

“We are on human sustainability where we were **forty years ago** on environmental sustainability”



**Professor Jeffrey Pfeffer**

Graduate School of Business, Stanford University, USA

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# EVIDENCE – PLENTIFUL, AUTHORITATIVE AND EASY TO FIND

Example:-

- Job strain and effort-reward imbalance were each associated with a doubling of the risk of cardiovascular death among employees
- Job strain and effort-reward imbalance also predicted adverse changes in biological factors such as cholesterol concentration and body mass index

**Job strain** = a combination of **high demands** at work and **low job control**.

**Effort - Reward imbalance** = **low** salary, **lack of social approval** and **few career opportunities** relative to efforts required at work.

Source: *British Medical Journal*, 2002. Finnish study, 812 employees, from 1973 to 2001, on cardiovascular mortality.

# SOME GLOBAL CHALLENGES

- **Demographics**
  - ageing population
  - people living longer
- **Lifestyle issues**
  - obesity
  - lack of physical exercise
- **More chronic diseases, occurring earlier**
- **Changing world of work**



# “Bad Management Theories are Destroying Good Management Practices”

Sumantra Ghoshal, 2005

Advanced Institute of Management Research

- “We have taught our students that managers **cannot be trusted** to do their jobs.....”
- “We have preached the need for tight monitoring and **control** of people to **prevent opportunistic behaviour**”

# “Command and Control” is The Prison

“Most people imagine that the present style of Management has always existed, and is a fixture. Actually, it is a modern invention – a prison created by the way in which people interact”



W. Edwards Deming

# CHANGING WORLD OF WORK



The **pattern of damage at work is changing.**

**Mental ill-health is increasing.**

- Knowledge-based economy
- Globalisation of labour markets – work anywhere culture
- Transferable skills needed, with flexibility, upskilling, lifelong education and training
- Many people wanting or having to work after 65
- Fewer permanent ‘core’ staff, with out-sourcing and zero-hours contract work
- “Always on” and “More with less”
- Concept of ‘**good work**’ and ‘**wellbeing**’

# SOME TYPES/FEATURES OF “**BAD WORK**”

- Redundancies
- Shift work
- Long work hours
- Job insecurity
- Work-family conflict



- Low job control
- High job demands
- Low social support at work
- Low organisational fairness/justice

# .....AND THE HEALTH IMPACTS

- Cardiovascular disease
- Diabetes and metabolic syndrome
- Medical non compliance
- Substance abuse
- Obesity



- Gastrointestinal problems
- Problems with fertility and pregnancy
- Cancer
- Depression and mood disorder

# What prevents us from working - or from working well ?

- Common mental health problems
- Musculo-skeletal problems
- The quality of work and the workplace
  - **organisation** of work
  - managerial **behaviour** and **leadership**
  - **absence of 'good work'**
- Other important reasons
  - long-term conditions – mental and physical
  - psychosocial/ home-related problems
  - lack of education and/or skills.



# Common Mental Health Problems: What and Why

- **Stress, anxiety, mild depression**
  - high **prevalence** across populations
  - little or no objective disease or impairment
  - most episodes settle rapidly, though symptoms often persist or recur
  - essentially whole people, should be manageable.
- Symptoms **often an expression** of, or reaction to, **poor work, poor workplaces** and/or **poor managers**.
- Health interventions such as drugs, EAPs etc. may help **BUT not address** the real root problem(s).
- Mental ill-health is the **major cause of sickness absence** in the UK, and very significant elsewhere.

WHAT CAN BE DONE



# Good Employment: Essential Characteristics

## Good Work

- **Stable and safe**
- **Individual control**
- **Fair work demands**
- **Flexible arrangements**
- **Opportunities for development**
- **Promotes Health and Wellbeing**
- **Prevents** isolation, discrimination
- **Shares information**
- **Reintegrates** sick /disabled

## Good Workplaces

- **Visible senior leadership**
- **Well trained managers**
- **Good communication**
- **Enabling staff engagement**
- **Integrated Occie Health**
- **Monitoring & measurement**
- **Empowering employees**
- **TRUST**

# Wellbeing, Mental Health and Engagement

- Wellbeing includes our **psychological state**
- High levels of staff **engagement** are **not sustainable** without **wellbeing**.
- Engagement without wellbeing can lead to a **burned-out workforce**.
- Robertson and Cooper have shown that the top driver for employee engagement is the extent to which **employees believe that their senior management has a sincere interest in their wellbeing.**
- Approximately 25% of the variation in reported levels of **employee productivity** is predicted by a combination of:
  - **psychological wellbeing**
  - **perceived commitment** of the organisation to the employee
  - access to appropriate **resources**, and
  - good **communication**.

# Train and Develop your Managers

- **Good line management** is key to Employee Wellbeing.

- **Managers should focus on:**

- **effective communication** with the other members of staff



employee and

- **awareness** of the issues and the ability to **empathise**

- **developing open culture** with employees feeling able to discuss their problems.

- **Learning about mental health** enables managers to judge when they need to refer employees to outside help.



- There are many sources of advice and good training courses.

# Some Sources

The Authenticity Paradox – <https://hbr.org/2015/01/the-authenticity-paradox>

Fast Forward 2030 – [www.cbre.com/futureofwork](http://www.cbre.com/futureofwork)

The White Hall Effect – <http://www.triarchypress.net/whitehall.html>

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Frey, C and Osborne, M 2013

The On Rushing Wave – <http://www.economist.com/node/21594264/print>

Health Benefits of Work – Dame Carol Black presentation to Australasian Faculty  
of Occupational and Environmental Medicine 1 April 2015