

acm news

september 03



take the lead with acm

ACM in partnership with Hay Group, the UK's largest human resources consultancy, is launching an innovative and inspirational series of leadership development workshops entitled 'Achieving results through other people'.

ACM and Hay Group are both highly respected organisations in the field of college management and their collaboration on this programme offers middle managers world-class training in aspects of management that ACM members have highlighted as their professional priorities. Our series of eight workshops will help you to bridge the gap between effective performance as an individual contributor to your team and achieving success as a manager of other people. The ACM/Hay Group programme will cover the essential leadership skills required by middle managers.

The workshops

[Emotional intelligence](#) Performance management
[Coaching and mentoring](#) Strategic skills for middle managers
[Career management](#) Motives and other filters
[Managing your team climate to enhance performance](#) Styles of leadership and learning.

Turn to page 2 to find out how you and your team members could benefit from your participation in this unique programme.

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lobbying activities **employment issues**

take the lead with acm

the workshops

Emotional intelligence

Having a high level of self-awareness of the effect that you have on others is essential if you want to have a positive impact and get the best out of your team. In this workshop you will:

- gain an understanding of the principles of emotional intelligence
- identify which emotional intelligence competencies are essential for your job
- rate yourself against the model to learn how you compare to the outstanding leadership benchmark
- work in small groups to discover which emotional intelligence competencies you already use effectively and to identify those that you could develop further.

Performance management

It is very challenging – but essential – to differentiate between levels of performance from individuals in your team so that you can encourage the best people to sustain their performance and tackle those people who are not contributing enough. How do you deal with those members of your team who are performing adequately but could achieve more if only you could understand what motivates them? This workshop will offer insights into how to achieve this. You will:

- understand the cycle of performance management from planning to continuity
- use data from multiple sources to review the performance of yourself and others, including 360° and 180° feedback
- practise conducting a win-win dialogue
- learn how to help people self-assess
- clarify the respective roles of appraiser and appraisee
- learn the importance of frequent high-quality dialogue and the ineffectiveness of infrequent box-ticking.

Coaching and mentoring

Increasingly, retaining and developing talent is a major challenge for organisations in the post-16 learning and skills sector. Coaching develops individuals' talents and enables them to maximise their effectiveness and to realise their aspirations. A critical part of your role as leader is to develop your team so that they can grow professionally. Individual coaching is the most effective way of improving the essential self-awareness that is a pre-requisite for positive change. This workshop will introduce the value of coaching in:

- enabling career transitions and progressions
- coping with change or stress
- practise conducting a win-win dialogue
- developing new behaviours or skills.

Strategic skills for middle managers

How do you translate the college's strategic plan into practical reality for your team? Superb strategic plans themselves do not produce high-performing and successful colleges. For that a college needs superb strategy implementation. Poor implementation of strategy can lead to poor performance. This workshop will introduce you to the skills for excellent strategy implementation by enabling you to:

- understand the difference between 'outside in' and 'inside out' strategic development, ie market-driven compared with core competencies-driven
- recognise the importance of implementation planning and execution
- get to know the factors that obstruct implementation
- learn how to conduct a strategy clarification exercise
- appreciate the importance of involving staff in strategy execution as well as development
- see how people's horizons of interest determine their propensity to understand, accept, internalise and promote a strategy, and learn to translate broad strategy into local meaning.

Career management

How do you manage your career so that each job enables you to grow and develop in the direction of your aspirations? In this workshop you will:

- use role profiles from the Leadership Development Framework to discuss what steps you would need to take to move between different leadership roles
- learn how to find and get the best out of suitable role models, mentors and coaches
- decide how to enlist the support of your manager.

Motives and other filters

It is always startling to discover that other people do not see and respond to the world in the same way that you do. This workshop will help you understand others' perceptions and motives and will help you to motivate your staff to give their best. You will:

- learn about the three social motives
- explore how your values, traits, language, etc affect how you interact with others and how they interact with you
- practise presenting ideas in a way that appeals to others and motivates them to perform.

