Engaging Workplaces, Effective Relationships

Creating a Template for Action

Report written by
Charlotte Sweeney
Jonathan Swan

working families
changing the way we live and work

oneplusone
Strengthening relationships

About Working Families

Working Families is the UK's leading work-life organisation. Drawing on 35 years of experience, we provide evidence-based insight, research and benchmarking for organisations and employees. Using our trusted expertise we help employers create workplaces which encourage both work-life balance for everyone and enhanced individual and organisational performance.

Working Families

About OnePlusOne

OnePlusOne is a UK charity that strengthens relationships by creating resources that help families and frontline workers tackle relationship issues early.

We help couples and parents through a range of web-services, while our online learning equips frontline workers with the skills to offer timely and effective face to face support to families.

Everything we do is based on the latest research evidence. Our research builds the knowledge base on relationships and, by sharing what we know, we influence policy and the creation of services that work.

OnePlusOne
Strengthening relationships

OnePlusOne and Working Families would like to thank the following organisations:

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Foreword

In 2012 OnePlusOne and Working Families collaborated on a ground-breaking study to increase understanding about the association between Relationship Quality and Work Engagement. This resulted in our report, *Happy Homes, Productive Workplaces*, (Burnett et al., 2012)

The project discovered that there is a positive connection between Work Engagement and Relationship Quality. It also shows that home-life can be a real driver of motivation and performance at work, and work-life can have a real impact on personal relationships.

We decided to continue working together to develop resources that will support increased engagement between employees and employers to deal with these issues. We are delighted there is much enthusiasm for this from participating employers and we're hopeful this will lead to more innovative workplace practices which recognise how much work impacts on personal relationships and family life.

Today's workplace is a highly pressurised place. Reported levels of stress are on the increase at all levels. More demanding workloads coupled with uncertain hours often spill into family life. As you will see from this report, many employees speak of home as a place where they are present but not really there. Minds focused on work-related issues. Unable to switch off.

Yet with enlightened employers striving to become more diverse and equal in their employment practices, how they deal with workplace stress and its effect on family life will be of increasing importance. It is also an additional reason to invest in supporting and strengthening people's ability to form strong personal relationships.

Relational capability is an important asset in the workplace for employees and organisations. On various measures, good interpersonal skills are associated with better employee performance, productivity and lower levels of sickness absence (Carter et al., 2011). Organisations that facilitate effective communication and team working – a model known as relational co-ordination – have seen better quality outcomes and improved job satisfaction (Gitell, et al., 2008). We have identified relational capability not just as a skill which can be developed, but as an approach to organising work and managing people which will strengthen teams, contribute to resilience and support consistent good performance (OnePlusOne forthcoming).

> **"** *Stress from work exerts a greater negative impact on work performance and family-life, compared to stress originating from family-life.* **"**

We have been encouraged to see how well these tools have been integrated into 'business as usual' in the companies that have trialled them. This, we believe, is evidence that organisations who are already taking a holistic approach to employee wellbeing and engagement will find that developing relational capability is a natural extension of their activities.

A little goes a long way. Some of the tools seem simple – indeed, they are – but the effects they have can be significant in providing a vital reality check in the way that we are working as individuals. Encouraging mindful self-management at an individual level is a powerful tool for organisational change.

Penny Mansfield CBE,
Director OnePlusOne

Sarah Jackson OBE,
CEO Working Families

Glossary of Terms

Please find below a list of terms that are regularly used within the report and their meaning:

Diagnostic Tool – process to examine and identify specific issues

Family-Work Conflict - family-life impacting on work-life

Relational Capability – Relational capability is an important asset in the workplace for employees and organisations. On various measures, good interpersonal skills are associated with better employee performance, productivity and lower levels of sickness absence (Carter et al., 2011). Organisations that facilitate effective communication and team working – a model known as relational co-ordination – have seen better quality outcomes and improved job satisfaction
(Gitell, et al., 2008).

Internal Capability and Relational Opportunity

Our concept of relational capability differentiates between '**internal capability**' and '**relational opportunity**' that together form a concept of **relational capability**.

Internal capability describes the skills, attributes and characteristics essential to establishing and maintaining relationships. The distinction between initiating and enhancing or maintaining relationships is helpful in identifying the different characteristics associated with each. Research on relational competence, from which we draw heavily, suggests the skills associated with initiating relationships include assertiveness, self-confidence, extraversion and well-developed communication skills (Hansson et al., 2004). 'Enhancing' relationships involves the skills and attributes required to nurture, develop and sustain relationships and requires traits such as empathy, flexibility, friendliness, likability, understanding, the ability to see the other's perspective, and altruism (see Carpenter, 1993).

Relational opportunity refers to the opportunity to exercise those internal capabilities. In other words, an environment that freely enables or even supports individuals to establish and nurture relationships. This directs attention to the conditions and circumstances in which we live and their impact on our ability to establish and maintain relationships. It could include the family home and, for example, the impact of the child's home environment on the ability to develop internal relational capability and establish the platform that enables him or her to participate in society. It could also refer to the work place, or the fabric of local neighbourhoods and communities and the extent to which they foster or hinder relationships with others. On a larger scale, relational opportunity also encompasses the factors that create the conditions in which we live, such as economic, political, legal and cultural influences.

Relationship Quality – a partner's subjective evaluation of a romantic relationship. It is this subjective interpretation of relationship state which is linked to relationship stability and conversely, relationship breakdown

Work Engagement - a positive work-related state of fulfilment that is characterised by 'vigour, dedication and absorption

Work-Family Conflict - work-life impacting on family-life

Executive Summary

In 2012 Working Families and OnePlusOne collaborated on a ground-breaking study to increase understanding about the association between Relationship Quality and Work Engagement.

The study concluded that **Relationship Quality and Work Engagement are positively associated**, with high or low levels in either correlating respectively to high or low levels of the other.[1]   The study also found that Work-Family Conflict (work-life impacting on family-life) has a stronger negative influence on both Work Engagement and Relationship Quality than Family-Work Conflict (family-life impacting on work-life). In essence, **stress from work exerts a greater negative impact on work performance and family-life, compared to stress originating from family-life**.

Although this is not an issue that is actively discussed within UK organisations, with workplaces becoming more pressurized and reported levels of stress on the increase this is a subject that should move from the margins to an important part of a company's commitment to employee engagement. This may be seen as a 'soft' management issue, however, the impact is very real and can impact on the 'hard' and more traditional management issues. Indeed, this is a subject that is starting to gain some attention in the United States with publications such as the Harvard Business Review debating 'How Couples Cope with Professional Stress' and how a good relationship at home gives people emotional, cognitive and physical vigour, which is advantageous for the workplace.[2][3]

To respond to the findings of the research, an additional review was conducted to translate the findings and recommendations into tangible actions that could be used back in the workplace.

This phase of the review was designed to do that in two ways:

- Create and pilot the use of a 'Mindful Working Tool' which translates the recommendations into work environments with two large organisations

- Create and pilot a diagnostic tool to identify the gap between an organisational aspiration to support employees to manage relationships effectively and the reality experienced by employees.

The review also considered how the original research could be translated into tangible actions for small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) given that 47%[4] of the UK private sector workforce are employed by SMEs.
The review was conducted with a number of large organisations, employing between them over 100,000 people in the UK, covering both the public and private sectors and a diverse range of industries. This does not take into account their global reach. A number of SME organisations were also engaged in a number of interviews to understand their perspective on this issue.

In essence, Senior Leaders, Human Resources (HR) Professionals and employees could identify the importance of relationship quality to employee engagement and motivation. Many were able to share clear examples of where work-life and stress from work had a negative impact on their home and personal relationships or where they had seen this in a colleague. Although all agreed that this is a subject that is important and should be taken more seriously by companies, very few were active and pro-actively responding to the challenges. The findings and recommendations can be found on the following page.

1. http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk/articles/new-thinking/happy-homes-productive-workplaces
2. http://blogs.hbr.org/2014/01/how-couples-can-cope-with-professional-stress/
3. http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/store/10.1111/joop.12045/asset/joop12045.pdf;jsessionid=4467D3F2D989CEAD5B190726F3F9EB1F.f04t04?
   v=1&t=hsvtj95k&s=9ddc4685322fd665c5b111df8ff1781c70997132
4. Federation of Small Businesses - http://www.fsb.org.uk/stats

The Key Findings of the Project

From all phases of this practical research there are a number of consolidated findings and recommendations which are listed below. The table also highlights the tools and information available within this report that will enable to you to review your current status and how to progress within your organisation.

