

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

Employee happiness is 23 per cent more dependent on co-worker relationships than relationships with direct supervisors, according to a recent survey. Co-worker connections and manager transparency were found to be among the main factors contributing to employee happiness.



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## **Communicate Your Organisation's Mission Statement and Values**

Only 42 per cent of employees around the world know their company's vision, mission and values, according to a December survey of 300 global organisations that yielded 40,000 responses. The survey also found that some companies completely forgo a formal vision or mission statement.

Employee ignorance of employers' vision, mission and values can often be chalked up to senior managers' lack of communication with their staff.

Failing to communicate your organisation's vision, mission and values can lead to a significant drain on employee morale. According to the survey, management transparency is the most important factor in determining employee happiness, which requires ongoing dialogue between management and staff about organisational goals.

When senior management neglects

to share this information, employees can feel like their positions are precarious and the company's direction is off course, leading to low morale and even lower productivity.

Transparency is key. Write a vision or mission statement if your company does not have one. Keep it short—no longer than three or four sentences. Get input from employees during the drafting process to involve everyone.

If your organisation already has a vision and mission statement, start communicating them immediately and watch employee morale rise.



**Crendon  
Insurance  
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## **2012 Flooding Numbers Released**

The unrelenting wet weather of 2012 is estimated to have cost the UK economy almost £600 million, according to a report by the Environment Agency (EA).

In 2012 there was a flood one out of every five days, affecting more than 7,000 properties.

Businesses lost £200 million, which includes £84 million in property damage. Overall property damage cost the economy £277 million, while indirect costs to business such as disruption and staff absence totalled £33 million. General transport and utility interruption damages topped £82 million.

On average, every business affected by flooding lost £60,000, although flood defences protected 200,000 properties worth an estimated £1.7 billion to the UK economy.

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## Small Business: GREAT Ambition Guidance Published

After the Chancellor of the Exchequer's promise of 'help for the high street' in his 2013 Autumn Statement, the government published guidance on 7 December concerning the 'GREAT Ambition', a programme committed to helping UK small businesses grow and prosper. The government hopes the GREAT Ambition programme can foster the UK's entrepreneurial spirit that spurred the creation of almost 500,000 new businesses in 2012.

To help these ambitious new businesses grow, the government committed to the following initiatives as part of the GREAT Ambition scheme:

### Make it easier to finance business growth by:

- Rebuilding a banking sector which works for small businesses.
- Helping businesses access non-bank lending and private equity.
- Tackling late payments from the public sector.
- Cutting taxes and extending the Small Business Rate Relief until April 2015.

### Make it easier to hire people by:

- Simplifying the hiring process by providing Universal Jobmatch, a free online system for matching candidates to jobs. Universal Jobmatch is located at [www.gov.uk/jobsearch](http://www.gov.uk/jobsearch).
- Equipping the workforce with the right skills by building new University Technical Colleges.

### Make it easier to develop new ideas and break into new markets by:

- Increasing grant funding to help the development of new ideas.
- Modernising and simplifying intellectual property law to help protect ideas.
- Boosting business' online presence with a broadband voucher scheme to defray the cost of installing high-speed broadband.
- Providing export advice and support via UK Trade and Investment at [www.ukti.gov.uk](http://www.ukti.gov.uk).

Visit GREAT Britain at [www.greatbusiness.gov.uk](http://www.greatbusiness.gov.uk) to learn more.

## Flooding numbers

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Because 175,000 businesses in England and Wales are at risk of flooding, EA officials are urging business owners to sign up to receive flood warnings and bolster their flood disaster plans to remain prepared.

Remember that it is impossible to completely flood-proof a property, and that limiting flood damage means constantly assessing and revising your business' flood disaster plan.

If your business is located in a flood-prone area, the best defence against flood damage is preparation. Purchase sandbags to have on hand when the inevitable strikes. Install automatic flood-proof doors and windows. Landscape your business' grounds to divert water away from your property. Adjusting the layout of your commercial property can often be the most successful way to curtail flood damage.

If damage from groundwater flooding is inevitable, purchase a pump to help keep groundwater out. But be careful—pumps can cause even more trouble if used incorrectly. Pumping from one place can cause flooding elsewhere. Consult your local EA office for information on how and where to divert floodwater from your business with a pump.

Above all, share your flood disaster plan with your employees to encourage preparedness.