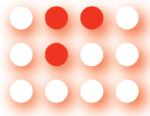


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Minimum wage cheats named and shamed

More employers who have failed to pay their workers the National Minimum Wage have been named and shamed, by business minister Nick Boles. However, none have been prosecuted.

Between them, the 92 companies named owed £1,873,712 in arrears. They cover sectors such as hairdressing, social care, hospitality and security.

The worst offender – in terms of the number of workers involved – was TSS (Total Security Services) Ltd of London which owed 2,219 employees a total of £1.74 million – an average of £692 a worker.

Larger sums were owed to individual employees by some firms. Oldham Premier Plumbing Supplies Ltd, Oldham, failed to pay £6,270 to one employee. "Big in bathrooms, small on prices," says the firm's website.

Matt Jenkins, trading as Matt Jenkins Dressage, Chipping Norton, failed to pay £6,184 to one employee. According to Jenkins' website: "No stone is left unturned when it comes to managing his horses and support team." Not quite.

Claire Reasons and Vanessa Nimmo-Cameron, trading as Merritime Nursery, Gosport, failed to pay £5,344 to one employee.

The nursery has "built up an excellent reputation of being kind, caring and passionate about the children we care for," says its website. It also touts its "wonderful team of 13 dedicated and professional members of staff".

The government press release says it is "committed to increasing compliance with minimum wage legislation and effective enforcement of it", and that "in the most serious cases employers can be prosecuted". Yet none of the firms listed were prosecuted, which begs the question: how serious a case does it have to be before an employer is put in the dock?

TUC general secretary Frances O'Grady said: "Ministers are right to name and shame these companies.... and the level of underpayment in some cases is truly eye-watering.

"Now is not the time for complacency, however. We know that thousands more rogue employers are cheating their staff and getting away with it. It is essential that HM Revenue and Customs catches up with them too.

"Bosses who try to duck the minimum wage must have nowhere to hide. Strong unions are needed in every workplace to stop these abuses from happening."

www.gov.uk/government/news/new-national-minimum-wage-offenders-named-and-shamed-february-2016

www.tuc.org.uk/economic-issues/labour-market/naming-and-shaming-minimum-wage-cheats-must-continue-says-tuc

LABOUR RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

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Restructuring and its effect on well-being

Restructuring in organisations has a mainly negative effect on the welfare of employees regardless of whether there are job losses, according to a new study involving the University of East Anglia (UEA).

Researchers found no clear differences in the impact on well-being between restructuring with and without cutting staff numbers.

The finding, published in the journal, *Work and Stress*, follows a review of 39 studies on restructuring published over 12 years which covered the public sector, such as government and healthcare, and private sector, including industry, transport, finance and services. The types of restructuring included downsizing, closure, mergers, change in ownership or privatisation, or a combination of more than one type.

The review's authors, from UEA's Norwich Business School and the Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research (TNO), examined the differences between the short and longer term effects of restructuring, for example from shortly after the announcement to during and after the restructuring process.

They also looked at which factors, such as job characteristics, those related to the restructuring process and individual characteristics, affect the relationship between restructuring and well-being.

Not all employees experienced the negative effects to the same extent and a few studies found positive changes in well-being over time, indicating a recovery of well-being or a positive impact of restructuring. This may have been related to the type of restructuring and the way it was managed, or due to the fact that the most negative impact had already happened.

However, the majority of the studies showed negative changes over time, both during the restructuring and in the post-restructuring period, with and without any downsizing. Some groups of workers reacted less negatively, for example those with a high organisational status before restructuring and workers with a change in workgroup.

Low income employees were identified as a possible vulnerable group, while less qualified employees, non-manual workers and permanent

employees were among those affected more negatively or differently by restructuring.

The researchers found that job characteristics such as higher physical demands and less job control decreased well-being, while factors related to the restructuring process, such as communication, provision of change-related information and training impacted positively.

Individual characteristics found to have a negative impact on well-being included job insecurity, employee adjustment to change, perceived impact of change and negative change experience.

Co-author Professor Karina Nielsen said: "The characteristics of the restructuring process, such as fairness of procedures, communication and change management in general have been found to have an impact on worker well-being.

"Some groups of workers react less negatively, for example if they have more chance of influencing the process. The key point is how you manage the change. Make sure people have control over their jobs, that there is good communication and the right kind of training."

www.uea.ac.uk/about/-/restructuring-affects-staff-well-being-regardless-of-job-cuts

Shopping free for all in England and Wales

The government is to hand local authorities the power to extend Sunday opening hours for shops.

It is introducing amendments to the *Enterprise Bill* to allow local authorities the power to extend Sunday opening hours, probably from the autumn.

Business minister Anna Soubry claimed: "The rights of shop workers are key to making these changes work in everyone's interests. We are protecting those who do not wish to work Sundays, and those who do not want to work more than their normal Sunday working hours."

The measures include greater freedoms for shop workers in England, Scotland and Wales to "opt-out" of working Sundays if they choose to, for example because they object on religious grounds or for family reasons.

Shop workers will now be able to give one month's notice to large shops that they no longer want

to work Sundays, down from the previous three months, and will have a new right to opt out of working additional hours. The government will also strengthen the duty on employers to notify employees of their rights about working on Sundays.