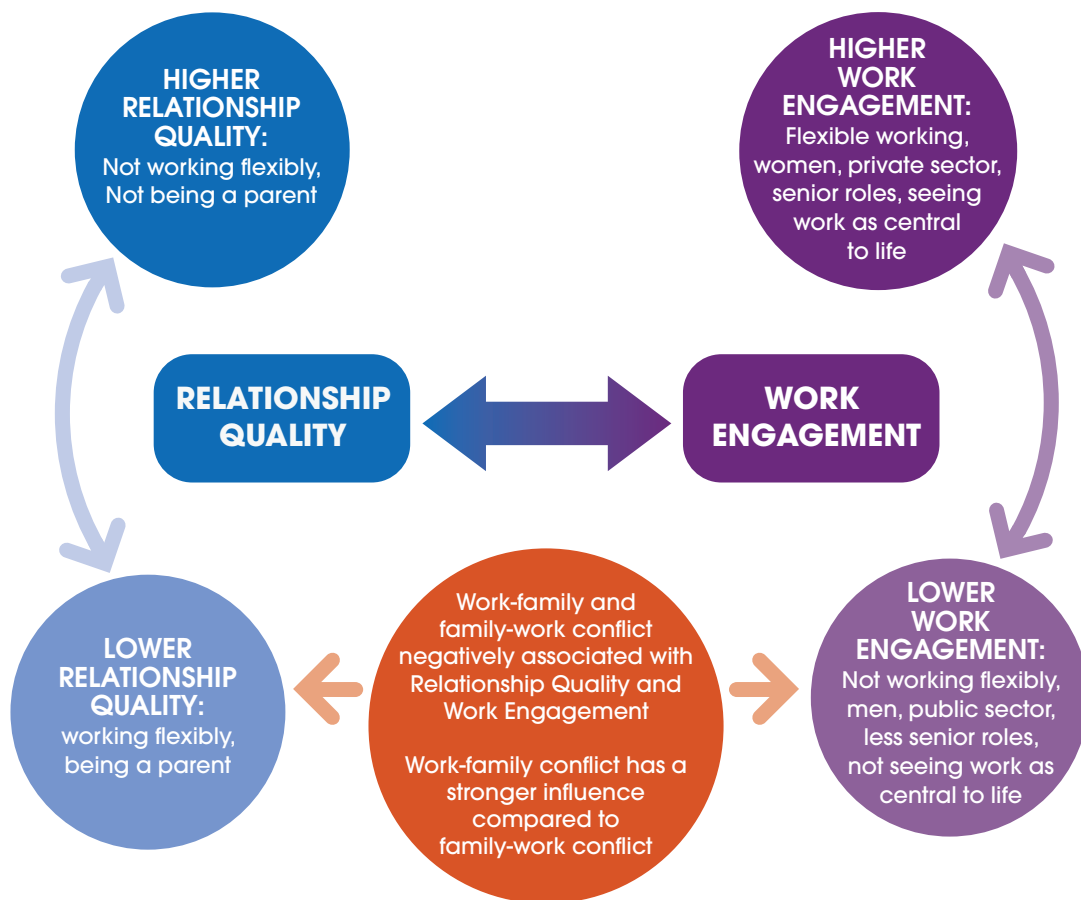| Finding	Recommendation	Tools to Support
There is a clear understanding that relational capability and the connectivity between work-family and vice versa is a critical element to the emotional wellbeing and productivity of an employee. However, there is limited articulation of the impact this has or any wider focus on activity.	Ensure the business case for relational capability is designed specifically for your business and is widely articulated and understood. Create a strategic vision and implementation plan to support the business case.	**The Business Case** Additional resources available from Working Families and OnePlusOne (Refer to page 43)
The 'Mindful Working' tool pilot showed that its use was highly effective and encouraged individuals to think differently about their work and the impact their work behaviours and habits had on their personal life and relationships.	Review the 'Mindful Working' tool. Create a version that is appropriate for your organisation and identify how to integrate into existing opportunities, such as performance management or training and development.	**'Mindful Working' Tool – Original** **'Mindful Working' Tool – Tailoring Guidelines**
Many organisations have training and development programmes which focus on relational capability themes such as conflict resolution, having difficult conversations and negotiation skills from a workplace perspective. However, these are transferrable skills in all aspects of life.	Although organisations promote these as effective management tools they can be packaged in a holistic way to promote the positive impact the use of these skills can have in other areas of life. Review your training and development programmes and identify how you can promote the skills and how they are used both in the workplace and within personal life.	**Diagnostic tool** **The SME Toolkit** **Guidance Statements for Policies** Additional resources available from Working Families and OnePlusOne (Refer to page 43)
There are limited references via company policies and procedures to the importance of relational capability and how this feeds into policies such as flexible working, maternity leave and employee wellbeing.	Review all policies and identify how relational capability statements can be incorporated into them and communicated to all employees.	**Guidance Statements for Policies**
It is critical for line managers to have the appropriate relational capability skills to be able to undertake their role and support their employees regardless of what may be happening in their work or personal lives.	Ensure all line managers undertake some form of relational capability training for their role and ensure there are explicit links between how this can be used in the workplace and in personal situations.	**The SME Toolkit** Additional resources available from Working Families and OnePlusOne (Refer to page 43)
For SMEs there were additional challenges where businesses were created with family members and the lines between work and personal relationships were increasingly blurred.	Ensure clear boundaries are discussed and agreed between work and personal relationships.	**The SME Toolkit** **'Mindful Working' Tool – Original** **'Mindful Working' Tool – Tailoring Guidelines**

Overview

In 2012 Working Families and OnePlusOne collaborated on a ground-breaking study to increase understanding about the association between Relationship Quality and Work Engagement.

In the context of the original research, Relationship Quality refers to a partner's subjective evaluation of a romantic relationship. It is this subjective interpretation of relationship state which is linked to relationship stability and conversely, relationship breakdown. Work engagement is defined as a positive work-related state of fulfilment that is characterised by 'vigour, dedication and absorption'.

The study, Happy Homes Productive Workplaces, conducted an online study in February 2012, receiving 2027 responses.

The study concluded that **Relationship Quality and Work Engagement are positively associated**, with high or low levels in either correlating respectively to high or low levels of the other.[5] The study also found that Work-Family Conflict (work-life impacting on family-life) has a stronger negative influence on both Work Engagement and Relationship Quality than Family-Work Conflict (family-life impacting on work-life). In essence, **stress from work exerts a greater negative impact on work performance and family-life, compared to stress originating from family-life**.

A model summarising the findings can be found below:

HIGHER RELATIONSHIP QUALITY:
Not working flexibly, Not being a parent

HIGHER WORK ENGAGEMENT:
Flexible working, women, private sector, senior roles, seeing work as central to life

RELATIONSHIP QUALITY

WORK ENGAGEMENT

Work-family and family-work conflict negatively associated with Relationship Quality and Work Engagement

Work-family conflict has a stronger influence compared to family-work conflict

LOWER RELATIONSHIP QUALITY:
working flexibly, being a parent

LOWER WORK ENGAGEMENT:
Not working flexibly, men, public sector, less senior roles, not seeing work as central to life

5. http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk/articles/new-thinking/happy-homes-productive-workplaces

Although this is not an issue that is actively discussed with UK workplaces, with workplaces becoming more pressurized and reported levels of stress on the increase, this is a subject that should move from the margins to an integral part of a company's commitment to employee engagement. This may be seen as a 'soft' management issue, however, the impact is very real. It can also affect the 'hard' and more traditional management issues. Indeed, this is a subject that is starting to gain some attention in the United States, with publications such as the Harvard Business Review debating 'How Couples Cope with Professional Stress' and how good relationships at home give people emotional, cognitive and physical vigour which is advantageous for the workplace. [6, 7]

In response to the findings of the original research, a number of recommendations were created:

Relationship Support
- Employers should view Relationship Quality as an asset that requires investment: from online relationship support or counselling, to providing support for parents.

Work-Family Conflict
- Employers can address long-working hours, provision and take up of flexible working options, and lack of awareness towards caring responsibilities.
- Managers should be up-skilled and employees enabled to take responsibility for ensuring the work environment remains positive and productive.

Presenteeism and Overwork
- Employers can improve job design, ensure employees take adequate breaks, provide stress management sessions, and allocate work appropriately.
- Senior figures should model this behaviour, to show it is no barrier to success.

Flexible Working
- Employers may need support in managing the interface between work and home-life.
- Employers should develop a mutually beneficial culture of flexibility.
- Senior figures should model this behaviour, to show it is no barrier to success.

Gender
- Employers should avoid the assumption that women will not want to focus on their careers if they have children, and monitor the effects of unconscious bias.
- Employers should monitor men more closely, and ensure flexible policies are aligned and communicated so men are able to access them equally, without concern over it damaging their career.

6. http://blogs.hbr.org/2014/01/how-couples-can-cope-with-professional-stress/

7. http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/store/10.1111/joop.12045/asset/joop12045.pdf;jsessionid=4467D3F2D989CEAD5B190726F3F9EB1F.f04t04?
    v=1&t=hsvtj95k&s=9ddc4685322fd665c5b111df8ff1781c70997132

An important factor in any research is the ability, and opportunities, to translate the findings and recommendations into tangible actions that can be used back in the workplace. The second phase of the study was designed to do that in two ways:

- Create and pilot the use of a 'Mindful Working Tool' which translates the recommendations into work environments with two large organisations.

- Create and pilot a diagnostic tool to identify the gap between an organisational aspiration to support employees to manage relationships effectively and the reality experienced by employees.

The 'Mindful Working Tool' was created and piloted with two large organisations from two very different sectors – Multi-Utilities and Finance. The findings from the pilot informed the next phase of the research. This was creating and using the diagnostic tool with five employers, again from different sectors – Multi-Utilities, Services, Health, Finance and Education. Some of the companies involved in the research included:

We were aware that the findings of the original research had to be translated into tangible actions for small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) given that 47%[8] of the UK private sector workforce are employed by SMEs.

This report shares the findings of the pilot exercises and recommends the appropriate tools and next steps for companies of all sizes to take advantage of the links between relationship quality and work engagement.

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SECTION ONE
Mindful Working Tool

Introduction

The initial focus to convert the research findings into practical actions that companies could identify with and take forward in a work environment was the creation of the 'Mindful Working Tool'. This took each of the five key themes of the original research findings and created five activities for line managers and five separate activities for team members to perform over a one-week period. The tool was developed with organisational development experts and leading employees to ensure the activities and tool were both realistic and impactful.

The aim of this section of the research was to:
* Improve employees' work engagement and performance
* Integrate into the normal working day without disruption
* Reduce the negative impact of work stress on family life
* Improve employee' family and personal relationships.

A copy of the original 'Mindful Working Tool' can be found in Section Four.

As the tool was being created, there was some concern that the recommended activities may be viewed as things that people already do on a regular basis, and therefore would not have the desired impact or create a behavioural change. To respond to this concern, the tool required piloting.

A small number of companies were approached to pilot the tool. This required the use of the tool within effective, well functioning teams, in different sectors. The pilots commenced within small, office-based teams within two large companies covering the Multi-Utilities and Finance sector. The tool was also reviewed by a SME and their comments shared, although they did not complete the pilot process.

The pilot undertook three phases over a two-month period:

Stage 1: Initiation – the tool was introduced to line managers and team members, explaining the purpose, benefits and the findings of the research to which the tool was based upon.

Stage 2: Trialling – line managers and team members use the original 'Mindful Working Tool', for four consecutive calendar weeks. Interim conversations were held with each team and line manager to support the process, answer any questions and respond to any initial findings.

Stage 3: Reflection – focus groups with team members and separate interviews with line managers were conducted to reflect on the tool and the impact on work engagement and family and personal relationships.

