



REVIEW

SEPTEMBER
2010

FUTURE MEETINGS 2010

17.30
networking
for 18.15 start

11 October

St George Hotel

15 November

Crown Hotel

13 December

Holiday Inn

(Safari)

Review of Chamber Meeting + News Update

IMPROVING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

- Recruitment and job offers – avoiding discrimination and misunderstandings
- Starting as you mean to go on - and providing feedback
- Disciplinary action – how to avoid industrial tribunal claims

HARROGATE DISTRICT NEWS

- Harrogate comes out very high in the BBC research ranking of resilience
- Majestic Hotel reopens just four months after the awful fire damage
- RBS announce massive job losses – but not so serious for Harrogate
- Yorkshire Forward to be replaced by Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)

CHAMBER MEMBERS' BENEFITS

- Harrogate & Dales Convention Bureau proposals out for consultation
- Yorkshire Business Market 2011 now open for bookings with 25% discount
- Members are invited to nominate speakers for 2011 Meetings and Seminars
- Chamber is undertaking major projects to improve Harrogate Trains & Roads

Future Meetings

Monday, 11th October, St George Hotel, Ripon Road – 17.30 for 18.15-20.00

Charity Evening - offering benefits for business

Disability Action Yorkshire; Saint Michael's Hospice
The Mental Health Project & Talking Space Counselling Service, Harrogate CVS

Monday, 15th November, Crown Hotel, Crown Place, Harrogate

FREE Seminar – 15.30 – 17.00 – 'Success creator' (Members only)
Double your income and increase your business exponentially

PUBLIC Meeting - 17.30 for 18.15-20.00

The Current Economic Situation and its impact on Harrogate

Wallace Sampson, CEO, Harrogate Borough Council
Andrew Jones MP for Harrogate & Knaresborough

PROMOTING HARROGATE BUSINESS

Harrogate Chamber of Trade & Commerce, PO Box 8, Harrogate, HG2 8XB

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IMPROVING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

September's presentations were a double-act with Neil Goodrum of McCormicks Solicitors and Michael Millward, Chairman of the North Yorkshire branch of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. This was well received by members and both presenters have provided detailed articles in order to ensure those members unable to be present gain a good insight into what was said on this important topic.

Dealing with Recruitment and Discipline – an Outline for Employers

There are two main areas of concern for employers about employees: recruitment and disciplinary action.

Recruitment

Employers need to be aware that there are various risks, when recruiting employees. Appointing people who can't do the job, do not get on with colleagues or are, for many possible reasons, disruptive to the business, can be damaging. With the wide ranging rules in this area, care must be taken not to discriminate unlawfully, including against job applicants who do not get appointed. Finally, it is very important that the correct written arrangements are made regarding terms and conditions of employment.

The best way to minimise these risks is to plan and document the recruitment process from beginning to end. A written Equal Opportunities Policy, which is made known throughout the business, is an essential initial requirement. A written job specification for the role should be prepared. Employers should consider the skills and attributes needed by someone who is suitable for the job and prepare a "person specification" ensuring that it only deals with things that can be objectively justified for the role. Careful thought should be given to the wording of any job advertisement and to where this will be placed. Consider using a written application form; research has shown that this is less likely to result in unwitting discrimination. Once applications are received review these, if possible, by more than one person, applying the objective standards as set out in the job and person specification.

Once a short list of candidates for interview has been prepared, there should be a written plan of how the interviews are to be conducted. There is less risk of unlawful discrimination if all candidates who are interviewed are asked the same questions; enquiries about personal circumstances should be avoided. Claims can be brought for indirect discrimination. This is where all people involved are treated the same, but the arrangements make it more difficult for members of a protected group to apply. This is a further reason why any requirements, applied to the candidates, must be necessary for the job.

Job Offers

Before offering a job, consider whether checks are needed, such as references, or medical, criminal or immigration record checks. Offers should be made conditional on satisfactory results to any checks.

