





Because business is about people

Back in March, OpenAI CEO Sam Altman admitted the firm was "a little bit scared" of its own technology. In May, 'godfather of Al' Geoffrey Hinton quit Google, citing the "existential risk" posed by Al's ability to "know so much more than any one person" and the likelihood of huge jobs disruption. Where previously its potential was largely hypothetical, OpenAI's ChatGPT has allowed the masses to tinker and see just where bots might help (or replace) them. So just how worried should we all be? Well, if you're a poet, not very (see p22). See also its attempt – as part of a modest ChatGPT-takeover issue – at Italian conspiracy theories (p20), which was meant to be the masons and mafia, but was so unhinged even the bot seemed to realise it, giving up abruptly mid-sentence. But the fact it made a decent(ish) stab at creative writing gives serious pause for thought. The fact it generated several solid summaries of arguments in a matter of mere seconds, even more so for us writers and those drafting HR policy alike.

#### Jenny Roper, editor

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### Inside front and back covers

Art generated by OpenAl's Dall.E 2. It was asked to: 'Generate artwork featuring a graphic repeating pattern that could be used on the inside of a magazine cover'

## Italy: unlikely political pioneer

Ah Italy, land of delicious ice cream, beautiful scenery, sunshine, opera and incredible art. It has also been responsible in recent years, however, for producing populist politicians in the vein of Silvio Berlusconi, with constant changes of leadership, flip-flopping between the extremes of left and right and infighting that would not disgrace a Monty Python sketch. But while the cognoscenti were pointing their fingers, the Italian style of government quickly spread across Europe including to post-Brexit UK. The country's cultural influence - food. fashion and design - is at a post-war high too, as Matthew Gwyther discovers. And the Italians apparent ability to live la dolce vita despite all the chaos looks increasingly inspiring.

Matthew Gwyther is a business journalist and a presenter on BBC Radio 4's In Business



## Can ChatGPT write poetry?

p22



Yes, I can write poetry. I am a language model that has been trained on a vast corpus of text, including poetry, and can generate original pieces in various styles and formats. However, as a machine learning model. my poetry may lack the emotional depth, personal experiences and creativity of human poets. Nonetheless, I can use my language skills and knowledge to create poems on various topics and in different styles. from traditional forms like sonnets and haikus to more experimental and contemporary approaches. If you have a specific topic or style in mind, feel free to let me know, and I'll do my best to create a poem that fits your request.



## The death of the perk

p26

Imagine the indignation. You've swung by your work's complimentary onsite laundry only to find it has closed down. And you might now need to cook your own dinner because of canteen cuts. This is the scenario faced by Meta employees, as a result of Mark Zuckerberg's 'vear of efficiency'. And many others – including perk trendsetters Twitter and Google - are taking similar steps. But do most staff actually care? Did these perks ever work, or should we welcome a new era of 'more sensible' efforts to gain staff engagement and lovalty, such as effective flexible working? There are certainly still plenty hoping to lure workers back to the office with free ice cream, finds Jeremy Hazlehurst. But their efforts look likely to be doomed in an era of very different working mindsets.

Jeremy Hazlehurst is a journalist who has written for The Wall Street Journal and The Times



## Lucy D'Orsi

p32

"I look at myself in the mirror and think: why didn't I know about some of this? And what could I have done differently?" So says chief constable of the British Transport Police (BTP) Lucy D'Orsi about her time as deputy assistant commissioner at the Metropolitan Police Service. She is talking about the recent Casev review on the cultural failings that led - most notably and tragically – to the crimes of David Carrick and Wavne Couzens. D'Orsi is determined such frank soul searching only drives her work at her current gig. Since she joined BTP, internal reports of wrongdoing have increased 63 per cent, something she is encouraged by but not complacent about. "Strategically, you have got to invest in this area," she says, adding: "We need total transparency."

Katie Jacobs is senior stakeholder lead at the CIPD and former editor of HR and Supply Management magazines



DALL.E. Topical Press Agency/Hulton Archive, Robert Alexander, Greg Nature Slade/Getty Images; Julian Dodd; Jeroen Bennink; Andrew Ferraro

## The value of 'soft skill' CEOs

p36

Leadership is a nuanced business at the best of times - and the 2020s are hardly those. Despite plenty of evidence on the importance of social, people-orientated skills, when faced with rising costs and rising uncertainty, many organisations go into survival mode and favour CEOs who possess much more technical. analytical capabilities. In other words, those who have come up through HR are still all too often seen as just too much of a gamble. But, as Andrew Saunders hears, businesses must urgently source leaders with the ability to engage both sides of their brains - whether from HR or elsewhere.