The focus groups and interviews were semi-structured, allowing flexibility within the questions and the ability to drill deeper where there were valuable insights.

The findings from the use of the tool were categorised into three main areas:
* Use of, and reflections to, the tool
* Discussing relationships and non-work issues at work
* Delivering future Health and Wellbeing interventions.

The Findings

Given the tool was piloted in two organisations that both take employee engagement and well-being seriously, there were some interesting findings:

MINDFUL WORKING TOOL

Use of, and reflections to, the tool

The overall feedback from those using the performance audit was largely positive. It was felt that the tool wasn't too administrative. For some taking part in the pilot it felt that these should be actions that would be part of every day life.

'It was very easy to go through the actual audit itself. I expected it to be a bit more in-depth'

There were clear examples where the use of the tool had created a change in behaviour by the person using it. These changes included activities they had started, and stopped, doing during the course of the pilot with many acknowledging that it took a level of discipline to change the habits of relatively small actions.

'This weekend, I consciously didn't go into the IPad, email and blackberry; that's a change for me because I am so guilty of it. It's been hard because it's a habit that I need to break'

'It was sort of liberating I guess to be part of the pilot and say I am being forced to do this; it was good to just bring awareness to it of how much you are online'

Although a number of the comments within the focus groups highlighted the reduction of time they spent reviewing emails and being online, there were a number of positive comments directly related to increasing communication within the team.

'I think the tool was a really good idea. What this has prompted me to do is message a couple of people just to say how did it go, or whatever, to stay connected and find out more about them'

When asked about the longer-term use of the tool and how this might change behaviour there were some mixed reactions, which were dependent on the employer group, the business area and the type of work.

'I think it would be useful to be reminded to use the tool on a regular basis as it takes time to change habits'

'I see the positives in this, my concern is that when we get to a busy time all this good work may go out of the window'

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'There are definitely other areas that would benefit from using this as they don't have the understanding of work-life and effective balance'

Discussing Relationships and Non-Work Issues at Work

During the focus group discussions, we asked employees if conversations took place within the workplace about personal relationships and home-life aspects. There were some differing responses, with many feeling that it was okay to talk about 'run of the mill' issues.

'I think actually having a good relationship with your team and understanding them not just superficially, but as an individual is important'

'We constantly talk about what is happening in our private lives within my team. If we know what is happening and what people are going through we can adapt how we work to get the best from the whole team'

There were clear acknowledgements that work issues do affect personal relationships...and personal issues can affect work.

'Outside work things do affect work; if there is something on my mind then it's on my mind [...] it does affect your effectiveness'

'We had a situation where someone was going through a divorce and had a change of manager during that year, a large part of this person's underperformance was down to the messy divorce and the complexities in their home life directly impacting their work life.'

Unsurprisingly, the relationship between the employee and the line manager was seen as critical in deciding if they would share any information about personal issues which may have an impact on work performance.

'If it's a big enough situation outside of work and I know it's going to affect my performance and it's getting me down I will tell my manager'

When asked if line managers were open to conversations about personal issues with their team there was generally a positive response from employees.

'The manager is usually trained to spot 'crisis points' because the first sign of something not right usually hits performance. It's then for the manager to have those conversations and draw the response from the employee to actually say I've got this big problem at home'

'I would certainly prefer that the person spoke to me about their issues because then it gives me additional information and context that I can use in the way that I communicate with the individual'

Delivering future Health and Wellbeing Content

Within the companies taking part in this pilot Employee Health and Wellbeing was certainly on the agenda. However, there was a view from the employees that it was quite reactive and left it to them to find out more information about the interventions or ask their line managers. Very rarely did employees mention that they felt the information was proactively shared.

'In terms of well-being we could probably do a better job of keeping it front and centre rather than in the wings waiting for something to happen'

When asked who they perceive use the Health and Wellbeing offerings currently available in their company there was a mixed reaction and a sense that they were geared more towards women and those in junior levels or early into their careers.

'At a very junior stage of my career I would have gone to these things quite often but the more senior I've become I go less and less'

When asked what they would like to see available within their companies to support creating both work and personal relationships, there were some very clear views.

'Strengthening relationship skills – if it was done right I think you would have a stampede of people going for this kind of thing. The skills, tools and techniques that people have they would be able to apply in every situation'

'Skills such as how to remain calm, how to negotiate, how to listen, how to see things from someone's perspective are directly transferable to the workplace, particularly as a line manager, they are the same core set of skills that are necessary for personal and work life'

'I think training and raising people's awareness in this area is a good thing for the managers, so an education and training piece should go hand in hand

There were also a number of responses highlighting the importance of emotional intelligence among the managers, or the lack thereof, in some instances.

'We have all the right policies in place; some of our managers don't have the right skills and knowledge to implement the policies'

'As a result of a personal issue my performance was affected and I wound up on a development plan. The manager was supportive because they had to be; my manager was doing everything by the book HR wise but it wasn't necessarily sincere'

"Inclusion and Diversity in the workplace, and striking a sensible work-life balance, are important to National Grid. We are delighted to have been a part of this important research, and we will certainly be seeking opportunities to incorporate the findings into our working practices wherever possible."

Karen Clayton, *UK General Counsel & Company Secretary and Executive Chair of the Work & Life Matters Employee Resource Group, Nationalgrid.*

MINDFUL WORKING TOOL

MINDFUL WORKING TOOL

Insights and Conclusions

It was clearly agreed by all involved with the pilot that relational capability and the connectivity between work-family and vice versa was a critical element to the emotional wellbeing and productivity of an employee. The discussion points and outputs from the focus groups were complementary to the original findings of the 'Happy Homes and Productive Workplaces research, clearly showing that, although not currently seen as a mainstream issue or understood by line managers, relationship capability has as significant impact in the workplace and the focus on this isn't currently as significant as it should be.

Although the tool was initially considered a little simplistic, there were a number of examples where using the tool had made individuals think differently about their work and the impact their work behaviours and habits have on their personal life and relationships. It was acknowledged throughout that some of the actions included within the tool would not be applicable for some roles e.g. not all employees have a job that would require email access and the use of a blackberry.

An important insight was that skills such as conflict resolution, having difficult conversations and negotiation skills are transferrable and valuable in all aspects of life. Although organisations promote these as effective management tools they could be packaged in a holistic way to promote the positive impact their use could have outside of the workplace.

Given the encouraging and insightful nature of the findings, they were then progressed in the following ways:

1. To influence the areas focused on within phase II of the research to identify what companies actually do to acknowledge the influence that work-family conflict and family-work conflict have on employees productivity and wellbeing

2. To fine-tune the 'Mindful Working Tool' as an effective tool for other companies to use and adapt as appropriate.

CASE STUDY

NATIONAL GRID: Work & Life Matters Employee Resource Group

We piloted the 'Mindful Working' tool in one of our teams with a global reach. The participants expressed surprise that something so apparently simple and obvious could be so effective. Most of those involved in the pilot have continued to use the tool, and we are planning to recommend its incorporation into our suite of tips and techniques on building an inclusive workplace.

Within National Grid, when we talk about performance we see *how* you perform as being equally as important as *what* you do. We also recognise that striking a successful balance between work and home is important. This is why one of the questions in our Annual Employee Opinion Survey (EOS) asks whether the employee's manager/supervisor is considerate of their life outside work – a question which attracts one of the highest positive responses. We also find that employees with a greater degree of autonomy over their working arrangements tend to score higher in our performance, engagement and values indices within the EOS.

2 SECTION TWO
Diagnostic Tool

Introduction

As a build from phase 1 of the research, this next phase was created to identify the gap between any policy or commitment stated within an organisation, linking the skills and knowledge required to effectively manage relationships in a way that translates directly between work and home and vice versa (both positively and negatively), with the lived experience of individual employees. The identification of any gap would enable companies to review what they currently do, how this is communicated to employees and how this is demonstrated on a day-to-day basis via manager and peer behaviour.

It was important for the quality of the research that the organisations involved were very diverse in terms of size and sector. This was to ensure that a broad scope of findings were created and the opportunity to identify how different the views were across sectors. The companies that we ideally wanted to be involved in the research were those who had a track record of progressing employee engagement activities and could clearly articulate the benefits to their business. The companies were hand selected and approached directly to invite them to take part. The companies who were keen to take part employ over 100,000 people in the UK and represent public and private sector as well as Multi-Utilities, Services, Health, Finance and Education sectors. Some of the companies involved in the research included

The research covered a number of stages:

Stage 1 – Interview a Senior HR Professional to gain their views on 'Relational Capability' and understand what processes they currently have in place to raise awareness and empower employees.

Stage 2 – Conduct desk analysis of the policies where 'relational capability' may be included in some guise. Examples of these could include flexible/agile working, maternity and parental leave and stress/resilience management.

Stage 3 – Conduct focus group interviews with employees (cross section of levels and functions) to identify and understand their lived experience within the company.

Stage 4 – Share feedback with each of the companies and gain their insights into the quality and accuracy of the diagnostic.

Stage 5 – Share the collective findings with all organisations involved, looking at the similarities and differences of the sectors.

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL

The questions created for both the senior HR professional interview and the focus groups targeted a number of areas, including:

- Their personal and company view of the importance of relational capability in the workplace and how this has an impact on their organisation

- How this manifests itself in the workplace including any recent examples

- Their ratings of how successful they feel the company is in promoting this aspect of management and work life

- What the culture is generally like

- The focal points for the future.

Each of the above stages were conducted over a six-month period.

The Findings

All five organisations were given their own individual feedback for each section of the research. The findings below are a collated version.

Senior HR Professional Interviews

All of the Senior HR Professional Interviews focused on the areas highlighted above to gain their perspectives and experiences.

Without exception, all of the HR Professional's interviewed saw the value of relational capability to the workplace and the impact this could have from both a work-family conflict and family-work conflict perspective.

'If life isn't good at home our staff are not at the top of their game – we have a caring culture, managers flag issues'

'Physical, mental and emotional wellbeing while at home, work and everything in between – all impact productivity'

'If you have a supportive environment at home it does allow you to do more at work'

'Relationships do have an impact sometimes and can translate into sickness absence'

'If people are not happy at home they are not going to bounce into work'

Many cited that they felt this was core to the leadership within the organisation and had very clear links and synergies to the wellbeing strategy.

