy Baumeister) have demonstrated that whilst food and shelter are the defining needs for existence, belongingness is equally important.

When we are thinking about a good working environment, we don't necessarily think 'do people feel the need to belong here?' When we are creating communities, we don't necessarily prioritise that human connection, that sense of human belongingness.

There is a remarkable piece of work that looks at longevity and happiness – a 70-year-long study, one of the longest pieces of psychological research in history. The findings are that a happy life is a life connected to other people. This is relevant for work because 42% of British workers say that they don't have a single friend at work. That means that almost half the workforce are experiencing isolation at work.

If we were a new school starter in mid-term the teacher would assign another pupil to befriend us. We need to think more like that, to establish links between people. One of the things that minority groups say about what helps them align to their work is whether they are invited by others to join 'resource groups' or communities of interest. It could be a group of Black or Asian workers, Gays or Lesbians – whatever. The evidence is that this helps people feel belonging, to be inspired at work and increases employee engagement.

## Deep Work and Monk Mode Mornings

Deep Work is the notion that we achieve breakthrough thinking and moments of creative clarity when we struggle uncomfortably to get a task done. Often that discomfort leads to a breakthrough in our thinking. We sit there at a bit of a 'dead end', we don't know where we are going to go and then suddenly an epiphany hits us.

Deep work is a recognition of that. The problem is that modern work has been built to prioritise shallow work, to prioritise things that are quick and easy to do and don't require a lot of concentration – like meetings, emails or responding to someone's text. We don't achieve creative clarity when we are in a perpetual state of constant interruption.

The intention of my book was to say that if we recognise that moments of high productivity are achieved in these periods of deep work then we need to foster a very simple way to create them.

My suggestion is what I call Monk Mode Morning where, a couple of times a week, you set yourself 60 to 90 minutes uninterrupted time to try to get something done. To give you a live example, to my shame the number one thing on my to do list from my boss remained untouched for four and a half months. I did it yesterday in three hours and the biggest barrier was putting aside uninterrupted time to do it. It wasn't anywhere nearly as much work as I thought it was going to be, but it required a period of concentration.

*Our satisfaction at work comes from having autonomy (the freedom to get things done and to have a personal impact), mastery (a sense that we are getting better at it), purpose (an understanding of why we are doing a job) and a voice (a say in what happens)*

## CEOs are often the assassins of creativity and productivity, but they can be persuaded to change

Something well documented is the notion of emotional contagion. Yawning and laughter are contagious. We catch our moods from other people. So, if the boss is relentlessly optimistic, we might scoff at that being insincere, but it cross-pollinates. If the boss is relentlessly anxious and distressed, then that cross-pollinates too.

If you look at the link between neuroscience and 'creativity by design', fear, anxiety and worry seem to kill our capacity to be expansive in our thinking. Deliberately. When a truck is about to drive into you, conscious thought then evaporates and it's just fight or flight to get yourself out of a bind.

I think that, historically, bosses have misunderstood that there is good and bad pressure. If people are finding themselves in a state of constant peril, they develop a state of heightened alarm that generally doesn't lead to imaginative expansive thinking.

If the CEO is doing this, what can be done? How can they get the support and guidance that they clearly need? How can the organisation put pressure on the CEO (or line manager) to reflect on the impact of their behaviour?

I'm pretty convinced of the power of conversation on these things. Generally, people are uncomfortable about individually challenging a boss. But if there is space for a team discussion at an away day, staff might ask for an agenda on 'how we work together' and raise a question like 'how do we feel about late night emails?' and if the team says that they don't like it, the boss might listen.

### Pre-mortems are better than post-mortems

Pre-mortem is the notion that, with the benefit of hindsight, we knew that something would go wrong. Pre-mortem attempts to capture some of the upside of that without waiting for an after-the-event post-mortem.

When Sarah Ellis came up with her radical plan to reduce the amount of packaging that Sainsbury's were using, she ran a pre-mortem session where everyone was encouraged to 'destroy' the plan before it was enacted by working out what could go wrong. All doubters were given a voice. As a result, the radical transition to eco-packaging was successful.

You could call this 'design to fail' or note that this is a traditional component in wargaming.

## Getting workplace culture right starts with the CEO but doesn't end there



Macro culture is driven by the board. It sets out the culture they want for the business and thus its destiny. For example, when and why you decide to fire someone sets the culture at a macro level.

