MONTHLY NEWSWIRE

Dear Client,

Welcome to our monthly newswire. We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter and find it useful.

Best wishes

John Harrison

MICROSOFT OFFICE FOR iPAD

It has been a long time coming, but it seems that Microsoft have finally realised that most businesspeople want to use Microsoft Office on their iPad. The company have recently released individual versions of their Word, Excel and PowerPoint programs that will work on an iPad, making it possible for users to switch seamlessly between PC, Mac, tablet and phone when working. The apps make intuitive use of the iPad's touch screen, and 'sharing' features allow you to collaborate with others.

The trio of apps are listed separately in the App Store and (as with Office Mobile) each is free to download. Free versions of each app can only be used in read-only mode; users wishing to edit or create documents will require an Office 365 subscription.

There are plenty of free "Office-type" apps out there, but Office 365 may be the more attractive option to those using Microsoft Office on their desktop PC, Mac or laptop. The good news is that your iPad downloads won't count towards the usual five-PC / Mac limit. Microsoft Office is also one of the only mobile office suites that works with Microsoft OneDrive and SharePoint: if this is where you store your documents, it is advisable to continue with Office.

GETTING INDUCTION PROCESSES RIGHT

In a world where the latest generation of "millennial" workers are prone to changing jobs, the importance of a good employee induction plan can no longer be ignored. In order to get your induction process right you need to consider:

- How long it takes new employees to become a productive member of the team
- How long it generally takes new team members to reach a level of competency so that they can work for a key client

Team Involvement

Getting your new recruits involved with the right people is key. Integrating your new employee with the team should involve activities which are relevant, interactive and, most importantly, fun! A dedicated mentoring relationship is also extremely helpful to your new hire as they will feel secure knowing that they have someone to turn to with their questions. The mentor should be an established member of the company and someone your new hire will feel comfortable seeking assistance from on policies, procedures and guidelines.

Prepare a Workspace

Nothing makes someone feel more welcome than when you take steps to prepare for them. Depending on their role, here are some common workplace essentials to have in place, ideally before your new hire is on board:

- Email account set up
- Stationary
- Mobile phone / BlackBerry if applicable
- Security access card / fob
- Computer set up with software, passwords etc
- Business cards if applicable

Training

It is important that you make your new employee feel that the business cares about them. The onboarding process should include formal training in their first week. This training could include HR, policy and procedure training, IT training for specific systems, etc.

Ensure that your training programme is timely and relevant to their position and role in the company, and that you encourage them to take part in further after-hours education, workshops or CPD training where relevant.

BEING A BETTER MANAGER / LEADER

Today's challenging business environment requires more from managers and business leaders. Here are a few tips to help you focus on being more effective.

Work to Your Strengths

Many of us spend too much time worrying about our shortcomings. Try to focus on the things that you are good at and use these strengths for the benefit of the business. What activities draw you in so much that you lose track of time? What boosts your energy, and what does that say about you? Now focus on the tasks that these strengths will help you with. Everything else should be delegated.

Pause

We all face challenges at work. They could take the form of tight deadlines, demanding customers or difficult decisions in sensitive situations. Ignore your body's natural inclination to assume "fight or flight" type reactions. Instead, stop. Just pause. Consider the upside and downside to the business and the people involved. Ask questions and encourage others to get involved in decision making. Consider the best outcome from the situation and work towards achieving that outcome.

Create Trust

To build trust and support, you need to be reliable. Don't make commitments that you can't keep. Manage expectations and deliver on your promises. Be open and accept criticism. Be honest and don't be defensive if something goes wrong - admit that you made a mistake and propose a sensible way to recover - this builds trust and respect among your peers.

Ask the Right Questions

Listen to others, ensure that you have all the facts and then consider your questions. Avoid shooting from the hip. If you need to ask a question on a specific situation, perhaps create a draft email. Save the draft and read it again later. Upon second reading, it will generally become apparent if the question is appropriate or not.

Allow Recovery Times

No matter how good you are at your job, you cannot work at 100% all the time. Athletes allow themselves time to recover after a training session or a race. Business managers and leaders need to do the same. Build in time each day to let you think and reflect on the challenges, problems and opportunities that are currently on your desk. Ensure that you take a lunch break and that it is away from your desk. This recovery time will allow you to perform better throughout the day.

EFFECTIVE DELEGATION

We all understand the importance of delegation, yet very few know how to do it properly. Here are a few tips to help you delegate work effectively.

Realistic Deadlines

It is important to note that overloading your team will have a negative impact, so before you delegate work make sure that you understand how much work they currently have to do. Next identify any extra capacity in your team and consider whether this is enough to complete a delegated task or project. Set a deadline that is realistic and achievable for the person or team to whom you are delegating the work.

Be Specific about What You Want Done

Be clear as to the purpose of the delegated work and what kind of results you expect. Providing a written outline of what you require can be useful, as this gives your team something to refer back to. Finally, take the time to answer your team's questions - this takes less time than redoing the work!

Leave Them to It

Once you have delegated work to someone who is well equipped to handle the task, allow them to be imaginative in their approach and do something in a differently or better way. How they do the work doesn't really matter, as long as it produces the right results. Remember - nobody likes to be micro managed.

Develop Your Team

You can use delegation to empower team members and encourage them to develop new skills and expertise. Make sure that they feel comfortable to ask questions: let them know that you are happy to clarify anything they may be unsure about.

Reporting

Have a system in place so that your team can report their progress without having to constantly interrupt you during the day. Setting dates for progress updates can be useful.

Please contact a member of our team if you would like to discuss any of the issues raised.