'Certainly think this is important for the future but wouldn't single it out – I would link it to wellbeing – good for business as well as staff'

'We want all our leaders to be authentic – the same person at home and at work'

Some also highlighted that many personal relationships were formed at work, which meant that the links to family and work were more evident.

'There is a young workforce in the call centres, there are a lot of personal relationships in there and you can see this on a daily basis...'

'Many people end up meeting their partner at work and relationships develop. If something happens to one person they talk about it and has a knock on effect on both work and home'

All of the Senior HR Professionals saw the challenges with flexible working and the hours spent at work being issues that had a significant impact on work-family conflict and the quality of relationships.

'It's not uncommon for people to say they're too tired to do things with their families over the weekend'

'I have heard of personal relationships breaking down because of the time spent at work'

They also shared how important they felt this was and how seriously this was taken by their senior leadership teams.

'The impact of this is taken seriously by our senior leaders but not the cause'

'Senior Leaders do take wellbeing seriously, but more focused around customer experience and then linked to staff, but not the other way round'

	Where would you place your efforts and information available to employees?	Where would you place the impact of your efforts mentioned above?	How proactive are you in promoting information and employee empowerment in this area?	How important do you think this issue is for your company?
Consolidated Response Range	3-8	1-7	1-8	6-10
Average Response	4.8	3.2	4.6	7.7

They were also given a number of questions and asked to rate them on a scale of 1 – 10, ranging from 1 = no focus/impact/activity/not considered, 10 = significant focus/impact/activity/embedded. The results were collated for each organisation and then consolidated below as a collective view. As you can see from the above table there were a number of diverse views on this topic (as shown in the consolidated response range) especially on the questions focusing on current activity and effort. The majority of the HR Professionals felt that their efforts to date on this agenda were limited, with the impact being less evident. There was one organisation that felt this was already an important element within their plans and were making a positive impact for employees.

Without exception, all HR professionals interviewed felt this is an important agenda for the future and something their companies should place more focus and emphasis on. It was interesting to see this consistent view across such diverse sectors, including private and public organisations.

And some final thoughts...

'This conversation has made me think about how the links between relationships has an impact at work – we need to consider this from a wider perspective'

'This is about the whole person and ignore it at your peril!'

Policy Review

The policy desk analysis was specifically conducted after the HR Professionals interviews to ensure the appropriate policies were reviewed and that a high level understanding of the company culture was considered when doing so. The focus of the policy review was to identify any aspects within the policy or procedures documentation relating to relational capability and the impact of relationships in the workplace and at home.

The types of policies where connections to relational capability would be more likely were recommended to the organisations for review, these included policies such as flexible/agile working, maternity and parental leave and stress/resilience management.

Throughout all of the policies reviewed, there were limited links, with some quite tenuous links. Limited references were found in the following policies or workplace literature:

• Managing Pressure at Work
'Excessive or prolonged pressure in the workplace is a health and safety issue; a cost to the organisation and the individual; and can be prevented and alleviated by individuals and their managers. On an everyday basis, work, home, life and health are interdependent. It may need to be acknowledged that sometimes it is difficult to assess whether the main cause of stress is work related or due to private circumstances'.

" Taking part in this research has helped us, as an organisation, to realise the gap between our policies and practice in terms of this research. Having a third party talk to HR, staff and to review our policies highlighted a need for us to focus, more positively, on the connection between positive relationships both at home and at work and the constructive impact this can have on employees and employers. "

Gail Keeley, HR Manager, Policy and ER, The London School of Economics and Political Science

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL

CASE STUDY

LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

At the LSE we have a long track record as a diverse, fair and flexible employer which in turn helps us to attract, engage and retain the best employees. To support this, we have a high proportion of staff who work flexibly (our flexible working policy has been open to all staff for a number of years) and we have worked hard to become recognised as a 'top employer for working families'. The culture at the LSE is very open to flexibility with regards to parental and caring responsibilities and is becoming more so in terms of other responsibilities and interests outside the sphere of work.

The School has good mechanisms of support in times of crises, such as paid time off for dependents, and recognises the need to support staff through life's challenges.

This particular research highlighted that the School had not made the connection between the support offered and the positive impact that this would have on workplace and employee engagement. In order to address this key disconnect we are: Reviewing the School's leadership training programme to expand the flexible working section to encompass the positives for both employee and employer, in addition to management style and authenticity to create more openness at work; reviewing current policies to make the connections more positive; a senior figure at the School will hold briefings about flexible working and will focus on positive impact this may have at home and at work; rebranding and re-launching our flexible working policy and toolkit; a commitment to monitor flexible working in the School's Equality and Diversity strategy.

We hope that by doing so, there is an opportunity to increase engagement even further and ensure a consistent approach to flexible working across the School.

• Staff Counselling Service
'This is an opportunity for all staff to access support, whether to discuss a problem or situation that is causing concern, or some distress that is taking place at work or home'.

• Retirement Planning
'The workshop includes Personal Reality and Change – to review career to date, plan for the future and the impact this may have on your personal circumstances and home life'.

• Customer Relationships – External Literature and Training
'You'll be providing leadership, advice and inspiration to some very busy managers. So if you don't get on well with people and have the right relationship skills to do so, you won't get very far'.

• Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)
'EAP offers a number of support services for employees including advice about relationships and the impact they can have on your wellbeing'.

• IVF – Leave for Fertility Treatment
'We understand that this can be an emotional time and will offer support through time off and access to confidential EAP'.

Focus Groups

The focus groups were conducted directly after the policy review and used similar questions to those asked within the HR Professionals interviews to enable cross-referencing of the responses. The focus groups were attended by a diverse range of employees from different departments, levels, ages, experience, women and men so that different lived experiences within the organisation could be shared.

There were mixed views from the focus groups as to the expectations they placed on their employer and if they felt that relational capability was important in the workplace. However, without exception all focus groups gave rich examples of the impacts of 'work-family conflict' and 'family-work conflict' on their engagement and motivation in the workplace.

The collective responses from the focus groups were collated together under the following themes:

Culture

The majority of respondents stated that they personally liked to work in more open environments where you could talk about your life outside of the workplace, but also acknowledged that the culture wasn't consistent across their organisation.

'We have an open environment where people do share what's going on personally'

'I always work best in a company where I can be consistent at both work and home'

'There are a lot of mini cultures here and it depends which part you are in as to if you would talk about personal issues in the workplace'

'There is a culture of talking about personal issues...but it depends which office you're in'

Workloads

Many employees talked about increased workloads and the impact this was having on personal lives:

'Many staff are overworked – this can have an impact at home as they don't want to talk about work in their personal time'

'The hours at work nearly broke my marriage up as I was regularly on call. Work took over! Now, the blackberry is switched off when I'm not in the office – it was having a negative impact at home'

'We all work long hours, "everyone does it" – No-one thinks about the impact long hours has on home life'

Line Managers

The importance of the line manager understanding their team members and how to respond to issues or changes in behaviour within the workplace was highlighted in every focus group.

'Someone was great at work and then their behaviour changed, there was something going on at home. They tried to soldier on but as their Line Manager it was my responsibility to notice this'

'As a Line Manager we are trained around difficult conversations with staff and how to communicate...its all about relationships'

'I try to stay in tune with my staff and know that they need to be able to get through the day'

Flexible Working

There were a number of comments made about the impact of working flexibly:

'Getting the work rota one week in advance does not help my home life'

'My line manager lets me work in a way that suits me, I feel in control and feel better at work and at home'

> At Metro Bank, our people are our most important and valuable asset, and as a result we treat them with the utmost consideration and respect; the same way that we want them to treat our customers. The initial report findings were certainly of interest and reinforced the importance that building strong relationships has on the culture of our business.
>
> *Danny Harmer, People Director, Metro Bank*

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL

However, throughout the focus group discussions there were clear examples of when work pressures have a negative impact on personal relationships:

'When stressed at work that level of stress does come out and get passed on at home – they call me a 'ratbag' at home'

'I don't want to do anything at home when it gets so bad at work – I may be at home in body...but not in mind'

'Travelling for work puts some real pressures on home relationships as they always feel that work will come first – I do try and spend more time with family when I'm in the country'

'I regularly subconsciously find myself 'being there but not there' – at home in body but constantly thinking about work. The family don't get the best out of me'

There were also a number of clear examples of where home pressures have an impact in the workplace:

'Anything that happens at home, either positively or negatively, stops me thinking things through at work'

'My father was taken ill...both work and home suffered. I wasn't delivering in either and felt that I was letting both sides down'

'I had a negative experience there where issues going on at home and I didn't have the support network to deal with it. My line manager wasn't supportive but I did what I could do so that work didn't suffer... my home relationships took a real knock!'

'There was an example where someone lost their job as personal life was negatively impacting work and this got into a downward spiral. We found out about it when it was too late to help'

'You should never expect 100% from your staff as there will always be something else going on that needs time and emotional resources'

Senior Leaders

Within some of the focus groups they felt there was commitment from the top of the organisation and they took this agenda very seriously.

'We have a wellbeing board that focuses on the employee – they are showing their commitment by putting money to this'

'I believe that senior leaders really do take this seriously, the challenge is the middle managers as they have a lot of priorities'

They were also given two questions and asked to rate them on a scale of 1 – 10, ranging from 1 = no focus/impact/activity/not considered, 10 = significant focus/impact/activity/embedded. The results were collated for each organisations and then consolidated below as a collective view.

	Where would you place the level of information available to you as an employee?	How important do you think this issue is for your company?
Consolidated Response Range	1-8	1-9
Average Response	4.7	6.1

As you can see from the above table there were very broad and diverse views on this topic. On each question posed to employees the range of responses was very broad, however, you will see from the average response scores that the focus group members felt more strongly that the issue was important for their company and were more negative about the view that information was not currently available to them.

