PEOPLE matters

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Proudly Serving the Airport Industry for 30 Years

Produced for

This is...

shaping sustainable futures

About This Is...

This is...
shaping sustainable futures

We are an international organisation and leadership development practice whose purpose is to help create better organisations.

This Is... offers innovative and customised support to organisations who want to develop a high performance culture. We take time to listen to and understand our clients' businesses, aspirations and concerns - and then work in partnership with them to come up with an approach and plan which will help them achieve their strategic objectives. We provide coaching, facilitation and expert advice to help our clients on their journey of cultural change - and often build long term relationships as trusted advisors to leaders and organisations.

This Is... understands that it is essential to build leadership capability and capacity in a climate of change, uncertainty and resource constraints. We develop and deliver customised leadership development programmes which are appropriate to our clients' circumstances. We also provide executive coaching, mentoring and support for individuals and teams.

We take pride in our thought leadership credentials and write and speak extensively. We provide education and training on leadership, change and people management in partnership with universities, business schools, and international organisations.

About Airport World magazine

AIRPORT WORLD
Proudly Serving the Airport Industry for 30 Years

Launched in 1995, and published daily online and six times a year in a magazine format.

Its primary aim is to provide a forum for airport-related management issues, a vehicle for airports to promote and market themselves across the globe and a direct route for suppliers of products and services to airports.

Interviews with airports CEOs and articles about infrastructure development, sustainability, customer excellence, IT innovation and commercial revenue generation make up the major proportion of the magazine's content.

Airport World delivers a powerful and cohesive editorial package. The articles are concise, intelligent, and clearly written, striving to provide the airport industry with an unparalleled strategic business magazine.



PEOPLE matters



Why trust matters

Terri Morrissey and Richard Plenty consider the importance of trust in the workplace.

Does trust matter when we work with others? This is the question we posed at an invited symposium in the International Association of Applied Psychology conference in Florence in July 2026.

Imagine a travelling world where you could rarely trust your baggage to arrive safely; or repeatedly missed your connections because the timetables were unreliable; or where security staff did not bother to turn up for work thus creating long queues.

We take it for granted that organisations will honour their commitments to us in most of our interactions with them. Mission critical organisations such as hospitals, transport, doctor's surgeries, water and energy supplies are based on delivery expectations that all of us can rely on. They have systematic processes and procedures which help them to deliver consistently.

When these organisations run efficiently and smoothly, it is also because people working in them can be trusted to deliver on their promises.

There are unwritten codes in many cases which make all of these activities possible, and provide the key building blocks of an efficient and effective society.

In an organisational context, these constitute the psychological contract between employer and employee. This (often unwritten) set of mutual expectations drives high performance. Both organisations and employees can feel let down and disappointed if they feel their trust is misplaced, the contract is broken, or expectations are not met.

Trust which is based solely on contractual arrangements and legal agreements, and where financial or other forms of penalty are the only incentive for performing, are rarely sufficient for organisations seeking to deliver outstanding results.

This transactional approach can be inflexible and is rarely as effective in delivering truly high performance as relationship-based trust, where delivery is based on mutual understanding and fundamental principles on which the parties share and agree.

Relationship-based trust takes more effort and requires more time to build than transactional trust. It requires getting to know people, empathy, and appreciating each other's perspectives to build strong bonds that are based on mutually agreed understanding.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Denver International Airport has named **Dave LaPorte** as its interim CEO following the retirement of **Phil Washington**. LaPorte, the airport's chief operating officer, will officially take over on August 3.

Queenstown Airport has appointed experienced infrastructure and capital delivery leader **Mike Simmers** to the newly created role of chief of infrastructure. Airport CEO, Shane O'Hare, said the appointment is an important milestone for the organisation and reflects the company's investment in its leadership.

Ferrovial Airports has appointed **John Morton** as its new CEO, effective from September 2026. He will succeed **Luke Bugeja**, who is retiring after more than five years in the role.

Shawn Streck will become the new airport director of the Sioux Gateway Airport/Brigadier General Bud Day Field in September.

Genuine trust is based on relationships built over time. Trust is built step by step and reviewed regularly. Delivering on the promise moves things forward. Credibility and likeability of the parties in the relationship can make a difference.

Consistency of approach – knowing where you stand and what you stand for – is key. It means being as honest and transparent as possible in our dealings with others. Trust, once lost, takes time to build back. But being able to say what we can't commit to is as important as being able to say what we can commit to when circumstances change.

Being aware of our limitations and boundaries and being able to communicate them to others can set expectations in a realistic and achievable manner.

The effort is worth the investment. Over the longer term, high levels of trust make a difference to how well we work together, the quality of relationships and ultimately the quality of outcomes. It is important for maintaining commitment and flexibility through uncertain times.

And more importantly, it is a precious part of what we value in human relationships and continued social cohesion.

AW

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PEOPLE matters



User friendly buildings

Terri Morrissey and Richard Plenty discuss the importance of remembering the human factor in airport design.

Whether you like it or not, travel can be a stressful business. The idea of a dream holiday or business trip can feel like a bit of a myth as reality sets in.

Oftentimes we are faced with long queues, delays, stressful checks, extremes of temperature, missed connections, getting lost in vast terminals … it is almost as if there is a plot afoot to deter people from travelling at all!

While it is impossible to make travel entirely stress-free, airport design that puts passengers first can make a significant difference. The key is to see the experience of both passengers and airport workers from the user's perspective.

Involving future users in the design process, clearly mapping the passenger journey through the airport, and applying new technologies and advanced design approaches can all help to create human-centred environments.

Psychology and anthropology are disciplines that underpin this approach. Observation tools, questionnaires, predictive analysis of behaviour, and understanding the nature of stress, can all be used to build the human into the design of the airport space.

'Wayfinding', for example, can be studied to observe how people make decisions when navigating through an airport.

Studying key points in the journey from public transport or parking to baggage handling, to security checks – right through to boarding a plane – can influence design resulting in a more efficient and less stressful process.

Attention to the human interface is key. Travelling to a recent meeting at the ACI EUROPE head office in Brussels by Metro provided a perfect illustration of how a failure to do so can cause confusion in any transport system.

The closest station, 'Arts Loi', was clearly indicated on the Metro map in the train carriage, but the sign on the station platform at the expected stop said 'Kunst-Wet'. It turned out that this was the Flemish name for the same station but there was no indication on the station signage!

Looking ahead, the introduction of modern biometric technology is reshaping airport design and some airports, such as Incheon with its Smart Pass biometric boarding system, have already invested in this area.

Passengers can pass through immigration checkpoints and boarding gates using facial recognition rather than documents. Biometric should ultimately enable smoother journeys and customised individual support for the passenger journey.

There are many other areas where attention to the human factor can make a difference to the passenger. A sense of belonging can be created through use of displays and interactive experiences.

The aesthetic experience should not be forgotten and is a feature of some 'sustainability inspired' airport designs which aim to bring aspects of the natural environment into the airport. This makes sense as sustainable design is something that demands particular attention in the airport context.

Physical comfort is always important and can be enhanced through controlling temperature, access, seating arrangements, ventilation and noise levels. We find that noise levels can be particularly annoying in some airports when waiting for a flight.

Catering outlets with loud music, high pitched sounds from coffee making machines; staff shouting orders and the inevitable screeching of small children can be enervating. Strategically placed screens; plants; and design of the layout with the customer comfort in mind could go a long way to making the experience much more comfortable!

Putting thought into the design of building and spaces coupled with the use of emerging technologies in sustainability can help create more user friendly and accessible buildings, create human centred environments and make the journey less stressful for all.

It just takes some imagination – and thinking more about the user! AW

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Moments of truth

Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey reflect on how passenger perceptions of travel are shaped by their experiences in turbulent times.

How fast and how unexpectedly the world changes. We ran our ACI 'High Performance Airport Leadership' programme from February 16-20 and the message coming from our international participants was optimistic, with growth remaining the principal challenge.

We will be running a second course from March 23 -27. In the space of one month, war has broken out across the Middle East at a scale and intensity few had anticipated. The context has changed entirely. What will be the mood this time?

We live in turbulent times. For over 20 years, leadership commentators have been using the phrase 'VUCA' to describe a world which is 'Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous'. This remains a useful acronym, but the increasingly chaotic nature of change means it doesn't adequately capture people's perceptions and emotional responses to the way things are going.

The impact on people can be profound. Jamais Cascio, an American anthropologist and principal author of the recently published book *Navigating the Age of Chaos* (2025) has come up with the acronym: 'BANI: Brittle, Anxious, Non-linear, Incomprehensible' in an effort to capture how people perceive a world in which expected patterns fail, and where the illusions people have built up on how we can predict and control the future are called into question.

In this world there are no constants. What are the anchors that can steady the ship?

In chaotic times, we increasingly rely on the constancy and stability of human interactions and experience. These become critical beacons in an uncertain world. Supporting each other – our family, friends, colleagues and sometimes even strangers – becomes very important.

We remember the positive things that people do for us that make a difference in this unpredictable world. We yearn for communication that helps us understand what is happening.

This also holds true for the passenger experience. Reputations can be made and lost when times are challenging. This is when people's impressions are most vivid – and these are reflected in the stories that are told for many years afterwards. Treat people well when times are tough and they will tell others about it. Treat them badly, and they do not forget.

As a passenger, there is nothing more unsettling during disruption than to be left without any information, human contact or sources of reliable messaging. We both have experiences that we have never forgotten. They include being stuck in Sydney Airport for hours on the runway with a young family during a strike over 30 years ago and not being given accurate information by the airline about the evolving situation.

Fortunately, there are signs that many airports are taking their responsibility for the passenger experience much more seriously than before.

In an interview on CNN, the CEO of Dubai Airports, Paul Griffiths, was asked how DXB was supporting passengers during the current crisis. He replied that it was 'incredibly important to keep people informed' and that the airport had also remained 'calm and composed'. He also said that he thought the airport was doing 'reasonably well'.

As testimony to this, members of one of the author's family recently passed through Dubai Airport en route to Sydney Australia from London. Providing a quick test of these aspirations, their comments were that everything seemed completely normal and that DXB was busy but efficient.

Indeed, the most stressful part of their journey was the loss of our 6-year old's cuddly toy 'Hedgie', left on the inbound flight.

'Walking in the passenger's shoes' and making an anxiety provoking situation feel as safe and normal as possible is a good place to start when addressing the passenger experience in turbulent times. Finding and returning Hedgie would be the icing on the cake! AW

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PEOPLE matters



Developing a sustainability mindset

Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey reflect on what's involved in taking a longer-term perspective in a fast-changing world.

As we begin 2026, the world continues to be in state of flux, changing rapidly and unpredictably before our eyes. Venezuela, Ukraine, Iran, GROK and tariffs are all in the news today.

Geopolitical upheavals and advances in artificial intelligence challenge our assumptions, forcing us to adapt and learn – or risk being left behind.

We live in a world that can feel overwhelming. There never seems to be enough time. We are bombarded with information and often so busy that it can be difficult to know where to start.

The pressure to meet immediate targets, deadlines and expectations is unrelenting. Something we experience ourselves whenever the time comes round to write our column!

So, it is hardly surprising that in these circumstances many of us, organisations as well as individuals, adopt a pragmatic short-term focus, concentrating on the immediate task at hand, looking for simple pragmatic solutions that work quickly, and not worrying too much about an unpredictable future that may or may not happen. We just want to get the job done.

Unfortunately, a short-term approach such as this has its problems in times where the environment is changing rapidly. We live in a connected world, where reputation matters, trust is hard won, and the consequences of our actions have implications beyond ourselves.

The decisions we make today can be seen in a different light when circumstances change.

For example, many airports greatly reduced their staff numbers during the pandemic when the priority was to cut costs. Five years later, these same airports are facing the opposite challenge of attracting and retaining people to be able to cope with the growing demand.

To think and act with the long-term in mind requires a different approach to the operational mindset that is so often our default paradigm.

It needs a strategic 'big picture' view of the world – a sense of purpose, values, principles and ethics, which go beyond the immediate financial realities to include consideration of people, environment and community impact; a systems perspective which tries to understand how things are interconnected; and a willingness to accept that not everything has a simple immediate solution.

It also requires patience. Take the clothing company Patagonia. Over several decades it has deliberately taken a sustainability perspective. It switched to organic cotton in the 1990s despite higher costs and supply chain issues, investing in recycling materials and repairability, and built products designed to last rather than encouraging repeat purchases.

As a consequence, it has developed strong brand loyalty, and its reputation has attracted committed employees, partners and customers. It has achieved sustained long-term commercial success and is resilient during industry downturns.

There are many encouraging signs that Airport Sector leadership is promoting a sustainability ethos. For example, the ACI Webinar 'Future Proofing the Airport Workforce' in December 2025, attracted hundreds of participants.

An ACI project on a global framework for ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) was set up and reported in August 2025. The pioneering ACI Carbon Accreditation Programme has expanded to include 625 accredited airports.

However, there is still some way to go to put this into mainstream practice. The world political context is less supportive than it was. There are pressures for growth and expansion which could result in cutting corners.

There is also a need to develop more leaders who have the skills and abilities to do this, who can see the big picture, have strong personal values, relate well to others, are willing to collaborate, and can drive change.

Still, as the benefits become obvious, the development of a sustainable high-performance ethos is one change that can only gather pace. AW

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To travel or not to travel?

Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey reflect on the 21st century version of Shakespeare's existential question.

We write this while we are attending the COP30 Climate change conference in Belem, Brazil, as representatives of the Global Psychology Alliance (GPA).

We spent this morning working with others from around the world. This afternoon, we listened to the opening address, in which Brazilian President Lula said 'people matters' needed to be at the heart of the change agenda. Regular readers of this column will realise that this is a view we share!

We're not actually in Brazil but working from home in different countries (Ireland and the UK), along with colleagues scattered around the world. We are nearly all virtual participants.

We have one in person delegate on the ground in Belem. Yet we still feel a sense of community, connectedness and team cohesion. We share a common purpose.

It is only four years ago that we attended the COP26 conference in Glasgow. At that time our whole delegation attended in person. Since then, the opportunity to attend virtually has expanded, become more formalised and inclusive. The immediate saving in environmental and economic costs, as well as our time, is enormous.

Modern technology has made this possible, transforming how we are able to work and interact – enabling video conferencing, instant messaging, and digital communication across continents.

Remote working, once seen as a poor substitute for 'being there', continues to evolve as virtual and augmented reality, together with immersive online platforms, allow people to collaborate, explore, and share experiences in increasingly realistic ways.

Given these circumstances, it is tempting to ask whether in due course we could connect, collaborate, and even live our lives almost entirely online?

Virtual communication offers efficiency and convenience. We could all stay at home rather than have to travel. It could be more flexible, cheaper and less environmentally damaging. But is it likely to work?

It might come at a cost to creativity. An article in *Nature in 2022* by Melanie Brucks and Jonathan Leavy found that virtual communication curbed creative idea generation simply because it focused the gaze of communicators on a screen, rather than looking around as they would in in-person groups.

Indeed, moving about is important. The layout of Apple's headquarters in Cupertino, California, was deliberately designed to encourage random encounters and the kind of informal communication that fuels collaboration and innovation.

Exclusively working remotely might also make it more difficult to build trust, which underpins most high performing teams. This is helped by people getting to know each other as individuals rather than images on a screen. How often, for example, have we been surprised by how tall someone is when we meet them in person having worked with them virtually?

Research by UK psychologist Amanda Potter and her team at Zircon shows that in-person teams feel a greater sense of psychological safety than those working remotely.

Professor Alex Haslam, lead author of the groundbreaking book *The New Psychology of Leadership*, argues that a feeling of 'belonging' and shared social identity is key for both personal wellbeing and organisation performance.

It may not work well either on a personal level, where the demand for travel continues to grow. People have a desire to visit new places, go on holiday, and have different experiences whatever the practical difficulties and costs.

Reconnecting with family and friends provides a warmth and quality of shared experience that video calls cannot match. Sometimes we just need to be there.

Still, travel comes at a cost: economic, personal and environmental. The future of connecting people and places lies not in a stark choice between the physical and the virtual, but in choosing carefully what is best suited to the context and circumstances. To travel or not to travel – that is indeed the question. AW

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PEOPLE matters

People still needed for creative innovation

Terri Morrissey and Richard Plenty reflect on whether machines can ever completely replace humans in the workplace.

In January 2009, Captain Chesley Sullenberger succeeded in landing US Airways Flight 1549 on the Hudson River in New York following the failure of both engines after take-off from LaGuardia Airport. The decision to land on the river saved the lives of all on board. Trying to land at nearby Teterboro Airport or attempting a return to LaGuardia would have been disastrous.

Many people celebrate this story. The courage, skill and creative thinking exhibited by the pilots in such a high stress situation was so striking that it was made into a film 'The Miracle on the Hudson' which was an international box office success.

But that was 16 years ago. Is there any possibility that developments in AI could soon make this kind of story sound like ancient history? We asked Google and Chat GPT if AI could have landed the plane on the Hudson as Sullenberger did. The answers we got were illuminating.

The consensus was that this event was a triumph of human intuition, experience and judgement, and whilst AI was advancing, it was difficult to imagine artificially intelligent systems replicating the nuanced decision making required in such high stress, complex and critical situations anytime soon.

An AI system trained on airport landings would not consider the Hudson as a likely landing strip. A former US Air Force and glider pilot did.

This story makes us think more generally about the future of work and the role AI might play in replacing humans.

Many pundits are of the view that AI will end up taking over nearly all jobs as 'cost effective problem solvers' and that we humans will have a limited time span in terms of our contribution to the workplace. We are not convinced of this argument.

Let's take large language models as an example. These add value through analysing vast amounts of data, searching the internet for the consensus view on complex topics, and looking at potential solutions through the lens of current ways of thinking. They focus on the past, searching the web for knowledge that already exists and summarising what is found.

Whilst the outcomes produced need to be treated with caution, the systems generally work well for sharing information about what is already known. They are being widely adopted.

Still, this approach has limitations when it comes to creative thinking in a fast-changing world. It is obvious that technology, geopolitics, societal norms and environmental considerations are changing at pace. Yet we have known for years from disclaimers in investment funds that 'past performance is not a guide to future performance, nor a reliable indicator of future results.'

The risk is we end up with detailed debate about data and the best way of managing the past rather than focusing on the step changes needed to move us into the future.

This is where the human qualities of intuition, critical thinking and a capacity for empathy come into their own.

Radical innovation and change often comes from those who are relatively new to an area; from the younger generations; from those who think differently and feel things passionately; from those who understand the underlying issues; from people who exhibit courage, determination and resolve and from those who collaborate with like-minded others on issues of real importance.

AI can help, but not replace, the human quest for innovation, the key here is not to overplay its role. It is an augmenter and facilitator – but not a substitute – for creative human thought.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Clark County Department of Aviation has a new aviation director after **James Chrisley** replaced the retiring **Rosemary Vassiliadis**. The department operates Harry Reid International Airport in Las Vegas

After more than nine years in the hotseat **Jonas Abrahamsson** will voluntarily leave his position as CEO of Swedavia at the end of February 2026 to take up a position outside of the industry.

Elsewhere in Sweden, **Pontus Tagesson** will become the new airport manager of Ronneby Airport, succeeding Arri Kallonen, on November 3.

In the UK, Leeds Bradford Airport has appointed **Declan Maguire** as its new aviation director.

Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) has appointed **William Ho** as its new executive director for corporate development.

Ray O'Driscoll is the new interim CEO of The Shannon Airport Group after **Mary Considine's** departure to Irish Rail.

Prince George Airport Authority (PGAA) in Canada has named **Geoff Ritchie** as its new president and chief executive officer.

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PEOPLE matters



Tales of the unexpected

Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey reflect on the challenges of planning for the future in such uncertain times.

Many years ago, we were working with the CEO of an under-pressure organisation and suggested that he should spend more time thinking about the future.

"Perhaps it would be a good idea to paint a picture to your leadership team of how you see the next five to ten years?" we asked in the style of well-intended management consultants. "The next ten years?", he retorted. "I've no idea what's going to happen on Monday!"

That leader now seems to have been ahead of his time. Fast forward to the present, and we are living in a world where it has become difficult, if not impossible, for anyone to predict the future with any degree of certainty.

Recent world events have provided a backdrop of unpredictability – geo-political conflicts, tariffs, supply chains, COVID, climate change, AI – and created many possible futures and options. It's a world where one of the most oft repeated phrases is "that's too uncertain to call".

Whatever way we react personally to uncertainty, none of us can wish it away. Some people find uncertainty makes them anxious, others enjoy the buzz from having to think on their feet, but all of us have to deal with situations where the facts are unclear, the environment is rapidly changing and where the outcomes of any course of action are far from assured.

