

GODPARENT



RED SOFA INTERVIEW

LIONEL NAIDOO, DRAGON INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Lionel discusses technology during the pandemic.

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XLEDGER

CONTINUED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Jake and Eve are continuing to expand their knowledge about Xledger.

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2021 YEAR ROUND UP

We are now entering the last few weeks of 2021 and what a year it has been so far. Nearly everyone has had to make an adjustment in their life somewhere and business owners have had to make more than anyone. In all the turmoil, we do need to switch off from time to time whether it is simply sitting down with a good book and a pack of Jaffa Cakes to nibble on, (are they cakes or actually biscuits in disguise?) or getting outside for some fresh air. If it's the latter that appeals, why not follow me on the STRAVA app, log your walks and join the Essendon challenge of doing an hour's walk or activity per day.

ROGER EDDOWES
BUSINESS GODPARENT



WHY I SHOULD FOCUS ON MY EMPLOYEES' WELLBEING?

Guest article from Sue Parry, Face2Face HR

Is the wellbeing of your employees something you need to consider? In my view, absolutely and here's why - these are the many benefits:

Performance

High rates of employee wellbeing correlate strongly with improved performance at work. Improving job satisfaction is a central focus of employee wellbeing and there is plenty of evidence that high job satisfaction increases performance in terms of quality of work, productivity rates and financial performance.

Feeling their employer considers their wellbeing a priority increases the 'goodwill' factor and causes

employees to be more co-operative, more collaborative and more willing to go the extra mile.

Improving general health rates through a focus on wellbeing can improve energy rates at work, and therefore productivity, and can also enhance cognitive abilities, improving rates of creativity and problem-solving abilities.

Sickness absence

Lower sickness absence rates - partly because they are less likely to go down ill but also because recovery time will be quicker.



Work-related stress is likely to be less common, and employees who do go off sick are less likely to suffer from the 'dreading going back' effect.

Recruitment and retention

Employees are more likely to feel engaged and to enjoy coming to work. This obviously improves retention rates, leading to a drop in the amount of time and money spent on recruitment, including lost productivity for new employees and lost management time for supporting fresh recruits.

A BIG WARM WELCOME TO SAMANTHA AND UMRAN!

Please give a warm welcome to two new members of the Essendon Accounts & Tax team.



First, say hi to Samantha. Samantha has joined as a payroll manager and brings with her a wealth of knowledge, having had over 20 years of payroll experience in other companies. In her spare time, Samantha enjoys going to the cinema and theatre... when not running around after her son or watching Cbeebies!



Secondly, let us introduce Umrana. Umrana has joined as a management accountant, returning to the world of accounts since completing a BA creative writing course. Pre-pandemic, Umrana loved to travel, and hopes to be able to explore more in the future. In her free time, she enjoys reading, walking her dog and attending to her bantam chickens.

p.s. If you don't know your chickens, a bantam chicken is a miniature version of a regular chicken!



LIONEL NAIDOO ON THE RED SOFA



Interviewer: Today we have Lionel from Dragon Information Systems joining us on The Red Sofa.

Lionel, Hi. Are you able to give us a brief insight into Dragon IS?

Lionel: Morning Roger, thank you for having me.

Dragon Information Systems is an IT managed services business. Basically, we're a bunch of individuals that are passionate about technology and about helping our customers navigate the world of technology.

Interviewer: The pandemic has changed the way we work. How has technology enabled this change?

Lionel: Everybody's been affected by the pandemic and everybody's seen the effects of technology. Whether that be through accelerated payments, contact lists, remote working, distance learning has been a big key feature. Telehealth - having to speak to your doctor over a mobile phone is now a big thing.

So I think technology has affected us in very many ways and has helped us navigate through the pandemic quite easily.

Interviewer: Are companies that embrace technology early on in the pandemic, seeing any benefits to their business?

Lionel: Absolutely. Businesses who have embraced technology earlier on, are businesses that have come out stronger now that we have come out the tail end of the pandemic. It means that these customers have adapted very quickly to the change in working practices, have embraced technology to keep the doors open and to keep them trading.

Interviewer: What are your thoughts on the working from home experience? Is nine to five dead and flexible working becoming the new norm?

Lionel: I don't think nine to five is dead. I think in lots of cases, for instance, the retail sector, you can't work from home. But for the rest of us who are in the services based businesses, yes, flexible working has now become a very, very big part of our lives. I also think that in terms of rigid working styles that's now changed. People are looking for more flexible working arrangements, the ability to work from home more frequently. And, of course, as technology providers, it's up to us to enable that change.

Interviewer: Moving forward are there any technology tips or insights you can share with us?

Lionel: Absolutely. Right now, business owners are really concerned about mental health. They're concerned about productivity. I think technology has to be used in a way that is there to increase our productivity. So that's business owners finding ways in order to drive outcomes, monitor, use KPIs. I think businesses can now take the opportunity to use technology to automate a lot of their processes. So processes such as creating tools when your onboarding employees, making them comfortable and also using technology to secure the digital landscape.

Interviewer: Lionel, thank you for your time today, Lionel, from Dragon Information Systems.