If a job offer is to be made, it should be in writing. Make it clear whether or not the offer contains the terms of the employment contract or whether these are to be in a separate document. It is better if any contract of employment is provided at the time of the job offer so that there is no misunderstanding about what the terms are. A written statement of the principal terms and conditions of employment must be given to an employee within two months of starting work.

Disciplinary Action

Turning to the disciplinary process, employees who have been with an employer for 12 months or more have the right not to be unfairly dismissed. There are a number of fair reasons for dismissal, including the employees conduct or their performance. Even when an employer believes that they have a fair reason, the law still requires that they act reasonably in treating that reason as sufficient grounds for dismissal. For example, it would probably be unfair to dismiss an employee who was late for work on one occasion. This might be different if the employee is persistently late after a reasonable and fair procedure is followed with proper warnings given.

In most cases, to dismiss fairly there needs to be a fair reason, based on reasonable grounds after a reasonable investigation. Some other disciplinary action may be more appropriate.

Dismissal is only reasonable in the most serious cases or in circumstances where there is a significant and repeated problem. Employers should still follow a proper procedure where it is thought that less severe action, such as a written warning, would be appropriate. Fair procedure includes a written invitation to the employee to attend a formal meeting. This must make it clear that the meeting is under the employer's disciplinary procedure. The letter should set out the reason and grounds why disciplinary action is being considered. It is important to make clear that no decision has been taken and that the employee will be given every opportunity to answer the matters raised.

At a disciplinary meeting, the employee has the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative. The employer should also have at least two people present, even if one is solely there in the role of note taker. If, following the meeting, it is decided that disciplinary action is needed, this should be set out in writing and the employee advised of a right of appeal to a more senior level of management. Providing for appeals can be difficult for small employers, but it is important to consider how this might be done. An appeal stage should not be left out.

Failure to follow a fair process can add to the compensation an employee might recover, if a claim is made to an Employment Tribunal. When hearing a case, the Tribunal will take into account the ACAS Code of Practice on dealing with discipline. This is essential reading for employers before starting any disciplinary action. The Code is short, straight forward and available free from the ACAS website.

Neil Goodrum, McCormicks Solicitors
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www.mccormicks-solicitors.com

Starting as you mean to go on and providing feedback

Starting a new job is as exciting for the employer as it is for the employee; both are full of expectations and the desire to be successful. It is hard to imagine how it could all go wrong!

The key factor in any relationship is expectations. All too often in employment relationships employers focus on what they want and what they need, and ignore the reasons why the employee entered the relationship.

People need to have a reason to work. They have to be motivated, and increasingly in the 21st Century that motivation is not money. Your employees are increasingly looking for something that adds to their lifestyle as much as their bank-balance.

Employers need to understand what their employees do in their spare time. What family commitments do they have? What ambitions do they have? In essence what motivates them?

Likewise employees need to ask why and how their job helps them to achieve the lifestyle they want, but surprisingly not many have asked themselves this question.

There are three things that managers need to know about motivation. Firstly what type of personality do their employees have? Are they what McGregor described as Theory X personalities, happy to do the absolute minimum to get by, or Theory Y personality's eager to get on in life and be successful?

Then there is the issue of whether they are working to satisfy basic needs like housing and food, which Herzberg described as Hygiene Factors or have they moved on to addressing what he described as Motivator Factors having a brand new car rather than just a car?

Finally the five point scale of Maslow's hierarchy of needs which defined motivation as a combination of elements covering psychological, security, social, esteem, and self actualisation, along which each individual progresses in all work environments. It is a more detailed definition, but one which helps managers to understand their employees more deeply.

Understanding what motivates your employees and creating a combination of objectives and rewards that motivates the employee to achieve objectives or maintain performance standards is the secret of a constructive employment relationship.