Managing your team climate to enhance performance

Your team's perception of how it feels to work in your team has a significant impact on their motivation and performance. As their leader you are the single biggest contributor to the creation of the team climate. In this workshop you will:

- learn about the six dimensions of team climate that impact on performance
- think about your own leadership situation and how your natural style affects the team climate
- establish the links between leadership styles/behaviours and team climate
- rate your team climate
- discuss practical ways of changing your team climate.

Styles of leadership and learning

We all have preferred ways of approaching situations, but our natural tendencies are not always appropriate. Developing a wide repertoire of styles and learning so that you can adapt your approach to each specific situation will help you to become a more effective leader. In this workshop you will:

- use different simulations to enable you to reflect on how you approach different or new situations
- refresh your knowledge and understanding of leadership and learning styles
- confirm your natural preferences
- learn how to broaden your repertoire.

Details of the dates, locations and fees for the emotional intelligence and performance management workshops can be found in the enclosed flyer. The dates, locations and fees for the other workshops will be published in future ACM newsletters, on the website and the e-information service.

These workshops can also be delivered to colleges on a tailored, in-house basis. To discuss this option contact Nadine Cartner, Head of Policy, by email at nadinecartner@acm.uk.com

Pass on the good news about ACM membership

We believe that your manager colleagues should be given the opportunity to find out about the benefits of ACM membership. We are asking for your assistance in passing on the tear-off section of this newsletter to a non-member colleague, thereby enabling you to retain the newsletter for future reference.

New publication

The organised college manager, enclosed with this issue of the newsletter.

employment issues

singled out

Peter Pendle, ACM Chief Executive and General Secretary
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Bullying is a major and growing concern. *FE focus* has carried reports of 'bullying cultures' in both local LSCs and FE colleges. It has become the third most frequent reason for ACM members calling our helpline. Furthermore, the problem could be even greater than perceived because bullying may be the cause of other work-related stresses.

Since incorporation there have been increased pressures on colleges and their managers to perform. Years of financial constraints have resulted in thousands of managers being made redundant. However, the work does not go away and those that remain find themselves picking up extra responsibilities. FE managers now routinely work excessive hours. National targets, inspections and the raft of bureaucratic demands only add to the burden. During one of my visits to a college it emerged that two-thirds of ACM members had visited their doctor and been prescribed medication for work-related stress.

What is bullying?

Bullying is persistent, unwanted behaviour that causes distress to the victim. In the workplace it often focuses on distorted or fabricated allegations of performance. Most people know when they are being bullied. Some of the common signs include constant fault-finding, shouting, abusive or intimidating language, being singled out for criticism, being asked to perform unrealistic tasks, being overloaded with work, or having work taken away, being ignored, marginalised, overruled or undermined, or being put down, patronised or humiliated in front of others. Sometimes the person carrying out the bullying might not even realise that what they are doing amounts to bullying.

Regular criticisms about a person's work that might contain some grains of truth are not really about performance but about the need for control. Such behaviour is often bullying. There are proper established procedures for improving performance and unfair criticism isn't one of them. This is an important point. Managers can be accused of bullying when they take up capability issues with staff so it is vital that proper procedures are used, effective communication is employed and transparency observed.

The effects of bullying can be catastrophic. The victim's performance may be affected and their self-esteem will suffer. Worse, they can become ill. Common effects include stress and anxiety, frequent colds and other viral infections, headaches, fatigue, dizziness and panic attacks.

Action to take

Bullying is always unacceptable and can potentially result in expensive employment tribunal cases. So what can colleges do? ACM believes there must be a change in colleges' culture. Blame and shame must be replaced with communication and teamwork. Everyone must be involved in the process, from unions to senior management. The aim should be to develop an anti-bullying policy that incorporates equal opportunities measures and procedures for tackling complaints of bullying. Victims are often reluctant to make their complaints formal so any procedure for dealing with complaints must make it clear that victimisation of those making complaints will be a serious disciplinary offence. The policy itself should become part of the college induction and training routine. More importantly, senior management should embrace it as they take forward a new approach to staff management and working together.