Lionel: Thank you, Roger.

THE ONGOING SAGA OF VAT AND JAFFA CAKES

I thought I would tickle your tastebuds ...

It's my personal opinion that you should never assume anything with VAT. Many of you are probably thinking now of the Jaffa Cakes case which was about whether it was a cake or a biscuit?

It's sold in the biscuit aisle, can be eaten like a biscuit and advertised the same way as other biscuits. But it has the same ingredients as a traditional sponge cake and goes hard when it goes stale, unlike a biscuit which goes soft. In the UK, value-added tax is payable on chocolate-covered biscuits, but not chocolate-covered cakes.

In 1988, the statutory definition of confectionery (which is subject to VAT) was changed to include items of

sweetened prepared food normally eaten with the fingers. HMRC undertook a review and reversed its viewpoint ruling that Jaffa Cakes were actually biscuits partly covered in chocolate and so subject to VAT. In 1991 McVitie's appealed and headed off to a VAT tribunal.

The court found in favour of McVitie's and stated that, legally, Jaffa Cakes are considered a cake, which means that McVitie's doesn't have to pay VAT on Jaffa Cakes in the UK.

This all happened back in the early nineties, but 30 years on we have the issue with other confectionery bars.

In accordance with the 1988 statutory definition of confectionery, cereal bars held together with syrup are subject to VAT.

However, Wm Morrison Supermarkets have recently argued that this definition does not apply to Nakd Wholefood bars whose main ingredient, dates, was already sweet and not sweetened by other ingredients or natural flavourings.

So, I'll leave you until next time pondering how VAT can be so tricky, and with the other thought, can a pineapple flavoured Jaffa cake still be called a Jaffa cake?

I thought a Jaffa was an orange!

STRAVA CHALLENGE!

Do you go for a walk daily? Do you need a challenge to get you more active?

The Essendon challenge on Strava to walk 1 hour a day could be just what you need. Join in with members of our team to spur each other on and walk your way to the top of the leaderboard!

To get involved, simply download the Strava app, connect with Roger Eddowes, then he can invite you to join the challenge.

Let's get walking!



HOW TO MAXIMISE THE WEEKEND RECHARGE

Even if you haven't been able to get away on holiday this year, try our top tips to switch off and make the weekend a stress-free mini break.

Change your mindset

Treat your time off as a holiday, and you might reap the benefits. A study found that those who took their weekends off "like a holiday" were happier than those who didn't.

Create your own sanctuary

Jumping straight into the to-do list on a Saturday morning is not the best way to start the weekend. It can set the tone for the rest of it as work instead of play. Start your Saturday by setting time for yourself. Spend your time doing what you like to do.

Get some fresh air

It is no secret that being outside can have a positive effect on your mood, reduce stress, and keep you active. To make it feel more as if it were a holiday, consider planning a picnic with friends or family, or looking for activities in the local area which can help you to enjoy yourself outside.

Prioritise social time

When you're off work and time to yourself is scarce, prioritise some social time with friends and family when possible.

Don't spend Sunday thinking about Monday

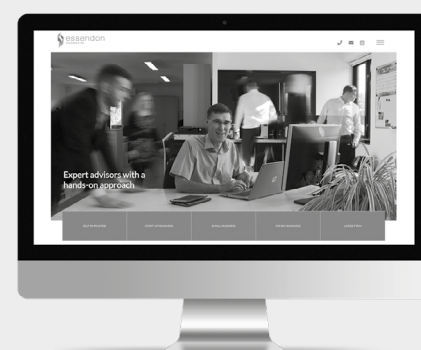
The moment Sunday hits, that Sunday night feeling kicks in. You're anxious about Monday and what it has in store. But Sunday isn't Monday. One way to get through the day is to establish a ritual that helps you live in the present rather than thinking about tomorrow. For example, you could take a bubble bath or watch your favourite TV show.

It's ok to do nothing!

It is important to take time off and not feel bad about doing nothing when you would otherwise be working. This is especially relevant for people who have been working from home throughout the pandemic and whose view of home space and work space may be blurred.

OUR NEW WEBSITE IS LIVE!

The aim of our new website is to demonstrate how our services can be tailored to businesses of all sizes. Head over to essendonaccounts.co.uk and let us know what you think.



XLEDGER: CONTINUED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Jake and Eve have been continuing to expand their knowledge of the Xledger accounting system, right from client onboarding and workshops, through to developing and implementing a live system for clients to use.

A key element of Xledger is the in-depth reports, which we can tailor to fit each individual client's needs.

This enhanced knowledge of the system allows us to see the potential that Xledger can provide to new or rapidly growing clients and enables us to identify when they are outgrowing their existing software.

Xledger provides clients with real-time financial information, to help make accurate decisions for now and the future.



MINDBENDERS ADULT COLOURING

Directions

Boil the kettle, dig out your colouring pencils and take some time out to relax. Have fun and colour outside the lines... it's ok!



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Want to maximise the potential of your business? Contact the Business Godparent now to steer you in the right direction.

Call today on 01908 774320



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