Andrew Saunders is contributing editor of Work. and a business journalist whose writing also appears in The Times, The Telegraph and Management Today



## Q&A: Caroline Andrews

p44

Ouestion: what do 37-metre dinosaur skeletons, pineapples and huge volumes of hand sanitiser have in common? Answer: thev have all been transported (some more routinely than others) by IAG Cargo, the airfreight division of International Airlines Group, The business really is one of those little-known outfits nonetheless making the world go round. Which is why CPO Caroline Andrews was so keen to join a year ago. And what a year it has been for her HR team - with a new global learning platform, leadership training and ideas-sharing hub just a few of the initiatives launched. Andrews talks Jenny Roper through this impressive tranche of work, as well as her thoughts on purpose and successfully managing change.

Jenny Roper is editor of Work. and former editor of People Management



## Murdoch's last hurrah

p48



Rupert Murdoch's empire emerged through strategic acquisitions, culminating in the establishment of News Corporation. Media entities like Fox News. The Wall Street Journal, and The Times of London bolstered his influence. However, the empire faced setbacks with the 2011 phone hacking scandal and the evolving media landscape. Despite challenges, Murdoch's empire retains a formidable position, adapting to the digital era while maintaining its significant impact on public opinion and media landscape.

Paul Simpson is a journalist and author. His latest book, The Colour Code, is published by Profile Books



## Debrief p62

### Management

Organisations are in danger of driving away their most loyal employees by always going to them with extra tasks

### Labour market

Only 15 per cent of businesses have so far utilised the UK's new post-Brexit points-based immigration system

#### Gender equality

'Observable skill signals' such as education are more decisive in women's progression, betraying organisational bias

#### **Psychology**

Regularly being tasked with jobs that are neither satisfying nor purposeful can lead to a form of burnout: 'boreout'

## Equality, diversity & inclusion

HR professionals are no less likely than the average person to demonstrate bias towards disabled people at work

### Wellbeing

Only a quarter of organisations have a policy covering fertility treatment, and less than a quarter of those that offer support have told staff about it

### **Gamification**

Turning tasks and learning experiences into fun games boosts engagement, job satisfaction and performance

#### Financial wellbeing

Only 40 per cent of firms have introduced new cost of living support since the start of 2022, and half have neither increased pay nor offered other support

#### Workforce planning

Employers must make more effort to retain older workers through enticing learning and development opportunities

### **Industrial relations**

Women drove a steady rise in trade union membership between 2017 and 2020, but the overall increase was modest

### Corporate governance

Bosses are dissatisfied with the quality of people data they receive, with a clear opportunity for HR to step up **O&A HENRY ENGELHARDT** 

# How to be a better boss



AS FOUNDER AND FORMER CEO of insurance group Admiral, Henry Engelhardt believes that "being a good boss is not only good for all those around you, but organisations will get better results as well". Easy to say, but Engelhardt knows what he is talking about. Not only has he grown Admiral from start-up to a plc worth £10bn, but it has been consistently listed in The Sunday Times's Best Places to Work. Engelhardt's new book, Be a Better Boss: Learn to build great teams and lead any organisation to success, explains why setting the right culture should be top of any CEO's agenda.

## What can managers do to become better bosses?

Remember you can't hit your targets yourself. If you want to hit — or destroy — your targets you need to make sure you have the right people with the right tools and that they are motivated all day, every day. All managers, myself included, forget this one every once and a while, but if you can keep it in mind most of

the time it will help you. Never forget how important you are to the people you manage. A small word from you, positive or negative, is likely to have a big effect. The power of the team is invariably greater than the power of any single individual, so don't make decisions on your own – talk with people.

## What is the biggest management lesson you have learned?

Believing in the power of people. I'm constantly amazed by what people can do when they are inspired.