We are faced with dilemmas that don't have simple solutions and where 'it all depends' is the general answer, for example:

- **Action or Patience.** Is it best to make a quick decision and move on – or wait a bit longer until the fog lifts, and risk missing the boat?
- **Planning or Improvisation.** Detailed planning becomes very difficult when things are unpredictable. Should we instead 'muddle along' and improvise as events unfold?
- **Intuition or Logic.** Relying on 'gut instinct' to produce the right solution is simpler and quicker than trying to apply logic. But how can we be sure that our intuition is not flawed and biased?
- **Persistence or Changing Course.** There are no guarantees that if we continue with a course of action, we will get the outcomes we want. Still, there can be rewards for perseverance – and changing course mid-flight can lead to confusion
- **Past, present or future.** History can provide valuable insights. However, what worked in the past may not work so well in the future. And how should we balance the demands of the 'here and now' with thinking through future scenarios?

While the best response to these dilemmas is contingent on circumstances and context, we have come up with a framework to help us plan ahead in times of uncertainty , the Richmor Model – *https://www.all-about-psychology.com/uncertainty-rules.html* – published by Cork University Press/Atrium in 2020.

The Richmor model provides a systematic way of helping us to check that our objectives, strategies and plans still make sense in the light of changing and uncertain circumstances, and whether we need to consider different ways of meeting our strategic objectives. There are four steps:

1. **Reflect.** Carve out time to understand the situation and clarify our strategic objectives
2. **Strategise.** Review the options we have (usually more than we think) to achieve our goals
3. **Explore.** Explore each option, working out – in so far as we can – the consequences of each
4. **Act Decisively.** Decide on the best option – and act boldly in a way aligned with our values.

In times of uncertainty, it is usually better to stop and think rather than act impetuously or blithely continue with what we have been doing.

There is a lot of truth in the wisdom of the ages – 'Take a deep breath and count to ten', 'Don't put all your eggs in one basket' and 'Look before you leap'!

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

London Gatwick will have a new chief executive for the next phase of its journey after announcing that VINCI Airport's **Pierre-Hugues Schmit** will succeed Stewart Wingate in September. Wingate, who has held the top job at LGW for 15 years, will take up the new role of managing director of UK Airports for VINCI Airports and Global Infrastructure Partners (GIP) in the autumn. Schmit is currently chief commercial and operational officer at VINCI Airports and a non-executive director on the London Gatwick Board.

Elsewhere in the UK, Edinburgh Airport has appointed **Stephanie Wear** as its new chief commercial officer, replacing **Gail Taylor** who has joined Sydney Airport as its new commercial project director.

Columbus Regional Airport Authority president and CEO, **Joseph Nardone**, has announced his intention to retire and will step aside when a successor is found.

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PEOPLE matters



Time to take a break?

Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey look at the importance of human factors and managing fatigue.

When do we know it's time to take a break? Do we notice when we start to feel tired, begin to find it difficult to concentrate, and realise we are running out of energy and creative ideas? Or do we only notice later – when fatigue sets in, our performance begins to suffer, and we make mistakes?

When we are under pressure, especially when we are experiencing high workloads, it is all too easy to carry on too long. We cut corners in an effort to meet tight deadlines, make unwarranted assumptions and commit errors of judgement with potentially serious consequences.

Human errors of judgement are particularly problematic for those in safety-critical roles. Indeed, work on air traffic controllers has been the subject of research by psychologists interested in the impact of high-pressure environments on attention span since the 1960s.

Their studies explored the relationship between workload, stress and automation on people's ability to manage periods where intense concentration was necessary. They articulated how the human element could contribute to accidents and paved the way for further research in air traffic management.

They found that fatigue can indeed compromise focus, reaction time, and decision-making, and could result in potentially catastrophic errors of judgement. At the same time, they found that there was rarely a simple relationship between fatigue and performance in real life settings. An understanding of the whole human-technology system was vital, a 'human factors' approach.

The importance of the human factor has become a hot topic again recently in the United States, which has experienced a number of "near misses" in air traffic management. For example, a near-collision at New York's JFK Airport between a Delta aircraft and an American Airlines jet in early 2023 received substantial media attention. There are many other recent cases.

Could the fact that the US has been facing a critical shortage of air traffic controllers in recent years be a common factor in this spate of incidents? Could understaffing be leading to fatigue and misjudgements?

The answer (so far) seems to be that fatigue, in itself, is not the prime cause, but the human element remains important. For example, failures in communication between air traffic controllers and aircraft as well as issues associated with interruptions, distractions and multi -tasking are cited in some reports. The European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) published similar findings in May 2024, saying that no fatigue related accident or serious incident involving air traffic controllers had been reported in the previous ten years.

However, it also found that reporting mechanisms were not fully effective, and that good practice required the implementation of a Fatigue Risk Management System providing guidelines on rostering, fatigue reporting and other mitigating mechanisms.

This seems like a sensible proposal. Indeed, a more systematic approach to looking at work patterns and their impact on fatigue and wellbeing might well have a broader applicability to jobs in airports – not only safety critical roles. Conventional work patterns are being eroded and transformed through hybrid working, digital advances, and competitive pressures. We come across many people who claim they feel 'overwhelmed' by work pressures as a consequence.

In a sector which needs to attract, motivate and retain people, it is important to keep the person at the centre. So why not proactively manage fatigue rather than let it manage us?

This means looking systematically at what work patterns make most sense, developing people's resilience, offering wellness programmes, developing peer support networks and providing psychological services if needed. It also means educating people on how to manage fatigue. And – on that note – it's time for us to take a break!

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Chris McLaughlin became the CEO of Dallas Fort Worth International Airport (DFW) on May 19, succeeding **Sean Donohue**, who is retiring after more than a decade leading DFW.

The Supervisory Board of Berlin Brandenburg Airport has appointed István Szabó as its new chief operating officer effective from autumn 2025. He will take over the operational responsibilities from **Thomas Hoff Andersson** who has moved to Munich Airport to become its new chief operating officer.

Brisbane Airport has appointed **Scott Norris** as its new executive general manager for commercial and will oversee retail, commercial, parking and industrial development at the Queensland gateway.

London Luton Airport (LLA) has appointed **Lord John Hutton** as chair of the board to oversee the next phase of the airport's development. Operated by Aena, London Luton is the UK's fifth largest airport.

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PEOPLE matters

AI – Artificial or Augmented Intelligence?

Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey share their thoughts on some of the human challenges associated with the rapidly developing field of AI.

We are just back from facilitating a Global Psychology Summit in Kingston, Jamaica, at which a key topic was the rapidly developing field of Artificial Intelligence (AI), and the promise, limitations and ethical challenges associated with this rapidly developing field.

This is an area from which we will not be able to hide. AI already outperforms humans on pattern recognition, searching the internet for relevant material, and data analysis. Generative large language models can produce summaries of complex issues in seconds. They are also becoming widely available. Chat GPT, for example, launched in late 2022, can now be used by anyone with a smart phone.

Advances are occurring so fast that it is almost impossible to be an expert in the field. Nevertheless, at the Kingston summit on March 19, a panel of 'almost-experts' did their best to consider the implications. On the whole, they were positive. They claimed that there are exciting opportunities for innovation and expressed the hope that AI will lead to enormous benefits for us all.

As an example, the ability to search large volumes of material on the internet, cutting down the time needed to trawl through documents and being able to search in multiple languages across many databases, provides a real boost for evidence-based research, especially when combined with the ability to synthesise and summarise material in a readable, concise format.

At the same time, our panelists warned of the complex and challenging issues associated with its uptake. It is unwise to rely on what emerges from the technology without a hefty input from an expert human source.

AI, at least in its present iterations, makes too many mistakes. It weighs sources equally, unable to distinguish between their quality. Searches are based on historical data. Consequently, algorithmic bias can lead to stereotypes being perpetuated.

For example, Amazon's initial efforts to produce a recruiting tool preferred male candidates for technical jobs.

Things can go badly wrong without human judgment. Large language models rely on searching the web for similar responses rather than logic. For instance, one of the panelists had asked a large language model 'How many 'r's' are there in strawberry?' Unable to find anyone in its databases who had asked this exact question before, it replied '2'.

So, it is the collective intelligence of people and the technology that really makes the difference, rather than the technology on its own. The clever way to use it is to get AI to do the 'heavy lifting', curate the material that emerges, take what is best and then refine efforts by asking incisive more detailed questions. A computer-human endeavour!

This use of AI as 'augmented intelligence' rather than 'artificial intelligence' is beautifully illustrated in a recent article in the Harvard Business Review by Christian Stadler and Martin Reeves called "When AI Gets a Board Seat", describing a year-long experiment involving a group of managers and their use of Chat GPT.

The article concludes that what makes AI a valuable member of the executive team is that it differs from humans by disrupting and broadening what is taken into account and providing information quickly. For this to work effectively, it needs a human critical thinker in the loop.

All of this implies that we need to spend much more time understanding how to use digital technology, educating and training people how best to use it. It seems that while we won't be able to live without it, we will need to spend time and effort learning how to live with it.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Seattle-Tacoma International Airport's managing director, **Lance Lyttle**, will leave the gateway in April to become the new CEO of Greater Orlando Aviation Authority (GOAA), which operates Orlando International Airport (MCO) and Orlando Executive Airport (ORL) airports in Central Florida.

The French Parliament has approved the appointment of **Philippe Pascal** as the successor to **Augustin de Romanet** as CEO of global airport operator, Groupe ADP. The move is strongly supported by President Emmanuel Macron.

Newcastle Airport in Australia has announced the appointment of **Linc Horton** as its new CEO, effective May 5, 2025. Horton becomes the permanent replacement for **Dr Peter Cock** who left the airport completion of a decade of service.

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AW

PEOPLE matters



Sustainable recruitment

Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey reflect on the recruitment difficulties facing airports today.

Demand for travel continues to grow. ACI World's 2024 Annual World Traffic Report (September 19, 2024) points out that recovery of passenger journeys from pre-pandemic levels is now complete, with 2024 traffic at 104% of the 2019 level. There will be a projected 9.5 billion passengers globally in 2024, up from 8.7 billion in 2023.

In such a growing sector it might be expected that there would also be a corresponding growth in attractiveness to potential employees. Yet the report says that labour market shortages are a potential brake on this expansion.

What is driving this shortage? Could it be that having let so many people go during the pandemic, the airport sector is facing a lack of trust as an employer of choice? Is it possible that people do not have faith in the industry to provide secure career opportunities in the way it used to?

While this may indeed be the case, there may be other factors at play. Even where the industry has had success in attracting people, it is often having difficulty in retaining them.

This is particularly the case where 'traditional' management practices remain in place, promotion opportunities are limited, there is a need for shift work, and there are less opportunities for working flexibly. Other sectors can be seen as more 'up to date' and attractive.

The immediate challenge is to address the key issues that give rise to these perceptions and encourage people to think of airports once again as a long-term employer of choice.

Firstly, it is important to make sure that the working environment is attractive to the kind of people that an airport wants to recruit and retain. Are the terms and conditions, management practices and ways of working appealing?

Secondly, it is important to ensure that new recruits have a clear path for career progression and development. Otherwise, they may look elsewhere if progress appears blocked.

And thirdly, leadership attention needs to be focused on widening the potential talent pool by paying attention to 'EDI' – equality, diversity and inclusiveness – and ensuring that equal opportunities are given to women, minorities and traditionally under-represented groups.

However, addressing these matters may not be enough to attract and retain the most talented, who are often driven by a sense of purpose, a desire to make a difference and to make a personal contribution to the societies in which they live.

They are more likely to join and stay in an organisation where their personal values align with their employers. Is there something deeper to be considered?

One missing ingredient may well be the broader challenge of sustainability. Many high potential employees seek employment in organisations that demonstrate genuine concern for the environment, biodiversity and ethical practices and values.

They will ask: do potential employers put sustainability at the heart of everything they do? Do they value innovation and promote purposeful work? Do they balance growth with environmental and social responsibility?

Do they engage in practices such as waste reduction, recycling, renewable energy sourcing, and promoting the use of public transport to work? Do they engage with local communities where they are based and aim to be a 'good neighbour'?

Paying attention to the twin challenges of sustainability – creating an attractive working environment and demonstrating a genuine commitment to a sustainability ethos – provides a solid foundation for long-term sustainable recruitment.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport has announced that Spokane International Airport's, **Larry Krauter** will replace the retiring **Candace McGraw**, as its CEO in March 2025. McGraw has been at CVG for 15 years and overseen a number of big developments at the airport, including the construction of an Amazon Air Hub there and its broader expansion to the sixth-largest cargo airport in the USA.

Susan Margles will take up the role of president and CEO of the Ottawa International Airport in January 2025. She succeeds Mark Laroche who announced his retirement in May after 12 years as head of the airport.

Newcastle Airport in Australia has announced that **Andrew Warrender** will serve as its interim CEO from next year until a permanent replacement is found for outgoing CEO, **Dr Peter Cock**, who has completed his decade of service to the airport and region. Warrender will temporarily step up from his current position as the airport's executive manager for aviation and air freight business development.

Tampa International Airport has decided to recruit from within and appoint **Michael Stephens** its next chief executive. He will replace the retiring **Joe Lopano**. Stephens currently serves as TPA's executive vice president and general counsel and will assume the role sometime after Lopano's last day in April 2025.

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PEOPLE matters



The human connection

Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey reflect on the importance of the human connection as the 'airport group' model grows in importance.

How do airport acquisitions and mergers affect people who work in airports?

Until well into the 1990s, the airport sector was characterised by a multiplicity of state-owned, independently run, relatively small organisations. Airports were reliant on state investment, which was not always available. Exchange of resources and best practice between airports was limited.

This has changed. A report by CAPA Centre for Aviation in 2024 describes how the 'airport group' is becoming an increasingly significant organisation model. It quotes a 2022 Study by ACI identifying 27 airport groups comprising 425 airports, collectively handling 29% of global passenger traffic. Private sector investment is a key part of this.

The CAPA report states that the 'airport group' model adds value in terms of economies of scale, economic resilience and an increased ability to finance capital improvements. The evidence suggests that operational efficiency is higher as shared targets and co-ordinated support systems are brought to bear, with an impressive track record also on sustainability initiatives such as carbon accreditation.

There is, in principle, more opportunity to share best practice and to invest in new technology. Small and medium-size airports can get access to resources and expertise not previously available.

However, the study does not cover what it is like to work in this kind of environment. Do larger conglomerates offer a better experience for employees?Is this shift to bigger, more connected entities more likely to attract people into the industry and encourage them to stay? These are important questions for the sector at present.

On the positive side, airport groups provide international opportunities for career development and personal growth, particularly for those with high potential or with specialist skills, that are not easily available to those working in stand-alone entities. For example, we have personally come across Fraport employees working in Europe, the Middle East, Asia-Pacific and South America on transferring and sharing best practices.

Larger groupings also provide opportunities to implement best practice at scale. A case in point is global airport operator, Aena. It has around 48 airports in mainland Spain and many more in the Americas. The group is currently focused on improving 'the art of communication' across the company using a co-ordinated approach which includes performance management, training and development, and reviewing leadership competences.

Independent airports, on the other hand, can have a spirit that larger entities find hard to match, with a strong sense of identity, belonging and organisation commitment. The ACI EUROPE Leadership & Human Resources Forum meeting held at London City Airport in October 2024 reminded everyone in attendance what this feels like.

The airport tour provided an opportunity to talk directly with people working in the airport. Many had worked their way through a variety of jobs, giving them an understanding of the challenges faced by their colleagues. They also felt part of a community and knew each other personally and by name.

A human connection can make a huge difference to how people feel about their work. Thanks Frankie, Maya, Mo, Tana, Lee, Grace and Michael for your insights.

As the sector continues to change and develop, it is important to ensure that these best aspects of small and independent airport cultures are not lost in the transition to airport groups. Let's make sure we find ways of combining the functional advantages of scale with the personal and human touch needed to get the best from people.

We need people to be connected as well as airports.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Albany International Airport in New York State has a new leadership team following the departure of former CEO, **Phil Calderone**, and the appointment of **Peter Stuto** as acting CEO and **John O'Donnell** as acting COO. Both men came out of retirement to take up the roles.

The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority has announced that aviation industry veteran **Terrence Liercke** has been named vice president and airport manager of Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport.

Ulf Nygren will become the new manager of Kiruna Airport in Sweden in December. He will replace **Andreas Fredriksson**, who left his position in August this year.

Idris Caldiran has succeeded **Kadri Mete Erkal** as the new general manager of Diori Hamani International Airport (NIM) in Niamey, Niger. Erkal remains with the FB Group, taking up the position as chief airports officer. FB Group holds the concessions for NIM and Freetown International Airport (FNA) in Lungi, Sierra Leone.

Christchurch Airport is delighted to announce the appointment of **Meg Matthews** to its board of directors. Matthews has held leadership roles including head of marketing (Australasia) for Air New Zealand and chief executive of World of WearableArt.

Former Cape Fire Department captain **JoJo Stuart** is the new manager of Cape Girardeau Regional Airport in Missouri, USA.

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PEOPLE matters



Customer facilitation

Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey reflect on the importance of designing for a diverse range of travellers.

A few years ago, one of the authors (Terri) badly sprained both of her ankles, luckily not at the same time, but within the same year. The experience of having to wear a specially designed boot and trying to walk with crutches gave her an insight into what it must be like to travel with a permanent disability.

She needed to build in more time to negotiate her way around and it turned out to be more expensive as she had to take taxis. Taking trips and finding her way through airports involved much planning ahead.

"Walking in the passenger's shoes" quite literally, made us realise the importance of designing for people with mobility issues and disabilities in general.

Many airports now are much more conscious of people with disabilities. They are aware that not all disabilities are as visible as mobility challenges. With increasing numbers of people wanting to travel, airports find they are having to design their services for a broader spectrum of passengers than in the past

Building awareness of the issues involved in dealing with disability is essential. There are many types of disability – and cultural differences around the world in how disabilities are perceived.

There are also many touchpoints – check in, baggage, security, retail, passport control, boarding – and usually these involve people not directly employed by the airport. Those airports that aspire to reach the highest standards of passenger facilitation have to make an effort to reach all those in passenger-facing roles.

To help in raising standards, ACI and IATA have developed programmes and produced handbooks and training manuals on this subject. Some airports such as London Gatwick (LGW), with its sensory room for relaxation, and Vancouver (YVR) with its programme for people with autism, are excellent examples of the conscious design that is required to cater for diverse passengers.

Such considered thought is enabling thousands of people, who might have been excluded from travel in the past, to take part now in an activity the majority have taken for granted.

Daa (Dublin Airport Authority) provides a further example. It has produced an excellent booklet, A Short Guide, in consultation with Age Action, which is especially designed for older travellers. In fact, it is not just helpful for older adults, but it can be used by anyone trying to navigate their way through the airport, especially during particularly busy periods.

It lays out in simple terms how to find gates, where to look for check in areas, how to get specialist assistance, and also where restrooms and other facilities are located in the airport. It is an excellent example of how to simplify what could otherwise be a complex and mystifying airport experience. It also has a special section 'Important Flyer' where people with autism and other 'invisible' disabilities can be identified by wearing wristbands or lanyards.

Empathetic consideration for passengers with disabilities need not only be regulation bound, but a matter for everyday operations. Creative and innovative thinking needs to be encouraged. Listening carefully, suspending judgement and dealing with each person as an individual are key.

'What matters to people' is more important than 'what's the matter with them'. Thinking along these lines can raise the travelling experience for all passengers and help manage throughput in a caring way. With forethought, design and training, airports need not be sources of distress to an already anxious traveller.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Dato' Mohd Izani Ghani is the new managing director of Malaysia Airports Holdings Berhad (MAHB). Izani is a former Board Member of Malaysia Airports which he served on for nine years, from 2011 to 2019.

Francois Berisot is Budapest Airport's new CEO, succeeding the long serving **Kam Jamdu**. Berisot moves from a similar position at Nikola Tesla Airport in Belgrade, which is part of VINCI Airports' global network of gateways.

Metropolitan Nashville Airport Authority has announced a new leadership team under president and CEO, Doug Kreulen. The new team includes senior vice president, chief administrative officer, **John Cooper**; vice president for airport planning, strategic planning, **Syed Mehdi**; and vice president for airport capital development, **Puneet Vedi**.

Baroness Liz Sugg is the new chair the Council for the Independent Scrutiny of Heathrow Airport (CISHA). CISHA was formed following extensive stakeholder consultation and has been designed to maximise the efficiency and transparency of Heathrow's community engagement, including scrutinising its sustainability progress and establishing stronger links between the UK hub's five existing community forums.

