



FOCUS ON FRIDAY 2013

How much coaching can you fit into 140 characters? Every month a member of the Year One Consulting team or one of our guest tweeters explore a different subject related to personal and organisational development. This booklet brings together a year's worth of tweeted reflections, ideas, tips and questions.

Follow **@yearoneteam** on twitter for more insight and inspiration every week when we **FOCUS ON FRIDAY**.



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Tim is Managing Director of Year One Consulting and heads up our Organisational Strategy and Team Development services. A highly experienced facilitator and coach, he specialises in leadership development, creative thinking and teamwork and has worked with clients in central and local government, higher education and the creative industries.

COMMUNICATION

There are many ways to connect to colleagues at work, but sometimes we default to quick & easy rather than considered & effective.

Keep in mind the diversity of perspectives, knowledge & preferences across your audience & craft your communication accordingly.

Communication is more than sending. What format or style will work best for your receiver? Flex accordingly to get your message across.

Returning to a swamped email inbox? Sifting "mission-critical" from "FYI" is a ritual dreaded by many. One cause: overuse of CC'd emails.

Why CC? Habit? Company policy? Because the person emailing you did? Consider the recipient: Are you sending a signal or creating noise?

Don't hit CC: reply/send to the primary recipient & forward to people who should see it, explaining why. No time? No reason? No need to CC.

How often do you pick up the phone? Email is a great way to rapidly broadcast far & wide (hence: spam) but isn't always the best option.

For complexity & nuance, phone calls beat email every time: human interaction can quickly progress things in a way that email chains can't.

Avoid the temptation to email by default (though it may be comfortable, easy and "off-my-desk" friendly) & reconnect with conversation.

If your team can't fit round a dining table, you can't rely on people "just knowing" everything that is going on. Hence: team meetings.

Team meeting rule #1: Avoid Mondays. An end of week session can make it easier to review the week, mark success & be prepared for the next.

Team meeting rule #2: Not everyone has to be there. 2/3 of the team is fine. Circulate notes ASAP & have the chair follow up with absentees.

Team meeting rule #3: Have one, especially if you're "too busy". An assumption/psychic power mix is a risky fuel to run your enterprise on.

TYPE AND COMMUNICATION

Type is about preferences; the ways of experiencing and interacting with the world that are most comfortable for a particular individual.

Type doesn't predict performance or behaviour; context, culture, personal experience and the groups we belong to all influence how we are.

The Type model can provide a useful reminder that people may have different perspectives & approaches to our own... and that's okay!

We sometimes rely on habits in communication because they're easier and quicker for us rather than what our audience is looking for.

Audience not responding to information you are presenting? It could be the style, channel or format that isn't working, not the content.

Diversify your communication: use email, phone, formal meetings & informal conversation to present big picture, headlines & detailed facts.

An aspect of Type is our preference for either external activity & experience (extraversion) or internal concepts & emotion (introversion).

Ensure team-wide input & engagement by providing balanced working environments with space for informal interactivity & planned reflection.

Sensing is a preference for concrete details & the factual present: Intuition is for the big picture, patterns & future possibilities.

Engage sensing & intuition preferences in audiences by including crunchy data & high level vision. Watch for interest: adapt as appropriate.





Mary Ann heads up our In-sourced Recruitment and People Management services. Combining over 20 years' worth of people management experience with a keen awareness of related policy, legislation and academic theory, Mary Ann specialises in preparing teams and organisations for change and helping them through it. She works mainly with clients in creative industries, heritage, media and higher education.

JOB APPLICATIONS

CVs; proof read for sense & spelling, ask a friend to check, read it aloud; get rid of all errors (don't claim eye for detail – prove it!).

CVs; layout your info from most important to most mundane; if page 1 doesn't make it clear if you match the role, page 2 might be too late.

CVs; be honest, complete and concise; make it easy to read the dates in sequence, explain reasons for leaving and any gaps.

Get the cover letter basics right: Dear Sir/Madam =Yours faithfully; Dear Ms Jones=Yours sincerely. Show your address, their address & date.

Cover letters are the chance to prove that you want this particular job & that interviewing you would be interesting and worthwhile.

Use your cover letter to highlight your strengths; don't just cut & paste from your CV, but don't mention something that's not in the CV.