Given the responses to the above question regarding accessibility to information for employees, the focus groups were asked what more their organisations could do. The responses were:

'Team Leaders should be assessed on how they support their people'

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL

'Integrate something about healthy relationships, both at home and work, into the wellbeing policy – and deliver against it'

'The policies are great but a lot of manager's don't know about them or where to find the information – if you are in the know they are great!'

'I'm sure if leaders realised this had an impact on productivity they would take it more seriously – education for that population is key'

'We have great customer service training but no link to how the relationship skills can be used in personal circumstances'

'This should be increasingly important to our company given the ageing of employees and the family stage they are mostly at'

There was one final, and important, point for some:

'Some people would find the link to home as intrusive – some people don't want to talk about their family at work...if anything is going to be done in the workplace this does need to be considered'

" At Chelsea and Westminster we recognise that outcomes for our patients are directly affected by how engaged and motivated our workforce is. This research backs up this belief and has given us clear direction with regard to how we improve in the future. **"**

Amber Payne,
Employee Benefits Manager,
Chelsea and Westminster NHS Foundation Trust

CASE STUDY

NHS CHELSEA AND WESTMINSTER'S VALUES AND "KINDNESS" CAMPAIGN

More than 900 patients, members of the public and staff voted during our 'Who do you think WE are?' consultation to help us define our values in February 2012. The Trust values following this consultation were agreed as: Safe, Kind, Excellent and Respectful. Our values were launched in May 2012 during our Open Day and following further focus groups, we defined what these values mean in practice. We want to ensure the highest quality care for those being treated here and the highest quality experience for staff working here. These values and behaviours guide everything we do as a Trust and as individual members of staff. They define the quality of care that patients should expect at Chelsea and Westminster and how we as staff can help meet those expectations.

Kindness Campaign:
In February 2014, a special campaign was launched to define what kindness meant to individuals. Staff and patients were encouraged to write on specially designed postcards what kindness meant to them. This could take any form – a simple definition, a personal or family experience, a quote. It was made clear that these definitions were not limited to work but could include an individual's personal life also. These quotes were collated and a poet invited into the Trust to sift through them and use them as the basis for some original poetry which was shared with the staff.

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL

Insights and Conclusions

The diagnostic tool resulted in a number of key findings which continued to highlight the significance of relational capability and the connectivity between work-family and family-work conflict.

The HR Professionals across the organisations all believed that this is an important issue for their workforce, and not something that is given the level of focus or priority that it should. Without exception, they all made very clear links to this topic and the positive impact this could have in the workplace, on employee engagement and a number of other strategic aspects which were important to the overall business objectives of the organisations e.g. patient experience and client satisfaction. They also highlighted the importance of this for their senior leaders, although it was emphasised that the impact was the driving force rather than the cause.

The review of policies and procedures showed that this currently isn't something that is included within existing organisational practices. Many links were tenuous with a small number of links to training and awareness. Any existing support that was available was seen as reactive with limited visibility for employees.

The focus group discussions highlighted the 'lived experience' within their organisations and the apparent disconnect between the views and aspirations of the HR Professional and the real life experiences across the different levels within the employee base. Many employees were able to share examples of both work-family conflict and family-work conflict, which they had personally experienced or seen a work colleague experience. The impact these examples had both within the workplace and in their personal lives was very evident and reinforced the importance of relational capability within the workplace.

The diagnostic exercise highlighted:

- The high level of importance HR Professionals from a number of sectors consistently placed on relational capability and the impact this has within the workplace and in personal life

- The limited references to this in organisational policies, procedures and guidelines

- The lived experiences of employees, their perception of the limited resource available and the consistent view that this is increasingly important within the workplace.

3 SECTION THREE
Small and Medium Sized Enterprises - SMEs

Although much of the work in this area has previously highlighted large organisations, the benefits of relational capability are as relevant to small employers as much as they are to large ones. The concepts and underpinning rationale around relational capability remain the same for organisations of all sizes and sectors, but the way that small businesses run and are organised, and the resources available to them are very different. This SME toolkit has been designed to complement the work that has been undertaken to date in large companies and be incorporated into the wider report.

Understanding the SME viewpoint

To explore the SME attitudes towards the concept of relational capability, a number of activities have taken place:

- Discussions with SME representative bodies.
- Semi-structured interviews with SMEs of varying sizes and sectors.
- Interview with a specialist SME outsourcing HR provider.

These activities were designed to examine a number of things in relation to SMEs:
- What the general view was of developing relational capability within organisations
- Whether or not such an approach would be relevant to SME organisations
- Does developing relationships capability offer a sufficient business benefit for SMEs to considering adopting it
- What current practice is within SMEs around workplace and non-workplace relationships and relationship issues
- How resilient SME leaders were when employee relationship issues increase work pressure
- To what extent are skills in managing relationship issues (both work and non-work ones that impact on the workplace) essential to effective and astute management.

In the semi structured interviews SMEs were asked to describe what they understood about relationships (both work and non-work) and the workplace, and to describe how these were managed. They were asked to describe their own organisational culture and management approach. They also described their policies and procedures around management and expectations of staff, and how these policies were communicated to staff members. Where appropriate they described their 'chain of command' and escalation processes. In addition they were also asked to describe their overall ethos as an employer, where such an ethos was driven from, and what the advantages and disadvantages of this ethos were.

Relationships - the SME environment

There is great variety in the SME environment, but one characteristic that emerged through interviews was that time pressures are acute and there is very little slack in the system. Both SMEs themselves and SME-representative bodies highlighted this as a major issue; anything that isn't seen as core business would have to compete for the attention of SME leaders and managers who are focused on the day-to-day running of the company.

To be compelling, and to command attention, promoting relationships capability to SMEs must be practical, relevant and **clearly demonstrate the business benefits**. Without this key component of an easily identifiable rationale for adopting new approaches to managing and incorporating new practices, and an unambiguous demonstration of how it can directly benefit their business, SME managers will find it hard to justify diverting time and resources.

SMEs were not hostile to a relationships approach, nor is this a new concept to them. The under-standing that non-work relationships issues had

SMEs

workplace impacts had traction. Indeed, the experience of SMEs was that managers said they did not struggle to understand the non-workplace issues that affected employees work performance and capacity. Rather, the culture inside the organisation was one where employees were accustomed to a sharing and 'open' environment, often characterised as a 'family' one. This wasn't necessarily viewed as a wholly positive culture for the organisation. Often managers could find themselves diverted from crucial business matters because of employee issues originating outside of the workplace, issues that included, but were not confined to, relationship ones.

Managers and SME leaders also reported, as a consequence, that their own relationships were sometimes placed under pressure as they had to find extra capacity (often from their own time) to respond to workplace-related matters. SME managers identified with the idea of the culture of these organisations being more 'family-like'. Whilst wishing to maintain the strengths that this might bring (high trust; openness and tolerance; a willingness to provide support), they were also conscious that the downsides (over familiarity; lack of professionalism; treating the workplace as an extension of home; overspill of non-work into work) negatively affected their business.Therefore, a better way of managing this type of culture would be welcome.

SMEs, Management and HR

The size of SMEs means that they often do not have Human Resources departments to implement new ideas and procedures, and to systematically measure their outcomes. The SMEs interviewed preferred to use an outsourced HR model, and there were strong arguments for doing so. These included getting the 'nuts and bolts' HR practices such as sickness absence, maternity and paternity and Right to Request flexible working right. By using external HR providers, managers were relieved of the doubts that they might be 'doing it wrong', especially around disciplinary issues. This also freed managers from the day-to-day burden of matters that consumed their time, and inserted an extra layer of distance between managers and employees that was deemed necessary to preserve business professionalism and promote the idea of fairness and objectivity in decision-making.

Managers in SMEs spoke of not wanting to become a kind of social worker, managing employees by maintenance, and were conscious that some employees consumed more input in terms of non-work issues impacting on working life than others. There were some concerns that such employees used non-work issues as a defence against poor performance at work and managers had experience of employees exaggerating non-work issues to excuse poor work attendance and behaviour. Here, guidance about relationship management, particularly the interface between relationship issues and formal HR procedures, would be welcome. One of the strengths of the external HR model was that the SMEs who used it felt that they had a sounding board on staff issues where they had little experience and were in need of advice about the next steps to take.

Although SME managers are aware that employee performance is vital to business success (and indeed, survival), the 'softer' side of management was not generally something that any of the leaders and managers interviewed had any formal training in. Broadly speaking, the manager managed in a style with which they were comfortable, and if the manager was also the SME founder or Director, then their management style informed the company ethos and culture.

For senior managers who were not owner/managers, the picture was more nuanced. They may have acquired more 'traditional' management skills and techniques. Nonetheless, relationship support as a specific skill was not something that they had been exposed to. Introducing this as part of a managerial skillset was something that would be of interest if it helped to bring a structure to the process of dealing with relationships issues within the workplace, and also if it assisted managers in being more attuned to situations where employees are reticent about issues from outside work that are impacting on their ability to do their job. Managers would like to know when they need to step in, but also *how* they should step in.
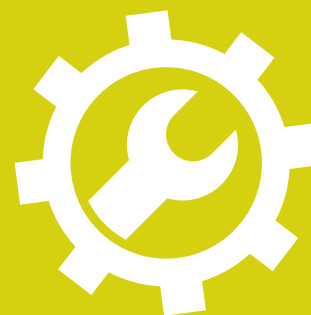
4 SECTION FOUR
Tools and Additional Resources

This toolkit and additional resources has been created in direct response to the findings of this practical research. To create the most effective and sustainable impact for your business, all of the tools and resources should be used. However, each can be used in isolation.

Included within the Toolkit:

- **The Business Case:** Why Relationships Matter at Work

- **Guidance Statements** - Relational Capability Statements for Embedding into Employment Policies

- **'Mindful Working' Tool** – Original

- **'Mindful Working' Tool** – How to Tailor for your Organisation

- **Diagnostic Tool** – creating your own analysis to assess where you are

- **SME Toolkit** – Managers guide for thinking about these issues – pointers for people to consider and be aware of and the potential legal elements to consider

- **Other resources** available from Working Families and OnePlusOne

TOOLS & RESOURCES

The Business Case: Why Relationships Matter at Work

Overview

There are direct business benefits from supporting employees to maintain and enhance their personal relationships. Employees with good personal relationships have higher work engagement, which results in greater productivity, focus and investment in their work.