Erick Dahl is the new airport director of Colorado's Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport and **Tyler Miller** is the new chief operating officer of Blue Grass Airport (LEX) in Lexington, Kentucky.

Finally, two tourism-based appointments. Brisbane Airport CEO, **Gert-Jan de Graaff**, has been appointed to the Board of Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ). The experienced airport boss has worked across four continents over a quarter of a century. Meanwhile in Ireland, Cork Airport's managing director, **Niall MacCarthy**, has been elected as the new chairperson of the Irish Tourism Industry Confederation (ITIC).

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PEOPLE matters



Bureaucracy and innovation

Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey reflect on the importance of encouraging innovation in the workplace.

Could excessive bureaucracy and red tape be slowing down your organisation's innovation process?

It's an important question for airports to ask themselves at a time when the need for innovation has never been greater. And it is very possible that the answer will be, yes!

We have either carried out – or been asked to review – a number of airport culture and engagement surveys over the years which evaluate how airports are faring on creating high performance culture. One of the most consistent findings has been the extent to which excessive bureaucracy in airports is a blocker to engagement and gets in the in the way of high performance and innovation.

A similar picture emerged from a session we ran on 'Work Experience' at an ACI World Conference in Brussels just before the pandemic. Of the 60 or so participants who attended, nearly all agreed that this was the single most important obstacle to getting their jobs done.

People find unnecessary red tape very frustrating. Many spoke of how different their working experience would be if there could be easier access to information, and more freedom to take action in their roles. They spoke of how decision making was often far too slow.

Of course, this is not a problem solely for airports. Cass Sunstein in his book, *Sludge: What stops us from getting work done – and what to do about it*, speaks about that treacly, sticky substance which blocks our freedom of movement and hinders us achieving certain goals. Excessive waiting times, paperwork and confusing processes all add to our frustration and inability to get things done.

Some sludge is necessary and can be called "good sludge". For example, it is important that safety critical operational processes continue to receive due attention. And entitlement to social benefits requires some checks and balances and a certain amount of form filling. However, in Sunstein's view, most large organisations, government departments and businesses produce far too much sludge – essentially a 'time tax' on our productive time – time that could be spent being innovative and creative.

It can also have a big impact on customers. How much time do all of us have to spend nowadays on the phone, directed by automated systems which do the very opposite of their stated purpose of being a 'help' line? The real intention often appears to be to make things so difficult that we simply give up.

So how can we free up organisations, customers and employees from the negative consequences of 'sludge'? How can innovation be fostered?

Sunstein recommends 'A Sludge Audit' to find out what's causing the buildup of sludge and how to take steps to reduce or eliminate it. The ambition should be to take stock of the processes and procedures in the system.

Ask the questions: Why do we have them? What function or purpose are they trying to serve? How accessible/inaccessible are they? How easy are they to navigate from the client/customer/employee perspective? Do they make sense? Are they helping or hindering the achievement of the goals for which they were designed? Is the technology designed to support access? Is the supporting technology itself a hindrance?

How much time is being spent fruitlessly filling in forms, waiting for phones to be answered, going around in circles and giving up in despair when that time could have been spent in productive behaviour designed to create new products and services or new ways of addressing challenges?

It is time to tackle unnecessary bureaucracy and focus on how we can unblock the logjams, improve productivity, minimise frustrations and release the innovation trapped within the system.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Changi Airport Group (CAG) has a new CEO after **Weng Kum Yam** succeeded the long serving **Hiang Seow Lee** in the role on July 1. Paying tribute to Lee, CAG chairman, Tan Gee Paw, said: "In the last decade and a half, Seow Hiang's vision transformed Changi into the airport it is today – a strong air hub with an extensive network of city links, providing an extraordinary experience and supporting Singapore's economy." Yam was formerly CAG's executive vice president for airport development, leading the Changi East project, which includes Terminal 5.

London City (LCY) and London Southend (SEN) airports in the UK both have new bosses. LCY has confirmed the appointment of former chief operating officer, **Alison FitzGerald**, as its new chief executive officer after a short spell as co-CEO with Wilma Allan. While SEN has named director of operations, **Marc Taylor**, as acting CEO following the unexpected departure of **John Upton**, who has left to "pursue new opportunities".

Mark Laroche, president and CEO of the Ottawa International Airport Authority is to retire, noting that with the airport now fully recovered from the impact of COVID and "in excellent shape", it was time for his successor to come in and oversee a planned terminal expansion project.

Also outgoing is San Francisco International Airport director, **Ivar Satero**, who has announced his decision to retire at the end of 2024. San Francisco mayor, London Breed, said Satero had "steered SFO through a series of transformative infrastructure projects", with an additional $11 billion in projects to come over the next five years.

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PEOPLE matters



The design of work

Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey reflect on the importance of paying attention to designing a people-centric working environment.

As we write this article, we have just completed running the April 2024 ACI Human Resources programme, a five-day course which educates airport leaders and future leaders on key concepts and frameworks in modern strategic human resources management.

The course aims to develop the mindset, knowledge and skills necessary to lead and get the best from people in an airport context and achieve sustainable high performance in a world of uncertainty and change.

The course objectives and content are very topical. People aspects of the business are currently at the top of the agenda as airports face the challenges of attracting, recruiting and retaining sufficient numbers of skilled people to cope with the increased demand for travel.

We discuss how airports are changing and the skills required for the future. We work with participants to consider how their airports can become more attractive as employers, particularly to younger people. We also spend time looking at how best to engage and motivate people, so they want to stay working in the organisation.

One conclusion that emerges from just about every course is the importance of paying more attention to the design of work. This means designing and crafting work environments which enhance and encourage high performance and work enjoyment.

Most people intuitively understand that poor work design can inhibit workplace creativity, enjoyment and performance. How many people perform well when they don't understand what is going on? How many of us enjoy being 'micromanaged' and not given a certain amount of autonomy in how we execute our role?

So, it is important that airport leaders establish organisation and work design principles that can help create a great working environment – a sustainable, high-performance culture which fosters employee engagement and helps people to thrive and grow. The following practices provide a starting point:

- Communicate a clear and inspiring organisation vison, mission and values so that people have the opportunity to understand and buy into the organisation's purpose and direction – and feel a sense of 'belonging'.
- Ensure the structure of the organisation facilitates the delivery of objectives, with clear role accountabilities and responsibilities. People need to understand what's expected of them and should have a degree of autonomy in how they go about it.
- Design systems and processes that make it easier for people to do their work, including digital and IT which help get the job done, and where there is some flexibility in working arrangements
- Develop a culture where high performance is expected and recognised, where people are supported, appreciated and treated with respect, and where there are opportunities for personal growth and career development. The style of leadership makes a huge difference to the working environment. Leaders at all levels need to role model the behaviours they would like to see.

There are many practical ways of putting these principles into practice. A recent publication from ACI EUROPE's Leadership & HR Forum, *People Engagement Guide 2023* provides hints and tips on those which are particularly important for work motivation.

Creating a top performing airport is about people as well as technology. Investing time and resources in designing a people-centric work environment is as important as designing the physical infrastructure. It's two journeys – not one.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Jim Szczesniak is the new the director of aviation for the City of Houston and will oversee the management and operations of George Bush Intercontinental Airport (IAH), William P Hobby Airport (HOU), Ellington Airport (EFD) and the Houston Spaceport. Szczesniak brings a wealth of experience having previously served as the airport director for the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport and he spent a decade at the Chicago Department of Aviation where he eventually became deputy commissioner of aviation for O'Hare and Midway airports.

Elsewhere in Texas, Austin-Bergtstrom International Airport has named **Ghizlane Badawi** as its new chief executive officer, ending a year-long period of temporary leadership after the sudden resignation of the previous CEO last spring. The appointment of Badawi, who had been serving as interim CEO, is designed to "bring stability" to Austin-Bergstrom ahead of a host of expansion-related decisions before the City Council later this year.

Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) CEO, John Akerman, has made three new additions to his executve leadership team, appointing **Maria Bleavins** as chief airport administrative officer, Robert Lowe as chief people and culture officer, and **Becca Doten** as chief of staff.

London Gatwick has a new chief operating officer, **Mark Johnston**. He joins from AGS Airports, the owners of Aberdeen, Glasgow and Southampton airports in the UK, where he held a similar role for more than three years.

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PEOPLE matters



Making new connections

Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey reflect on how the global pandemic has changed the way we connect and communicate with each other.

To what extent did the COVID pandemic fundamentally change the way in which we connect: physically, geographically, socially, and psychologically?

Prior to 2020, if we wished to see distant relatives and friends, attend business meetings and conferences, go on holiday or just indulge our sense of adventure – provided we could afford it – we generally did so in person. It was hard to imagine any other way. Air travel enabled all that and played a key role in connecting people and places.

During the pandemic, lest we forget, we had to find new ways of staying connected. Whilst this had a devastating impact on airports and air travel, technology came to the rescue.

The phenomenal rise of Zoom, TEAMs, WhatsApp, social media and other connecting technologies allowed us to communicate virtually.

For some, this was simply a less favoured option but a necessary one. For others, it helped transform the social and economic fabric of their lives, with new opportunities and flexibilities. Indeed, the debate it sparked about the future of work is still raging and is not over yet.

Many people had a major shift in their thinking about their priorities and what was important for them. Some left the workplace never to return; others adapted to living in a virtual world and wanted to retain that lifestyle; others felt a sense of social and psychological isolation which built a pent-up demand to return to some level of normality when "all this has passed".

The impact of the huge upheaval catalysed by COVID cannot be underestimated. Apart from the economic consequences, it created a major shift in thinking, behaviour, aspirations, and a new sense of 'what mattered' for the future.

Ecologically, many of us became more aware of the importance of sustainability and the need for a radical rethink of global systems, given the role of carbon emissions in the warming of the planet.

Fast forward to today. We live in a world of growing geo-political conflict. At the same time, technology has enabled connectivity in ways unimaginable a few years ago. Chat groups on WhatsApp link friends, family, and colleagues across many parts of the globe. Virtual meetings, conferences and gatherings are more the norm.

Many organisations never returned to the 'office' and their employees expect to work at least part of their time from home into the future.

Yet, despite everything, air travel is almost back to pre-pandemic levels, driven initially by travel, leisure and tourism but with business travel now increasingly rebounding as well. Why has this happened?

Perhaps it's because we humans are social beings and need the social and psychological contact that was denied us during the pandemic.

So, when we talk about connectivity, let us bear this need in mind. What many people missed during the pandemic was physical and psychological connection to family, friends, and community. Virtual connectivity may work in some cases but cannot compensate for the real desire to meet in person and to experience the psychological and social contact that this brings.

And while curiosity about the world can be satisfied in some measure by virtual reality, this is not, yet, in any case, a substitute for the real thing... the sights, sounds and smells of different places ... and the understanding, warmth and empathy for other people and cultures that we can gain through travel.

Is this compatible with sustainability? Sustainability is about finding a balance between environmental, social, and economic matters. So, it is vital that we continue to accelerate the transformation of our systems by investing to ensure 'connecting' remains the enjoyable experience it should be.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Industry veteran, **John Ackerman**, is the new CEO of Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA). He moves from Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport (DFW), where he served as executive vice president of global strategy and development.

Nicolas Deviller is the new CEO of Airport International Airport (AIG), operator of Amman's Queen Alia International Airport, succeeding the outgoing Nicolas Claude. Deviller moves from VINCI Airports, where he was CEO of Cambodia Airports.

Long serving Tampa International Airport, CEO, **Joe Lopano**, has announced that he plans to retire before his contract expires in April 2025. The timing of his departure will be determined by how quickly it takes Hillsborough County Aviation Authority to find his successor.

Mario Diaz has resigned as executive director of Houston Airport System. The city has named current chief operating officer, **Jim Szczesniak**, as interim director.

Jan Metsovitis has been appointed CEO of Heraklion Airport in Crete, Greece. The hugely experienced Metsovitis joins from Doha's Hamad International Airport where he most recently worked as senior vice president of operations. He was formerly on the management team of Athens International Airport.

Nils Funke will assume the role of Malmö Airport director on April 1, 2024, succeeding **Karin Öhrström**.

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PEOPLE matters



Sustainability: The social pillar

Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey reflect on the human factor in sustainability.

We are very proud to say that this article marks the completion of 10 years of 'People Matters' columns that we have written for *Airport World*.

We didn't expect the column to be in demand for so long, but as things have turned out, people challenges have become increasingly crucial for airports, the format has been attractive and the column a success.

Since 'People Matters' started in January 2014, we have written 60 articles on a wide range of people challenges relevant to airports.

That meant 60 times when we had to decide what to write about, how to research the topic, and how exactly to work together on the article; 60 occasions when we had to agree on what line to take and what we wanted to say; 60 periods we drafted and redrafted until we had a final version which met our standards; and 60 'moments of truth' when we had to deliver the finished product to a deadline and for critical review by the editor, Joe Bates.

As we reflect on our experience, it is clear to us that even for such a comparatively simple task, the human effort and skills required to sustain a consistent standard of delivery are significant. Quite apart from the technical skills of the writing itself, there is a need for collaboration, an ability to juggle priorities, and the self-discipline and drive to see the job through to completion.

And as with many jobs done over a long period, resilience is key. There are always occasions when there are distractions and difficulties which make it hard to focus. It helps that we feel that the work we are doing is worthwhile and that our contribution is appreciated. We need to keep a positive mindset and attitude.

How is this relevant to airports? Many of the same considerations apply – and the human factor is even more important in this complex work setting. Many people need to work together to deliver sustainable high performance.

Attitudes and behaviour are crucial. People with a sense of emotional commitment to their airport and its purpose can transform the passenger experience. A recent publication (2023) by ACI EUROPE's Leadership and HR Forum, *People Engagement Guide*, aims to provide a practical, easy to follow and implementable approach to developing the kind of culture which supports this sustainable high performance mindset.

It brings together findings from research, best practice and collective experience from European airports. It focuses on how to create the kind of positive, inclusive, people-oriented environment that can help all those who work for airports to feel motivated and enthusiastic about both their organisations and the work that they do.

Organisation culture is but one aspect of the 'social pillar' of sustainability, which many airports are now addressing. Other elements include community engagement, corporate social responsibility, diversity, equality and inclusion and governance.

Leading and managing the changing and complex environment and the uncertainties that the future holds will also require collaboration, innovative thinking and interdependent teamworking.

The traditional Human Resources function's remit has enlarged to include all of these aspects along with ensuring the long term viability of the organisation.

We hope to be around ourselves for a few more years to continue to map and comment on these exciting challenges.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

The Royal Schiphol Group has annouced that **Pieter van Oord** will become its new CEO next summer. He will succeed **Ruud Sondag**, who will stay on until March 1, 2024, at which point he will no longer be available due to other commitments. In the period March to June 2024, CFO, **Robert Carsouw**, will serve as interim CEO.

Another incoming CEO who won't be onboard until mid-to-late 2024 is **Gilles Rufenacht**, recently named as the retiring André Schneider's successor at Geneva Airport. He will assume the role in the autumn of 2024.

Elsewhere in Europe, **Christian Poulsen**, has been confirmed as the new CEO of Copenhagen Airports. He has served as acting CEO since Thomas Woldbye's departure to London Heathow, and will take up the role on a permanent basis from January 1, 2024.

LaGuardia Gateway Partners (LGP), the manager and developer of LaGuardia Airport's new Terminal B, has named **Klaudia FitzGerald** as its new chief operating officer.

Carrie Hurihanganui, chief executive officer of Auckland International Airport Limited and **Dr Kijmanawat Kerati**, president of Airports of Thailand have been elected to the board of ACI Asia-Pacific & Middle East.

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AW

PEOPLE matters



The human factor in innovation

Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey reflect on how investing in people and culture is essential for innovation.

"What was impossible yesterday is an accomplishment today, while tomorrow heralds the unbelievable."

These were the words of entrepreneur, Percival Elliott Fansler shortly before the world's first commercial airline flight took off from St Petersburg to Tampa Bay in Florida, USA, on January 1st 1914. A distance of only 17 miles with just one passenger, the former Mayor of St Petersburg.

Fansler's words were prescient. This one flight paved the way for the billions of passenger journeys that now routinely take place annually, and the complex organisation, infrastructure, technology, and regulation that support them.

The development of aviation has been a story of collaboration, co-operation – and relentless growth. Airports have evolved from simple landing strips to business organisations that underpin the economies of the communities that they serve. Geo-political change and economic uncertainties have provided an ever-shifting context.

On the whole airports have adapted well and shown a great deal of resilience to changing circumstances. Still, the need for innovation has never been greater than it is currently. Coming out of the COVID pandemic, airports now face the immediate challenges of dealing with renewed growth, rebuilding their economic viability and improving the passenger experience while at the same time addressing the longer-term challenge of environmental sustainability.

How airports bring people with them, so that innovation is welcomed rather than resisted, is critical. Digitisation and technological advances provide paradigm shifting opportunities for innovation, but to take maximum advantage of the possibilities for change will require attention to the people who work at the airport as well as the technology.

Investment in the human side of airports and the organisation culture is equally important in fostering innovation. In particular it will be important to focus on:

- Building communities for collaborative working. Co-creating solutions with others is generally a more successful way of innovating in a complex world that just 'buying in' expert solutions. After all, it's the socio-technical system that needs to change, not just the technical one, and involving people creates a better shared understanding of what needs to be done and what needs to change. Building communities may involve forming new organisational alliances and partnerships – or consolidating existing ones. Developing higher levels of trust underpins this approach.
- Paying attention to the employee experience. People who trust their organisation and feel positive about their overall work experience are more likely to embrace innovation. One innovative area, that of the human centric workplace, sees people, their values, ideas, and experiences as a priority and puts effort into creating meaningful working environments that are inclusive, flexible, and fair. This approach aims to create better work experiences, build in resilience and de-risk innovation. It cares about the experiences of its employees as much as it does about customers and puts in similar investment and effort into making this happen.
- Reconsidering attitudes towards failure. Without the possibility of failure, true innovation cannot flourish. Amy C Edmondson in her book, *The Fearless Organization*, talks about the need to create organisations where people feel free to speak out, are encouraged to engage in creative ideas generation, and do not fear making mistakes or being punished for getting things wrong.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Thomas Wodlbye officially replaced **John Holland-Kaye** as CEO of London's Heathrow Airport on October 18.

Gary McLean has been announced as the new managing director of Dublin Airport by Irish airport operator, daa, succeeding **Vincent Harrison** who has taken up the position of chief commercial and development officer for the daa group.

Swedavia has announced that **Susanne Norman** will become its new chief operating officer for international airports and **Karin Цhrstrцm** its director of regional airports, effective from April 1, 2024. Norman will succeed the departing **Peder Grunditz** who has decided to leave Swedavia after 20 years of service.

In such organisations, failure is considered part of the learning and innovation process. In the words of singer-songwriter Ed Sheeran … 'You learn nothing from success. Nothing. You learn everything from the failures… Success happens from failing hundreds of times. It doesn't happen overnight… and you have to have the belief that eventually it's going to get better'.

Pay attention to people and culture and 'What is possible today, will be an accomplishment tomorrow'. AW

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PEOPLE matters



Comments welcome!

Terri Morrissey and Dr Richard Plenty consider the importance of creating a work culture where employees feel safe and confident that their opinions will be valued and respected.

How many of us have felt we had something important to say at work but failed to do so?

Speaking up can be hard to do. It is all very well asking people to say what they think and give their opinions in organisations where trust exists and where the culture encourages feedback, ideas generation and differences of viewpoints, but not every workplace has this type of culture.

Unfortunately, too many people still work in what psychologists call a toxic culture, where the 'dark side of leadership' prevails. Typically, leaders in a toxic culture pursue at all costs over-ambitious, unrealistic, and non-negotiable targets set from the top – and in the process end up treating their employees in a demeaning and irrational manner.

They don't have the time to listen to concerns and become overbearing, dominating and unreasonable, exhibiting behaviours which are controlling, hubristic, manipulative, and lacking empathy.

At its worst, this dark side is typified by leadership which can be viewed as aggressive, narcissistic, psychopathic, and even Machiavellian. Is it surprising that people find it hard to speak out, give honest feedback or contribute ideas that might have the potential to anger or provoke such bosses?

People are likely to experience stress or feel micromanaged in such cultures. The organisation may experience high turnover rates or high levels of absenteeism due to stress related illnesses.

Organisations which place too high a value on status and position power can also inhibit people from speaking up. The late Dutch social psychologist Geert Hofstede called these, high 'power distance' cultures, where those without power tend to defer to those who have it.

