



MOTIVATION OR

HUMILIATION?



The use by HSBC management of whiteboards in branches and centres has been a recurrent source of unhappiness amongst Amicus members over the years, It has also been a subject of much debate at national level between the union and the bank.

Unlike other major banks where the naming of individuals and comparison of their achievement to targets or objectives is not permitted, HSBC has been reluctant to let go of the misguided belief that these boards can motivate better performance. Senior managers have repeatedly told the union that staff like to see their names on the board when they are doing well.

In contrast, feedback to the union suggests, that even when they are doing well, members are concerned that colleagues resent seeing their good performance on the board. They also complain that the data can be used to work out the bonus they will receive. There is a clear consensus that names on whiteboards discourage teamwork, de-motivate and are counter-productive.

As to those who are not doing so well, feedback consistently suggests members see their names on the whiteboard as public humiliation – a practice specifically outlawed by the bank in its bullying policy. On occasion, seeing their names on the board against comparatively poor achievement has been “the straw that breaks the camels back” and triggered anxiety or depression.

Hitherto the bank has said that it is up to individuals to complain if they are upset by how a manager has used the boards.

Amicus maintains that it is for the bank to clearly state that individual names should never appear on a whiteboard. Anything short of that is liable to misuse and provides a potential opportunity for bullying.

Motivation to perform can be achieved by using whiteboards to show team objectives and how the branch, department or unit at any level is doing.

Amicus is pleased that management in CTS has given a commitment to stop the practice of identifying poor performing individuals on whiteboards. Guidelines will soon be produced on how to implement this change. In the branch network, management remains committed to allowing individuals who so wish to have their names and achievements written up on the boards. However, having listened to our concerns, they have agreed to allow staff who do not wish to have their names and achievement to objectives on whiteboards to opt out.

Given the feedback we have received and our concerns re dignity at work and privacy, the union strongly recommends that members exercise their right to opt out and do so without delay. You do not have to explain or give any kind of reason for this choice. Nor should you be highlighted by your manager or colleagues for having done so. Indeed, the bank would see it as a breach of core standards if this were to happen. The more people who opt out the less of an issue it will become. The right to opt out does not just apply to whiteboards but to any general communication on performance that refers to individual achievement.

It is our view that in the long run the simplest and most sustainable way to ensure that whiteboards are used correctly is to limit them to team achievement. However, the opt out is a valuable step in the right direction.

Bonus reductions for absence – Amicus success

The union has had a positive outcome in its first grievance on this issue.

The facts of the case were as follows. The Amicus member was rated 3 for overall performance and 3 for the purposes of bonus.

According to the matrix for the annual scheme, the member would have expected to receive a bonus of £1050. However, due to absence, this bonus rating was reduced to 4(i) and the payment to £350.

The bank and the union had both calculated that the member's absence was 27% of her normal working year. In contrast, the reduction in bonus was a massive 67%.

The member's grievance was that the reduction was out of all proportion.

In deciding in the member's favour, the bank made an award of £416.50. (£1050 - 27%/ £283.50 = £766.50. £766.50 – the £350 she had received = £416.50)

We await the outcome of a further case in progress and expect a similar decision. Amicus JAORs have been advised that this decision should provide a basis for other successful cases on this issue and members with similar concerns should contact them. In fact, your rep may advise you that, prior to raising a formal grievance, you should speak to your Line Manager or Countersigning manager, citing this article, and suggesting they speak to HR Connect on 72418170.

Through this route, it may be possible for the bank to make a corrective payment without the need for a formal grievance.

Are you in the right band?

Amicus is preparing for a review of pay bands as part of our dialogue with the bank for next year's pay round.

The union anticipates that there are members in the network who believe they are not on the correct band. There could be many reasons for this; for example, rising prosperity, a tighter labour market and rising costs in your area or the perception that it is unfair that you are on a lower pay band than a nearby workplace. We are also aware of discontent in some areas with new recruits being brought in on higher salaries than existing staff who then have to train them up.

Last year we were successful in arguing for an increase in banding from A to B for staff in Swansea Customer Credit Services (CCS). The bank accepted our case (which had been made in 2004 and was based in the unfairness of staff in the same location being on different bands) because they were having difficulty filling a large number of vacancies.

If you feel you can make the case for an increase in banding in your workplace then please get in touch with Bernadette Fisher, Amicus, 33-37 Moreland Street, London EC1V 8HA or fax to 0207 780414112 or email hsbc@amicustheunion.org

First Direct Dignity at Work Campaign

The last edition of @work highlighted the Amicus Dignity At Work campaign. Particular focus was given to the campaign held in First Direct.

As promised we have now compiled the results of the questionnaire.

The following figures were compiled from responses received from both the Leeds and Hamilton sites;

- 67% of staff surveyed said they were aware of the First Direct policy on Dignity at Work
- 25% of staff surveyed said that they had experienced bullying at work*
- Of those that had experienced bullying at work, 44% said they did not do anything about it, 29% said they phoned the union for help, 5% said they phoned a work helpline and 22% said they did 'other'.



* It should be noted that this figure does not necessarily mean that the employee experience bullying at First Direct. The question asked was a general question of whether one had ever experienced bullying at work.

First Direct pay

Amicus has secured a good pay rise for all members working in fd. Following challenging but constructive negotiations, we were able to reach an agreement that achieves the pay objectives our members identified as this year's top priorities:

- A pay rise for all employees that exceeds the rate of inflation.
- Addressing the lack of pay parity at certain role levels between Leeds and Hamilton.

The Agreement – an 11 month pay deal which gives all employees a minimum increase of 3.5% and some role levels a 5% increase to address pay parity between the Leeds and Hamilton sites.

Additionally

- fd and Amicus will continue to further develop the Equal Reward Audit in 2006.

Plus Fund Values will increase by 2.5% on 1st July.



Seconded Reps on the move

Its all change at the Seconded Reps office with a move east to Amicus 33-37 Moreland Street, London EC1V 8HA. The Amicus HSBC help line telephone number has changed so if you need to contact one of our dedicated team of seconded reps call 02072539642.

Claire Parker in Cardiff joined the seconded rep team in January 2006 and has been with HSBC for eleven years.

Chris Lewis has been a seconded rep since January 2005 and is based in Prestwich.

- Terry Clements returns to the bank and the newly appointed seconded rep is Paul Aburn who is moving down from Scotland and will be based in the Moreland Street office. Paul has been with HSBC for almost 8 years and active within the union for 5½ years.

KEEP

IN TOUCH

Amicus is looking to further develop email links with members. Go online to www.amicustheunion.org to sign up to the ground-breaking new Amicus e-bulletin @ctivist. Coming out every month, @ctivist will bring all the news, views and events straight to your inbox - completely FREE to Amicus reps and activists!

The HSBC section would also like to build a database of email addresses. Send us your full name, date of birth, membership number and email address to hsbc@amicustheunion.org

Not a member?
Join on line at www.amicustheunion.org