

# The 10% World of Group IT

In his autobiography published last year, the former CEO of General Electric, the legendary Jack Welch, congratulated himself on introducing the vitality curve as part of the Company's Performance Management process. The vitality curve, which makes it sound far more scientific than is the case in reality, is used by all levels of management to differentiate between those 70% of staff who are vital to the organisation, the 20% who are star performers and then the bottom 10%. Under Welch the bottom 10% were either redeployed or, as was more likely, removed from the organisation. In GE this ranking process is carried out every year.

It would seem that some Senior Managers in Group IT, presumably in a rush to prove that they are developing a high performance culture and have taken on board the comments of Igor Andronov, Director of Group IT, about poor performers in his recent video, have taken it upon themselves to rank their staff and put the bottom 10% on Performance Improvement Plans. **In an email which LTU has seen, one Senior Manager says "Bottom 10% performers need to be on PIP/Performance Management/Development plans. We talked this through at time of ranking....."**

A policy of forced ranking is fundamentally unfair and potentially discriminatory. Rankings are not comparable from one division to another: being the third best employee in one division is not the same as being the third best employee in another. Rankings have no absolute meaning. All IT staff in the Application Development Division may be high performers, but ranking will force some staff to be labelled poor performers. The opposite may be true in another division. Equally, if the process is not done openly and fairly then how do we know that it's not impacting adversely on one distinct group of staff more than another.

**We have asked Group IT to either own up to operating such a policy and discuss it with LTU in the normal way or to disown it and tell those Senior Managers who are using it to stop immediately. We will be discussing this issue at our IT Negotiating Meeting next week.**

---

**"In an email which LTU has seen, one Senior Manager says "Bottom 10% performers need to be on PIP/Performance Management/Development plans. We talked this through at time of ranking....."."**

---

# LTU's Advice Team

The 'Advice Team' is the Union's most important and most frequently used service. It is run by a team of full time LTU Officials based in the Union's Office in Bedford. Like all LTU Officials they are employed and paid for by the Union and we do not employ Officials seconded from the Bank. This is because we believe that they need to be wholly independent of the Bank and have no potential conflict of interest. All LTU's Advice Team previously worked for the Bank and were lay representatives of LTU. Between them they have over 70 years previous experience in the Bank.

## Need For Advice And Representation

**"It will never happen to me" has been an all too familiar response from members of staff whenever the issue of Performance Improvement Plans or even disciplinary action has been discussed.**

The fact is that it can and does affect individuals at all levels including those with previously impeccable records and performance.

## Get Advice

Performance Improvement Plans can lead to dismissal. At the first hint of an issue it is better to seek advice rather than wait and hope that it will come to nothing.

**If you anticipate even a possible problem contact the Union immediately. Do not assume that by 'keeping a low profile' you will cause a problem to go away. Our advice and assistance can be that much more effective if we are approached before a PIP case begins.**

In any preliminary discussion on your performance, members should be careful what they say and accept. All too often staff who are subject to PIPs are alleged to have admitted to performance problems of which they are clearly not guilty. They do this in the hope that pursuing the line of least resistance will make things easier. It rarely does!

For any interview in which your performance is discussed, ensure that you keep a contemporaneous signed note for the record of what is said. Take note of any and all criticisms made against you and ensure that any counter arguments you make are put on the record.

# Representation

**If you require advice or help of any sort an Official will work with you individually, and will arrange a visit to you wherever necessary. It goes without saying that our support is provided on a 7 day, 24 hour basis.**

IT members of staff can also be assured that any requests for advice or assistance will be dealt with on a completely confidential basis by Officials who work totally independently of the Bank and who have an established track record in resolving personal problems. I emphasise this because I know that members of staff are often reluctant to share their problems and this sometimes leads to our being contacted for assistance much later than we would wish.

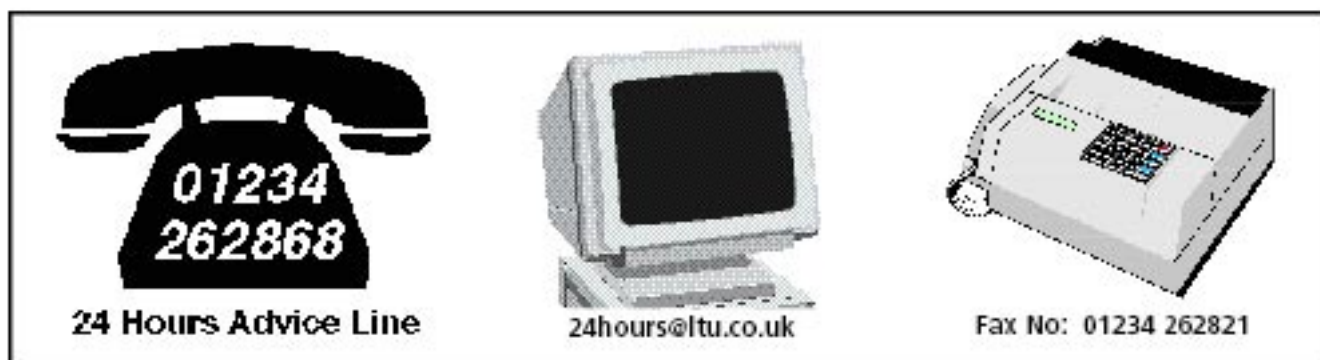
**If any criticism is levelled against you or if you think criticism may be levelled against you for any reason in the future, seek advice on how to proceed by contacting LTU's Advice Team on 01234 262868.**

# Service for Members only

LTU membership is, in many ways, like a form of insurance. LTU members pay monthly subscriptions and these subscriptions pay for all our services including the Advice Line. Non-members pay nothing and, again like insurance, cannot take out membership only when they have a problem. We will not advise or represent non-members under any circumstances. For that reason members calling the Advice Line may be asked to confirm personal details so that we can validate calls.

# Contacting LTU

Members with any questions can contact the Union's Bedford Office as follows:



**Mark V Brown**  
Assistant General Secretary