This can have important implications for safety. A study by Enomoto & Geisler (2017) found that there was a significant correlation between high power distance cultures and plane crashes. In a review of performance in 68 different countries between 1970 and 2012, they found that where junior pilots had difficulty contradicting senior pilots there was a significant increase in the chance of an accident.

The study concludes by saying that 'it is only when the entire crew are working together as equals (that) the chances of success are greatest'.

If people are fearful of speaking out even in these kinds of life or death situations, imagine how this plays out in 'day to day' organisational life in an over-hierarchical culture?

People will not give their opinions nor share important information if this does not concur with the prevailing view and mindset. Vital data on accidents, quality lapses, and systems defects, for example, may not be communicated out of fear of the consequences to the messenger. Sub optimal organisation performance and employee disengagement are the results.

So how can we encourage people to speak out – and be heard – given the practical realities of organisations and their leaders?

Our experience has been that while this is one of the most challenging areas to effect change, successful interventions can have an enormous impact on motivation, morale and performance.

The aim should be to create a culture where employees feel valued, their opinions respected, and where they have the skills and courage to contribute their views.

Developing people at all levels in communication skills, teaching them how best to plan and frame their interventions, and building their confidence to speak out, is important. Strong HR Departments can also play their part in calling out dysfunctional behaviours and carrying out regular benchmarked employee surveys to monitor organisation culture and engagement.

But, ultimately, this is an area where top leadership needs to play the key role and have the courage to make it clear that speaking out is to be encouraged and dysfunctional leadership will not be tolerated.

Psychological safety is just as important as physical safety.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Hag Jae Lee is the new CEO of Incheon International Airport and has wasted no time in outlining his vision to create a series of smart logistics clusters around the South Korean gateway.

Manchester Airports Group (MAG) has announced the appointment of **Ken O'Toole** as its next Group CEO. He will succeed **Charlie Cornish**, who has led the business for the last 13 years, on October 1, 2023. O'Toole is currently deputy CEO of the airport group.

Jost Lammers is set to stay on as CEO of Munich Airport until the end of 2029 after agreeing a five-year extension to his contract at the German gateway, which was set to expire at the end of 2024.

At the request of the Supervisory Board, **Ruud Sondag** will remain interim CEO of the Royal Schiphol Group until March 1, 2024, at the latest. The Supervisory Board is making progress in the recruitment procedure for a definitive successor.

Greenville-Spartanburg Airport in South Carolina has welcomed **Thomas Brooks** as its new vice president and chief financial officer and Gloucestershire Airport in the UK has unveiled **Jason Ivey** as its new airport director.

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PEOPLE matters



Evidence-based HR

Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey consider the pros and cons of adopting a systematic data-based approach to decision-making in the workplace.

The Nobel prize winning psychologist Daniel Kahneman in his book *'Thinking Fast and Slow'* describes two human systems for decision making: fast, intuitive thinking and slow, rational thinking. Both types of thinking are vital, but what is most appropriate at any time depends on the circumstances.

For example, professional pilots flying in good conditions can make rapid visual assessments of where they are and how they are doing. But when they are flying at night or in cloud, they are taught to rely on their instruments – the evidence – rather than their instincts.

In difficult conditions – and complex, changing or uncertain circumstances – relying on intuition alone can be dangerous. Gathering data and objective evidence provides a sounder basis for decisions. Organisations sometimes don't do enough of that when addressing their people issues.

We came across a very good example of this when working with a large multinational organisation where there was a high turnover of young talented engineers. The conventional wisdom was that this could be remedied by better induction, training, higher pay and carefully managed career progression.

These solutions had been put into place at considerable cost – but the engineers still kept on leaving. It was only when the evidence from employee survey data, turnover statistics and exit interviews was put together systematically that it became obvious that the real reason for people leaving was that there wasn't enough challenge on the job. People wanted more responsibility, not more support.

This kind of systematic data-based approach to decision-making is becoming formalised as 'evidence-based HR'. At the European Association for Work and Organisation Psychology (EAWOP) Conference we recently attended in Katowice, Poland (May 2023), Prof Rob Briner pointed out that a 'conscientious, explicit and judicious' approach to collecting evidence from multiple sources can increase the likelihood of a favourable outcome when making decisions.

He described a six-step approach:

1. Ask the right question; 2. Acquire and gather data from multiple sources; 3. Appraise the data, taking into account its credibility; 4. Aggregate the information; 5. Apply the findings; and 6. Assess (and learn).

All of this sounds straightforward, but our experience is that putting evidence-based HR into practice can be difficult. There isn't always backing from the top. Some organisation leaders are reluctant to invest time and resources in exploring 'people' issues deeply and are not open to changing their minds if new evidence emerges.

Others feel that time spent 'thinking' and in the collection of evidence might be better spent 'doing' – trying things out to see what works in practice.

Despite these difficulties, our view is that evidence-based HR is likely to grow rapidly in importance, as organisations demand evidence to help them prioritise investment and make better, more considered decisions.

It will be turbocharged by the enormous strides being made in digital and AI, as well as advances in psychological science. Professional organisations such as the CIPD (Chartered Institute for Personnel Development) and CRF (Corporate Research Forum) are providing strong backing.

At the same time, it is important to remember that leadership judgement and accountability for choosing a particular course of action can't be reduced to straight logic. In a changing world, what happened in the past might not always be a reliable guide to the future.

Leadership requires balancing and integrating many variables and choosing action, which takes into account the big picture – vision, values, overall strategy and ethics. And as we heard from other speakers at EAWOP, leaders also need to bring people with them by creating a sense of community, belonging and shared identity.

We need both logic and intuition to get the most from our organisations and our people.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Sydney Airport will shortly begin the search for a new CEO after the announcement that **Geoff Culbert** will step down at the end of the year. Culbert, who has held the position for almost six years, joined the publicly listed Sydney Airport as CEO in January 2018 from GE and will continue in his role until the end of the year to ensure a smooth transition.

CV Deepak is Airport Authority of India's new airport director for Chennai Airport, succeeding Shri Raju. Deepak was formerly general manager (Finance & Accounts) taxation cell at AAI's corporate headquarters in New Delhi.

Kam Jandu has returned to Budapest Airport to become its new CEO, succeeding **Chris Dinsdale**, who left earlier in the year to become the new president and CEO of Calgary Airport Authority. Jandu knows Budapest Airport well having originally joined the Hungarian gateway in 2009 and formerly working as its executive director of aviation director and chief commercial officer before leaving for a brief spell with Munich Airport International in 2021/22.

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PEOPLE matters



AI: Friend or foe?

Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey reflect on the implications of ChatGPT for the world of work.

Can you tell if this article is written by a human or by a computer?

A year ago, this was a question that very few people thought worthy of consideration. But since ChatGPT was released in November 2022, the power and potential of the technology has stunned the world and posed fundamental questions about what it means to be human.

An AI chatbot that uses natural language processing to create humanlike conversational dialogue, ChatGPT can respond to questions and compose various written content, including writing articles, essays, social media posts and emails.

The speed of uptake has been phenomenal. ChatGPT has acquired over 100 million users in a few months. It is already being used to code, programme, read legal texts, and summarise research papers.

It has passed the US Bar exam in the 90th percentile and may be capable of correcting those very papers shortly. The entire plumbing of the professional world has the possibility of being reworked and new businesses set up based on AI tools.

In late March over 1,000 scientists, including Elon Musk and Steve Wozniak, called for a six month pause on the development of AI including ChatGPT-4 noting that "advanced AI could represent a profound change in the history of life on Earth and should be planned for and managed with commensurate care and resources". Were they overreacting?

Perhaps not, at least as far as the world of work is concerned. Goldman Sachs predict the potential loss of over 300 million jobs globally as a result of "generative" AI such as ChatGPT. Those likely to be displaced include those in professional and managerial roles – including areas such as customer service – which have previously not been targets for automation.

On the other hand, there may be great opportunities. Sir Christopher Pissarides, professor of economics at the London School of Economics, and Nobel prize winner, seems optimistic. He claims that AI could hasten advances in productivity, remove boring tasks and enable us to move to a four-day week. This would give all of us more leisure time for more creative activities.

We seem to remember hearing that argument some 30 years ago with the prediction of the "paperless office", but now we are more overwhelmed than ever!

The CIPD (Chartered Institute for Personnel Development) issued some initial guidelines on the use and potential of ChatGPT in an article called "Impact of ChatGPT and other AI chatbots on the future of Work" on March, 27, 2023.

The article cautioned against using chatbots without building in checks for accuracies and biases. As the generative aspects of the technology are built primarily on inputs from the internet, its outputs can contain many inaccuracies, as well as reflecting prejudices, discrimination and bad practice from what has happened in the past.

For these reasons, the CIPD recommends that organisations need to create their own AI policy and limit its use to creating early drafts of documents. It claims that AI will have an impact on how we work, taking the "drudge" out of some tasks and making other roles redundant. Any time saved can be used to reinforce human skills and abilities such as critical thinking, empathy, creativity and problem solving.

Many organisations report that their people are currently so focused on transactional interactions they have little time to pause, take stock and use these skills. Rather than laying people off, employers should consider how the time saved can be used to create new opportunities and upskill employees.

Our view is that advanced AI does indeed represent a profound change in life on earth. The technology will not go away but will improve rapidly and it is up to us how we use and manage it. People will always be needed, but how and in what ways we contribute to achieving our goals will change radically.

And for those who are curious – yes, we did write this article ourselves without using ChatGPT! But next year, who knows?

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Kansas City Aviation Department's aviation director, **Patrick Klein**, is to retire on May 31, 2023, after serving the City of Kansas for 25 years. One of his last acts was to oversee the successful opening of Kansas City International Airport's new terminal.

Vincent Harrison has left his position as managing director of Dublin Airport to take up the wider role of chief commercial and development officer for Irish airport operator, daa.

Munich Airport NJ LLC, the operator of the new Terminal A at Newark Liberty International Airport, has announced the appointment of **Michael Kunz** as the company's new CEO.

Chris Dinsdale is the new president and CEO of Calgary Airport Authority. Born and raised in Canada, Dinsdale joins the airport authority from Budapest Airport where he held a similar position.

Malaysia Airports Holdings Berhad has appointed former Federal Court judge, **YBhg Tan Sri Datuk Zainun Binti Ali**, as its non-independent non-executive chairman.

Mike Dunn has announced his intention to step down as executive director of the Greater Rockford Airport Authority (GRAA) – operator of Chicago Rockford International Airport (RFD) – at the end of the year after more than 12 years in the position.

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PEOPLE matters



Outside knowledge

Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey reflect on the recruitment challenges facing airports and the potential benefits of bringing back older, more experienced staff.

As we embark on another year, many of us engage in the ever-optimistic pursuit of making New Year resolutions. We resolve to get fitter, lose weight, eat less, join gyms, stay positive and generally do better.

We do this even though we know that within a month or two, much of our initial enthusiasm for change will have waned or died away. As Oscar Wilde is reported to have said, it is "a triumph of hope over experience".

While this may be so, there is a lot to be said for using the New Year as an opportunity for taking stock and coming up with plans for the future. There are many pressing issues and challenges which need addressing as we move forward into 2023, not just for individuals but for organisations and societies.

Recovery from COVID is a prime example. The COVID pandemic may be gradually coming to an end three years on, but its effects continue to play out for societies in terms of long-term sickness, pressures on health services, mental health and economic impacts. The consequences for organisations have been no less profound. Many people were laid off in the downturn to reduce costs, but now that business is growing again it can be difficult to attract them back.

Recent analyses have provided a number of explanations for these trends. Firstly, some people have experienced long-term illness and sickness including psychological and mental health issues and have dropped out of the workforce.

Secondly, others have started to reassess their lives and the trade-offs between working and not working, with some taking opportunities for early retirement and others seeking more flexible options. There is a reluctance on the part of many to return to offices and long commutes – with a preference for the flexibilities associated with homeworking.

Thirdly, many employees in lower paid jobs in health, retail, and production have seen their pay fail to keep pace with inflation and are less engaged and motivated than before.

Many airports have found it difficult to keep up with the demand for travel. The 32nd ACI World Annual General Assembly in Marrakech on October 25, 2022, passed a resolution emphasising the importance of creating a strong and diverse workforce to ensure the long term resilience and sustainability of the aviation system.

And a recent 'ACI White Paper – The Evolution of the Airport Workforce: Turning Challenges into Opportunities (2022)' has focused attention on this issue and provides some practical ideas for action.

Bringing workers (back) to the airport is one way of starting to address the workforce challenge. Large segments of the population have left the workforce entirely, especially those in the 50+ age group, leaving many workplaces bereft of older workers, resulting in large gaps in expertise, experience, institutional memory, and wisdom.

Can this trend be reversed? Ageist attitudes will need to shift to create a welcoming environment for older employees to feel valued.

Efforts are being made by governments and some employers to entice recent workforce leavers back into work. These include retraining, 'clinics' in financial planning and money awareness and tax incentives to encourage 'work' rather than 'retirement'. Scaling down and flexible working hours may encourage older workers to come back on a part time basis thus capturing some of the lost experience and wisdom.

Mentoring programmes whereby older workers pass on their skills and knowledge to newer recruits are also ways to capture and redress the potential drain of experience. Some years ago we were impressed by Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport's policy of bringing back older employees and retirees to act as airport wayfinders and guides for anxious passengers. Their reassuring friendly presence was a welcome addition to the airport journey.

Deciding to embrace age as part of the diverse and inclusive workplace of the future may bring realism into the frame, turning Wilde's statement on its head and providing an opportunity for "experience over hope".

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Heathrow Airport CEO, **John Holland-Kaye**, has informed the Board of his intention to stand down during 2023 after nine years in the hot-seat. Praising his "exceptional leadership", the Board notes that he built a strong management team, helped develop a consumer-focused culture, improved cost efficiency and put "Heathrow at the forefront of global aviation's decarbonisation".

Kristina Ferenius will replace **Mats Påhlson** as Swedavia's new CFO. Ferenius, who is currently the CFO of Sveaskog, will take up her new role on August 1. Påhlson is leaving Swedavia after eight years to pursue a freer role as a consultant.

A belated welcome to **Atif Saeed** who was appointed CEO of Philadelphia International Airport (PHL) on December 1, 2022. "Saeed's leadership will be critical in helping enhance Philadelphia International Airport's position as a major economic driver for the city and region, helping to support thousands of jobs," said mayor, Jim Kenney.

Harold Samms III has joined Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) as the deputy executive director of the Landside Access Modernization Program (LAMP) Performance.

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PEOPLE matters



Creating a sense of common purpose

Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey reflect on some of the challenges airports working with private investors may face by embracing a more entrepreneurial culture.

We recently saw the much acclaimed film 'Living' where the main character, played brilliantly by Bill Nighy, spends his days in a bureaucratic office where nothing much gets done. He and his fellow workers spend their days pushing files around from one department to another.

Nighy plays a man without any real purpose in life. However, once he is told he has a terminal illness his behaviour changes dramatically. Realising he only has six months to live, he finally finds meaning and a purpose to his life in taking responsibility for delivering a children's playground to a deprived area of London.

The film is set in County Hall London in the 1950s when the public sector was characterised by rigid hierarchy, inertia, rules, lack of initiative and no-one taking ownership. This is not an environment which supports the kind of culture that is needed in competitive, fast paced, cost constrained, commercial settings where the customer experience is important.

So fast forward a few decades and perhaps it is not surprising that public-private partnerships – the collaboration between government agencies and private sector companies – are seen not only as a way of providing much needed finance to government agency projects, but as a mechanism for bringing a 'delivery' ethos and sharper private sector thinking, attitudes and behaviours into the public sector. They are seen as a means of injecting life into the kind of cultural inertia exemplified by our film's protagonist.

Airports have been using this approach for some time. According to ACI statistics (2017), airports with private sector participation account for an estimated 14% of airports worldwide, and handle over 40% of global traffic.

The expectation is generally that private sector involvement will help deliver efficiencies, higher performance outcomes and better value for money along with better customer service. But, as organisation leaders have found in many sectors – including energy, health and transportation – managing the transition to a more entrepreneurial culture is not without its challenges.

It can be difficult to keep all stakeholders happy. In a PPP, the government remains a shareholder and providing national, community and social value remains an important part of what is expected. To take just one example, cutting or reducing services to save money is not always a realistic option.

The best way forward for organisations with potentially divergent shareholders is to commit to a true collaborative approach where all parties develop a shared understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the partnership – and are clear on the overall purpose of the organisation. This should include vision, values and sustainability as well as economic considerations.

While it is relatively straightforward to do this for green field projects, the introduction of PPPs to existing enterprises merits particular attention. For example, adding a new 'PPP' terminal to an airport can lead to a clash of cultures (old vs new) with leadership, operational and HR issues and potential confusion.

And culture – the way we work together – is important. A recent ACI EUROPE report: *Handbook for Airport Culture (2022)*, highlights the role that airport culture plays in creating high levels of performance and customer service. A shared vision, values and goals provide a foundation for those working in airports to play an 'ambassador' role in their dealings with passengers and create a 'wow' factor in passenger experience.

A clear and unified sense of purpose can be enormously powerful. The motivation and enjoyment that comes from achieving worthwhile outcomes – as exemplified by Bill Nighy – should not be underestimated. It can make life worth living.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Karl Eklund will become the new airport director of Stockholm Arlanda Airport and Stockholm Airports on February 1, 2023. He is currently deputy CEO of SAS Ground Handling Sweden.

Irish airport operator, daa, has announced that **Kenny Jacobs** will become its new CEO in January 2023, succeeding the departed Dalton Philips.

Myron Keehn will become the new CEO of Edmonton Regional Airports Authority when current incumbent, **Tom Ruth**, retires at the end of December 2022.

AGS Airports has appointed **Andy Cliffe** as its new CEO. AGS operates Aberdeen, Glasgow and Southampton airports in the UK.

London City Airport (LCY) has announced that, following an extensive search and selection process, **Andrew Hodges** is to be appointed as its new chief commercial officer.

South Carolina's Greenville-Spartanburg Airport has named **Kirk Eickhoff** as its new senior vice president and chief financial officer.

St John's International Airport Authority's new CEO is **Dennis Hogan**. Hogan has previously held senior executive roles with the governments of New Foundland and Labrador. AW

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PEOPLE matters



Actions speak louder than words

Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey reflect on the importance of taking a broad perspective on sustainability.

We are writing this column from New Zealand where we are on a fact-finding mission on 'sustainability'. At the same time as we are working, we are enjoying seeing some of the amazing sights and re-connecting with distant family.

New Zealand is a beautiful country, so perhaps it's not surprising that environmental matters are taken seriously not only by government, local authorities and communities, but by many businesses, including airports.

Take Auckland Airport as an example. It was one of the first organisations to join the 'Climate Leaders Coalition' back in 2017. This coalition of businesses now has about 100 members and is committed to take voluntary action on climate change and work towards the transition to a low carbon economy.

Auckland Airport seems to have been an early adopter of sustainability principles, committing to action on four fronts – 'Place', 'Purpose', 'People' and 'Community', with targets in each area.

- Place: valuing the planet and acting on climate change for the future generations
- Purpose: creating stakeholder value; 100% of procurement aligned with sustainable guidelines
- People: adding value for employees; creating a representative mix of New Zealand people
- Community: creating community value in the local and wider Auckland areas.

This broad perspective on sustainability, which is similar to that seen in some European airports, requires a whole systems-wide approach, including action on reducing waste; improving recycling; and conserving and improving the biodiversity of its environment, as well as making and keeping commitments on net zero.

It also means adopting a "green managed growth" policy whereby action on a variety of fronts is taken, including working on innovation and collaboration with other stakeholders (airlines, designers, universities, researchers and bodies such as ACI, ICAO).

Airports can improve the health and wellbeing of employees and passengers through the use of electric vehicles throughout the airport operation and by creating a "green environment" in the airports by planting green walls, trees and encouraging biodiversity.

Investment in the future should consider sustainable design of buildings, operations, and jobs.

Social responsibility measures could involve working with local communities to fund alternative heating source for houses (heat pumps and solar) and encouraging ways of changing attitudes and behaviour of employees toward sustainable behaviour in the workplace.

Actions speak louder than words, and it is important to manage the transition to a sustainable future in a manner that shows results along the way. At the same time, it is sensible in a complex, changing and uncertain environment to 'look before you leap' and think things through before acting.

Simple linear project plans are not always well suited to fast changing environments, but an overall roadmap is helpful to align stakeholders. We have been using our own 'Richmor Model', which is part of a framework we have developed to deal with uncertainty, as a basis for this. The four steps are:

1. Reflect – Understand why-the context and big picture; what we want to achieve; who is involved
2. Strategise – Develop strategic options with stakeholders of how to achieve a sustainable future
3. Exploure – Look in-depth at the options for action; explore the implications; weigh up the choices
4. ACT – Build the roadmap; develop action plans and milestones; implement.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Dick Benschop is stepping down as president director and CEO of the Royal Schiphol Group, although he will remain in the hot seat until the Amsterdam Schiphol operator finds his successor.