Many people will define objectives using the S-M-A-R-T acronym, but I think this is a bit limiting as it talks about realistic and achievable, which tends to suggest that there is an expected limit to what the employee will be capable of achieving.

I prefer the M-U-S-T acronym as it removes this and talks instead about objectives being Specific, Measurable and Timed just like the S-M-A-R-T acronym, but replaces Achievable and Realistic with Unbelievable. By which I mean that people have not just done what they were told, they have achieved something that they did not believe themselves to be

capable of. If your individual employees do not develop, your business will not be able to develop.

But what happens if it does start to go wrong? How do you get someone back on track?

As a manager you see the performance or behaviour that is a problem, you do not see all the elements of a person's life that drives that behaviour. We all essentially have hidden depths.

This is another reason why it is important to know about the lives of your employees. It means that you can understand changes in behaviour and deal with them more appropriately. It doesn't mean that you should be a soft touch, but deal with a matter fairly and you will strengthen a relationship.

Give feedback in a constructive way and you are also more likely to engender a positive response.

Feedback	
Do	Don't
Focus on things that the person can change	Comment on something the person can do nothing about –like their gender, height, race
Tell them how their behaviour made you feel	Tell people how they were feeling when they behaved in a way that you found unacceptable
Always give examples and be as specific as you can	Use phrases like 'you always' it is too vague to have any meaning
Explain the affect the unacceptable behaviour has on you, colleagues and customers and the business	Let unacceptable behaviour of anytime pass without comment, always say something
Describe in detail the change in behaviour that you expect to see, how you will measure that change and when you will measure the change	Tell people to be more like someone else, they may see that as asking them to be like someone that they do not like
Ask the person if they will need help, information or new skills to achieve the change that you want to see	Assume that the person has actually been told what acceptable behaviour is
When the person does the right thing praise them and let other people know that you are pleased with their performance	Forget to go back and review the person on the agreed dates. If it is not important to you, it will not be important to them
Keep written notes of every conversation that you have about performance with an employee	

Michael is Chairman of the North Yorkshire branch of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), but his commercial company is:

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Tel: 0113 251 5123 Website: www.abeceder.co.uk

(The above articles are for general information only; do obtain specialist advice before taking any action.)

HARROGATE DISTRICT NEWS

Harrogate in top 30!

Recent BBC research showed that Harrogate came out 28th out of 324 districts in the UK for resilience of business, people, community and the place. It was the best town outside of the south east.

The business aspect was decided on how strong the local business base was and whether there was a high number of firms proven to adapt to the difficult economic conditions. Harrogate obviously does!

Barceló Majestic Hotel Re-opens

A prime example of that resilience is the re-opening of the Barceló Majestic Hotel just four months after the terrible damage caused by the recent fire. The west wing is open with 88 bedrooms available. The leisure club will re-open on 4th October after a makeover. The Dining Room, which was worst hit by water damage, will re-open early November ready for the Christmas Party season. For bookings call 01423 700300 or see www.barcelo-hotels.co.uk/harrogate

RBS local job losses

The recent announcement of 3,500 RBS job losses nationwide sent out shock waves in Harrogate over those employed at RBS Business Services. It emerged that the likely number of local job losses will be approximately 250 over a period of three years.

Harrogate Chamber's Chief Executive, Brian Dunsby and Past President, Brian Haines were interviewed by BBC Look North and were upbeat about the job prospects of the staff in Harrogate's thriving economy.

Government changes to Localism

The new coalition government is planning big changes with the abolition of regional government and well-known organisations like Yorkshire Forward and Business Link will be replaced by 'Local Enterprise Partnerships' (LEPs).

Business Link Yorkshire has stressed they are still very much open for business – Please call 08456 048 048.

Harrogate will be faced with the York & North Yorkshire LEP or the Leeds City Region LEP. Information currently available indicates that Leeds City Region will be more beneficial to Harrogate. The November Chamber Meeting will bring the latest news on the Government cuts and the plans for LEPs in this area.