Furthermore, the ability to create and maintain productive and rewarding personal relationships involves the following key skills: negotiation, communication and acceptance. These skills are also directly applicable to the workplace.

Using a suite of work and management practices to enable employees to maintain and enhance their personal relationships and drive employee work engagement results in: higher performance, boosting the bottom-line, and improved client satisfaction.

Context: Why Personal Relationships Matter Now

There are pressing economic, demographic and wellbeing reasons for organisations to enhance employees' personal relationships to drive work engagement.

The Economy

High performance is vital in tough economic times. Employees with strong personal relationships are more engaged, and are more productive, focused and invested in their work. These organisations will be the employers of choice when the economy recovers.

Demographics

The UK population is ageing, people are retiring later, and around 45% of marriages fail. Further, a third of workers will be over the age of 50 by 2020. These demographic shifts will put new pressures on employees' relationships, and employers will need to prepare for, and respond to them to avoid reduced engagement.

Wellbeing

Demands at work are increasingly being associated with strains at home. Also high workloads and work stress are associated with decreased relationship satisfaction. The cost of stress to the British economy is around 10% of Gross National Product, and costs businesses 13 million working days in absenteeism per year. Family breakdown reduces health, wealth and wellbeing, all of which put pressure on relationships and work performance.

Business Benefits Of Strong Personal Relationships

- **High relationship quality is linked to higher work engagement.**
  A positive home and family life enables people to be more engaged at work.

- **Relationship skills can directly benefit the workplace.**
  Good relationship skills (such as interpersonal skills, ability to multitask, respect for individual differences) are valuable workplace assets that can cross over and benefit employee performance, as reported by both male and female managers.

- **Strong personal relationships can help improve employee resilience.**
  Support from family and friends provides a buffer for the effects of work stress. It has also been linked to career success, career development, and satisfaction at work.

Business Benefits Of Boosting Engagement

- **Engaged employees perform better at work.**
  Engaged workers are more productive, invested in their work, and receive higher in-role and extra-role ratings from colleagues. They are more focused, less distracted, more attune to self-development and improving performance, and display greater initiative.

- **Engagement boosts business outcomes.**
  Work engagement is positively related to improved bottom-line financial performance and client-satisfaction. Increasing investment in engaging a workforce by just 10% can yield an increase in profits between £1083 and £1568 per employee, per year.

Strong Personal Relationships Drive Engagement

Enhancing employees' personal relationships naturally complements existing HR, Diversity and Inclusion, and Health and Wellbeing programmes, and work/family conflict initiatives.

Employers can achieve the **engagement benefits** of **enhancing personal relationships** by:

– Reducing **Work/Family Conflict**
– Enabling effective **Flexible/Agile Working**
– Combatting **Presenteeism, Overwork** and Burn-out

Reducing Work/Family Conflict

- **Reducing the crossover of stress benefits both work and family life.**
  Individuals who have more satisfying, high-quality family relationships are less affected by work stress. Similarly, those more satisfied at work are less affected by family stressors.

- **Work and family can enrich one another.**
  Positive experiences from work and family life can benefit each other. Men's positive attention and absorption in work is related to their attention and absorption in family life.

Enabling Effective Flexible Working

- **Flexible working supports family life.**
  There are clear, positive links between flexible working and work-life balance, family lives and stress levels. Flexibly-working fathers are physically and psychologically healthier, better able to manage their workload, and more committed to their employer.

Flexible working arrangements increase work-to-family enrichment, which in turn is linked to job satisfaction and turnover intentions, regardless of: gender, age, marital status, education, number of children and hours worked.

- **Flexible working increases employee performance.**
  73% of employers report that flexible working improves employee motivation, 58% report it improves productivity, and 53% experienced improvements in talent management.

  Flexible working practices have also been linked to improved employee relations, employee commitment, employee turnover, recruitment and absenteeism.

Combatting Presenteeism And Overwork

- **Presenteeism bears a significant cost to employers.**
  Presenteeism due to poor mental health leads to a loss of working time nearly 1.5 times that caused by sickness absence due to mental ill-health in the United Kingdom. Further, presenteeism has been estimated to cut productivity by one-third or more (Hemp, 2004).

- **Overwork has negative work and personal consequences.**
  Long hours are a source of negative job-to-home spill-over, affect safety, reduce productivity and increase errors. High work demands, and worrying about work during free time, can result in disturbed sleep patterns and difficulties awakening.

> **FURTHER INFORMATION**
>
> Further information to support the above points can be found within the Happy Homes, Productive Workplaces report:
> ➲ **http://tinyurl.com/8jwv443**

TOOLS & RESOURCES

TOOLS & RESOURCES

Guidance Statements - Relational Capability Statements for Embedding into Employment Policies

This information can be used by organisations to consider how they can embed relational capability thinking into their existing policies and practices. The business case provides rationale for including new strategies such as the wellbeing strategy.

Overview

We are all aware that no matter how much we try to compartmentalise our lives there are times when work has an impact on the home environment and vice-versa. The research *'Happy Homes, Productive Workplaces'* conducted in collaboration between Working Families and OnePlusOne has demonstrated the virtuous circle between healthy and stable personal relationships and high performance at work. The research highlighted that there is a positive connection between work engagement and relationship quality and appears that home-life can be a real driver for motivation and performance at work. It also appears that work life can have a real impact on the quality of personal relationships.

> Further information about the research can be found at ➲ **http://tinyurl.com/8jwv443**

Why is this important to the workplace?

To continuously get the very best out of our colleagues on a day-to-day basis we must understand the implications of how work and personal relationships have an impact on each other. Building effective and trusting relationships both in the work and home environment are crucial for an individual's wellbeing and resilience as well as improving productivity, engagement and motivation in the workplace.

Effective relationship skills are just as important in the workplace as they are at home and what is learnt in one environment can be transferred into others, for example, effective listening techniques, having difficult conversations. Creating increased relational capability has a positive impact on the relationships within the workplace, can improve the quality of collaboration, the client experience and how employees interact in their personal lives.

How do we embed this into the workplace?

Discussing relationships, or creating a spotlight on them, can be a highly emotive subject and not something that all employees may feel comfortable raising in the workplace. However, there are a number of trigger points within the employee employment cycle which may heighten the need for a company to take more notice of the connections between work and home.
The initial starting point may well be for companies to signal some form of acknowledgement of the above via a company statement or within other 'culture' messages. There are other touch points such as flexible working requests, going through a separation, becoming a parent or going through a particularly stressful time in the workplace such as redundancy that would benefit from the recognition of the impact of relationships and the cross over between work and home.
Many companies do support employees by ensuring an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is available to respond to the above situations. Although valuable, this can be seen as a reactive response and becomes valuable when a situation has reached breaking point. Creating relational capability within the workplace increases the chances of issues being proactively 'nipped in the bud' and dealt with in a timely and effective manner far before a 'breaking point' is reached.

Guiding statements:

To create an overarching statement it is important that this is congruent with the wording and tone of other statements or communications within the company. Many companies will not have used the phrase 'relational capability' before and will need to consider what is appropriate for them. The following gives an overview of what an overarching statement might look like, although this has been designed purely for guidance purposes.

Examples of what this statement might look like for:

Draft Statement / Value Statement:
At [include organisation name] we have a culture of treating all colleagues as they would like to be treated, ensuring that we respect one another and treat each other with compassion and courtesy. This underpins the way we cultivate and sustain our relationships with our colleagues, clients, shareholders and the wider community.

Flexible working
A key component to the success of flexible / agile working is the ability to communicate effectively with those around you – both at work and at home. Ensuring that home dynamics are considered when flexible working patterns are created is absolutely paramount to their longer-term success.

Any form of flexible working means that there will be less 'face time' with colleagues. To respond to this, more focus should be given to creating and maintaining effective relationships within the direct working team, and wider.

IVF
At [include organisation name] we understand that undertaking IVF can be an emotional time, both in a personal and professional context, and will offer support and assistance where required

Maternity Policy
Becoming a parent is a hugely emotional time and is important that the personal and relational aspects of becoming a parent are given the same level of importance as the work aspects. This may include being able to effectively manage relationships at home and in the workplace, managing expectations and workloads. Effective communication and relational capability skills will enable all to ensure this is a positive experience both at home and in the workplace.

Compassionate Leave
We appreciate that this can be an emotionally challenging and stressful time. When considering the requirements of the compassionate leave also consider the emotional requirements of the individual and how by strengthen both personal and work relationships can help to support them through this difficult period.

Training and Development
Many skills that are taught with the workplace in mind such as active listening, effective negotiation and dealing with difficult situations are transferrable skills that also have a place in the home environment as well. To ensure that colleagues are able to use these skills throughout their lives it is advantageous to highlight this throughout our training and development. How we develop and sustain effective relationships in the workplace and with our clients is a reflection of our ability to do the same in our personal environments.

TOOLS & RESOURCES

Mindful Working Tool – Original

The 'Mindful Working' tool was created by taking each of the five themes of the *'Happy Homes and Productive Workplaces'* research findings and identifying five activities for line managers and five separate activities for team members to perform over a one-week period. The tool was developed with organisational development experts and leading employers to ensure they were both realistic and impactful.

This is the original tool which was used during the pilot phase of the research and could be appropriate for a number of workplaces.

The five themes of the *'Happy Homes and Productive Workplaces'* research findings:

- **Relationship Support**

- **Work-Family Conflict**

- **Presenteeism and Overwork**

- **Flexiblie Working**

- **Gender**

Line Manager

Line-manager tries to perform **each activity** (at least) **once, each week**. 🗓 **WEEKLY**

Make a note of which could not be done and why. Then decide how it could be done differently the following week.

1. **Have a conversation with participating team-members about something that happens outside of work** (e.g. Did you have a nice weekend?) ☐

2. **Leave work on time** ☐

3. **Switch off your work mobile / do not check work email once you get home.   Support your team to do the same*** ☐

4. **Ask for the expertise of participating team members about their work, and if anything could be done to better/help manage their workload** (e.g. How could tasks be allocated/performed better? What is the best approach to achieve the task?) ☐

5. **Prioritise and do something with your family / friends that you have been putting off due to work** (e.g. spend time with a partner, see a friend, read to children) ☐

   * If work email/phone access is not a part of participants' jobs, then another appropriate replacement activity that delivers the same effect will be provided.