## How do you make your business a great place to work?

You work damn hard at it. We have four pillars to our culture - communication, equality, reward and fun - and we have to work hard to be great at all four all of the time. At a senior level we talked a lot about culture. If the CEO asks questions about conversion rates or marketing costs, that's what their team will think is important. If they ask questions about the motivation of staff, then that's what their team will think is important. Senior management must put culture high on the agenda.

### What should HR's role be?

HR is the gatekeeper and auditor of the culture and should work around the organisation to determine what the best culture is, then communicate its basic principles throughout.



## Help women thrive during menopause

NEARLY 60 PER CENT OF working women experiencing menopause said it had a negative impact on them at work, according to a Bupa/CIPD survey. Cathy Hastie, social entrepreneur and author of *Menopause Working*, wants to help women and employers improve their understanding of the menopause and help employees thrive during this experience.

While organisations are starting to recognise how important midlife women's skills and experience are to the workplace, change needs to happen faster – particularly around company culture. "Having a policy and guidelines is a great starting point, but unless your culture values mid-life women and makes them feel like they belong, they won't thrive, and they won't stay," Hastie tells *Work*.

"HR has a key role in this, as it is most likely to be the facilitator and owner of culture, people experience and benefits," she says. But what does this mean practically? "First, take steps to understand the lived experience of your menopausal workers – not everyone has the same experience. Second, ensure there is a programme of education for everyone, using a variety of media to maximise accessibility. Third, keep the conversation going and keep learning."

Cathy Hastie is director of HR transformation at PwC and founder of Menopause Working



## Upskilling for the hybrid world

HOW DO YOU MAKE HYBRID teams work? Insights' Global Hybrid Working Report 2023 surveyed 3,000 global employees, finding that 59 per cent worked in hybrid teams, with 65 per cent of organisations with hybrid structures reporting they plan to make this permanent. Yet only 21 per cent of these companies had implemented specific development plans, including upskilling for hybrid environments.

When asked about the most highly valued skills for making hybrid teams work, both managers/leaders and employees ranked skills such as communication, empathy, conflict resolution and building connections as key for effective teams - but the emotional intelligence, negotiation skills and self awareness that are key to developing these skills were ranked lowest.

This ideal skillset includes communication, change adaption, empathy and collaborative working. Marco Favarolo, head of APAC at Insights Learning and Development, says HR must recognise that not every manager will have these skills and that regular, in-depth training is required to develop them: "This will strengthen relationships at all levels, better equipping everyone to navigate and mitigate the physical distance that comes with hybrid working."

Marco Favarolo is head of APAC at Insights Learning and Development



## Should the UK have more bank holidays?

With an extra day off given to workers in England and Wales to celebrate the coronation, and many countries offering two weeks or more of public holidays to their employees, would it pay to have more paid time off?





**CHATGPT MAR 3 VERSION** chat.openai.com



### SHAVANAH TAJ General secretary, Wales TUC

Workers in the UK should have more public holidays. Employees in England and Wales have four fewer public holidays on average than their European counterparts. The UK's paltry number of bank holidays contributes towards our damaging long-hours culture.

In Wales there is a particular demand for St David's Day on 1 March to be made a public holiday, bringing us in to line with Northern Ireland and Scotland, whose patron saints days are holidays. Wales is currently the only part of the UK that cannot set its own bank holidays - the Welsh parliament should be granted this power.

All UK workers should get at least 12 public holidays and people in each nation should have a voice in deciding when these fall. Workers enjoy a bank holiday; however, many are asking whether the way we expect workers to take one at a particular time undermines good work policies that commit to inclusive, just and equitable workplaces. Could a greater diversity of cultures and religions be reflected in our choice of public holidays? This is a topic that's worthy of debate.

Finally, to make sure no one misses out, extra public holidays must be reflected in statutory holiday entitlement. And anyone required to work on public holidays should have the right to a pay premium or time off in lieu.



As an Allanguage model, I do not have personal opinions or beliefs. However, I can provide information and perspectives on the topic. Whether the UK should have more bank holidays is a matter of debate. Proponents argue that additional bank holidays would provide workers with more opportunities for rest and relaxation, leading to improved wellbeing and work-life balance. They also argue additional bank holidays could increase tourism and consumer spending.