VAT Registrations rise again

The latest York and North Yorkshire Economic Bulletin shows that the number of VAT registrations rose again in the last quarter, higher than the previous year, along with an increase of new accounts in July. Almost half of these accounts were opened in York or Harrogate, with just under half of those by sole traders.

At the same time the numbers of unemployed and job centre claimants has decreased, with Harrogate down to 1.7%, which is much lower than the regional and national figures. The full Economic Bulletin can be sent to members by e-mail request to the Secretariat.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

FREE Seminar – 15th November

Stuart Pearson of Peak Performance Practitioners will be running the second in the series of FREE seminars offered exclusively to Harrogate Chamber members.

Success creator - Double your income and increase your business exponentially; it offers you:

- Learn the 8 ways to increase your profit exponentially at little or no cost to you
- Have you got the right business model?
- Understand what is stopping you creating exactly the kind of business success you feel you deserve
- The simple way to overcome what is stopping you
- How to create the changes required

The session will be totally interactive. Find out more about Peak Performance Practitioners at:

www.peakperformancepractitioner.com

If you would like to attend, please send an e-mail to Maggie Hall at info@harrogatechamber.org

Call for Speakers 2011

The Chamber Management Group have been formulating the 2011 Meetings Calendar topics and venues. Any members with suggestions or offers to make presentations, please send by e-mail to info@harrogatechamber.org by the end of October.

MEMBERS' FORUM

Cedar Court ready for Christmas!

The Cedar Court Hotel's Christmas brochure is out and available for collection at Chamber meetings, or request a copy from the hotel direct.

Any Leeds United Fans might be interested in attending a Sportsman's Dinner at the Cedar Court Hotel on 14th October, with special guests Eddie Gray, Gary McAllister and other past Leeds United players. A few places remain – Tel: 01423 858585 or e-mail reservations@cedarcourtharrogate.co.uk

Ripley Castle Winter Festival

Ripley Castle is hosting a series of musical events promoted by White Rose Festivals on 1-4 December, including Four Seasons by Candlelight, A Night at the Opera, Sound of Musicals and a Winter Proms night.

Full details and booking at www.whiterosefestivals.com

CIPD events for Chamber members

The Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development is teaming up with two Harrogate Chamber members to host events in October.

Solicitors **Davidson Large** and **Raworths** will host events ranging from employment law through mental health in the work place, effective verbal communications, employee internet usage and more.

Full details and booking at:

<http://www.cipd.co.uk/branch/nyork/events>

FOCUS GROUPS

Town Centre

The Harrogate at Christmas campaign is gaining momentum and you will now be able to find Raffle Tickets for sale in the Victoria Shopping Centre and other outlets on Saturdays in the run-up to Christmas.

Sandra Doherty of Alexa House was awarded her 'I'm Supporting Harrogate at Christmas' bauble for her business's donation of £100 for 2010 Christmas Lights.

Find out more at www.harrogateatchristmas.org

Promoting Harrogate

Past President, Mark Lancaster of Colour It In updated members on the progress of the proposed Convention Bureau for Harrogate. Invitations have been sent to all venues in Harrogate asking them if they wish to be involved with a 100% support offered in the responses received so far. Would everyone interested in attracting business more tourism please contact Mark on 0423 813516 or email: mlancaster@harrogate.com

Traffic & Transport

Trains

Why Harrogate Trains? Chief Executive, Brian Dunsby has compiled a comprehensive 25 page report to the Department for Transport which has received written support from the Leaders of Harrogate Borough Council, the Chief Executive of North Yorkshire County Council and Chief Executive of Welcome to Yorkshire. They have all written to the DfT supporting the Chamber's bid for direct Harrogate-London trains.

The initial response from the Department of Transport is that the report is 'persuasive' and with the support of Harrogate and Knaresborough's MP, Andrew Jones, it has been elevated to ministerial level. He personally thanked Brian saying, "it really is an excellent piece of work because it is so comprehensive".