Team member

Team-members try to perform **each activity** (at least) **once, each week**.

Make a note of which could not be done and why. Then decide how it could be done differently the following week.

1. **Have a conversation with a colleague about something that happens outside of work** (e.g. Did you have a nice weekend?)   ☐

2. **Pursue a personal development opportunity** (e.g. read the news at lunch, research or engage in a hobby)   ☐

3. **Prioritise and do something with your family / friends that you have been putting off due to work** (e.g. spend time with a partner, see a friend, read to children)   ☐

4. **Leave work on time**   ☐

5. **Switch off your work mobile / do not check work email once you get home***   ☐

   * If work email/phone access is not a part of participants' jobs, then another appropriate replacement activity that delivers the same effect will be provided.

TOOLS & RESOURCES

TOOLS & RESOURCES

Mindful Working Tool – How to Tailor to your Organisation's Requirements

The 'Mindful Working' tool was created by taking each of the five themes of the '*Happy Homes and Productive Workplaces*' research findings and identifying five activities for line managers and five separate activities for team members to perform over a one-week period. The tool was developed with organisational development experts and leading employers to ensure they were both realistic and impactful.

The key recommendations from the original research were::

Relationship Support	
	• Employers should view Relationship Quality as an asset that requires investment: from online relationship support or counselling, to providing support for parents.

Work-Family Conflict	
	• Employers can address long-working hours, provision and take up of flexible working options, and lack of awareness towards caring responsibilities. • Managers should be up-skilled and employees enabled to take responsibility for ensuring the work environment remains positive and productive.

Presenteeism and Overwork	
	• Employers can improve job design, ensure employees take adequate breaks, provide stress management sessions, and allocate work appropriately. • Senior figures should model this behaviour, to show it is no barrier to success.

Flexible Working	
	• Employers may need support in managing the interface between work and home-life. • Employers should develop a mutually beneficial culture of flexibility. • Senior figures should model this behaviour, to show it is no barrier to success.

Gender	
	• Employers should avoid the assumption that women will not want to focus on their careers if they have children, and monitor the effects of unconscious bias. • Employers should monitor men more closely, and ensure flexible policies are aligned and communicated so men are able to access them equally, without concern over it damaging their career.

To ensure that the tailored tool responds to all aspects of the research findings there should be an activity that directly links back to each of the above.

Examples of activities that could be included for line managers are listed below. There may be others that are appropriate to the culture and work within your organisation and would be a good employee engagement exercise to create a specific tool for your organisation/part of your business with some of your colleagues.

Line Manager

Line-manager tries to perform **each activity** (at least) **once, each week**.

Make a note of which could not be done, and why, to be reviewed as to how they can do differently the following week.

Point One directly links to **'Relationship Support'** Options could include:
- Have a conversation with your team members about something that happens outside of work (e.g. Did you have a nice weekend?)
- Have a conversation with your team members about a positive activity they have planned outside of work for the future (e.g. a holiday or trip with their family or friends)
- Ensure that you and your team members are aware of information available within the company that will 'buffer' against any work-related stress (e.g. online training, internal resource groups).

Point Two directly links to **'Work-Family Conflict'** Options could include:
- Leave work on time
- Ensure that each of your team members leaves work on time at some stage throughout the working week
- Review who you are handing the work and key projects out to within your team. Ensure this is balanced so that all team members have the opportunity to be involved without the majority of work landing on one or two people.

**Point Three** directly links to **'Presenteeism and Overwork'** Options could include:
- Switch off your work mobile / do not check work email once you get home. Support your team to do the same
- Ensure you have at least one day each week where you are not completing any work related tasks. Support your team to do the same
- Ensure that you are taking appropriate breaks from your work throughout the day. Support your team to so the same.

Point Four directly links to **'Flexible Working'** Options could include:
- Ask for the expertise of your team members about their work, and if anything could be done to better/help manage their workload (e.g. How could tasks be allocated/performed better?, What is the best approach to achieve the task?)
- Ensure you are role modelling working flexibly to your team members, identify what works for you and share with your team
- Ask your team how we could all work more flexibly and how we might implement some of the suggestions over the coming weeks.

Point Five directly links to **'Gender'** Options could include:
- Prioritise and do something with your family / friends that you have been putting off due to work (e.g. spend time with a partner, see a friend, read to children)
- Ensure all team-members are getting the appropriate opportunities and accessibility to work projects and working flexibly
- Pursue a personal development opportunity and ensure all team members are encouraged to do the same.
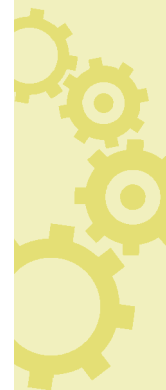
TOOLS & RESOURCES

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Team member

Team-members try to perform **each activity** (at least) **once, each week**.

Make a note of which could not be done and why. Then decide how it could be done differently the following week.

Point One directly links to **'Relationship Support'** Options could include:

- Have a conversation with your colleagues about something that happens outside of work (e.g. Did you have a nice weekend?)

- Have a conversation with your colleagues about a positive activity they have planned outside of work for the future (e.g. a holiday or trip with their family or friends)

- Ensure you are aware of information available within the company that will 'buffer' against any work-related stress (e.g. online training, internal resource groups).

Point Two directly links to **'Work-Family Conflict'** Options could include:

- Structure your working week to enable you to leave work on time without having to consider work when not there
- Pursue a personal development opportunity (e.g. read the news at lunch, research or engage in a hobby)
- Make sure you have an activity to look forward to in your personal life which is not work related.

Point Three directly links to **'Presenteeism and Overwork'** Options could include:

- Switch off your work mobile / do not check work email once you get home.

- Ensure you have at least one day each week where you are not completing any work related tasks.

- Ensure that you are taking appropriate breaks from your work throughout your working day.

Point Four directly links to **"Flexible Working'**Options could include:

- Switch off your work mobile / do not check work email once you get home.

- Ensure you have at least one day each week where you are not completing any work related tasks.

- Ensure that you are taking appropriate breaks from your work throughout your working day.

Point Five directly links to **'Gender'** Options could include:

- Prioritise and do something with your family / friends that you have been putting off due to work (e.g. spend time with a partner, see a friend, read to children)

- Talk to your family about the aspects of your work you enjoy

- Think about the aspects of your work that you really enjoy and how you may be able to factor more of those activities into your job.

! POINTS TO CONSIDER WHEN USING THE TOOL:

This tool can be used as both a planning tool for line managers and team members to schedule some of these activities into their work week and /or as a review document to identify how successful they have been in completing all of the tasks throughout the week and where their focus for the future should be.

Not all of the activities within the above tool will be applicable for every role in every organisation. These guidelines will help you tailor this so that it fits both the culture and the work undertaken throughout your organisation. The above are a number of suggestions for each of the five aspects of the tool, please use these as a template and discuss with your line manager and work colleagues as to the activities that will work for the part of the organisation you work within. It may be that you collectively come up with a number of activities that are more appropriate.

Regularly review the activities within the tool as, over time, other elements may become more important for you or you may 'master' one of the activities and want to challenge yourself a little further.

It is important to note that this isn't a tool to use as a one-off for a short period of time. The beneficial results come from embedding this into your work schedules so that the activities become repeated behaviours. This is the longer-term aspiration to focus on.

The tool can also be used as a 'pulse point', to check every now and again how you are performing against the activities. This could be linked directly to your health and wellbeing strategy and any promotions or communications around that to focus on emotional and holistic wellbeing.

TOOLS & RESOURCES

Diagnostic Tool – creating your own analysis to assess where you are

The Diagnostic Tool used throughout the research was created to identify the gap stated within an organisation. This links the skills and knowledge required to effectively manage relationships in a way that translates directly between work and home and vice versa (both positively and negatively) with the lived experience of individual employees.
The identification of any gap would enable companies to review what they currently do, how this is communicated to employees and how this is demonstrated on a day-to-day basis via manager and peer behaviour.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you would like more information about a detailed diagnostic to be completed within your organisation please contact OnePlusOne on **0207 553 9554**

There were four key stages to the diagnostic tool:

Stage 1 – Senior HR Professional Interviews to gain their views on Relational Capability

Stage 2 – Conduct desk analysis of the policies where 'relational capability' may be included in some guise. Examples of these could include flexible/agile working, maternity and parental leave and stress/resilience management.

Stage 3 – Conduct focus group interviews with employees (cross section of levels and functions) to identify and understand their lived experience within the company

Stage 4 – Share feedback with colleagues and gain their insights and discuss / agree the next steps and actions that should be taken to respond to the findings.

Find below an example of how the feedback from the above activity may look.

Stage 4 - Feedback

Aim: Share feedback with colleagues and gain their insights and discuss / agree the next steps and actions that should be taken to respond to the findings

To complete this stage review the responses and findings from each of the above stages and identify where there were any similarities that came out from each stage. For example:

'The HR professional stated that flexible working was there to ensure employees could effectively deliver their work commitments and have quality time at home. The policy mirrored those aspirations and highlighted the importance of quality time at home and the positive impact this can have on productivity. When speaking to employees they also highlighted the effectiveness of their flexible working arrangements'

There may also be areas where there is a disconnect between the different stages:

'The HR professional highlighted our senior leaders commitment to ensuring all employees are aware of stress and resilience and the impact this may have on productivity and home-life. However, there was no mention of this within the health and wellbeing strategy or the absence policy. Employees highlighted that they have been told to attend an on-line training package about stress in the workplace. However, there was no mention of the impact this could have on home-life and how personal relationships could have a positive impact on the levels of stress people experience and deal with in the workplace'

Once the key similarities and key disconnects have been identified, share with the HR professional and others within the company to discuss further. Focus on the areas where action can be taken, identifying any quick wins and areas where further discussions with other colleagues are required.