The Board of Directors of Dalaman International Airport has appointed **Yiğit Laçin** as the Turkish gateway's new chief executive officer. Irish airport operator, daa, has made group financial officer, **Catherine Gubbins**, its interim CEO while the process to recruit a permanent replacement for former boss, **Dalton Philips**, continues.

Sustainability is about the future. A recent video from young airport and aviation personnel highlights the need to act now to address the sustainability of the aviation travel business. They state that the technologies are already there and continue to evolve and call on the ICAO General Assembly to take urgent action to address climate change and create the sustainable travel industry of the future.

It is time to listen to their voices and put urgency behind the sustainability journey. And time for us to continue with our post COVID travels, pleased we can meet again with family, friends and colleagues.

AW

About the authors

Terri Morrissey and Dr Richard Plenty run ACI's Human Resources training. They received a Presidential Citation from the American Psychological Association in June 2022 for their leadership in advancing global psychology. Contact them at info@thisis.eu

PEOPLE matters



The times, they are a changin'...

Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey reflect on how we need to design and build airport workforces for a changing, yet uncertain future.

Have you ever noticed how people, generally, seem to prefer to 'to get on with things' and take immediate decisive action rather than think things through and plan ahead?

In an uncertain world, perhaps that's not surprising. It's difficult enough sometimes to know what's going to happen in the next week, let alone the next year or two. Taking action reduces uncertainty and makes us feel more in control.

And for most of us, life is very busy. There isn't much time to pause, take a step back and reflect before we act.

Indeed, Stephen Pinker, the Canadian American cognitive psychologist and author points out that human beings have evolved to cope with 'proximal' rather than 'distal' issues – to deal effectively with immediate challenges rather than focus our energies on a hypothetical future.

Unfortunately, in a rapidly changing and uncertain world, a narrow, short-term operational approach has its limitations. Decisions which seem to be obvious at the time may not look so sensible as circumstances evolve and the environment shifts.

For example, airports that focused solely on workforce cuts over the pandemic to reduce costs, now find themselves without enough skilled and experienced people to take full advantage of the recovery.

In this context, it was interesting to see a recent report published in June 2022 on 'The Future of the Airport Workforce', which takes a more strategic approach to workforce planning.

The report, prepared by ACI-NA in collaboration with 4QD Strategy Consulting LLC, focuses on North America, but is of general relevance to the whole sector. The report describes some of the major trends impacting the airport workforce – rapidly developing technology, demographic changes, generational shifts in attitudes and values, hybrid working and increasing competition.

The pandemic has accelerated the changes that were already underway and has led to people rethinking their attitudes to work.

The skills and competencies needed for success are changing. Specialised technical expertise, particularly in IT but also in skilled trades, will continue to be essential – and are already in short supply.

However, most of the biggest skill gaps longer-term will be in the 'soft skills' required to build the agile and flexible workforce needed to work successfully in a rapidly changing, digitised, customer-focused environment:

- Intellectual: strategic thinking and future focus, problem solving and resolution, critical thinking, digital fluency
- Relationships: building interpersonal and cross functional connections and relationships, influencing without formal authority
- Personal: leadership behaviour at all levels, agility, resiliency, flexibility and versatility

At the moment, training and development in soft skills is principally focused on current and emerging leaders. But the report goes further, arguing that given the fundamental changes taking place in the airport environment, these skills need to be developed much more systematically, at a much greater scale, and cover all levels of the general airport population.

We agree with this approach. But it won't be easy. Our experience is that the term 'soft skills' is a misnomer. They are generally 'hard' to develop, requiring not just training courses, but on the job coaching, mentoring and support to help people learn what it means to put them into practice in an operational environment.

It will need investment in people on a larger scale than up to now as well as sustained sectoral leadership commitment.

It seems somewhat ironic that the most important immediate lesson we can learn from the pandemic is the need to take a longer-term perspective.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

H.E. Jamal Salem Al Dhaheri is the new managing director and CEO of Abu Dhabi Airports, his brief being to "continue the journey of success" achieved by predecessor, Shareef Hashim Al Hashmi.

Keith Brune will serve as the new interim CEO of Philadelphia International Airport until a permanent replacement can be found for **Chellie Cameron,** who left the role this summer to become the new president and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce of Greater Philadelphia.

Derek Provan, chief executive of AGS Airports, which owns Aberdeen, Glasgow and Southampton airports in the UK, has announced that he will step down from his position next year. Provan, who joined AGS in April 2018, has taken the decision to step away from his executive role to pursue non-executive opportunities after 25 years in the aviation industry. He has agreed to remain in post until March 31, 2023, and will assist the AGS Board with the transition as it starts the process of appointing a successor.

Greater Toronto Airports Authority (GTAA) has announced that both chief financial officer, **Ian Clarke**, and vice president of airport development and technical services, **Pat Neville**, are to retire at the end of the 2022.

AW

About the authors

Terri Morrissey and Dr Richard Plenty are directors of This Is..., authors of the book, *Uncertainty Rules? Making Uncertainty work for you*, and run the ACI World Airport Human Resources Programme. Contact them at info@thisis.eu

PEOPLE matters



Beam me up, Scotty!

Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrisey reflect on how the human touch is an area to focus on while airport automation gathers pace.

Wouldn't it be great if we could just utter the magic words, 'Beam me up, Scotty', and arrive instantly wherever we wanted to go?

In a sense, that's something we have become accustomed to on ZOOM – but outside the domain of virtual reality, we must still traverse the real physical world to get from A to B.

Sometimes this can be relatively straightforward. Arriving recently mid-afternoon and 'on time' back at London Heathrow from Bogota, Colombia, on our first long-haul flight for years, we exited Terminal 2 only 45 minutes after touching down, through the immigration formalities and complete with all our baggage.

But as we all know, it doesn't always go as smoothly as that. In a post pandemic world, long distance travel can be quite an ordeal. Apart from making sure you have the right forms and sometimes having to wear a mask, the logistics don't always work. In airports across the world, flights have been cancelled, passengers stranded, and baggage delayed as a consequence of insufficient numbers of trained people.

During the pandemic many airports and airlines reduced staffing levels to cut costs. Now, with the rush of pent-up demand, they have been caught out. They are finding that they can't recruit and train people fast enough. Competition for labour is intense. The aviation industry is not as attractive as it was. Regulations on safety mean that it takes time to train people up to an acceptable level. There are simply not enough people to do the work needed.

Digitisation and automation, once seen solely as the enemy by workers concerned about job security, are increasingly seen as a way of supporting those who remain, reducing workloads and making it possible to keep operating.

Different airports are at different stages of development, but the advances are obvious to the passenger: automated check-in, faster and more efficient security, streamlined and digitised boarding and immigration. The technology is getting better, the jobs they are replacing are often tedious and boring, and the economic case is compelling.

This focus of digitisation will gather pace and broaden. Increasingly, professional and management jobs will be impacted.

Automation will turn to supporting and replacing more complex activities and tasks, using a combination of sophisticated algorithms, integrated databases, 'big data' and machine learning to inform practice and guide decision-making.

There will be many challenging questions to answer. For example, the balance to be struck between human judgement and technology, but further automation looks inevitable.

What airports won't be able to automate so easily is the consideration for passengers, the customer service, the understanding of individual needs that makes travel tolerable. Someone to sort out your seat reservation, help you if you get lost, direct you when you arrive.

After all, aviation is an industry that deals with the most diverse population of any sector – people of all ages, cultures, types, backgrounds and nationalities – travelling together across the world, often fatigued, stressed and wary. It takes people, not machines, to deal with that.

Of course, airports will have no alternative but to bring in automation to survive. They will need to come to terms with and embrace the opportunities that technology brings.

But until we can be beamed to distant locations instantly as in Star Trek, it is important that airports keep a focus on the human touch. The passenger experience demands it.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Manchester Airport in the UK has appointed **Chris Woodroofe** as its new managing director, replacing Karen Smart, who decided to step down earlier this year to "pursue fresh career opportunities". She announced her decision to go in early April as many UK airports struggled to cope with rising demand due to staff shortages.

Ferrovial Airports has named **David Kenny** as its new head of strategy and corporate development. He joins from Sydney-based AMP Capital Investors where he served as managing director and head of transportation infrastructure.

Jaimini Erskine is Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority's new vice president for marketing and concessions responsible for terminal concessions, corporate marketing and digital strategy.

Tim O'Krongley has joined San Antonio Airport System (SAAS) as its deputy aviation director of planning, design, construction and the New Terminal Program. SAAS has also promoted chief finance and administration officer, **Michael Garnier**, to its executive team.

Airport Authority Hong Kong has two new members of the Board, **Philip Chen Nan-Lok** and **Laurence Li Lu-jen SC**, their respective three year terms beginning on June 1, 2022.

Emmanuel Menanteau, CEO of Cambodia Airports, has succeeded Changi Airport Group's CEO, **Seow Hiang Lee**, as president of ACI Asia-Pacific's Regional Board. He officially assumed the role on June 1, 2022, and will hold the position until the end of 2024. AW

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PEOPLE matters



Eight years and counting

Terri Morrisey and Dr Richard Plenty reflect on the 50th edition of their popular human resources column in *Airport World*.

It's hard to believe that over eight years have passed since we wrote our first People Matters column in 2014. In that time, we have written 49 regular bi-monthly articles on the organisation, leadership and people aspects of the airport world.

How things have changed since we first got involved in the airport sector in 2005. Most people now take it 'as read' that people matters are a topic of importance, but it hasn't always felt like that. Reflecting back on the origins and evolution of this column provides an insight into changing attitudes and mindsets over the last 15 years.

It all started with a chance conversation between myself (Terri) and the then managing director of Insight Media (now Aviation Media) at an airport conference in Dublin in 2007. I pointed out that that this conference, as well as other international airport gatherings, focused almost entirely on the physical infrastructure side of airports – the bricks and mortar, the runways, the terminal buildings and piers and the financial investments associated with them – with almost nothing on the people and culture side of working in an airport.

Both myself and colleague Richard Plenty thought this was a major omission. At the time, we were engaged in a major change programme at Dublin Airport, 'Shaping the Future', working closely with the CEO, Declan Collier (who later became ACI World chair), to create a high-performance culture. It was clear that airport transformation required 'two journeys not one' – both infrastructure and organisation – and that leadership and people were key.

So, the idea began to develop that there should be more attention paid to these very essential aspects of airport life across the globe, as airports do not run without the skills and efforts of the people who work in them.

Shortly afterwards I attended an international conference at Dallas/ Fort Worth (DFW) to explore the topic further. At that Dallas conference I met with DFW's then CEO, Jeff Fagan, and spoke with him about his leadership of the airport and also about the people issues and challenges he faced as the CEO. This was a conversation he hadn't had before, and he also became interested in the topic.

Further CEO conversations with, for example, James Cherry from Aéroports de Montréal (ADM) and the leaders of Memphis, Athens, Schiphol, Minneapolis-St Paul and Vancouver airports as well as the CEOs from many regional and small airports, gave rise to a series of articles which Richard and I co-authored in *Airport World* from 2008-2011 on the people challenges facing airports – articles that were the forerunner to this column.

ACI began to pay increasing attention to leadership, organisation and people matters in the period 2011-2014. We were invited to run a session on leadership with the ACI World Board at their AGM in Calgary in 2012. ACI World invited us to design and run an airport HR programme in 2012, which continues to this day. And, Olivier Jankovec, director general of ACI EUROPE, encouraged and supported the formation of a regional Leadership and Human Resources Forum in 2013 to get HR managers more involved in this area.

So, by 2014, there was already much more interest in the topic than in 2007. The time was ripe for a regular column in *Airport World* and the first column appeared in the February-March 2014 edition. It was entitled 'Worth the Investment' and introduced the idea of people and culture being just as important an investment as infrastructure.

Building on our work both on the leadership conferences and as facilitators with the ACI World Strategic Human Resources Management Programme, we have since produced a series of articles on matters ranging from the use of evidence and data analytics to the impact of automation and technology, to traditional HR issues such as succession planning and talent management, to articles on people of courage and leadership role models such as Nelson Mandela.

More recently we have been writing about sustainability, resilience, workforce planning and on strategies for dealing with crises and the pandemic. We first aired our thoughts on uncertainty in the February March 2017 issue when we spoke about dealing with the unexpected, which we developed further in our book *Uncertainty Rules? Making Uncertainty work for you* (Cork University Press/ Atrium) brought out at a time of great uncertainty right at the beginning of the pandemic!

It has been an interesting and challenging eight years since we started the People Matters column. Airports have gone through many changes and developments in that time. We have tried to reflect these changes and have also endeavoured to bring some new thinking to the area of people and organisation.

We have also seen a huge shift in the emphasis on people and culture over the years with more investment and professionalism entering the field. We are seeing a shift toward more strategic involvement and thinking on the part of the people side of organisations, which is very welcome. AW

About the authors

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PEOPLE matters



What did you do during the pandemic?

Terri Morrisey and Dr Richard Plenty reflect on how the way airports acted during COVID might affect their recovery.

Airports are coming back to life. Travel restrictions are easing, and more people are prepared to travel than in the last two years. How are airports dealing with this transition? What strategies will airports have to put in place to meet this pent up demand?

These questions are being asked now by airport leaders as they ponder the decisions they made to cut employee numbers during the pandemic.

Two broad approaches were adopted:

- Some airports, conscious of the immediate impact on their people of redundancy – and thinking of the difficulty of rehiring and retaining people in the future – hung on for as long as they could without major change. These airports had the resources and support to weather the immediate economic storms. They tried to keep as many people as possible on payroll, with shorter hours, flexible working, and multi-skilling.
- Other airports took the view that it was better to get the pain over with quickly. Some had little choice. They adopted a strategy of immediate cost cutting and reducing their workforce, sometimes also seeing an opportunity to take and implement tough decisions about working conditions and pay as part of the process. They believed that they would be able to recruit new people if demand returned.

We don't know yet which strategic approach will prove to have been the better given the exceptional circumstances of the pandemic. We do know that a review is now necessary as business builds again.

Some questions airport leaders need to ask are:

- How can we make working in the airport attractive given the uncertainty of the past two years and the measures we took? How will people feel about career prospects?
- How do we generate a sense of meaning and purpose which will encourage talented people to join (especially given the environmental challenges faced by the industry)?
- How can we recreate cultures of belonging, especially if we had to let people go?
- How do we re-engage people and keep people motivated?
- Will people believe us/trust us this time?

The answers to these questions are not easy and there is no magic bullet. Whatever approach airports took to staff reductions, the answers will depend a lot on people's memories of how they were treated in the past two years and the way in which decisions were delivered and communicated.

Those organisations who treated people with respect and as partners in decision making will have a head start in shaping people's reactions to subsequent events.

While the past cannot be undone, we have some guidelines to consider going forward:

- Tell people the truth
- Take responsibility for decisions made and why they were made
- Re-engage by genuinely working together on a shared vision and clear, simple values
- Do not promise what cannot be delivered, but deliver on what you promise
- Be authentic.

It will be important to take the opportunity to restate the higher purpose and value of the airport business as a connector of people and places, as an enabler of greater understanding between cultures and as a facilitator of great experiences and memories.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Florida's transportation secretary, **Kevin Thibault,** has signed a five-year contract to become the new CEO of the Greater Orlando Aviation Authority (GOAA). He is expected to take up the position in mid-March. "I feel confident that we have chosen the best of the very best to lead us toward the 22nd century," said Carson Good, chairman of the Greater Orlando Aviation Authority.

Sweden's Ministry of Infrastructure has appointed an investigator, **Peter Norman,** to work on a development plan for Stockholm Arlanda Airport that would pave the way for the closure of Bromma Airport, the city's original downtown gateway and fifth busiest commercial airport in Sweden.

The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority has named **Chryssa Westerlund** as its new executive vice president and chief revenue officer. She will be responsible for airline business development, marketing and consumer strategy, concessions, commercial parking, corporate communications and government affairs for Washington's Dulles and Reagan National airports as well as the Dulles Toll Road and MWAA's corporate functions.

Irish airport operator, daa, has appointed **Andrea Carroll** as its new group head of sustainability. It states that she will "work across the business to lead the transformational change required to allow daa to not only meet but exceed its sustainability commitments".

Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) has promoted **Tommy Leung** to the role of executive director, third runway, succeeding the retiring **Kevin Poole**. Leung will oversee the development of the Three-runway System (3RS), including project management and project delivery. He will also supervise the Sustainability Department of AAHK.

Nick Hays is the new president and CEO of Winnipeg Airports Authority, replacing the long-serving **Barry Rempel** who has retired after almost 20 years in the hot-seat.

About the authors

Terri Morrissey and Dr Richard Plenty are directors of This Is..., authors of the book *Uncertainty Rules? Making Uncertainty Work for You*, and deliver ACI World's Airport Human Resources training.

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PEOPLE matters



Reflections and predictions

Terri Morrissey and Dr Richard Plenty look back at a tough year for airports and consider some of the human resources challenges that may lie ahead in 2022.

It is December 2021 and we have been living and working with this pandemic for almost two years. It is timely to reflect and take stock of the impact this has had on us all, on our working environments and lives – and on our physical and psychological wellbeing and health.

It is also a good time, at the beginning of a New Year, to try and make predictions about how the future may pan out.

That won't be easy. The only certainty seems to be that we have lived, and will continue to live, in a world of increasing uncertainty. This has made it difficult to plan, to strategise, and to make decisions around organisational and people issues such as resourcing, capacity building and people development. Many people have been made redundant.

At the individual level, the adverse impact of the pandemic on some people's mental health and psychological wellbeing has been obvious. Yet even this isn't a simple picture.

Take employee engagement for example. According to OrgVitality, a US-based consulting firm, employee engagement scores in the States held up remarkably well in 2020 due, in part, to the 'rally around' that can take place in a crisis. But now we are further into the pandemic, can this enthusiasm be maintained?

We have seen wave after wave of the pandemic, with another one hitting as we write this column. This has led to major changes in employment practices, which airports have been absorbing, especially in relation to where people work. Those that can work from home have been encouraged to do so, then exhorted back to the workplace and now, once again, encouraged to stay at home if possible.

This drive towards home working has been greatly facilitated by the rapid take-up of video meeting technologies such as Zoom and Teams. But this revolution in our ability to connect people virtually – instantaneously, easily, low cost – also hits directly at the value proposition aviation provides for business travellers.

In this changing environment, it is very difficult to make longer-term forecasts with any degree of accuracy as we don't know exactly how and when the pandemic will end. However, there have been attempts made to look to the immediate future and to try and paint a picture of the kinds of trends to expect.

According to Olivier Jankovec, director general of ACI Europe, in a talk he gave to the 31st Annual Assembly in Geneva in October 2021, there is a huge pent up demand for leisure and personal travel that is likely to put immediate pressure on airports as the pandemic subsides and they have to ramp up to meet this demand.

And they will need to do this in the context of some major external challenges such as environmental concerns and health issues.

With regards to the environment, the need to move more rapidly towards sustainable green aviation will drive technological innovation in fuel and airplane design as well as air traffic management. In this respect, ACI's Airport Carbon Accreditation programme will become ever more important.

In terms of the health challenges, there is a need to remove the anxiety surrounding travel. This will require even more collaborative working between and across disciplines to ensure a more co-ordinated and effective approach to international travel measures, thus enhancing the customer experience.

Collaboration, co-operation and partnership will be needed to address both environmental and health matters. The paradox is that while travel facilitates connection between people, geopolitics can sometimes make it more difficult.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Dato' Iskandar Mizal Mahmood is the new managing director of Malaysia Airports Holdings Berhad (MAHB). He had previously served MAHB as general manager (1999-2003) where he had led the Initial Public Offering (IPO) and listing of the company on Bursa Malaysia.

The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority has named **Tanisha Lewis** as its new vice president of diversity, inclusion and social impact. The move follows the creation of a new Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Social to further the organisation's long history of focusing on diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI), environmental and social impact in the communities it serves.

Munich Airport has two new members of its management board, **Nathalie Leroy** and **Jan-Henrik Andersson**. Leroy, who was born in France, has been the chief financial officer and director of infrastructure at the airport company since October 1, 2021. Jan-Henrik Andersson, who succeeds **Andrea Gebbeken**, has assumed responsibility for commercial and security activities.

Ryan Both is the new executive general manager for aviation at Brisbane Airport Corporation (BAC). He will commence at BAC on February 1, 2022, replacing **Jim Parashos**, who is leaving after five years with Brisbane Airport.