A culture of bullying is often a sign that employment relations practice is poor, so a wider programme of management training on employment procedures may be desirable. But often the first hurdle is recognising that there is a problem. Senior management should talk to the unions and look at sickness records. Stress and bullying often go hand in hand so a high level of stress absence may indicate an underlying bullying culture.

At national level, politicians and bureaucrats should consider the often unintended results of their policies. The LSC should deliver on its promises to reduce red tape and to simplify the funding system. The inspection framework should recognise the external pressures that affect institutional performance. Failure to confront bullying will only lead to more managers leaving colleges, something that the sector just can't afford.

Bullying leads to six-figure compensation

ACM has secured over £250,000 for a member who suffered serious psychiatric injury as a result of bullying and overwork. The member, who cannot be named, has, with the help of ACM solicitors, Reynolds Porter Chamberlain, been involved in a long-running legal battle to secure compensation for the damage to his health and future employment prospects.

Unusually in a case like this, liability was admitted at an early stage. Even so, the process has taken many months as efforts were made to maximise the level of compensation.

Commenting on the outcome, ACM General Secretary Peter Pendle said: 'Although no amount of compensation can undo the injury suffered by our member, this is still a sizeable sum. For ACM it is the largest amount we have ever recovered on behalf of a member. It is yet another demonstration of the importance of belonging to a union.'

Sadly, our member's suffering was completely preventable. If the college had acted when our member first raised the matter, if it had tackled the bullying and dealt with the serious workload, then the stress and psychiatric injury would not have happened.

ACM has produced employment relations leaflets on both stress and bullying that can be downloaded from the members' pages on the ACM website at www.acm.uk.com

For workplace advice and support, members can contact the helpline on 0116 285 4055 or at helpline@acm.uk.com

'Poor' verdict on dealing with stress

The majority of human resources (HR) professionals across the UK feel that their own organisation is 'poor' when it comes to dealing with staff stress, according to a poll from online news and information service, *HR Gateway*.

Nearly six in ten (58%) respondents said their own organisation was 'poor' at dealing with staff stress, while 16% answered 'average'. Only 26% described their organisation as 'good' or 'excellent'.

Commenting on the figures, David Green, ACM Head of Employment Relations said, 'The survey results don't really surprise me. ACM takes numerous calls from members about stress at work. Worse, we will continue to do so until colleges get to grips with excessive workloads, long hours and workplace bullying.'

According to the Health and Safety Executive, of the 40.2 million days lost to UK business in the 2001/02 period, a huge 13.4 million were lost due to stress, anxiety or depression.

Note: *HR Gateway* is an online news and information source for HR professionals and those interested in HR issues. It can be accessed at www.hrgateway.com

Members might also be interested in ACM's stress training event due to take place on 18 November 2003. See page 8 for details.

In-house training from ACM

ACM runs bespoke training courses for individual colleges on a variety of employment relations matters. If your college is in search of good practice or wants to update its managers on aspects of employment law, please give ACM a call. Fees for colleges are very competitive and in-house training can be a cost-effective way of delivering quality training to your managers. Contact David Green, Head of Employment Relations, for more details. Tel 0116 285 4055 email davidgreen@acm.uk.com

Lobbying activities

Concern over retirement age

A proposed increase in the retirement age for members of the teachers' and local government pension schemes is causing considerable concern. This follows the release in July of a government White Paper on occupational pensions that says that the normal pension age for most public service schemes should change from 60 to 65.

So what do the proposals mean in practice? In its statement on teachers' pensions the government has guaranteed that pension benefits for anyone currently aged 50 will not be affected by the change. It also guarantees that pension benefits earned before the new arrangements start will not be affected, ie changes made will not affect one penny of pension benefits already earned from past service. In addition, you will still be able to retire at, before or after 60 as you can now. However, at retirement, pension and lump sum benefits will take account of the number of years of service you have worked before and after the changes were introduced.

Despite these guarantees members remain concerned, particularly those of you who are almost or not yet 50. Then there is the matter of how members of the local government scheme will be affected.