Opponents, on the other hand, argue that additional bank holidays would negatively impact productivity and economic growth, as businesses would struggle to maintain output levels during periods of reduced staffing. They also argue increased labour costs and administrative burdens associated with scheduling and staffing would be a significant concern for businesses.

Ultimately, any decision to add or remove bank holidays would need to be carefully considered, taking into account a range of factors including economic considerations, worker wellbeing and cultural attitudes towards work-life balance.



Saïd Business School; Diana Henderson/Penguin Life



## **Equity** design

#### What is it?

In a nutshell, it means designing products, services and organisations to give all stakeholders – particularly employees – the opportunity to succeed. This does not mean giving everyone equal support, but ensuring they get the right support.

#### How does this differ from inclusive design?

It incorporates – and sprang out of – inclusive design, which many practitioners felt was not being inclusive enough. To give just one example, in certain sectors of the British design industry, as few as 5 per cent of staff are women. Even in more diverse workplaces, encouraging statistics about minority headcounts do not tell the whole story. Too often, laudable EDI policies are undermined by an organisational modus operandi originally defined by white, middle-aged, middle class men.

#### Can you give us some examples?

Managers often conclude that an individual with a different ethnic background does not 'fit' when they ought to ask: does our culture discriminate and/or marginalise people who do things differently? Many races, genders, classes and ages have particular ways of handling such common situations as expressing dissent, consulting colleagues and contributing to meetings. Equity design seeks to identify – and remedy – the biases inherent in any business to ensure a fair outcome for all concerned.

#### How does it do this?

Through an inclusive, collaborative, participatory and community-led process, which can run alongside day-to-day operations. The fruits of that process vary from organisational reform – flattening the structure to give wider access to leaders – revised training programmes (to ensure that support materials are not culturally biased towards particular groups) and office design (does the entire leadership need to be clustered in the same part of the building?)

#### The bottom line

Unfortunately, the awful cliché 'this is a journey not a destination' applies here. You can start by asking not why does their face not fit, but why does our culture not fit their face? Equity is not just quantitative – measured through quotas and such – it is qualitative.



## Love your middle managers

SENIOR LEADERS SHOULD stop treating middle managers as expendable cogs, argue McKinseyites Bill Schaninger, Bryan Hancock and Emily Field in *Power to the Middle*. Instead, they must be championed. "Middle managers can only perform their roles well if they are set up for success. Unfortunately, they're typically drowning in administrative work or extra tasks requested by more senior leaders," says Field.

"Senior leaders should start by giving middle managers time to do what they do best: manage their people. They should empower middle managers to make as many personnel decisions as possible – to shape when and how their teams operate and how they prioritise their time."

Things need to change – but how? According to McKinsey, managers must be allowed to have bigger titles and pay without being promoted out of managerial roles where they have the most impact; be given a leadership role in attracting and retaining the best people; and be allowed to modernise antiquated and inefficient processes.

Emily Field is a partner at McKinsey & Company



## Why you should think like a hacker

IN THE FOUR WORKAROUNDS, Paulo Savaget argues managers should think more like ingenious hackers. "Adopting a hacker attitude can help managers work around obstacles, find opportunities across silos, cultivate a culture of pragmatism, mobilise staff around processes instead of end goals, and navigate situations in which there is not an obvious answer or clear choice," he tells *Work*.

Savaget's appreciation of the hackers' workaround approach is born from his research into 'scrappy' small organisations, which he describes as "feisty, resourceful and operating at the fringes of power". "They see a world of possibilities by looking at unexplored places, finding unconventional pairings and repurposing resources," he adds.

Savaget gives an example from Zambia, where many medicines cannot be found in remote regions of sub-Saharan Africa because of healthcare bottlenecks. "A workaround doesn't try to tackle these bottlenecks; it circumvents them. The organisation I studied worked around them by piggybacking on Coca-Cola's distribution channels. They realised Coca-Cola can be found even in the remotest places on earth – so why can't medicines take a free ride with soda bottles?"

Paolo Savaget is an associate professor at Oxford Saïd Business School



## How to spend your time for happiness

A SUMMER HOLIDAY is often a time for self reflection. Cassie Holmes, author of *Happier Hour*, has spent years researching how our perception of time and happiness are interlinked. "People are tired of the unhappiness and stress associated with time poverty... People want to slow down and have enough time to invest in activities that truly matter to them," she explains.