Aena's managing director for airports and executive board member, **Javier Marín**, is the new president of ACI Europe, succeeding Munich Airport's Jost Lammers upon the completion of his time in the hot-seat. Marín said: "The role of our association has never been more central – giving us voice on the international stage, defending and promoting our license to operate, and making us even greater than the sum of our parts as we digitalise and decarbonise our industry."

About the authors

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PEOPLE matters



More than a numbers game

Terri Morrissey and Dr Richard Plenty consider the challenges of workforce planning in times of crisis.

Airports place a lot of emphasis on planning and designing their physical and infrastructure requirements and invest heavily in ensuring that the physical airport is fit for purpose and delivers an excellent customer experience. But is the same amount of thought and investment put into the design and planning of the human resource required to run it effectively and smoothly?

Take recruitment as an example. When someone is taken on for an airport job, is much thought given to the fact that they could be with the organisation for the next 20, 30 or even 40 years – or are they taken on simply to fill an immediate vacancy with little attention given to their adaptability, flexibility and longer-term potential?

Or consider succession planning. How many airports have robust plans in place to ensure people are being developed so that the airport always has cover for key leadership, operational and technical roles and is not over-reliant on a few individuals?

The fact is that some airports have excellent track records when it comes to strategically planning for their workforces – others not so. And these differences can become even more apparent at a time of crisis when major changes take place in levels of demand and the volumes of airport activity dramatically shift, as has happened during this pandemic.

In the face of the current crisis, all airports have had to take a hard look at their workforce as passenger numbers dropped dramatically and the future remains uncertain. Who should they keep and who should they let go? There are immediate pressures to reduce costs, but at the same time releasing skilled people – who may be difficult to re-engage when business picks up – is a problem. Airports can't afford to keep all their staff, but can't afford to let them go without a great deal of thought. That can be quite a headache when the recovery timeline is unknown and passenger demand uncertain.

It's a tricky balancing act which is still playing out in some parts of the world as employees return from government subsidised periods of furlough.

Those airports which seem to be managing the situation best take a strategic view to workforce planning, following principles such as:

- Always keep the future vision in mind when taking any workforce decisions
- Wherever possible, look for opportunities for new ways of working, For example, flexible hours, short time working or automation possibilities, rather than releasing people
- Try to keep core competencies whilst looking for opportunities for multi or reskilling to deal with changing work patterns
- Treat people as individuals, ensuring they remain connected to the organisation even when working remotely, with ongoing training and support
- Pay attention to their values when implementing any change, ensuring there are clear criteria and processes which are transparent and well communicated so that a 'felt fair 'process is maintained
- Bear in mind the need for airports to remain 'employers of choice' for future generations, reinforcing their connections with schools, colleges and universities

Workforce planning is not only about taking a longer-term perspective, but about the 'how' as well as the 'what'. Trust broken in difficult times cannot be easily repaired. The employee experience impacts on retention, engagement and ultimately on customer satisfaction.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Rafael (Ralph) Cutié has succeeded Lester Sola in the hot-seat at Miami International Airport (MIA) following his appointment as the new director and CEO of Miami-Dade Aviation Department. Cutie, who has served Miami-Dade County for 30 years, noted: "I look forward to building on my career driving forward major capital projects and managing teams to take the airport to new heights under the mayor's leadership."

London Gatwick Airport has unveiled **Jim Butler** as its new chief financial officer and board member.

Simon Dodd is the new head of aviation development at Brisbane Airport Corporation (BAC).

As part of a reorganisation of the senior commercial team at Leeds Bradford Airport (LBA) in the UK, **Nicola McMullen** has been named as the new aviation director and former LBA commercial director, John Cunliffe, will now hold the role of commercial and strategy sirector.

Prague Airport's new chairman of the board is **Jiří Pos** following the recommendation of the Ministry of Finance of the Czech Republic, the sole shareholder of the company.

Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority board of directors has elected **Thorn Pozen** as its new vice chairperson, succeeding William Sudow. Pozen is a partner in the law firm of Goldblatt Martin Pozen LLP in Washington, DC where he advises government and private sector clients on local government, administrative law and local and federal government ethics issues.

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PEOPLE matters



Action stations

Terri Morrissey and Dr Richard Plenty provide their thoughts on some of the staffing challenges airports are likely to face as passenger numbers begin to rise in the second half of the year.

We are writing this column in London on Monday, August 2, 2021. From today, double vaccinated passengers from the EU and USA no longer have to quarantine on arrival in the UK. So, for the first time for over a year, there is an opportunity for friends and families separated by COVID-19 to be reunited without having to isolate.

A cause for celebration? Yes, but unfortunately just as UK airports are gearing up for this increase in passengers, Border Force staff in Heathrow and Gatwick have been hit by an outbreak of COVID.

Today's *The Times* newspaper reports that this has seen more than one in four of them off work over the weekend. The requirement to introduce spot checks on passengers – as well as issues with technology at e-passport gates – have exacerbated these problems.

The immediate consequences have been 'quarter mile queues at Heathrow' and long waits for those impacted. The joy of reconnecting with people and places has been tempered by the practical difficulties of checking, verifying, and dealing with all the requirements of international travel. We hope that these particular problems will be resolved by the time this article goes to print.

Still, this specific example demonstrates the kinds of issues airports will have to face as international air travel starts to open up again – resourcing of staff; matching supply with demand; ensuring new procedures and technology work efficiently; working collaboratively with others who work under different governance and rules; and supporting passengers who find themselves caught up in all of this.

What a challenge this is for those who work in airports! Recent changes pave the way for a real recovery in passenger numbers and provide hope for the future, but planning ahead remains difficult due to the uncertainties associated with the pandemic.

Flexibility has become the name of the game. Employers want the freedom to move people around to respond to differing levels of demand without too many constraints. They have expectations around employee mobility, adaptability, and multi-skilling. At the same time, employees are increasingly assertive about their rights to work in ways which suit them, their working conditions and working hours.

These differing expectations can be hard to reconcile. To take a simple example, how should airports manage employees demanding a continuation of working from home for at least some of their time?

Changing times mean changing mindsets. We are looking at an environment where the 'psychological contract' between employees and employers may need to be renegotiated.

How can this best be done? These points were discussed at the 'High Level Political Forum at the United Nations' on 'Decent Work' on July 12, 2021. The American psychologist, Jeffery Saltzman, argued that the underlying psychology which motivates people has not changed over the years.

People expect to be rewarded fairly and reasonably, to be treated with respect and dignity, to work in an environment where they are able to do a good job, and to have a sense of personal future.

Airports whose leaders bear these principles in mind, have clear open communication channels, listen to their people, and involve them in jointly solving problems are more likely to be successful in recovering from the pandemic than those who stay stuck in the 'old ways'.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Queenstown Airport Corporation (QAC) in New Zealand has appointed **Glen Sowry** as its new CEO. Sowry was most recently CEO of Metlifecare and has extensive aviation experience having spent a decade in a range of senior management roles at Air New Zealand.

Louisville Regional Airport Authority (LRR) recently announced a comprehensive streamlining of the organisation to "further prioritise the experience of users and partners at Louisville Muhammad Ali International Airport (SDF) and Bowman Field (LOU)". As a result, **Brenda Allen** now serves as its senior vice president and chief legal and administrative officer and will oversee LOU's the Finance, Legal, Properties, Public Safety and Purchasing and Procurement departments; **Brian Sinnwell** has been appointed senior vice president and chief operating officer and will oversee Bowman Field, Engineering, Information Technology, Maintenance, Noise Abatement and Operations; and **Darrell Watson** will serve as its senior vice president and CEO with oversight of the Human Resources, Marketing and Air Service Development and Public Relations Departments.

Florida Governor, Ron DeSantis, has appointed **Belinda Kirkegard** to the Board of the Greater Orlando Aviation Authority (GOAA). Kirkegard is the economic development director for the city of Kissimmee.

Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) is on the lookout for a new vice president and manager for Dulles International Airport after **Mike Stewart** announced that he is leaving after 14 years to become the executive director of Virginia's Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport.

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AW

PEOPLE matters



Routes back to the workplace

Terri Morrissey and Dr Richard Plenty outline the challenges facing employees and employers in the post COVID workplace.

For many people, the most challenging journey they will face in the next few months will not be their first international flight – but their return to the physical workplace.

For some, it will come as quite a shock. Employees all over the world have tasted newfound freedoms in not having to commute, in being able to have more autonomy over their workplace and location and in many cases being more productive in the process.

There is a movement for more flexibility around the timing and place of work with many who have spent the past year working from home wishing to continue to do so.

San Diego Professor of Psychology, Jean Twerge, reported that 90% of Gen Z and Millennials do not want to return to the old way of working.

They expect a company culture that not only provides them with financial rewards for performance but also respects values of autonomy, innovation, and strong visible leadership. Indeed, many stated that they would be prepared to leave their jobs and look for employment elsewhere if these expectations were not met.

Some employers are responding to these demands as they see that they will need to offer different types of enticements to attract and retain this new generation of talent. So, are we seeing a new battle emerging, with the power balance between the employer and the employee changing?

Possibly – but there is a more fundamental shift going on. EY in its report 'Physical Return to Work Re-imagined Study' (August 2020), confirms the move towards greater flexibility and found three favourable tailwinds: it is better for employees; it is better for employers; it is good for the environment. Costs and environmental impact can be reduced.

COVID has accelerated the need for sustainability, reduced carbon emissions and reduced traffic congestion. The office provider, Regus, predicts that workplaces will be located closer to where people live; that they will feature more eco-friendly designs; have more green design and be more conducive to innovation.

They point to companies such as HSBC (reducing office space by 40%), Lloyds (by 20%) and KPMG and Spotify as already moving in this direction.

So, what are these trends saying for the airport of the future? What conditions can employees expect and what should employers offer to retain and continue to attract and retain people?

It may well be that, for many, the return to the workplace will be a welcome change from the forced isolation of the past year, the endless zoom calls, and the lack of gossip! But if there is too much rigidity, others may vote with their feet and seek employment where there is more flexibility, choice and immediate career opportunity.

Hybrid working seems to be the way forward. EY believe that this will build better loyalty, productivity, and work-life balance for employees. From the employer's perspective it will increase the pool of talent (can work from anywhere) and they will be seen as a more attractive employer.

The real challenge will be in airports' ability to offer people the choice; to have enabling technology to work remotely as well as in a centralised space; to allow for the creation of camaraderie and innovation by bringing people together to work on projects and to foster teamwork. Some roles will not allow for as much flexibility as others, so it will be important to demonstrate equity and a culture of fairness in job roles.

One thing is sure: the balance of power between employers and employees is shifting, and best be prepared for it!

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Luke Bugeja is the new CEO of Ferrovial Airports. Bugeja – whose 30 years of experience in the aviation industry has included holding senior positions at Changi Airports International (CAI) in Singapore and London City, Brussels and Bristol airports – succeeds **Jorge Gil** who had held the position since December 2012.

Ramon Miró has become the new president and CEO of Corporacíon Quiport, operator of Ecuador's Quito International Airport, succeeding **Andrew O'Brian,** who has decided to take up the position of CEO at Reach Airports – a joint venture between the Carlyle Group and Munich Airport International – in Washington DC.

Airport World is saddened to hear about the death of former London City Airport CEO and aviation veteran, **Richard Gooding,** OBE. The airport paid this tribute: "From infrastructure investments, to creating job opportunities for local residents and putting London City on the Docklands Light Railway network, his contribution to the airport was immense. He will be fondly remembered by all that worked with him both at LCY and across the aviation industry."

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AW

PEOPLE matters



Commercial spirit

Terri Morrissey and Richard Plenty provide their thoughts on the type of entrepreneurial mindset that might be needed to help airports bounce back from COVID-19.

How can you create the commercial spirit that will help airports to recover the ground lost during the pandemic?

In our work with organisations and organisation culture we have met and worked with many successful entrepreneurs. Most have run their own companies, but a few have been successful inside corporations.

Whatever the setting, they have all had characteristics in common that make them entrepreneurial and distinguished them out from the mainstream.

What can be learnt from them? What are their qualities, and can they be cultivated?

Take the Irish entrepreneur, Liam Young, as an example. He was working in a major telecommunications firm and spotted a business gap in service. The organisation was not interested in his idea, so he left, found a backer and a business partner, and ended up creating a major directory enquiry service in Ireland and in Europe.

He eventually sold this enterprise making over €40 million. And he did not stop there. He went on to become a 'serial entrepreneur' investing in start-ups, taking more enterprises to success.

• Entrepreneurs like Liam demonstrate the ability to both spot business opportunities and act on them. The second part of this is critical. Many people have good ideas but do not have the courage or the tenacity to turn them into reality. Consequently, their ideas never get off the starting blocks. Having the will to succeed, being resilient in the face of obstacles and possessing self-belief and self-efficacy are key parts of the mindset that differentiate the successful entrepreneur.

• They also demonstrate the ability to be persuasive communicators. Entrepreneurs have the capacity to bring others along with their ideas, including investors. They can create a compelling vision for the future and motivate people to follow them

• They tend to set their own goals, are driven to succeed and are open to learning and feedback from others. They are prepared to try things out and are not afraid of failure.

The British inventor and entrepreneur James Dyson, for example, has used learning from experience as a key part of his business model. Speaking about the development of his vacuum cleaner, he says: "I made 5,127 prototypes of my vacuum before I got it right, but I learned from each one. That's how I came up with a solution. So, I don't mind failure."

It is easy to see how established organisations might benefit from this innovative perspective, but how easy is it for them to hold on to people with an entrepreneurial mindset?

It's difficult but not impossible. All entrepreneurs we have met have a drive to be self-reliant. They prefer to think independently and like to feel in control of their own destiny. Consequently, many do not really like working for someone else and do not stay in corporations.

But there are others who can enjoy working within an established organisation for a broader purpose, with a ready network of skilled colleagues and access to resources.

Organisations that value challenge, encourage diversity of thinking, allow for experimentation and failure and are not bureaucratic are more likely to foster entrepreneurship and keep such individuals. Some organisations create hubs of enterprise allowing ideas to flourish, bringing ideas from the edge into the mainstream and fostering innovation.

The challenge facing airports right now is how to seize this opportunity to cultivate the entrepreneurial spirit and mindset of the future, to encourage creativity and innovation and to 'build back better'.

Creating a culture where entrepreneurship can flourish is a key part of the leadership agenda.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

The search is on for a new CEO for Berlin Brandenburg Airport after the supervisory board of Flughafen Berlin Brandenburg (FBB) reluctantly accepted **Engelbert Lütke Daldrup's** request to terminate his employment in September 2021. Lütke Daldrup is leaving because he says that he has fulfilled his role of overseeing the opening of Germany's new €6 billion gateway. Chairman of the supervisory board, Rainer Bretschneider, stated: "Engelbert Lütke Daldrup took on great responsibility at a very difficult time for FBB and has lived up to the hopes and expectations placed in him. The fact that BER went into operation was largely because of his work. We owe him a great debt of gratitude."

IATA has a new director general after former IAG CEO, **Willie Walsh,** officially succeeded the outgoing Alexandre de Juniac in the role on April 1, 2021. Walsh said: "I am passionate about our industry and about the critical work that IATA does on behalf of its members, never more so than during the COVID-19 crisis."

Stephen Thompson is the new airport manager of Tyler Pounds Regional Airport (TYR) in Tyler, Texas, USA. He moves from Denver International Airport where he served as its manager for airport safety.

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AW

PEOPLE matters

Psychological safety

Terri Morrissey and Richard Plenty give their perspective on how to create a psychologically safe work environment.

Have you ever felt that it would be better not to speak out, ask questions, challenge the status quo, raise issues, or simply make suggestions in your workplace because there might be a price to pay later?

If so, you are not alone. Research shows that people are extremely sensitive to the emotional climate in organisations and will not take the risk of being open and honest if they feel there may be recriminations later.

People know the stakes can be high, particularly during the current pandemic. If they see that this kind of behaviour has been suppressed or punished in the past, they may be scared to 'put their head above the parapet' in case they lose their job.

Keeping quiet is not something most people feel good about. It is difficult to feel committed to an organisation which does not give you a voice, accept or trust you.

At the same time, the inability to speak out matters not only for the psychological wellbeing of the individuals concerned, but also for their organisations.

For example, Google, in their Project Aristotle, looked at 180 teams to see what differentiated its highest performing teams from other teams. People in the highest performing teams listened to each other and weren't afraid to contribute and challenge the status quo.

'Psychological safety' was by far the biggest factor in a team's success. Those teams where individuals felt accepted, respected, and included did much better than those that didn't.

It is not enough just to create an environment where physical safety is a priority. Psychological safety matters as well, particularly in an environment of uncertainty. It is critical for enabling creativity and sets the tone for the culture.

Without it, as a result of an 'excess of caution', the organisation may lose out on valuable ideas and potential innovations.

So, how can you create an environment of psychological safety? How can you create a climate where trust and openness are valued and where ideas can be freely expressed?

- Firstly, treat people as individuals and human beings rather than just employees with useful skills sets. Genuinely connecting with others is key in times of uncertainty.
- Secondly, it is important to be transparent in communication. This means being open to listening without judgment, looking for win-win outcomes and approaching potential conflict as a collaborator rather than as an adversary.
- Thirdly, replace blame with curiosity. Instead of looking for the fault in an argument or idea, start from the position of trying to find out more about it, why the person has it and explore its possibilities.
- Fourthly, try to anticipate reactions and deal with controversy with an open mind. This can be difficult sometimes as the tendency is to shut out what we don't like, believe, or agree with. Creating an environment of openness helps to build trust, an essential ingredient for psychological safety to flourish.

The key drivers in creating a culture of belonging and commitment are having a set of core values and a sense of purpose in the organisation as well as a willingness to act in accordance with those values.

People are committed to organisations whose objectives they believe in. They trust leaders who are authentic and genuine.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Former IAG CEO, **Willie Walsh,** will become IATA's eighth director general in April, succeeding Alexandre de Juniac, who is stepping down at the end of March after four-and-a-half years in the hot-seat. Walsh said: "Associations play a critical role in our industry and none is more important than IATA. It must be a forceful advocate for the industry – moving forward crisis recovery priorities, ensuring sustainability and helping airlines to survive by lowering costs, reducing taxes and eliminating regulatory blockers to success."

Naples Airport Authority has unveiled **Justin Lobb** as its new deputy director of aviation. He will oversee the fixed-base operation, airport operations, security, maintenance, planning and development activities at Florida's Naples Airport.

Edinburgh Airport's decision to place a greater focus on cargo and enhance its freight facilities has led to it appointing **Conan Busby** as its new cargo business development manager. He said: "I know the airport is looking to make air cargo a more fundamental part of the business and I'm excited to play a significant role in growing and strengthening our network."

Ferrovial Airports has announced the appointment of former LaGuardia Airport CEO, **Lysa Scully,** as an independent senior advisor to its US division. Scully, who runs her own US advisory firm, had a distinguished 33-year career as an innovative leader at the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

UK airport operator, AGS Airports Ltd, has made a number of key new appointments to its executive committee. They include former managing director of Glasgow Airport, **Mark Johnston,** who has become its chief operating officer, and former Highlands and Islands Airports' finance director Gillian Burton, who takes up the role of chief financial officer.

Philipp Ahrens is the new head of shopping and gastronomy at Vienna Airport. The Austrian airport notes that he has previously demonstrated his extensive know-how of innovative concepts for retail and restaurants at Munich Airport.

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AW

PEOPLE matters

Digital age

Terri Morrissey and Richard Plenty share their thoughts on the benefits and drawbacks of new technology when it comes to meeting up and doing business.

We may be in the middle of a pandemic, but we have rarely been so busy! During September and October, we delivered three separate 'virtual' intensive five-day ACI HR programmes to 39 participants from all over the world.

For most of those attending this was the final 'elective' course in the completion of their 2020 AMPAP programme.

Whilst we had to amend and adapt the content to fit a virtual format and to ensure it was relevant for the current times, the basic concepts and framework were similar to the face-to-face courses we have run for ACI over recent years.

The courses were very well received, much to our surprise. People enjoyed them, and a strong spirit developed on each programme as people got to know each other in plenary sessions and breakout rooms.

The three programmes, all carried out via ZOOM, were very much interactive events, with engaging conversations and discussions, and a high standard of participation and learning. Each course created its own connected community of learners.

There were some other considerable advantages. Costs were far lower, with thousands of dollars saved in travel and accommodation. There was no time lost in travel, there was less impact on the environment – and no one caught COVID!

Still, the ability to meet and engage virtually strikes at the very core of the aviation offering – that of connecting people and places. It provides a competitive alternative which cannot be ignored.