For both schemes the government says the changes will be fully discussed with unions as well as with employers. ACM welcomes this and has already met with other public service unions at the TUC. As our Head of Employment Relations, David Green, explains, ACM will play an important role. 'The government intends to carry out reviews of the various schemes and consulting the unions will be part of this process. The genuine concerns expressed by ACM members show that this is a really big issue for us. As such, we will be fully involved in the consultation process. However, until the talking begins later this month, we simply won't have answers to many of the issues members are raising.'

In the meantime, David Green urges ACM members to write to their MPs. 'Colleges are having difficulty filling teaching and management vacancies at present. This proposal looks set to exacerbate the problem so it won't hurt our position to make MPs aware of this.'

Implementation of any changes is unlikely before 2006 for new pension scheme entrants and, according to the government website, *Teachernet*, before 2013 for the future service of existing staff. To complicate matters further, a new European Directive will eventually make it unlawful, in most cases, for employers to set compulsory retirement ages. It looks like a long road ahead.

ACM wins concessions on funding clawback

ACM has played a significant role in winning major concessions on retrospective funding clawback from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for 2002/03.

In March, ACM raised the serious concerns of colleges with the then Minister for Lifelong Learning and Higher Education, Margaret Hodge MP. ACM argued that as LSC software was still not operating properly, colleges were unable to correctly forecast the amount of LSC funding that they would receive or take remedial action to rectify recruitment shortfalls. The minister conceded that colleges should not suffer because of problems beyond their control.

No announcement had been made by mid-May and so further representations were made to the minister on the matter. In June, a memorandum was sent from the national LSC to all local LSC Executive Directors. The memorandum referred specifically to lobbying undertaken by the Association and outlined proposals that colleges within 3% of their target should not be liable to any reduction in funding and that colleges below 97% could offer funding back to the LSC in year and agree a re-pricing for the following year's allocation. Further meetings have since taken place between ACM representatives, LSC officials and senior civil servants.

ACM will continue to lobby on funding issues, especially where colleges are being treated unfairly. ACM is represented on the LSC's consultation group that is looking at simplifying the funding system and a circular will be published by the LSC on this issue in the autumn. We welcome colleagues' views on funding issues, which should be addressed to Peter Pendle, ACM General Secretary.

Two-year pay deal agreed

A two-year pay deal negotiated between the Association of Colleges (AoC) and the trade unions of the National Joint Forum (NJF) is to be recommended for acceptance by all the trade unions to their members. The deal will provide for stability in industrial relations and give colleges and staff a longer-term view of recommended pay awards for planning purposes. It offers FE employees pay increases and access to career progression that will address recruitment and retention difficulties identified by colleges.

ACM Chief Executive, Peter Pendle, said:

‘The aim was to close the pay gap between college staff and other parts of the public sector, as well as to start to tackle the low pay culture for support staff. This deal is a significant step in that direction.

‘Although some ACM members may have concerns that managers are being ignored, it was certainly the best deal we could get in the circumstances. The average increase for managers over two years will be 7.9% (0.5% backdated to April 2003, plus 3% in August 2003, plus 3% in August 2004, plus 1.4% (on average) harmonisation in 2004). This is pretty good for the public sector and better than the pay awards for schools or local government, so it does still narrow the pay gap for managers. The top of the management scale goes up to over £75,000. In addition, there is the promise of further increases for manager scales in 2005.

‘ACM made it clear that differentials must be maintained in actual terms, and they have been. Other associations were arguing to increase the top of the lecturer range but not the bottom of the management spine, but we argued successfully that changes should be made at the same time. We believe that AoC has accepted the principle that the starting point for FE managers should be the same as for managers in sixth form colleges and as the leadership spine in schools. Hopefully we will get the organisation to recommend this to colleges in the next round of negotiations.’

Full details of the settlement are available on the ACM website. The final offer is dependent upon all trade unions of the NJF recommending acceptance of this offer to their members. If any of the trade unions of the NJF do not recommend acceptance of this offer to their members, AoC reserves the right to reconsider its final offer.