The next meeting is with Network Rail to discuss the practicalities of running more direct and local services through Harrogate. A recent report includes Harrogate Trains as one of their aspirations for the future.

In the short term, Harrogate Chamber has compiled a spreadsheet that shows ALL the services that connect between London, Eastern Counties and Harrogate. A total of 57 services from London Kings Cross to Yorkshire have a connection to Harrogate, which is many more than the 25 shown in the pocket timetable. Copies are available on request from the Secretariat.

Roads

Early in September Brian Dunsby arranged for North Yorkshire County Council Highways Engineers to tour all the major traffic blackspots in Harrogate for over two hours accompanied by representatives from the bus company Transdev and the Taxi Association.

The problems suffered in Harrogate as a result of the inefficient timing of pedestrian crossings, traffic light junctions and interaction between traffic lights and islands were clearly demonstrated to the engineers.

Brian said that the joint recommendations have been accepted as meriting detailed investigation by the NYCC engineers and they will check the efficiency of all these key junctions to maximise the flow of traffic.

Our proposal is "radial route priority" by which traffic on the main roads is given priority over the side roads, because those on the side roads have alternatives, which aren't available for those using the main roads. Brian stressed that the town's economy depends on visitors coming into Harrogate on the main radial roads, who need priority treatment to get through and not be held up at every junction. He would be happy to discuss this with anyone interested in the flow of traffic through Harrogate and the problems at key junctions.

SPAMS & SCAMS

Mystery Phone Calls

No 1. Davinder Pabial reported one of her clients had a call from someone claiming to be from the Business Directory but didn't say which or what it was. He said that my client has been advertising with them for 5 years. He said it was probably my client's colleague who secured the advert - but my client is a sole trader. When my client asked what their website address was he gave it as the Business Directory but when my client said he couldn't find their listing he hung up.

No 2. Carole Hopkinson was telephoned by someone saying they were Microsoft technical support. They told her they had received error messages from her computer and that she had a Trojan virus that would kill her computer within a week! She spoke to her computer technician and was told it is a registered scam with Microsoft. Unfortunately some people had been conned into giving their credit card details. The voice is foreign with broken English. Brian and Maggie have also received similar calls at unusual times.

Dangerous Attached Files

There has been a flurry of short "innocent" sounding e-mails with attached HTML files that begin with a series of numbers. The messages refer to data, resumes, invoices and similar information that you are expecting! Likewise there are several attached ZIP files flying around. If you do not know the sender then never open attached files – just delete them unopened.

HMRC Tax Refund hoax

Steve Pepper sent details of recurrence of an old hoax: *You have received this message because you are yet to claim your tax refund of 965.80 GBP. This is the last notice we will be sending to you regarding this issue. Please submit the tax refund request and allow us 5-7 days in order to process it. Click the "Refund Me Now" link below and follow the on screen step in order to have us process your request.*

IGNORE - HMRC never send such e-mail messages!

LinkedIn & Twitter hoaxes

A rash of new hoaxes has emerged on Social Networks like Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter in which their logos have been copied so they look genuine. Just hover over all links to check before opening them.

YORKSHIRE BUSINESS MARKET

9th MAY 2011

A booking form for the Yorkshire Business Market on **Monday, 9th May 2011**, was included in last month's REVIEW – it can now be downloaded from the website www.yorkshirebusinessmarket.org/book.htm

Harrogate Chamber members can deduct a **25% discount off the prices quoted**, if booked and paid in full by 31st December 2010. Membership of Harrogate Chamber for 2011/12 must also be renewed from 1st April 2011, in order to retain this discount.

Stands begin at £266.00 for a 2m x 1.5m space, which **costs only £199.50** with the 25% discount. (No VAT.)

Early booking also means you get listed on the YBM website sooner, meaning more exposure for your company and visits to your website via the weblink!