"The high rates of burnout and anxiety are leading all of us to reconsider our compulsion towards our constant and hurried mode of doing. We must shift the goal of time management away from efficiency and towards what's worthwhile."

What does this mean for managers? "Senior leaders need to highlight the purpose of the work, why it matters and the ultimate impact it has," she says. When people are aware of the meaning of their work, they feel more motivated and satisfied.

As social connection is also fundamental to wellbeing, employees would benefit from more of it. "Leaders should support employees in developing friendships within the organisation. Studies show that people who have a best friend at work are significantly more engaged, do a better job, and are happier in their jobs and with their lives overall," explains Holmes.



## **KAREN DILLON**

### THE DESTRUCTIVE IMPACT OF UNCHECKED MICROSTRESS

DO YOU FIND YOURSELF collapsing into bed at night, exhausted and drained from the day, without being able to put your finger on why? It might be the result of 'microstress' – small moments of stress from interactions with people in our work or personal lives that are so routine we barely know they have hit us, but whose cumulative toll is enormous.

New research we

"Even high carried out into high performers were performers for our book. The Microstress drowning in Effect: How Little microstress' Things Pile Up and Create Big Problems - and What to Do About It, has made clear the destructive impact of unchecked microstress, both on individuals and teams. In hundreds of interviews, we consistently found that, once we got past the surface, even people who had been identified as high performers by their organisations were drowning in microstress. And it was threatening both their work and personal lives.

When these microstresses hit, we typically do not pause long enough to register what they are doing to us physically and mentally. Each microstress on its own may seem insignificant. But

microstresses can trigger a chain reaction of other, unrecognised stresses that can stretch for hours, even days. For example, we might work harder and longer to compensate for teammates that just missed the mark on their part of a project, putting a strain on our personal relationships in the process.

While conventional advice for coping with stress often proposes

activities such as mindfulness to help you steel yourself to cope with more stress, our research suggests we might be leaving

a higher-leverage option on the table. Years of social science research tells us that a negative interaction can have three to five times the impact of a positive. So why not focus on removing just two or three negatives – microstresses – rather than just attempting to better endure the current number? It is possible to identify a couple of microstresses that are systemic enough that it is worth pushing back on.

We must address the microstress head on. Because understanding how microstress is affecting our performance – and lives – is the start of getting it under control.

Cassie Holmes is a professor at UCLA's School of Management

Karen Dillon is former editor of *Harvard Business Review*, and co-author with Rob Cross of *The Microstress Effect* 



Fresh thinking from the worldfamous incubator of ideas

#### GREG BROCKMAN

Co-founder, OpenAl

## The inside story of ChatGPT's astonishing potential

In a talk from the cutting edge of technology, Greg Brockman explores the underlying design principles of ChatGPT and demonstrates some mind-blowing, unreleased plug-ins for the chatbot that have sent shockwaves across the world. "It feels like we're entering an historic period right now where we as a world are going to define a technology that will be so important for our society going forward, and I believe that we can manage this for good," he says.



**TSEDAL NEELEY** Leadership expert

### Making hybrid work better for everyone

How can we rethink hybrid work so it brings out the best in both in-person and remoteworking employees? Tsedal Neeley shares the changes we need to make to create workplaces that actually work – no matter where you are located. From her research with more than 300 companies, she gives four lessons. First, coordinate 'anchor' days where colleagues overlap. Second, plan informal conversation at the beginning of a meeting. Third, use the right tools to communicate. Finally, commit to the new hybrid culture. Job done.

#### **YEJIN CHOI**

Computer scientist

## Why Al is incredibly smart – and shockingly stupid

Yejin Choi demystifies the current state of massive artificial intelligence systems like ChatGPT, highlighting key problems with cutting-edge large language models. "We're entering a new era in which AI is almost like a new intellectual species with unique strengths and weaknesses compared to humans. In order to make this powerful AI sustainable and humanistic, we need to teach AI common sense, norms and values," she says.



# Manage anxiety to become bolder

IT IS HARD TO FEEL BOLD in your life and career if you are feeling anxious or afraid, but Luana Marques, former president of the Anxiety and Depression Association of America, has written Bold Move: A 3-Step Plan to Transform Anxiety into Power, where she outlines how we should not - but often do - manage our anxiety: avoidance. "For many, the response is avoidance, which only exacerbates anxiety. To transform anxiety into power, we must learn to approach rather than avoid," she tells Work.