After all, if even airport managers can meet virtually for business and training, saving time, money and the environment, what does this tell us about the future of business travel more generally? Will it be a luxury of the past?

Well, perhaps, but the jury is still out on what the best blend of 'face-to-face' and virtual working will turn out to be.

Now that organisations have had nine months experience of remote working, its limitations are becoming clearer. Zoom fatigue has become a reality for many. Many meetings are purely transactional and do not engage the hearts and minds in the same way as face-to-face can.

Face-to-face remains the gold standard for in depth communication and interactions, particularly those needing creativity, innovation and spontaneity.

These are far harder to orchestrate in a virtual setting. They cannot be easily reduced to an hour long pre-scheduled meeting. They require chance meetings, informal chit chat and the gossip that comes from encounters in the corridors and in the canteen.

Likewise, social interaction is still needed as the foundation for the deep levels of trust needed in complex business and commercial interactions. Body language and demeanour tell us a lot about others.

As Aristotle said: 'Man is a social animal'. We need the company of others and to be surrounded by people to engage creatively. And we need to meet in order to engage.

And as for us, whilst we enjoyed the virtual sessions we ran this year, the real experience is even better, and we hope to return to some face-to-face programmes in 2021.

While digital can play its role while we need to continue to keep our physical distance, it cannot substitute for the richness of the human experience we get from meeting each other socially and getting to know where people live and work!

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Munich Airport president and CEO, **Jost Lammers**, is to serve a second term as president of ACI Europe. Lammers, re-elected at ACI Europe's recent virtual Annual Congress and General Assembly, said: "There has never been a more challenging time for the airport industry. And precisely because of this, the role played by ACI Europe has never been more important."

London Gatwick is on the lookout for a new chief financial officer after **Nick Dunn** ended a 10-year stint at the UK gateway to become CFO of CityFibre. Gatwick CEO, Stewart Wingate, said: "Nick is a strategic thinker and has contributed hugely as part of my team." The airport's deputy chief financial officer, **Lorenzo Rebel**, has agreed to fill the void until a permanent replacement is found.

Luciana Burdi is the new director of capital programs and environmental affairs for Boston Logan operator, Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport). She succeeds Sam Sleiman who is retiring after 27 years with Massport.

Kam Jandu has decided to step down as chief commercial officer of Budapest Airport to seek new opportunities in 2021. Jandu joined the Hungarian airport as aviation director in 2009 but is probably best known for his success as the gateway's CCO since 2013, during which time he was responsible for its airline and commercial marketing, commercial passenger services and cargo operations.

Groupe ADP has announced a number of management changes. They include **Antoine Crombez** and **Régis Lacote** leaving their roles as chief of staff and managing director of Paris-Orly Airport respectively to become GMR Airports Ltd's new deputy CEO and chief operations officer (COO). The Indian airport operator is 49% owned by Groupe ADP. Lacote's position as managing director of Paris-Orly Airport has been filled by **Justine Coutard** while Crombez's former chief of staff job, attached to the chairman and CEO of Groupe ADP, has gone to **Claire Viellard**.

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AW

PEOPLE matters



People sustainability

Terri Morrissey and Richard Plenty share their thoughts on sustainability and how building a sustainable future for airports requires investment in people.

Sustainability has been defined by the Brundland Commission as the "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

In 2018, John Elkington – who first used the term, "The Triple Bottom Line", to describe the sustainability pillars of profit, people and planet – penned an article in the *Harvard Business Review* suggesting that it was time to rethink the concept.

In the article, he claimed that there had been a distinct failure to really benchmark all three pillars. Elkington had, he explained, intended the Triple Bottom Line to be a call for radical system changes, and not just another accounting system for organisations to use when assessing their sustainability.

Twenty-five years on he believed the focus should be on technological breakthroughs, innovation and disruption in order to bring a ray of light to next generation solutions to global issues and challenges.

This systems view of sustainability was also taken by Fritjof Capra (2015). He talked about the interconnectivity and interdependence of a number of disciplines, including biology, cognition, social and ecological sciences to bring together a holistic view of sustainability in a global world.

So, what can organisations do to maintain sustainability in this context? And specifically, what can airports do? Airports are, of course, trying to reduce carbon emissions through a combination of technological innovation and behaviour modification. But what can they do in relation to the people side of the equation?

Sustainable organisations know that in order to survive into the future they need to value the contribution of their people, even in times of uncertainty and crisis. How people are treated in those times becomes an important part of the future viability of the organisation, not to mention the reputational impact and the employer branding proposition.

Enlightened leaders know that building a sustainable future for their organisations requires an investment in people and in their development. Even in times of crisis, organisations cannot ignore the future and future requirements of the business.

What skills will be needed? Do we have those skills? How can we develop those skills? Can we upskill and retrain the existing workforce to be ready to take up tomorrow's challenges? And will we have to recruit new talent? These are just some of the questions that need to be asked and answered.

There is a dilemma here. In order to survive it may be necessary to let people go to save on costs. But a fundamental question needs to be asked: What impact will this action have in the longer-term?

If sustainability is the goal, then maybe we need to ponder more on this question and reflect on the potential longer-term damage that may be done to the reputation and branding of the organisation as an employer of the future.

Airports are vital to economic life and in some cases a national asset. In these circumstances, perhaps governments should also consider what steps they could take to help airports preserve the employment of those involved. Short-term actions can have longer and unintended consequences.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Ryanair's former director of route development, **Kate Sherry,** is the new aviation director at Edinburgh Airport and will oversee the airport's recovery from the impact of the current pandemic, taking over the vital role of managing airline relationships and ensuring that Scotland's largest airport retains and grows its connectivity in the coming years.

AA Ponomarenko was elected chairman of JSC Sheremetyevo International Airport (JSC SIA), the operator of Moscow Sheremetyevo, at a regular meeting of the company's board of directors on September 30, 2020.

London Luton Airport (LLA) in the UK has announced the appointment of **Jonathan Rayner** as its new chief commercial officer. He joins from Edinburgh Airport and will be responsible for growing and developing the gateway's commercial activity by working with airlines, retailers and other business partners.

Newcastle Airport in Australia has welcomed **Robert Sharp,** the former group executive of Virgin Australia Airlines as an independent member on the airport's Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee (ARCC).

David Walters is the new finance director at Cardiff Airport. As part of the board he is expected to play a significant role at a strategic level in delivering and maintaining a successful and sustainable airport for Wales.

Minneapolis/St Paul International Airport (MSP) has a new police chief, appointing **Matt Christenson** from within after deciding that the 29-year airport veteran was the best person for the job. "Chief Christenson has tremendous knowledge of the entire policing operation at MSP, everything from anti-terrorism efforts to patrol, investigations, traffic control, community outreach and records administration," said Mike Everson, director of public safety for the Metropolitan Airports Commission.

Fayetteville Regional Airport's acting interim airport director, **Toney Coleman,** has taken up the top job at the North Carolina gateway on a full-time basis following a national search. Predecessor, Bradley White, retired in April.

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PEOPLE matters

Time to board?

Terri Morrissey and Richard Plenty share their thoughts on the importance of restoring passengers' confidence in the aviation industry.

How quickly times change! If you'd asked people what they thought about flying at the start of 2020, the vast majority of answers would probably have revolved around ticket prices and the enjoyment, and hassle factor, of the travel experience.

Ask them now and they are much more likely to talk about their health and whether it is really safe to fly again.

Travellers and potential travellers are now focusing strongly on whether a decision to fly could impact their wellbeing. An Accenture survey (April 2020) found that 64% of passengers were concerned about their own health while 82% were concerned about other people.

Air travellers want to be reassured that service deliverers, airports and airlines, will put their wellbeing first. They want to feel confident that this will be top of everyone's agenda.

Indeed, so important is this trend that ACI Europe's recently published document *Guidelines for a Healthy Passenger Experience at Airports*, identifies a new category of passenger: the 'Health Concerned'.

Potential passengers need to feel safe from threats to their health, that there is little risk of catching COVID-19 through air travel, and to feel reassured that all measures are in place across multiple interfaces for passenger safety.

In general terms, it is clear what needs to be done. As far as airports are concerned, the focus has to be on ensuring a healthy and safe airport environment for passengers. And this is precisely what airports are doing in an effort to entice passengers back.

The ACI guidelines on the crisis recovery process set out how to go about this. The guidelines cover the whole passenger process from pre-departure, to arrival at the airport, to check-in, to moving around the airport, to security queuing, to boarding and to disembarking.

They describe in detail how airports can introduce and develop processes for ensuring the maximum sanitisation, safety, and risk mitigation at all of these touchpoints.

Up to date information is critical in building trust. Communicating with passengers at all of these points, both in advance and during the airport experience, is vital for continuing reassurance. Wayfinding that is clearly marked and guidance from airport personnel that is empathetic and aimed at reducing the anxiety and stress of passengers is also important.

For many passengers, though, the real fear is not the airport but the flight itself. Sitting for long periods of time in an enclosed space and not being physically distant from others poses a real challenge.

Understanding the risk is important. The three airline alliances have produced a short video 'Fly with Confidence', which emphasises the safety of air travel at this time, and which may go some way towards reassuring the risk averse traveller. And as more people begin to fly again, hearing positive experiences from others who have travelled is likely to help.

Still, the decision 'to fly or not to fly' is a complex one. Each person must weigh up the need for air travel against the perceived risk to themselves. In order to encourage passengers to travel, airports ideally need more detailed information on how different types of passengers are evaluating risk for themselves. This is not easy to come by. Potential passengers are not a homogenous group and their reasons for travel vary.

In the absence of this market intelligence, the most useful thing that airports can do is to work closely with airlines, with the aim of ensuring that people feel they can take a flight without compromising their health.

To fly or not to fly? That is clearly the question. In our view, the answer is not so much 'if' but 'when'. Providing clear communication on the measures being taken is important. Each of us can then make up our own mind.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority has unveiled **Daren Griffin** as its new president/CEO, replacing the retiring Marily Mora. Griffin joins from Portland International Airport where he served as PDX's director of operations.

London Gatwick's new chief commercial officer is **Jonathan Pollard**. He joins from London Luton Airport where he held the same position.

Tamara Vrooman is the new president and CEO of Vancouver Airport Authority. She joins from Vancity Credit Union where she was CEO for 13 years and succeeds the retiring **Craig Richmond.**

Manchester Airport has appointed **Karen Smart** as its managing director. She moves from East Midlands Airport where she has held the same role for the last two years. Her replacement at East Midlands Airport is **Clare James**.

Cardiff Airport has named **Spencer Birns** as its interim CEO following **Deb Bowen Rees'** decision to step down from the role on August 1. Birns, who has been with Welsh airport since since 2006 and was only named chief commercial officer last year.

Airport Authority Hong Kong (AA) has appointed **Julian Lee** as its new executive director of finance, succeeding **William Lo** who stepped down in early April after a decade of service at Hong Kong International Airport. Lee will report directly to CEO, Fred Lam, and becomes a key member of the senior management team.

Dawn Hunter has been promoted to the position of director of aviation commercial management at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport. She joined the airport in 2017 as its senior manager of airport dining and retail.

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Terri Morrissey and Dr Richard Plenty are directors of This Is...and deliver ACI World's Airport Human Resources training. Their new book, *Uncertainty Rules? Making Uncertainty Work for You*, published by Cork University Press/Atrium, is available now. You can contact them at info@thisis.eu

AW

PEOPLE matters

Time to reflect

Terri Morrissey and Richard Plenty share their thoughts on some of the early lessons learned from COVID-19.

In our last 'People Matters' column, we focused on how to build and sustain resilience in a crisis situation. Crises occur suddenly, require immediate responses, and are generally of short duration.

Not so this one. This crisis has been prolonged, with devastating effects globally on our health, employment, social lives and psychological and emotional wellbeing.

We have lived in a world where the 'pause' button has been pushed. We have had to change the habits of a lifetime. Many of us have had 'taken for granted' freedoms removed; no social face-to-face interactions and have not been able to travel for work or leisure.

We have had the time to reflect, think and examine more closely what we really value. What does this all mean?

Many of us have become armchair philosophers. There are quite a number of predictions about how we will "come out of lockdown". Some, hankering for the past and conscious of the economic and social damage that has been caused, are focused on getting back to normal as quickly as possible.

Others advocate a more gradual return to what they call a "new normal", seizing the opportunities this crisis gives us to address global issues such as climate change, the environment and public health.

Whichever scenario you favour, the reality is that we are in period of great uncertainty. There are more questions than answers. Will business people be reluctant to fly when they can Zoom into meetings instead? Will people be fearful of travelling for leisure?

In a recent webinar, hosted by the London School of Economics (Assessing the Impact of COVID-19: From Mortality to Misery, May 21, 2020), a number of behavioural scientists discussed the impact of the pandemic. They suggested the creation of a wellbeing index to put alongside the mortality statistics so as to be able to gauge better the true impact of policy decisions.

They also suggested that as we move out of lockdown, we should be reassessing our capital investment programmes. Should we, for example, be spending more on promoting energy efficiency and less on building transport infrastructure?

Any changes may have unintended consequences. James Fellows, travel writer, speaking on Fareed Zakaria (CNN, May 24, 2020), said that we have taken for granted our ease of travel up until now. Without that, we will narrow our horizons, cultural, moral and social. There will be less person to person contact.

Our view is that we need to ensure that the lessons we learn from this crisis should be used to help create a better, sustainable future. A co-ordinated, collaborative international response is urgently required across the aviation sector as a whole.

It will be important to reach out to persuade and influence others outside the industry, whose support will be necessary but who may have mixed views.

For those in leadership positions this will be a testing period. Quite a challenge, but one which could ultimately result in a transformed, more resilient sector.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Karin Öhrström is the new airport director of Malmö Airport, although she won't take up her position until September 1, 2020. She currently works as head of customer and sales at energy company E.ON Energilösningar. "Our ambition is to continue developing Malmö Airport as an important regional airport that contributes to access in southern Sweden and to continue driving our climate change work," notes Swedavia's director of regional airports, Susanne Norman.

Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority CEO, **Marily Mora,** originally expected to step down in June has agreed to stay on until July as the hunt continues for her successor. The current shortlist for her position contains a handful of well-known industry figures in the US.

Fraport AG's Supervisory Board has elected Hessian finance minister, **Michael Boddenberg,** as its new chairman. Boddenberg succeeds Karlheinz Weimar, who stepped down at the close of May's Annual General Meeting (AGM) after leading the Supervisory Board for more than 16 years. Boddenberg said: "By responding quickly and decisively to the current global aviation crisis, we will be able to ensure the company's future competitiveness."

AGS Airports Ltd, which owns Aberdeen, Glasgow and Southampton airports in the UK, has confirmed the appointment of **Roger Hunt** as interim managing director of Aberdeen International Airport. Hunt, who will continue in his current role as AGS' chief of human resources and development director, succeeds **Steve Szalay,** who has become the new operations director at Southampton Airport, spearheading a newly restructured management team following the departure of managing director, **Neil Garwood.**

Cardiff Airport has confirmed its next chair will be **Wayne Harvey,** former senior managing partner for Deloitte in Wales. He takes over from the outgoing chair, **Roger Lewis,** who was at the helm during achievements over the past five years which included passenger growth and the arrival of Qatar Airways flights.

About the authors

Terri Morrissey and Dr Richard Plenty are directors of This Is... and deliver ACI World's Airport Human Resources training. Their new book, *Uncertainty Rules? Making Uncertainty Work for You*, published by Cork University Press/Atrium, is available now. You can contact them at info@thisis.eu

PEOPLE matters



Resilience in crisis

Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey provide their thoughts on adversity and crisis management.

The COVID-19 crisis has profound implications which require global, collective and personal responses.

We live in a VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous) world, and when we hit a crisis like this it can test us all to the limit. Can we learn from previous crises or are we in uncharted territory? What strategies should we adopt? How do we cope?

Remember there's a light at the end of the tunnel

Crises don't last forever, although it can feel like that at the time. An inspiring vision, mission and sense of purpose – which everyone can buy into – becomes really important. In the Brussels Airport terrorist incident of 2016, a determination that the airport would 'come back stronger' proved a very effective rallying cry. In the COVID-19 situation, we need to remind ourselves that there will be an end in sight, even if we can't see it right now. We are all in this together. It is important to focus on what we can do now, where we are, that will contribute to the overall collective and global response required.

Take personal responsibility and leadership

Quite often 'natural' leaders emerge, sometimes unexpectedly, in response to fast moving and rapidly changing local circumstances. We are seeing it already in local WhatsApp groups, online volunteering, supportive messaging and virtual 'keeping in touch'.

Support others rather than behave selfishly

There is a human toll with emotional and physical exhaustion, fear, panic and anxiety are common responses. A combination of practical and psychological support is required, which is based on a strong evidence base. All of us need to think of how we personally behave: are we creating a positive spirit? Are we supporting the vulnerable? Are we being kind? Are we using our emotional intelligence? The evidence is that a positive proactive approach to helping others makes us feel better, too.

Prioritise communication

In a world of social media and 24/7 news coverage, speculation and misinformation can swiftly fill any communications vacuum. As soon as relevant and accurate information emerges, it needs to be communicated. Delivering clear messages, which people understand in the way that is intended – and which they are prepared to act on – is very difficult to do. A balance must be struck between 'rationality and humanity', and care taken in how information is presented. Pictures of empty supermarket shelves, for example, can just reinforce the perception that no food is available and make the situation worse.

The social isolation that will be essential to get us through this period is a particular challenge. We can all play a part in making sure we keep in touch with others, only spread accurate information, keep our emotions in check and don't get trapped into believing and spreading fake news.

Stay rational

Crises can lead to fear, anxiety and ultimately panic as we stop thinking rationally and instead react emotionally. This is rarely effective in uncertain and crisis situations where we do better if we keep our cool. If you feel yourself starting to become anxious, a useful way of trying to prevent this is to think 'STOPP' – **S**top: pause for a moment; **T**ake a breath; **O**bserve how you are thinking and feeling; **P**ull back and put things in perspective; **P**roceed: Think before you act.

Pay attention to our own wellbeing

It's really important to take care of our wellbeing, particularly if we are isolated for long periods. Ways to do this include keeping physically active and rationing our intake of information.

In times of crises we can become overwhelmed by the volume of information that we receive. Listening to the news non-stop not only takes up an enormous amount of time that could be spent on more useful activity but also can make people feel depressed and anxious. This is especially so if the news is distressing and there is nothing that they can do about it. On the other hand, shutting out all information is not sensible either. Better to filter news so as to keep up to date and aware but not get overloaded. Control the things that you can control.

Keep the big picture in mind

Airports connect the world physically. In times of crisis, we need to connect in mind and spirit as well as body. Global collaboration, sharing information and resources, being open and transparent, working together, and taking a whole world view are all vitally important at the same time as paying attention to our local situation. There is much we can learn from others if we are prepared to take a step back, listen to the evidence, and are prepared to change our minds when necessary.

AW

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Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey are managing director and chair, respectively of This Is...and deliver ACI World's Airport Human Resources training. Their new book, *Uncertainty Rules? Making Uncertainty Work for You* is out now and can viewed at https://b2l.bz/Rhjcc7

PEOPLE matters

Rethinking performance

Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey provide their thoughts on performance benchmarking.

Arguably the world's greatest sporting event, the Olympic Games, is due to take place again this summer when Japan hosts Tokyo 2020.

The Games are a wonderful experience for spectators and participants alike. It is now almost eight years since we had the opportunity to see them in London in 2012 and enjoy the athletics, cycling, yachting and beach volleyball while marvelling at the dedication, persistence and grit of the competitors.

Thinking about London 2012 also made us wonder if there was anything we could learn about organisation and human performance from events like the Olympics.

This might sound strange as obviously all the participants at the Olympics are elite committed performers at a world-class standard. However, it was the nature of the overall programme that struck us. There are clear winners and losers. Results and feedback are immediate.

There is direct competition in the context of agreed formats and rules: the fastest runner, the highest jumper, the quickest time.

This is, of course, very different to much of life where many situations are not so clear cut and it can be difficult to know with certainty how well we are doing. Yet, knowing where we stand compared with others, gives us the opportunity to improve our performance and keeps us sharp.

How can we ensure high performance and best practice in the world of people performance at airports? In the absence of an 'Airport Olympics', to do this fully would mean putting into place an objective and transparent system comparing 'like with like' airports. This would need to consider:

- The games they play. Airports differ greatly in their size, location, geography and climate as well as the range of services they provide and the type of traffic they deal with. They may have different strategic objectives and definitions of success.
- The rules they follow. Airports may be public or privately owned, with different views on how closely to follow regulations or acceptable standards of service. They may keep all their services in-house or outsource.
- The measures they adopt. For example, there are few standardised measures for assessing people and organisation performance.