Micro level is related to teams. The individual's experience of work starts at a team level rather than at a company level. Professor Cary Cooper describes it as the line manager lottery. Your experience of whether you love your job largely depends on whether your boss is an asshole or not.

I've witnessed people defined by an organisation as 'low status' who have changed its culture. I saw a receptionist change an organisation's culture. She was an actor, working there when she was between jobs. The temp can often see how things really operate without being inculcated into the 'group think' that might exist there. This receptionist said to someone, as an aside, "you know the culture is really bad here?". She was thinking that if I'm going to be here for say five months, I'm going to change this. So, she organised 'crisp Thursday'. This captured the elements of going to the pub without losing are people who don't or can't go to pubs.

As Chris Pursley has demonstrated, there is a definite benefit in people spending time chatting to each other and relaxing.

### My book an indictment of how companies treat HR

If you genuinely believe that people are your best assets, then HR should be a top table discussion. You should, at the top level, be genuinely focused on how you can get the best out of people. However, generally, HR gets called in when you are about to undertake downsizing or pay reviews on a very tactical rather than on a strategic basis. There is an equivalent need to encourage HR professionals themselves to become more strategic.

# DIN highlights the key hacks recommended in *The Joy of Work*

## Recharge – 12 performance-enhancing actions to improve work culture

### 1. *Have a Monk Mode Morning*

Carl Newport defines Deep Work as “professional activities performed in a state of distraction-free concentration that push our cognitive abilities to the limit.” Set planned times when you can work uninterrupted. Mornings work best for creativity.

### 2. *Go for a walking meeting*

Energise discussion and encourage people to ‘open up’ by having (any) two people taking part in a short brisk ‘walking meeting’ outside the company premises. Aerobic exercise energises divergent thinking which results in fresh, imaginative ideas.

### 3. *Celebrate headphones*

In productivity terms, open plan offices are a disaster. But if you must have one, allow staff to wear headphones for set periods when they need to concentrate on their work.



### 4. *Eliminate hurry sickness*

We are overburdened with stimuli in every aspect of our lives. As a result, we find ourselves in a constant state of anxiety, never feeling that we’ve got everything done. Find time to relax at work and at home to switch off all stimuli and boost your wellbeing and creativity.

### 5. *Shorten your working week*

All historical and scientific exercise demonstrates that shorter hours tend to be more productive. Productivity peaks at just under 40 hours a week. Above 50 hours a week, exhaustion and burnout set in.

### 6. *Overthrow the evil mill owner who lives inside you*

Avoid ‘presenteeism’ – judging people by how often they are in the office and how long they work. Focus on what they have achieved rather than how they went about it.

### 7. *Turn off your notifications*

Set your own micro-boundaries at work – by creating different ‘stop lights’ regarding when we do things and when we don’t. For example, decide to tackle emails between (say) 9 and 10am and 4 to 5pm. Don’t look at your inbox at other times and switch off your social media notifications too.

### 8. *Go to lunch*

Plan to do something in your lunch break that forces a change of scene and brings variety to your breaks. Go to lunch, sit in the park, take exercise or go shopping. Anything to allow your mind and body to switch off and relax. Never agree to meetings that span your lunch break.

### 9. *Define your norms*

Don’t assume that your work culture is inevitable. Give staff, individually and on agreed days, one or two nights a week where they are not expected to deal with emails, texts or calls. Avoid sending emails to large numbers of people and expecting a response from all.

### 10. *Have a digital sabbath*

Have a company policy of no emails between 5pm on Friday and Monday morning – with contingency arrangements for emergencies. If you do need to work on an email over the weekend, save it and send it on Monday morning. Switch off all digital stimuli on Sunday.

### 11. *Get a good night’s sleep*

No performance enhancement method has anywhere near the impact on creativity and productivity as a good night’s sleep. Sleeping on a problem really does work too. It also reduces absenteeism. Have a regular bedtime and stick to it – and go to sleep sober.

### 12. *Focus on one thing at a time*

Focussing on one thing at a time makes you more productive. It also makes you happier at work because you achieve more with less stress. Warwick University research demonstrates a 22% gap between the productivity of happy and unhappy employees.



## Sync - Eight fixes to make teams even closer

### 1. *Move the kettle*

The key to business success and creativity is 'ideas flow' – the capacity of new thoughts to cross-pollinate with others. Rearrange the office furniture, layout and amenities to encourage casual conversation between staff.

### 2. *Suggest a tea break*

When you take a tea break, encourage others to join you. This simple hack increases team cohesion and productivity.