"Living boldly starts with identifying the real enemy – psychological avoidance. There are three types of avoidance: reacting, remaining and retreating. To live a bold life, we must recognise our avoidance patterns and confront them head on."

To learn to move forward and address anxiety's root despite feeling afraid, Marques proposes the practice of three skills: shift, approach and align. "Shift broadens our perspective when discomfort narrows our view and makes us cling to old narratives. By asking: 'What would I tell my best

friend in this situation?' we can change our thoughts and reduce anxiety," she says.

"Approach teaches us to move towards emotions, preventing them from reaching a boiling point. Practising opposite action — facing discomfort rather than avoiding it — helps us realise that our perceived fears aren't real, thereby lessening anxiety.

"Align involves recalibrating towards our values to overcome the freezing response to discomfort. By incorporating what truly matters into our daily lives, we can start moving in the right direction.

"Leaders should model facing discomfort within their organisations and understand what fuels it. By creating a personalised three-step action plan to move boldly towards their goals, they can lead values-driven organisations. Living a values-driven life means using our values as a guiding compass, enabling us to face avoidance, recalibrate our lives and work towards what truly matters."

Luana Marques is associate professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School



## **URI GNEEZY**

### DO NOT ASK FOR LONG-TERM THINKING THEN INCENTIVISE SHORT-TERM WINS

MARK ZUCKERBERG WROTE in a 2008 email: "It is better to buy than compete." This kind of behaviour may be illegal – as the FTC made clear in a lawsuit against Facebook, accusing it of buying WhatsApp and Instagram to kill the competition. But sometimes these tactics are used for short-term gains.

An example is the case of Bazaarvoice's 2012 acquisition of PowerReviews, which led to a significant increase in Bazaarvoice's stock price and its executives realising \$90m when Bazaarvoice's stock price soared above \$20. The acquisition was primarily aimed at eliminating PowerReviews, which was a fierce price competitor to Bazaarvoice.

As a result of this competition, many retailers and manufacturers were able to receive substantial price discounts. However, it also resulted in an antitrust complaint by the US Department of Justice in 2013, which forced Bazaarvoice to divest PowerReviews; consequently its stock price plummeted below \$7, resulting in a considerable loss to shareholders. Bazaarvoice executives knew the potential longterm consequences for the company, yet chose to take the risk and acquire PowerReviews, primarily driven by their desire to pocket the \$90m in the short run.

In my book, *Mixed Signals*, I use the tension between short-term and long-term goals as an example of how incentives send signals. Company management may convey an official message concerning topics such as ethics, teamwork and quality versus quantity, but these messages are often just empty words. Simultaneously, many organisations create incentives that give rise to a contradictory signal, such as rewarding individual success

"Inconsistencies between
the company's official
message and the incentives
provided can cause confusion
among employees"

over teamwork, and prioritising quantity over quality.

Such inconsistencies between the official message and the incentives provided can cause confusion among employees, who may not know which signal to follow. More often than not, they follow the incentive route, which is not the company's priority.

Empirical data indicates that short-termism is a real phenomenon. Executives who receive mixed signals from their company based on their incentives are more likely to prioritise short-term gains over long-term value-creating projects. This could result in delays or even sacrificing initiatives that are critical to the organisation's long-term success. As demonstrated by the Bazaarvoice case, short-termism can also impact the level of risks that a company is willing to take.

There is, however, a viable method to encourage CEOs to prioritise long-term success; for example, by escrowing the CEO's equity for an extended period, which is a process in which a third party holds an asset on behalf of two other parties until certain obligations are fulfilled. In the context of company management, an escrow ensures that executives who receive equity as a bonus must wait for the obligated period to pass before selling the stock. An alternative is to extend the CEO's guaranteed tenure, which addresses the CEO's concern about being replaced if the company underperforms in the short term.

To promote long-term considerations, it is essential that short-term incentives do not carry too much weight. Do not ask your team to work towards long-term goals and then punish them if the short-term outcomes fall short. Instead, ensure that the timeline of your incentives aligns with your ultimate goals.