Usdaw general secretary John Hannett said: "Devolving Sunday trading to over 300 local authorities will strangle the retail industry in red tape. What the government is proposing is undesirable and unworkable.

"Their claims to be offering additional protection for shopworkers amounts to nothing more than what has existed for the last 20 years. Nine out of 10 members working in retail oppose longer Sunday trading because they know it will have an adverse effect on family life and put them under even more pressure to work longer hours on a Sunday."

www.gov.uk/government/news/extended-sunday-trading-due-in-the-autumn

www.usdaw.org.uk/About-Us/News/2016/February/Usdaw-disappointed-that-the-Government-has-not-lis

Factory output flat at end of 2015

Manufacturing output was flatlining at the end of last year, latest official figures show.

In the final quarter of the year, factory output was unchanged on the previous quarter, according to the Office for National Statistics.

Nevertheless, that was an improvement on the 0.5% decrease in the third quarter on the second quarter.

In the latest quarter, output of coke and refined petroleum products was up by 4.5% on the previous quarter. There was a 1.7% increase in transport equipment and 1.6% in textiles and clothing.

However, there were decreases in output in seven of the 13 subsectors.

Manufacturing output was down by 1.0% on the same final quarter 2014.

The monthly figures are more volatile and they show a 1.7% decrease in output between November and December.

TUC general secretary Frances O'Grady said: "These disappointing figures coincide with a cross-party group of MPs slamming the govern-

ment for scrapping a billion pounds of support for low carbon technology. Yet the government seems incapable of making the connection between its bad decisions, and the bad outcomes for the economy.

"The UK economy needs a stronger manufacturing foundation to propel growth and create decent jobs. But manufacturing industry is not getting the support it needs from government. We need a proper industrial strategy with strong and stable investment in skills, infrastructure and innovation."

Output of the production industries (manufacturing, mining and utilities) was down by 0.2% on the previous quarter, but up by 0.6% on the same period a year earlier.

In the final quarter of 2015, production and manufacturing were 9.8% and 6.5% respectively below the levels achieved in the first quarter 2008, before the economic downturn.

On an annual basis, manufacturing output in 2015 was down by 0.7% on 2014, while production posted a 1.0% increase.

www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778_432824.pdf

www.tuc.org.uk/economic-issues/economic-analysis/industrial-issues/manufacturing/manufacturing-slump-signals-need

Managers should take lead over well-being

With mental ill-health one of the biggest public health challenges facing society, there is an overwhelming business and moral case for employers to address this challenge.

A new report, *Leading on mental well-being*, from the business-led charity, Business in the Community, says line managers play a crucial role in promoting positive employee well-being. As the workplace continues to evolve at a rapid pace, there is increasing pressure on line managers to deliver business objectives at the same time as supporting the well-being of employees. It is vital that line managers receive the best possible support to help them manage these responsibilities effectively.

The study highlights the evidence for empowering line managers to make a greater positive impact on employee well-being. It contains insight from industry experts, advice on how organisations can take action and features the voices of line managers themselves as well as case studies of effective support programmes.

The report calls for line managers to be provided with the well-being support they deserve, which would enable them to take the necessary steps to empower them to promote well-being within their teams.

Businesses in the Community has called on businesses to make mental health first aid training available to line managers to ensure that they are able and confident in supporting employees who may be experiencing mental health issues in the workplace.

Absence from work over mental ill-health costs £25 billion a year, the report says.

http://wellbeing.bitc.org.uk/system/files/research/bitc_linemanagerreport_feb2016_final.pdf

Wake up and smell coffee over dyslexia

A woman with dyslexia has won a disability discrimination case against her employer Starbucks, after she was accused of falsifying documents.

A tribunal found Meseret Kumulchew had been discriminated against after making mistakes due to her difficulties with reading, writing and telling the time.

She was given lesser duties at her branch in London and told to retrain, which left her feeling suicidal.

The tribunal found Starbucks had failed to make reasonable adjustments for Kumulchew's disability and had discriminated against her because of the effects of her dyslexia.

It also found she had been victimised by her employer and there appeared to be little or no knowledge or understanding of equality issues.

Starbucks said it was in discussions about providing more workplace support.

The judgment against Starbucks was made in mid-December, and there will now be a separate hearing to determine any compensation.

The current media coverage concerning the duty of employers regarding dyslexic employees is a wake-up call for employers, the British Dyslexia Association (BDA) said.

BDA chief executive Dr Kate Saunders said: "One in 10 people has dyslexia to some degree. Many people will not know they have dyslexia because it wasn't identified at school. Many dyslexics are struggling in the workplace with very high levels of anxiety, because employers do not have the training or the awareness to make adjustments for them."

Employers have duty as part of the 2010 *Equality Act* to make reasonable adjustments. However, because dyslexia is a hidden disability the BDA recognises that employers need training in how to identify and provide appropriate support for dyslexic employees.

Dyslexic individuals can have strengths in certain areas such as problem solving, creative, lateral thinking and 3-D thinking and often have very good interpersonal skills, the BDA points out.

It is not surprising, therefore, to find that well informed companies are starting to recognise the benefits of having a team that represents diverse neurological thinking and have a good mix of skills. In this global commercial environment, this can give a company a competitive edge.

www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-35521061

www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/news/item/name/employers-and-reasonable-adjustments-useful-information

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