

HALLOWEEN FUN DAY AT AGA

AGA had a great day this Halloween with a Spooky Bake Off, Costume Competition and Halloween Quiz!

Congratulations to all our winners!

Team building and specially planned activities not only boost morale of employees, but it can also increase the success of your business. Here are a few reasons why team building is important in the workplace:



1. Facilitates better communication – Activities that create discussion enable open communication among employees, and between employees and management. This can improve office relationships and in turn, the quality of work done.
2. Motivates employees – Team leadership and team building go hand in hand. The more comfortable your employees are to express their ideas and opinions, the more confident they will become. This will motivate them to take on new challenges.



3. Breaks the barrier – Team building increases the trust factor with your employees. Often in corporate settings there is a disconnect between the leadership team and employees because the employees sense too large of a gap between the two. Team building exercises give leadership the opportunity to be seen as a colleague rather than a boss, which can do wonders for employee morale.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

PG. 2

- World Mental Health Day
- Richer Wedding

PG. 3

- Digger Death
- New Dartford Project

PG. 4

- Focus on Asbestos

PG. 5

- Drug & Alcohol misuse at work

PG. 6

- AGA Wedding
- Face Fitting

WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY

October saw World Mental Health Day, but employers should remember that mental health problems can affect anyone, on any day of the year.

One in four people in the UK will have a mental health problem at some point. Where work-related stress is prolonged it can lead to both physical and psychological damage, including anxiety and depression. Work can also aggravate pre-existing conditions, and problems at work can bring on symptoms or make their effects worse.

Work-related stress and mental health issues need to be assessed to measure the levels of risk to staff. Where a risk is identified, steps must be taken to remove it or reduce it as far as reasonably practicable.

There is guidance on how [managers can support employees](#) along with [advice for employees with mental health conditions](#) on the HSE website.

Over 11 million days are lost at work a year because of stress related illness at work. You can start a conversation about work-related stress by using HSE's [talking toolkit](#) and download or buy their [step-by-step workbook](#) which shows how the Management Standards approach will help employers tackle work-related stress.

Promoting issues associated with mental health is also a focus of many in the construction industry. More information on this area is available via the [Health in Construction Leadership Group](#).



CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE FOR OUR WHOLE RANGE OF NEW ONLINE COURSES

Whether you're looking to improve your own knowledge, or provide training to employees, AGA Ltd.'s new e-Learning portal will allow you to book easy to follow e-learning courses in a number of areas. Each course is followed by a short test to clarify your understanding regarding that topic, which after successful completion, you will be issued with a certificate. Get up to date, specialist training in Control of Substances Hazardous to Health, Fall Prevention, the Construction Design & Management Regulations 2015, Risk Assessments Manual Handling, Fire Safety and many more.

RICHER WEDDING!

CDM Adviser, Paul Richer, married the lovely Vicki at Caswell House, Witney on Thursday 24th October.

Needless to say, there were a few sore heads in the office on Friday!

The happy couple are now enjoying the wonders of Las Vegas on their honeymoon.

Congratulations Paul and Vicki, we wish you a lifetime of happiness.



BUILDER JAILED OVER DIGGER DEATH

THE DIRECTOR OF A BUILDING FIRM HAS BEEN SENTENCED TO TEN MONTHS' IMPRISONMENT AFTER HE FATALLY CRUSHED AN EMPLOYEE WITH A DIGGER



Robert Harvey was operating the machine when Nicholas Hall was pinned against a wall by the excavator bucket, causing fatal injuries.

The court heard Harvey's company, Front Row Builders, was building a vehicle wash bay for Peter Lawless Road Planing at an industrial estate in Blantyre, South Lanarkshire, on 7 May 2016.

Harvey was using the digger to lower cement and blocks into the excavation pit for the three men working there, including Hall, to use in building a wall. He tipped the bucket to empty the mortar contents and shouted to Hall to "scrape the rest out with a shovel". Hall was pinned against the wall by

the excavator bucket and died of blunt force injuries to his chest and abdomen. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation found Harvey failed to undertake a sufficient assessment of the risks to those who had been instructed to work with him and was not appropriately trained to use the excavator.

