



By: *Catriona M. Munro, TA Editor in Chief*

Time off for good behaviour?



A baby born during the Covid pandemic is now three years old. Do you think we should fret about whether these children can manage to use a toilet independently or show significant early signs of literacy? Is that a job for parents? Or is it up to school teachers?

I've always been persuaded by multi-speed learning; people learn at various rates (it's a bit like EU accession; some countries are quicker to meet the criteria than others).

If you haven't succeeded in gaining qualifications for University entrance by 18, perhaps it's not the right path for you.

Or do you need a year out to consolidate your plans and retake your exams? You can definitely make use of the time to seek advice or good experience. Not to mention make a bit of money.

Most people dread a boring job when they hit the workforce. Most people will also endure swathes of boredom at least intermittently. Most people would pretty quickly consider looking for a new job, depending on how new they are in the post, and how hard their employers tried to keep them.

Healthy company ethos

Now that the 21st century is embracing dramatic changes in the workplace - droids, AI and their concomitants - new employees look for personal advantage from employers' "war for seeking talent".

Many companies have signed up to a "healthy company ethos" based on the principle that a healthy and rewarded workforce will give employers what they ultimately want: loyalty.

Whether workers can expect food vouchers, travel subsidies or a seriously mapped out career progression involving training leading to qualifications leading to career progression.

My favourite "reward scheme" as an employee was a day of training in rope skills in the Forest of Dean in southern England.

Deep in the forest lived a rather jolly young Australian woman, who assisted a former Royal Marine in running various exercises around the forest. The students (who were from overseas) were told to get on the tightrope that was strung around a number of trees.

They discovered immediately that if they tried to get on the rope alone, they would fall off straight away, but the more of them were on there, and supporting each other, the easier it became for the students to move around the ropes.

The exercises graduated from a simple rope trip to the students leaping off a pretty high platform. They were attached to an instructor, but roped up so loosely, they just felt alone and insecure, but a surge of achievement when they completed the task.

One of the students was quite moved: he was bristling with adrenaline when he succeeded in the task and told me he'd previously been a telephone engineer who had fallen off a pylon.

Apart from an injured back, he had developed a pathological fear of heights after his accident, but was now cured. That was a gratifying story.

My time with the ropers was some years ago. I've now read it is perfectly common for an employer to send elements of its workforce off on spa weeks

Rope training is fun, but not really for the faint hearted (apart from the ex-telephone engineer). It would depend on your company's culture.

Quite a lot of the ropers' clients were in fact young offenders who had ended up in prison when they were barely out of their teenage years. We can only hope it worked for the majority.

My time with the ropers was some years ago. I've now read it is perfectly common for an

employer to send elements of its workforce off on spa weeks, for the purposes of nothing but relaxation and possibly a bit of staff bonding.

But if it makes them [temporarily] happy and fulfilled, why on earth not? And why shouldn't work be fun? Sometimes.