We also have a Yorkshire Business Market Twitter feed at www.twitter.com/yorkshirebusmkt **Please follow and spread the word if you are on Twitter!**

DO YOU WANT A HARROGATE & DALES CONVENTION BUREAU?

What is a convention bureau? Simply a proactive sales team to promote venues and the wider offering of the area to the lucrative business tourism market – that is conferences, seminars, board meetings, etc.

Why do we need one? Competition! – Harrogate has built a reputation as a destination for exhibitions and conferences over the last 40 years but in that time nearly every major town and city in the UK has developed an offering to the business tourism industry. Harrogate really has something unique and this needs a combined and co-ordinated effort of promoting, marketing and sales to win business for our area.

Who should be involved? If you have a venue in Harrogate, Skipton, Richmond, Boroughbridge, Ripon and anywhere in-between that can accommodate a business meeting, conference, exhibition, workshops, training programs, away days or team building event you need to be involved.

If you want to be involved please fax 01423 870025 or email a message to info@harrogatechamber.org

THANKS TO CEDAR COURT HOTEL

Many thanks to Simon Cotton, General Manager of **Cedar Court Hotel** for hosting the September meeting very comfortably in the large Rowan Suite.

The recently refurbished lounge and bar area are very welcoming and the aromas emanating from their kitchen were making our mouths water. The plates of food being delivered to the Brasserie looked delicious!

For full details telephone 01423 858585 or click on: www.cedarcourthotels.co.uk/Harrogate.aspx

NEXT MEETINGS

11th October – St George Hotel

The popular **Charity Evening** returns with presentations by several members explaining how your business can benefit by helping local charities and social enterprises.

The presenters will be:

- Disability Action Yorkshire – Jackie Snape
- Harrogate and Area Volunteer Centre (The Mental Health Project/ Talking Space) – Lizzie Rosewood
- Saint Michael's Hospice – Christine Norton

Find out how supporting local charities can give a boost to staff morale and raise your company's profile. Notify the Secretariat if you also wish to speak briefly.

15th November – Crown Hotel

The Current Economic Situation and its impact on Harrogate is the topic for the November meeting. Following the Government's spending review on 20th October, Wallace Sampson, CEO, Harrogate Borough Council and Andrew Jones MP for Harrogate & Knaresborough will update members on the implications for regional and local government structures of the expected drastic cuts in funding - and the impact they may have on Harrogate District. The current proposals for the formation of Local Enterprise Partnerships to replace RDAs will also be considered.

NEW MEMBERS

Castle Galleries (Fine Art Retail)

Francoise Mosey, Gallery Manager
40 Parliament Street, Harrogate HG1 2RL
Tel: 01423 569656 **Fax:**
E-mail: fmosey@castlegalleries.com
Website: www.castlegalleries.com

Chem-Dry of Harrogate, York & Leeds (Carpet and upholstery cleaning)

Joshua Binelli-Dix, General Manager
Unit 1, Brickyard Road, Rocliffe, , York YO51 9NS
Tel: 0800 123013 **Fax:** 01423 325830
E-mail: salesdept@chemdryharrogate.co.uk
Website: www.chemdryharrogateyorkleeds.co.uk

Fast Forward Technology

(IT services, supply, install, etc.)
Dean Hall, Managing Director
9 Princes Square, Harrogate HG1 1DN
Tel: 01423 593758 **Fax:** 08452 872743
E-mail: dean@fastforwardtechnology.co.uk
Website: www.fastforwardtechnology.co.uk

NYBEP Ltd (Business education partnership)

Jacqueline Baker, Employer Engagement Adviser
Spitfire House, Aviator Court, York YO30 4UZ
Tel: 01904 693632 **Fax:** 01904 693070
E-mail: jacqueline@nybep.org.uk
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Printed by Enid Taylor Ltd, Harrogate Tel: 01423 567764 Fax: 01423 567765 E-mail: info@enidtaylor.co.uk