Pay in Wales

The joint unions in Wales are preparing the pay claim to be submitted to the employer’s side. fforwm has already lodged a funding bid with the Welsh Assembly that has been supported by ACM and several of the other unions.

The pay claim argues that all college employees should receive at least a 3.5% increase in pay with effect from 1 April 2004. ACM has also ensured that the pay claim includes calls for the introduction of a new spine for management staff, with a starting point equivalent to that for management staff in sixth form colleges and for leadership staff in schools. The top of the management spine should be the same as in England, and ACM is seeking to ensure that differentials with other staff are at least maintained in real terms.

Ill-health retirement

Members who have applied or are thinking of applying for ill-health retirement are probably aware of the difficulties in being accepted by Teachers’ Pensions (TP) for this benefit.

TP has rather strict criteria for accepting applications; members have to demonstrate that due to their ill health they will not be able to work in a teaching/management capacity within the foreseeable future. This can mean that members’ initial applications are not accepted by TP.

ACM offers support and representation for members who wish to appeal against the initial decision and the Association has been very successful in the last few years in winning appeals and gaining ill-health retirement benefits for our members.

If you require advice on applying for ill-health retirement or have been turned down and wish to appeal against the decision, please email the Helpline at helpline@acm.uk.com

ACM events

17/10/03 | London

Media training

For managers who are in contact with journalists. The trainer is a former journalist and radio presenter who will teach participants how to handle the media in a professional and effective manner.

Members £245

Non members £265

Places limited to 10 delegates

27/10/03 | Leicester

Success for All and the new funding model

See the enclosed flyer for details of the event's content.

Members £120

Non members £150

7–8/11/03 | Birmingham

Branch networking event

Details will be circulated to branch officers and contacts in the future.

7/11/03 | Vale of Glamorgan

FE college institutional planning

ACM Wales conference for managers

Further details will be provided in the next issue of *ACM news*.

18/11/03 | Cirencester, Gloucestershire

Stress training

Discover the hazards that might lead to stress in the workplace and consider the organisational and practical steps that can help reduce or prevent work-related stress.

Members £60

Non members £80

More information and online booking facilities can be found at www.acm.uk.com or by calling 0116 275 5076.

ACM staff

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Help us keep your records up to date. Contact Jane Dunn with any changes to your postal or email addresses, job title or employer.

ACM conference 2004

Thursday 25 and Friday 26 March 2004
Solihull, Birmingham

Prosperity through learning: practical skills and policy vision for leaders

Colleges are at last being recognised by politicians and policy-makers as having a vital role to play in the nation's prosperity. It is in colleges that the education and skills training necessary for addressing the present and future skills needs of the nation are delivered.

In this context, the ACM conference 2004 offers college managers significant professional development opportunities. One focus of the event will be on management skills development. A wide and exciting variety of skills training sessions will be on offer to support managers who want to improve their management skills. The second, and related, focus of this year's conference will be on visionary leadership. Top policy-makers and thinkers will address the conference and engage in discussion and debate with delegates. College and sector leaders who want to understand and shape the future of the sector will consider this conference unmissable.

Further information will be circulated to members in October. To reserve your place in the meantime, please contact us on 0116 275 5076 or email events@acm.uk.com

Put the fun into fundraising

On 31 October 2003, the Breast Cancer Campaign will be holding a 'wear it pink®' day. The charity is asking thousands of colleges, schools, companies, clubs and other organisations to take part. Anyone can participate – all you have to do is donate £2 to wear something pink. All money raised will be used to fund research into breast cancer. One woman in nine will be affected by breast cancer in her lifetime in the UK. So 'wear it pink' and support the charity in its attempts to either find a cure or prevent the condition. If your college would like to take part in this fundraising event, call 0800 781 9465 or email wearitpink@bcc-uk.org You can also register online at www.wearitpink.com

If you're feeling energetic, why not join the Breast Cancer Campaign's running team and take part in the BUPA Great South Run. This 10-mile road race takes place in the middle of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, on 12 October 2003, in Portsmouth with space for 12,000 runners. If you have your own place or would like one of the places allocated to the Breast Cancer Campaign, please email runners@bcc-uk.org