Write (& save) all your application form answers in a dummy version so you can spell check, edit & read the case you make in its entirety.

Read your application form answers out loud – are your sentences too long, do they make sense, are you using your authentic voice?

Unless your CV shows employer names with global recognition, explain what kind of organisations they are as well as what you did there.

If your correspondence address is miles away from the employer, demonstrate how prepared you are for the commute or relocation.

If the person spec calls for budget skills, show the recruiter where you've used your budget skills not just that you have them.

If it's a long application form then you're being tested for effort & persistence; "refer to CV" won't get you to the top of the shortlist.

Watch out for clichés: there are so many other ways of saying "I work equally well as part of a team or on my own initiative"

Watch out for toe-curling mistakes; don't leave another employer's name in the body of your cover letter or add kisses under your signature!

PREPARING FOR A NEW STARTER

Even if someone's joining you at your busiest, make time to prepare in advance; it saves you giving (& them seeking) duplicate explanations.

Prepare an induction checklist in advance, share it with everyone who'll need to deliver any part of it, ask them for additional suggestions.

Think carefully about what you want the new person to have achieved by the end of day 1, week 1 & mth 1 & add it to your induction checklist.

Timetable an employee's first few days in detail, allowing time for breaks and include a few tasks that they can do unsupervised.

Draw up an org chart & floor plan w/names & depts to go with an introductory tour on day 1; it's a lifesaver if names get forgotten on day 2.

Plan a mixture of big picture info with role-specific training, and include reflection, discussion & active tasks to avoid info overload.

Check the new person's ID & eligibility to work legally before the job offer & say what other info you'll need to get them on payroll asap.

Let your new employee know in advance what they'll be doing on day one, especially if it includes a photo-shoot for website/ID badge.

Have their contract of employment ready by day 1 at the latest to use as a discussion document around your working practices & values.

Make sure everyone in the team knows their new colleague's name, when they're turning up, and who's expected to greet them.

Lunch in a new job can be daunting; let a new person know if they need to bring lunch with them on day one; line up lunch buddies if poss.

Focus fully on your new employee when they arrive; ideally, book them to start the day after you've begun your working week.





Esme is our Project Coordinator. Esme works across all our activities as well as leading on our highly acclaimed Creative Career Schools Masterclass and "Purposeful Party" FizzBuzzJazz™. CIPD-qualified, she is also a key member of our In-sourced Recruitment team and runs our summer work placement programme.

INTERNSHIPS

Hosting a placement? Prepare yourself & your team. Gather useful, meaningful tasks & create an induction/work plan for the whole placement.

Going on placement? Do your research. Look at company history, key staff & clients. Make sure you know the dress code & plan your journey.

Hosting a placement? Take them on a tour. Introduce the whole team & don't forget fire exits, toilets, refreshments & what happens at lunch.

Going on placement? Be on time and be enthusiastic. Create a good 1st impression, and if you get nervous, remember that they invited you!

Hosting a placement? Placements are about learning. Do encourage & give praise, but don't avoid giving constructive criticism if needed.

Going on placement? It's up to you to get the most of the experience. Ask plenty of questions & keep a diary of what you've done each day.

Hosting a placement? Take time to review. Discuss the placement from both sides, see if you can improve the experience for the next person.

Going on placement? Reflect on everything you've learnt & achieved - useful when it comes to adding to your CV. Remember to thank your host.

BREAKING BAD WORK HABITS

Bad habit #1: Being late. Arriving late for work or meetings can be stressful, cause delays & mean you miss out on important information.

Being on time will remove some of the frantic rush from your day and will help you look and feel more organised, prepared & calm.

1st step to being on time: plan your journey realistically. How long will it take on a bad day? Most importantly stick to the departure time.

Bad habit #2: Staying at your desk for lunch. Not leaving your desk at lunch can be bad for your health, productivity and focus.

Leave your desk and get some fresh air too. It will allow you time to refresh, reflect and return rejuvenated for your afternoon of work.

1st step to leaving your desk: Make lunch an appointment in your diary. Go for walk, visit a museum, go window shopping or see friends.

Bad habit #3: Not taking time off for rest & recuperation. Struggling on won't help you recover, might make you worse & your team ill.