### 3. *Halve your meetings*

Meetings may serve a social purpose, but they are deeply unproductive. They tend to take place at the time of day when we are at our most creative. Halve the number of company meetings and shorten their length. Shorter meetings focus discussions.

### 4. *Create a social meeting*

Researchers have found that 'sync' is enhanced when workers meet in a social way. Make food the centre of the meeting and avoid alcohol and pubs so as not to exclude people. If you are the boss, buy the pizzas. Once a month between 4.30 to 5.30 on a Thursday afternoon is the ideal time. Invite remote workers to these meetings as their isolation is a growing issue in business.

### 5. *Laugh*

Humans laugh to connect with each other, to achieve synchronisation. Laughter in a leader is a sign of openness and a willingness to show vulnerability. Nobel Prize-winning economist Daniel Kahneman has demonstrated that the relaxation brought about by laughter opens our minds to creative thinking.

### 6. *Energise inductions*

The better the welcome, the sooner new joiners will start delivering results. Moreover, employees are most responsive to cultural assimilation when they first start. Think about how you can encourage new starters to feel more at home, more quickly.

### 7. *Stop (being) a bad boss*

Bad management is one of the easiest ways to destroy Sync in a team. The key traits of a bad boss are incompetence, lack of consideration, secretiveness and poor communication skills. The characteristics of a good boss are 'being supportive' and having a good working knowledge of what you expect staff to do. If you've never done a job in your sphere of control, spend time observing your staff doing it.

### 8. *Know when to leave people alone*

Recognise the power of solitude in terms of creativity. Make your expectations of staff clear, give them the support they need and then get out of their way. Promote Monk Mode Morning working for everyone.

## Buzz – Ten secrets of energised teams

### 1. *Frame working as a problem you are solving*

Frame the company's work not as a series of inter-related tasks but as mutual endeavour to solve a problem or to achieve a goal. Get everyone in the business involved and excited about the challenge. Bottom-up solutions work better than top-down ones.

### 2. *Admit when you've messed up*

Talk about issues and problems right away. Make sure that the leader kicks off by saying what she or he might have done better. You can't engender a work culture of 'fail quickly and learn' if the leader doesn't acknowledge their own failures.

### 3. *Keep teams lean*

The more people in a team the greater the multiplier of lines of communication. A five-person team has 10 communication channels, a 10-person team 45. Maintaining these communication channels reduces productivity.

### 4. *Focus on the issue, not the people*

Recognise the link between 'psychological' safety and employee happiness and creativity. Focus discussions on issues not people. Get team members to present problems and issues in diagram form so that others focus on the message rather than the messenger. Promote 'positive affect' – a happy state of mind which engenders creativity, collaboration and problem solving skills.

## Setting time for innovation makes that innovation more likely to happen

### 5. *Introduce a Hack Week*

Our workplace responsibilities can take the joy out of our jobs. Themed 'hack sessions' – short bursts of thinking aloud – can restore that joy and sense of purpose. Set up a hack week – or a hack day for two months' time and repeat periodically. Set realistic goals.

### 6. *Ban phones from meetings*

It distracts and reduces creativity and trust within teams. Turn meetings into genuine face-to-face interactions. Ban laptops and iPads too!



### 7. *Champion diversity*

Remember that the best businesses seek to include people from as many different backgrounds as possible. The world isn't homogeneous. Companies (and the Boards) shouldn't be, either. At a micro-level, when creating teams, select a diverse range of members to avoid 'groupthink'.

### 8. *Replace presenting with reading*

Instead of circulating a PowerPoint presentation in advance and/or presenting it at a meeting, get the author to draft a short 'story telling' paper and table it on the day and give team members up to 30 minutes for a 'silent read' before discussion begins. This 'democratises' interaction and encourages everyone to contribute.

### 9. *Conduct a pre-mortem*

Conduct pre-mortems before launching new initiatives. They are more constructive than post-mortems. Encourage everyone to identify potential causes of failure. By doing so you will achieve a 30% improvement in project success rate.

### 10. *Relax*

Laughter doesn't just enhance Sync but Buzz too. Remember that laughter creates the conditions for positive affect and psychological safety that are essential to Buzz.

In these uncertain times, the need to engage more effectively with colleagues and customers is vital.

Please forward this bulletin to colleagues - especially those working on customer service, resident engagement, HR and business transformation

Our Summer Bulletin is due to be published in July. Let us know of any topics you would like us to cover