He pleaded guilty to breaching S 7(a) and S 33(1)(a) of the Health and Safety at Work Act and was jailed for ten months at Hamilton Sheriff Court.

"Those in control of work have a responsibility to devise safe methods of working and to provide the necessary information, instruction and training to their workers in the safe system of working," warned HSE inspector Helen Diamond after the sentencing. "If a suitable safe system of work had been in place prior to the incident, the death of this worker could have been prevented."

£650K FINE AFTER WOMAN KILLED BY LORRY

Nicola Berridge, 53, collided with an HGV during the redevelopment of Bedford station on 13 February 2015.

She had stepped through a gap between two buses to get onto a pedestrian crossing partially blocked by the lorry, which was delivering sand to the congested site.

Berridge walked in front of the eight-wheel vehicle as it began to pull away and she suffered "catastrophic and immediately fatal injuries".



The jury was told the bus station site was frequently congested and there was a problem with contractors' vehicles being parked in the working part of the station.

Bedford Borough Council, which owns the bus station and organised the £8m redevelopment programme, pleaded guilty to four charges of breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act. These include failing to ensure people in their employment were not exposed to risk, failing to make a suitable assessment of the risk to pedestrians being struck by construction vehicles, and not taking reasonable steps to ensure their contractors could work safely. It was ordered to pay a fine of £300,000 plus £16,803 in costs.

Bus firm Cambus, a trading name for Stagecoach, denied the charges but was found guilty of failing to discharge a duty to non-employees under the Health and Safety at Work Act between 25 February 2013 and 14 February 2015. It was fined £350,000, with costs to be awarded at a later date. The jury acquitted road surfacing contractor DJT Surfacing of the same charge.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Emma Page said: "There were inadequate control measures in place to segregate vehicles and pedestrians at the site and lack of proper planning in terms of pedestrian access and egress to the bus station.

"Hazards associated with vehicles and pedestrians in the same location, particularly the case in a facility such as a bus station in the centre of a busy town, are well known and easily controlled using reasonably practicable precautions."

WHY IS ASBESTOS DANGEROUS?

Asbestos can be found in any building built before the year 2000 (houses, factories, offices, schools, hospitals etc.) and causes around 5000 deaths every year.



**Warning
Asbestos**

Asbestos can cause the following fatal and serious diseases:

Mesothelioma

Mesothelioma is a cancer which affects the lining of the lungs (pleura) and the lining surrounding the lower digestive tract (peritoneum).

Asbestos-related lung cancer

Asbestos-related lung cancer is the same as (looks the same as) lung cancer caused by smoking and other causes.

Asbestosis

Asbestosis is a serious scarring condition of the lung that normally occurs after heavy exposure to asbestos over many years.

Pleural thickening

Pleural thickening is generally a problem that happens after heavy asbestos exposure.

Asbestos still kills around 5000 workers each year, this is more than the number of people killed on the road.

Around 20 tradesmen die each week as a result of past exposure.

However, asbestos is not just a problem of the past. It can be present today in any building built or refurbished before the year 2000.

When materials that contain asbestos are disturbed or damaged, fibres are released into the air. When these fibres are inhaled they can cause serious diseases.

These diseases will not affect you immediately; they often take a long time to develop, but once diagnosed, it is often too late to do anything.

Therefore, it is important that you protect yourself now.

COMPANIES FINED AFTER ASBESTOS EXPOSURE

RJW Building Solutions Limited, a contractor carrying out refurbishment work at the Sea Hotel in South Shields, and Hotel 52 (Sea) Limited, the client company who arranged this work, were sentenced after workers disturbed asbestos.