Don't go back to work the moment you begin to feel better. Take an extra day or two to fully recharge and return to work at your best.

1st step to taking time off: allow yourself to do it. Focus on the importance of long term productivity versus short term tasks and targets.

Bad habit #4: Not taking your own advice. If you don't take your advice, why should other people & how will you know if it still works?

Taking your own advice takes self-discipline and shows respect for others & it's a signal that you're managing your time & yourself.

1st step: next time you give someone else advice, stop, write it down or text yourself & ask: "when was the last time I did this?"





Alan is a well-respected performance coach and strategy consultant whose key areas of expertise are implementing change, improving productivity and enhancing people management capability. As a member of our organisational strategy team Alan applies his breadth of experience in helping clients plan for success in challenging circumstances. He has worked with organisations in financial services and technology sectors as well as with central and local government, higher education and charities.

ENVIRONMENT AT WORK

Your work environment has a big impact on you and those you work with. The right environment will lead to the right results.

Take a good look around your workspace. Is it helping you get on with things or holding you back? What does it say about you?

Clear your desk. Confidentiality & security is important but so is the feeling of completion. Tidy looks more successful than untidy.

Can you hear yourself think? Sounds in the workplace are important to consider. Call your own office to reveal how others might hear it.

If you work from home do you have a space that lets you 'go to work'? For some it's a physical space, for others a psychological space.

Do friends & family easily disturb and distract you when you're working? Have a clear protocol for when interruptions are acceptable.

Do you feel guilty if you aren't at your desk? Don't. Some of us do our best thinking away from our desks in cars, cafes, even in the shower.

What do you do when you're stuck? Simple: change your space. Go somewhere inspiring. Creative thinking doesn't have to involve a desk.

Treat your working wardrobe as part of your environment. What you wear can influence how you feel as well as how others see you.

Dress for success wherever you are. Dressing for the office may help you stay focused and engaged when you're working from home.





Keith has a wealth of experience as a strategic planner and brand strategist, with a particular focus on internal branding within organisations. As a coach and facilitator, Keith applies psychodynamic techniques in helping managers find space for reflection and to develop personal impact at work. He has worked with clients in heritage, higher education, retail and local government.

ACTING ON REFLECTION

We feel pressured to respond in an 'always on' world. That email must be replied to now. That post followed up straightaway. But do they?

Stop, think. Will an instant response be your best response? What would happen if you gave yourself time to reflect?

The best creative thinking takes time. That's science: faced with a challenge, our brains send out a 'synaptic ripple' with the problem.

The longer the ripple, the better the ideas your brain gives back. Take time to think properly – and surprise others with your insight.

Sleep on it. Allow a problem to percolate through the brain's low involvement processing overnight, and we solve it better the next day.

What are you responding to? Instant answers can be driven by automatic triggers from other areas of life. Think. Then answer the question.

Do you have to respond right now? What would happen if you didn't? Would your eye be off the ball? Would people think you're slacking?

Take time, act on reflection. And impress colleagues by your considered, insightful response. Better than a knee-jerk reaction any day!





Dan is a spoken word poet and compère, poetry projects and event organiser, workshop facilitator, crowdsourcing poet and writer. In 2013 he held the positions of Canterbury Laureate and Poet in Residence at Waterloo Station. His poetry deals with love and literature, science and stars, people and Pac-Man. Dan was with us at Year One for two years before moving to Apples and Snakes as Digital and Marketing Officer, finally making the leap into full-time freelancing this year. Follow Dan on Twitter @dansimpsonpoet.

MARKETING YOURSELF AS A FREELANCER (IN HAIKU FORM!)

Your online presence
(website, media, networks)
align, control, use.

Personality
not only your profession
balance is the key.

Online calling card:
build professional website
buy your domain name!

Present your best side
winning personality
drunken photos? No.

A good rule of thumb:
one or two updates a day
do not spam the feed!

Tweet: "my bus is late"
not an interesting update
for you or your fans.

Generosity:
it is not all about you.
retweet for rewards.

"So what do you do?"
a most common question asked
your answer: ready!

An offer of work:
lovely business cards to hand
I like moo.com.

Asked to work for free?
Perhaps there is benefit
but value your work.