Small and Medium Sized Enterprise (SME) Toolkit

The toolkit for SMEs is intended to provide a number of activities and exercise that SMEs can implement to help them build relational capability. Derived from the same tools that have been tried and tested in large companies, the tools can be adapted to suit the circumstances of individual businesses.

The toolkit comprises a number of different elements. These are intended to be of maximum appeal to SMEs by being pragmatic and business-focussed.

The toolkit elements are:

The Diagnostic Tool

Being a 'Relationships Aware' Manager

Guidance for Employees

Employee Questionnaire and Measurement Tool

Notes on Good Practice for SMEs

TOOLS & RESOURCES

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The SME Toolkit

The Diagnostic Tool

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Once the key similarities and key disconnects have been identified, share with the HR professional and others within the company to discuss further. Focus on the areas where action can be taken, identifying any quick wins and areas where further discussions with other colleagues are required.

The SME Toolkit

Being a 'Relationships Aware' Manager

Training for managers and SME leaders focuses on two components:

> The management of relationships amongst their workforce and for the benefit of their organisation

+

> The management of their own relationships as they are affected and impacted by workplace issues. This is a particular concern for smaller SMEs where managers take on a dual role of business leader and line manager of employees.

Training for managers in relationships management incorporates understanding the link between relationship quality and work performance. Training should focus on building relationship skills into the everyday business of management, rather than being a special suite of tools that is rolled out in times of crisis.

> **Training for managers should ideally cover:** ▶

- **Recognising potential relationship issues**
  - Drops in motivation
  - Behaviour changes
  - Productivity and performance drops
  - Sickness absence increases
  - Staff monitoring or survey evidence

- **Building the right culture**
  - Keeping two way communication channels open
  - Keeping the door open for informal, confidential conversations
  - Listening to feedback about culture

- **Developing the right management style**
  - Openness
  - Dealing with perceptions of favouritism and weakness

- **Acknowledging the causes of relationship problems**
  - Non-judgmental management
  - Getting the balance right between business and personal needs

- **Managing**
  - Handling difficult/ emotional conversations/active listening
  - Developing and agreeing a plan
  - Knowing when to get outside help and what this might mean
  - When and how to escalate or revert to other organisational procedures

Training for business owners, managers, leaders in resilience in their own relationships is essential, not only from a wellbeing and relationships health perspective, but also from a business one. Where relationship issues become complex and negatively spill into the workplace, effective and clear-eyed decision making can be compromised.

Examples that emerged in SME interviews included managers feeling unable to have difficult conversations with employees. This lead to underlying non-work issues escalating into relationship breakdown, which negatively impacted on the workplace, to leaders needing to support employees to such an extent that operational matters were neglected.

> **Training for managers should cover:**
> - Managing time
> - Stress
> - Work-life balance
> - Emotional intelligence
> - Managing in a less 'family' way

TOOLS & RESOURCES

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The SME Toolkit

Guidance for employees

Guidance for employees has two aims.

> To explain the purpose and scope of a relationships-based ethos

+

> To lay out some simple actions that employees can use which will support the development of a relations-based approach.

Any statement about a relationships based approach might be incorporated into a staff handbook or policy, or in the company values statement if they have one.

> Simple tools employees can use include:

- **Have a non-work conversation with a colleague.** Ensure it is a two-way process (e.g. about family-life, or sport, or culture, etc.)

- **Prioritise and do something with your family / friends / on your own that you have been putting off (or too tired to do) due to work.** (e.g. spend time with a partner, see a colleague, go for a walk at lunchtime, read to children, etc.)

- **Leave work on time and switch off your mobile / do not check work email.**

- **Perform pro-active management of your tasks** - in a manner of your choice as is appropriate for your job (e.g. Only check your emails three times today or deal with all emails the day they arrive and then archive to avoid backlog).

Although these may seem simplistic, these tools, when tested in larger organisations, proved effective in nudging employees to behave in more relationship-supportive ways. Whilst simple to achieve, they are effective in refocusing employees on their own work and life integration habits and behaviour. They are low impact and zero-cost, and can be helpful in recalibrating team and company culture.

> **FURTHER INFORMATION**
>
> Further information can be found on how to create your own 'Finding your Balance' tool at **http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk/articles/ employers/resources-guides-and-free- webinars/working-families-guides-for-employees**

The SME Toolkit

Employee questionnaire and measurement tool

SME businesses are generally less likely to carry out staff surveys. However, in order to quantify the effectiveness of a relationships-based approach, they will require a baseline understanding of their staff to measure against. Providing a survey that is calibrated to measure engagement and performance will, over time, show whether or not relationship support is understood and appreciated and whether staff morale and engagement is boosted. A further step would be for employers to establish whether they can ascribe any changes to the bottom line to taking a relationships-based approach.

A staff survey (either as a new stand-alone one, or incorporated into an existing one) could include some of the following example questions:

Staff Survey Example Questions

	Agree	Disagree
• Good relationships at home can have a positive impact in the workplace (strongly agree or strongly disagree)	☐	☐
• This issue is taken seriously by senior management (strongly agree or strongly disagree)	☐	☐
• Do you agree or disagree with the following statements:		
▪ My organisation cares about me as an individual	☐	☐
▪ My line manager cares about me as an individual	☐	☐
• Would you recommend your employer as a good place to work?	☐	☐

TOOLS & RESOURCES

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The SME Toolkit

Notes on Good Practice for SMEs

For SMEs (often without in-house HR or employment expertise) there are sometimes concerns about employment issues: there can be uncertainty that they are doing the right thing in terms of legislative compliance and employment risk. This brief guidance aims to help them by promoting a sensible, pragmatic approach. It is not intended to provide advice, legal or otherwise.

If an SME introduces any policy regarding relationships and relationship support for its employees, there should be a guiding principle of openness. The policy may be as simple as a statement about a supportive culture and a sensible approach, where informal conversations are encouraged. Employees should be encouraged to be open about any relationship difficulties they may be facing. The firm should be clear that the policy is intended to benefit both the employee and, as a result of the employee's increased productivity and resilience, the firm. There should also be clarity about what support may be available and from whom, and also what is expected of the firm and the employee. Finally, there should be clarity about how any private information will be handled by the firm.

Of course, if the manager has received training in the area (or is referring to guidance on dealing with sensitive issues, for example provided by ACAS) and as a result handles the conversation sensitively, the employee may be more willing to communicate in an open way and any support is potentially more likely to be offered or accessible. A manager can provide compassion and support. The ideal is probably that any ongoing relationship support required should be provided by an external third party and not by someone within the organisation.

Any information provided should be treated confidentially and should not form the basis of any treatment of or decision subsequently made about the employee. Such decisions should be made on the basis of performance. It should be understood that a long-term impact on performance or capability, whatever the cause, may result in performance and/or capability procedures.

> Two main issues have been identified.
>
> (1) Can an employee be under an obligation to share non-work issues – particularly where, for example, they relate to performance?
>
> (2) What happens to information that is shared about relationships and non-work issues at work?

The simple answer is, of course, that the employee cannot be compelled to disclose personal details to his/her employer. However, if the firm offers understanding and support, the employee will probably be more likely to be open, particularly in situations where the employee feels that their performance is being affected. In a situation where a manager enquires whether there may be family or relationship factors at play in a performance or similar situation, the employee again cannot be required to disclose.

Other Resources Available

There are a number of resources also available from Working Families and OnePlusOne which respond directly to the findings of the original '*Happy Homes and Productive Workplaces*' Research and will support the use of the other tools within this report.

Relationship Support

- **Building a relationally capable workforce:** E-learning package and skills workshop
- **Managing conflict at home and at work:** E-learning package and skills workshop
- **Changes for me and Us:** Online antenatal education package for parents
- **When parents part:** online support package for separated parents
- **Webinars** On various relationship issues/topics
- **Couples Living Apart:** Information package

Work-Family Conflict

- **Quickbite™ seminars and programmes for All** (Balancing work & being a dad, Balancing work and being a mum, Balancing work and caring, Flexible working the essential guide)
- **Minibite™ e-learning single videos and programmes for All** (Balancing work & being a dad, Balancing work and being a mum)
- **Quickbite™ seminars and Masterclass programmes for managers** (Engaging working mothers, Engaging working fathers, Developing carer friendly teams, Developing high performing flexible teams)

Presenteeism and Overwork

- **Quickbites™ for All** (Building resilience, Maximise your energy and your time)
- **Minibites™ for All** (Building resilience, Maximising your energy and your time)
- **Quickbite™ seminars and programmes for managers** (Developing high performing flexible teams)

Flexible Working

- **Quickbite™ seminars and programmes for All** (Flexible working the essential guide, Balancing Life, Maximise your energy & your time, Job sharing – making it work)
- **Quickbite™ seminars and programmes for Managers** (Flexible working: the mind-set shift, Job-share: making it work)
- **Masterclasses programmes for managers** (Managing the change and Leading flexible high performing teams)

Biographies

Charlotte Sweeney has specialised in large-scale change programmes with a focus on diversity, inclusion, engagement and wellbeing for over 15 years. She is seen as a thought leader in her field and works with companies and executives from the private, public and third sectors to drive leadership and cultural change. Charlotte worked for Blue Chip companies in the Financial Services Sector for 25 years (Barclays, Barclays Capital, HBOS and Nomura International) before creating her own consultancy.

Charlotte is a Non-Executive Director at the Mid Yorkshire NHS Trust, has recently conducted an independent review on the Voluntary Code for Executive Search firms for the Secretary of State Dr Vince Cable, is Vice-Chair of the Dept of Business, Innovation and Skills external D&I Advisory Panel and is the creator and leading the Lord Mayor of the City of London's Diversity Programme 'The Power of Diversity'. She sits on a number of advisory and charity boards as well as being a founding member of the POWERful Women initiative led by Baroness Verma to increase the representation of women in the energy industry.

Over the years she has won many awards, including from Harvard, for her work in the Diversity and Inclusion field.

Jonathan Swan is Policy and Research Officer for Working Families. He has researched and written on a wide range of work-life integration issues, including: fathers and work, flexible working in senior roles, productivity and performance, organisational culture and active ageing. He is responsible for the annual Top Employers for Working Families benchmark for organisations and the Time Health and the Family series of reports.