South Tyneside Magistrates' Court heard that while workers were refurbishing the bar area of the Sea Hotel in September and October 2018, they disturbed asbestos.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that both companies had failed to ensure an appropriate assessment was carried out to check for the presence of asbestos in the areas of the Sea Hotel where refurbishment work was taking place.

RJW Building Solutions Limited of Bridge End Industrial Estate, Hexham pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 5 of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 and was fined £20,000 with £1,084.59 costs.

Hotel 52 (Sea) Limited of Stockbridge, Newcastle upon Tyne pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 etc and was fined £16,000 with £1,246.90 costs.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Loren Wilmot said "Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral fibre which was widely used in both building and engineering materials for its strength, heat and chemical resistance. There are several different types of asbestos however they all share similar properties. When asbestos is disturbed, fibres are released into the air where they can be inhaled and may penetrate the lungs. This can cause serious diseases including mesothelioma, lung cancer and asbestosis. These diseases do not have an immediate effect, they often take a long time to develop, but once diagnosed, they are often fatal."

DRUG AND ALCOHOL MISUSE

Employers have a legal duty to protect employees' health, safety and welfare. Understanding the signs of drug and alcohol misuse (or abuse) will help you to manage health and safety risk in your workplace, develop a policy to deal with drug and alcohol-related problems and support your employees.

What the issues are and what to look out for

Consider these warning signs, which could indicate drug or alcohol misuse:

- unexplained or frequent absences
- a change in behaviour
- unexplained dips in productivity
- more accidents or near-misses
- performance or conduct issues

These can also be signs of other things, like stress or illness.



Consult your employees

You must consult employees or their representatives on health and safety matters. Consultation involves you not only giving information to employees but also listening to them and taking account of what they say. You could ask your employees what they know about the effects of drugs and alcohol on health and safety and the restrictions or rules on drug and alcohol use in your business.

Develop a policy

All organisations can benefit from an agreed policy on drug/alcohol misuse. You could include a drug and alcohol policy as part of your overall health and safety policy.

If an employee tells you they have a drug or alcohol problem, an effective policy should aim to help and support them rather than lead to dismissal. But it should also highlight when you will take disciplinary or other action, for example that you will report drug possession or dealing at work to the police straight away.

Support employees with a drug or alcohol problem

When you've assessed the risk and have a policy on drug or alcohol misuse (or abuse) in your workplace, make sure your employees know about the policy and the support you offer.

Encourage them to get help from their GP or a specialist drug or alcohol agency and refer them to your organisation's occupational health service (if you have one).

The law

You have a general duty under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of your employees. Employees must also take reasonable care of themselves and anyone who could be affected by their work.

WORKS GET UNDERWAY AT BASINGSTOKE



Client: Muse Developments Limited

Project Managers: Buro Four Project Services Limited

Architect: TP Bennett LLP

Structural Engineer: Morph Structures

Contractor: Morgan Sindall

Contract Value: £20 Million

AGA's involvement: Client Adviser & Principal Designer Adviser

This project comprises the demolition of existing structures and the construction of a five-storey office, ground floor retail space and multi storey carpark together with associated external works. The site occupies 0.7 hectares of land located within the Basing View Business Park referred to as "Plot Sienna".

DUST INSPECTIONS UNDERWAY

[MAKE SURE YOUR CONSTRUCTION SITE IS READY FOR AN HSE INSPECTORS' VISIT...](#)

HSE inspectors are now visiting sites across the UK focusing on controlling construction dust. Make sure you have the right measures in place to protect workers.

Regularly breathing construction dust can cause diseases like lung cancer, asthma, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and silicosis. Construction workers have a high risk of developing these diseases because many common construction tasks can create high dust levels.

These diseases cause permanent disability and early death. Over 500 construction workers are believed to die from exposure to silica dust every year.





Prepared By:

Andrew Goddard Associates Limited
Avon House
82 Wellington Street
Thame
Oxfordshire
OX9 3BN

Tel: 03300 886 585
Email: info@aga-ltd.co.uk
Web: www.aga-ltd.co.uk