It is no surprise then, that, in practice, 'external benchmarking' and measuring productivity at the airport level can seem so daunting that many airports give up and focus inwardly on their own performance over time.

This is unfortunate. While trend analysis provides some level of performance tracking it does not allow for meaningful benchmarking, league tables or comparisons between airports to be made.

Focusing on specific areas and understanding, in depth, the details of how performance is measured elsewhere can provide a better starting point and a practical route to improvement. Mutually agreed shared criteria can be developed to make comparisons more meaningful.

Having said all this, people are more than numbers and generate value through a combination of intellectual contribution, skills, relationships, attitudes and behaviours. Qualitative as well as quantitative measures can enrich the exchange through conversations, visits, case studies and exchanges.

Time for a rethink!

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Jesus Saenz Jr is the new director of San Antonio International Airport replacing **Russ Hardy** who announced his decision to step down in 2019 to move closer to his family on the US East Coast. Saenz, who left his post as chief operating officer of Houston Airport Systems to take up his new role, will also be responsible for Stinson Municipal Airport.

Chief operating officer, **Dato' Mohd Shukrie Mohd Salleh,** has been appointed acting CEO of Malaysia Airports Holdings Berhad (MAHB) as it looks for a permanent replacement for Raja Azmi Raja Zanuddin who resigned in December after less than a year in the hot seat. Announcing the decision, MAHB said that Zanuddin had left to "pursue other opportunities".

Amman's Queen Alia International Airport has a new boss following **Nicolas Claude's** appointment as CEO of operator, Airport International Group (AIG). Claude, AIG's former chief operations officer, succeeds **Kjeld Binger,** who will continue to act as a senior advisor to the Board.

Nompumelelo (Mpumi) Mpofu is the new CEO of Airports Company South Africa (ACSA). ACSA says that the highly experienced Mpofu – the former director general of South Africa's Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation in the Presidency – joins the company at a time when it is "charting a fresh course for the future".

Tatiana Starostina is the new chief financial officer of Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) replacing **Ryan Yakubik** who left LAWA in late 2019 for a position in the private sector.

Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) has appointed **Ricky Leung** as its new executive director for engineering and technology. He succeeds the retiring Alex Kwan. Reporting to the AAHK CEO, Fred Lam, Leung will be a key member of the senior management team.

About the authors

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AW

PEOPLE matters



A hot topic

Terri Morrissey and Richard Plenty provide their thoughts on how changing attitudes to climate change might affect airports.

We felt privileged, honoured and trusted to be asked to facilitate the first Global Summit on Psychology and Climate Change, which took place in Lisbon, in mid-November, 2019.

The Summit was attended by 44 leaders of Psychological Associations around the world in order to review how psychologists can best address this urgent global challenge.

We were joined by the President of Portugal, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, who spoke inspirationally on how he saw the importance of psychology in this area. He felt that psychologists should have a key role to play in helping shape and change human attitudes, habits and behaviours to climate change.

"We must have a global response to this as there is not a single country that can address this subject alone," he said.

There were graphic presentations from different countries showing the impact of global warming, and reinforcing the urgency of the situation. A Resolution signed by participants publicly reinforced the commitment of all those attending to work collaboratively 'to encourage governmental, educational, health and corporate leaders to promote sustainable and corrective behaviours'.

Industry has a key role to play. There is mounting evidence that changing human behaviour at the individual level, whilst helpful, will not of its own solve the problem. Households can contribute somewhat through changing energy consumption, diet and travel patterns but changes to systemic organisational processes and practices can have a more significant impact.

So, what does this mean for airports? Well, here, there is already a good story to tell. Leadership attitudes and behaviours towards the environment are already changing. Airports recognised this problem relatively early through the Airport Carbon Accreditation programme, initiated by ACI Europe in 2009, which now extends globally.

There are four levels of accreditation: the first three levels have been reached by 227 airports and the highest standard, level 4 (carbon neutral) is now achieved by 61. It's a small proportion of all the world's airports, but a step in the right direction, and a good example of foresight and collaborative working.

What else could the aviation sector be doing? We see a number of possibilities:

- Extend the Airport Carbon Accreditation programme and further promote offsetting
- Research and promote new technologies that reduce emissions at source
- Give greater weight to environmental criteria in performance and risk evaluation
- Look for new ways of working to make the aviation sector as a whole more efficient and sustainable across the whole system – airports, airline, air traffic control, regulators and others – at all organisational levels.

Still, the sector is growing rapidly, and aviation CO_2 continues to grow as a proportion of total emissions. There is likely to be increasing political and social pressure to curb growth.

'Flygsham' (flight shame) is a new Swedish word for the environmental guilt some passengers feel when taking flights.

Aviation's 'license to operate' and grow depends on taking the environment seriously. Flying could become less acceptable if environmental issues aren't addressed comprehensively.

All of us have a part to play. People matter.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Greater Toronto Airports Authority (GTAA) has pulled off a major coup by agreeing a deal with Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) CEO, **Deborah Flint,** to become its president and CEO from April 2020. Flint, who has served LAWA and overseen the growth and development of Los Angeles International Airport for the last four years, will replace the retiring **Howard Eng** in the top job in Toronto.

Vancouver Airport Authority is searching for a new president and CEO to succeed **Craig Richmond** who is retiring in June 2020 after seven years in the role. He said: "I have so much pride in what we've accomplished together. We grew passenger volumes by 50%, embarked on the most ambitious capital plan in the airport's history and we created meaningful partnerships within the community – and we had a lot of fun doing it."

Moscow Sheremetyevo International Airport operator, JSC SIA, has extended the contract of director general, **Mikhail Vasilenko,** for a further three years. He has held his current role since 2005 and under his management Sheremetyevo has seen its passenger numbers soar from 12.2 million in 2005 to 45.8 million in 2018 and the airport is one of the top performers in Europe in ACI's annual ASQ customer excellence programme.

Mary Considine has been confirmed as the new CEO of the Shannon Airport Group. She moves up from the post of deputy CEO and CFO and needed no time settling into the role after a five-month stint as acting CEO. She noted "The Group is uniquely placed to act as a catalyst for further economic growth through our mix of business activities."

About the authors

Terri Morrissey was the CEO of the Psychological Society of Ireland from 2015-2019. She and Dr Richard Plenty are Directors of This Is... and run the ACI World Airport Human Resources Programme. They are also authors of 'Uncertainty Rules? Making uncertainty work for you' to be published in early 2020. Contact them through info@thisis.eu

AW

PEOPLE matters



Utopia or dystopia?

Terri Morrissey and Richard Plenty provide their thoughts on artificial intelligence and robots in the workplace.

This column is called 'People Matters' for a good reason. People remain the key element in organisational success, even in an increasingly technological world. As Mark Littlewood pointed out in *The Times* (September 8, 2019), 'Robots are on the rise but never underestimate the human factor.'

Angela Epstein made a similar point when she wrote, also in *The Times* (September 17, 2019), 'Human behaviour should be the focus of airport security'.

Both writers make the point that while technological advances can enhance workplace activities, especially high precision and drudge work, the human being cannot (yet) be replaced by artificial intelligence in terms of human interaction, observation, creativity and sense-making.

And while progress is fast in developing automated diagnostic tools which may eventually be more reliable than professional experts, caring, touch and simple everyday tasks such as folding towels and plumping pillows are a long way off.

But with the speed of advance in automation and artificial intelligence, will this state of affairs continue? Should we be concerned that we will all be deskilled and unemployed (the 'dystopian' view), or should we welcome technology as a way of freeing us up for better things (a utopian perspective)?

We have a sense of déjà vu about this. We remember being told about the wonderful opportunities of e-mail which would free us of the need for paper, give us oodles of leisure time and free us to pursue more creative and leisurely pursuits. Yet, at the same time, dystopians (including many typists) were more concerned about losing their jobs.

The increasing use of robots is, ironically, bringing this debate back to life. Robots can alleviate routine mundane work; carry out dirty, dull and dangerous activities; go to places no human can go to; remotely detonate explosives; deliver parcels; take aerial photographs; scan suspicious items on security checks; load and unload heavy baggage.

These are all positive contributions to making the workplace potentially more human friendly, allowing the rest of us get on with the more creative and innovative jobs. Right?

The downside to this is that these very same helpers could turn into enemies: take over our jobs, rise up and ultimately destroy us. We come from a generation that avidly followed the BBC TV science-fiction series, Dr Who, where the dystopian view of robots prevailed, Daleks, whose only message was "Exterminate", delivered in an hysterical high-pitched tone.

This is not just the stuff of science fiction. Some eminent writers, including Stephen Hawkins, have predicted artificial intelligence could become an existential threat to humankind.

So, should our view of the future be one based on optimism or pessimism? Should we hold a benign view of how technology can be used in the workplace or a malevolent view of how it can be manipulated?

Should we consider incorporating ethical and moral values into guidelines for development and usage as Japan, South Korea and China appear to be doing.

In our view, these are not simple 'yes-no' questions. Technology is neutral: it is how we use it that matters. Workplaces evolve. The nature of work changes. New skills and knowledge are required to shape as well as adapt to change.

The key is that we need to be in control and in the driving seat, ensuring that workplaces can be rewarding places for people. Otherwise this column may become 'Robots Matters' in years to come!

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

The Carlyle Group's global airport investment platform, CAG Holdings, has named **Dr Gerrard Bushell** as its new chair and the executive chair of The New Terminal One Development Project at New York–JFK. He will be responsible for delivering the New Terminal One Development Project at JFK International Airport.

San Antonio's aviation director, **Russ Handy,** is to step down at the end of the year. Handy, who has overseen major construction projects and helped improve connectivity at the Texas gateway, plans to move to the East Coast to spend more time with family and pursue other endeavours.

Jackson Municipal Airport Authority (JMAA) has appointed **Patrick 'Pat' Minor** as the new manager of Hawkins Field Airport. He is a graduate of Jackson State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice. He has well over 19 years of aviation experience in law enforcement, airport operations, aviation security, badging and communication.

Torrance Richardson is the new president and CEO of Gerald R Ford International Airport. Richardson most recently served as executive vice president and chief operating officer of the Columbus Regional Airport Authority, which oversees three airports in central Ohio. During his tenure there, passenger traffic grew by 33% to more than 8.4 million passengers, and freight increased by 91% to more than 300 million pounds.

Brisbane Airport Corporation (BAC) has named **Carl Jones** as the new head of its aviation development. Canadian Jones joins from Vancouver Airport where he served as director of air service development.

About the authors

Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey run the ACI Airport Human Resources programme and are the authors of' 'Uncertainty Rules? Making uncertainty work for you', to be published by Cork University Press in early 2020.
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PEOPLE matters

Anger management

Terri Morrissey and Richard Plenty provide their thoughts on dealing with difficult customers.

We travel a lot. Our experience is mixed. Most of the time our journeys go without incident, but there are times when adverse weather conditions, delayed and cancelled planes and long queues can make a simple trip less than a straightforward experience.

Sometimes, though, it isn't the conditions at the airport but people's reactions which turn a difficult situation into a nightmare. Recently we have both had the misfortune to have been on delayed flights with a number of disgruntled and aggressive passengers who seemed to believe they had the right to take their anger out on everyone around them.

Whilst we didn't enjoy the experience, it must be even more difficult for frontline airport and airline employees. It's all very well being taught that the customer is 'always right', the customer is king, that customer service is of the utmost importance – but this is not always easy to put into practice when faced with passengers behaving so badly.

What is it about airports that can sometimes bring out the worst in people? In an insightful article, 'Helping to reduce fights before flights: How environmental stressors in organisations shape customer emotions and customer-employee interactions', published in this spring's edition (2019) of *Personnel Psychology*, DeCelles et al investigate this issue in depth. They distinguish between two key types of stressors:

- Situational stressors – security line waiting time; time to departure gate; number of oversold seats; longest queuing time at gate counter; time passengers started to queue up at the gate; flight delays: weather/ non weather.
- Physiological stressors – noise; babies crying; subjective temperature; subjective levels of crowding; numbers on passengers in the waiting area.

They found that situational stressors were related to customers experiencing fear (for example, fear of missing a flight), and that these fears could be amplified by the physiological stressors. In some situations, fear can then turn into anger.

Indeed, it can be very difficult and, sometimes dangerous, to deal with angry people. In order to express empathy, we need to be able to value the welfare of the other. Service employees who have to deal repeatedly with abusive behaviour can end up with emotional burnout.

Threatening and aggressive behaviour which causes us to feel anxious and fearful is less likely to encourage us to be helpful than responding to someone who appears to be anxious or fearful.

What can be done to improve the situation? Environmental factors can be addressed through well designed spatial layout, encouraging less alcohol consumption, communication and information.

Training can support employees to deal with irate passengers by working through different scenarios in advance and developing strategies for coping. Well-trained staff are able to understand better the differences between fear and anger and are more likely to adopt the most appropriate responses

Organisational support is vital. Employees need to feel safe in their work environment. Knowing that there are sanctions on customer's rudeness and aggression which will be acted upon can help reassure them in their work.

The customer may be king, but the customer isn't always right.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Budapest Airport CEO, **Jost Lammers**, is to replace **Dr Michael Kerkloh** as the managing director of the Flughafen München GmbH (FMG) Group on January 1, 2020. He will also become the future chairman of FMG's management board when Kerkloh steps down at the end of 2019 after more than seventeen years with the airport. Minister of State and chairman of the Supervisory Board of FMG, Albert Füracker, is confident that Lammers will make for an "excellent" addition to the team.

Avinor has rejigged its executive team, with Oslo Airport director, **Øyvind Hasaas**, swapping jobs with the Norwegian airport operator's executive vice president for operations and infrastructure, **Stine Westby**. "This is a solution I am certain is good for Avinor," enthused CEO, Dag Falk-Petersen. "It will contribute to develop both Oslo Airport and the operations and infrastructure unit. Such an exchange creates dynamics and innovation, which is particularly important in times where we are trying to find new and more cost-effective solutions through a major cost-reduction programme." Westby, who joins a fairly exclusive club of female airport bosses, says: "I'm looking forward to starting one of Norway's most interesting jobs, and am humbled by the task. This is a job with great social responsibility that I am looking forward to get to grips with."

Guam's Antonio B Won Pat International Airport has welcomed **John Quinata (JQ)** onboard as its new deputy executive manager. He joins operator, Guam International Airport Authority (GIAA), after a 38 year career in the military and will work alongside executive manager, Thomas Ada.

About the authors

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AW

PEOPLE matters



Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey provide their thoughts on how to encourage entrepreneurial spirt.

Back in 2012, we delivered a keynote address at ACI Europe's Regional Airports Conference in Ljubljana on 'Building an entrepreneurial mindset'. At the time, many airports were facing economic challenges which could not be met by simply providing 'more of the same'. They needed to explore other sources of revenue to stay in business. Innovative thinking was required.

This requires a combination of creative thinking mixed with commercial 'nous'. It quite often means looking at the ordinary in different ways, of putting on different lenses when viewing the day to day, of seeing new patterns or combinations or of re-imagining alternative methods of delivery.

It may also mean designing new products, services or of anticipating a new trend or demand.

Those who are best suited to this type of environment usually demonstrate characteristics such as curiosity, measured risk taking, openness to change, a willingness to experiment, perseverance and resilience.

They generally see the big picture. People who understand the customer and can anticipate customer experience and need – along with a good measure of empathy – are good candidates.

Fast forward to 2019 and an innovative mindset is still relevant. This time round it's not just about money: it's about sustainability in the broadest sense. Take Dublin Airport, for example. Back in 2012, they launched a scheme to sell 'plane water' at €1 a bottle, which was a great success.

In 2019 this popular offering has been augmented by an imaginative system of 'hydration stations', water fountains fitted with swan necks where passengers can fill their own bottles with less environmental impact.

So, what can be done to create a more 'entrepreneurially friendly' workplace environment and develop more 'entrepreneurially minded' employees? After all, many people who work in airports weren't recruited for these kinds of skills, but for their ability to work in an operational environment where the priorities are consistent delivery and abiding by a rigorous set of rules and regulations.

A good place to start is to create space and time for reflective thinking and conversation. Many workplaces are far too busy, with little headspace for considering how the work is done and how it might be delivered in alternative or more effective ways.

Many day-to-day activities and experiences provide fertile material for thinking about better ways of working and of delivering new value adding services.

Creating an environment where people feel more free to express themselves and to challenge the tried and tested in a psychologically safe space can lead to surprising results. It really doesn't require much investment except the willingness to give it a go. A few tips:

- Review the tried and tested and see if it's still relevant for today
- Bring the outside in by looking at what other organisations have done
- Wear new lenses when viewing the passenger experience

And most importantly, make sure you don't just 'think' about things – but try them out to see if they work. 'Trial and success' can be a winning formula. Who knows where the new pot of gold lies?

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Leeds Bradford Airport (LBA) in the UK has a new boss, former London Luton and Newcastle airport board member, **Hywel Rees**. He joins LBA from AMP Capital, where he has been a senior member of the asset management team for around five years, with a focus on airports. He said: "I am delighted to join Leeds Bradford Airport and look forward to working with the team to grow the airport long-term and deliver a high-quality service experience."

Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) has announced the retirement of chief operating officer, **Samson Mengistu**. Mengitsu enjoyed a 30-year career with the City of Los Angeles, more than 25 of them at LAWA. He has served under four Los Angeles mayors, and numerous Airport Commissions and LAWA administrations.

Brisbane Airport Corporation (BAC) has announced changes to its executive leadership team with **Martin Ryan** taking up the leadership of the newly created Consumers Group as executive general manager. Following an organisational restructure that came into effect on April 1, 2019, the Consumers Group was created to better serve passengers and other visitors to Brisbane Airport.

Hong Kong International Airport operator, Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK), has welcomed three new board members – **Stuart Thomson Gulliver, Dr Lo Wai-kwok** and **Thomas Jefferson Wu.** All will serve three year terms.

Keith Ludeman is the new chairman of London Luton Airport (LLA). The former CEO of Go-Ahead Group Plc joins the UK's fifth busiest airport ahead of the December 2018 completion of its £160 million transformation project.

Tulsa Airports Improvement Trust (TAIT) has made two new additions its executive leadership team after promoting **Chuck Hannum** to the role of chief operating officer and appointing **Jonathan Gobbo** as its new director of real estate. "Chuck and Jonathan bring over 30 years of experience to our leadership team, and we could not be more excited for their fresh perspective," said Alexis Higgins, CEO of Tulsa Airports.

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AW

PEOPLE matters



It's good to talk!

Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey provide their thoughts on the need to rediscover the art of the conversation.

Go into any restaurant, travel on public transport, stand in line for your coffee, walk in the street, wait in the Departures Lounge before your flight, walk through the Arrivals Hall of a busy airport and observe.

How many people are actually having conversations? Or do they seem more interested in looking at screens? Have we lost the art and science of good conversation?

The importance of human communication has been downgraded by an obsessive focus on interactions with social media: immediate feedback, hashtags and sound bites are seen as more worthy of our shortening attention spans than investing time in face-to-face interactions.

In everyday life, public discourse and, in the media itself, the consequences are beginning to emerge. Empathy is dying. We care more about our own image than really understanding where others are coming from. Slogans, yes/no debates, the search for black and white answers, simple solutions and certainty dominate. Evidence is less important than strongly stated opinion. Is this an effective approach in a world of increasing complexity?

As far as the world of work is concerned, where results count, it isn't. Most organisation challenges need people to work together to sort things out and agree on a sensible course of action. Yet in many organisations, despite people working close to each other in an open plan environment, they never walk around to speak to their colleagues. An email, text or tweet is sent instead.

This may suffice if there is a clear simple unambiguous communication required, such as "Are you going for lunch at 12.30pm?" It is not enough where someone's input is needed to deal with a complex issue, where priorities need to be sorted, where performance needs to be discussed, or where an innovative approach is required.

There is no substitute for the gold standard of effective face-to-face conversation if we want to address real world issues and keep everyone on board. According to the organisation learning guru Peter Senge, the starting points for a meaningful conversation are active listening ('inquiry') and an ability to 'advocate' and explain one's position. Good conversations should be about dialogue and developing a deeper understanding rather than simply winning an argument.

'Appreciative Inquiry' can also be a very helpful approach. This focuses on strengths rather than weaknesses, solutions rather than problems. It accentuates the positive whilst also acknowledging the shortfalls, engaging hearts and minds and spirits in working together to focus on what works, and on the future.

It involves questioning, building relationships, listening actively and with empathy, advocating one's position – all with the objective of building mutual understanding so as to move closer to an agreed future direction and course of action.

How can organisations encourage better conversations? By ensuring there is a commitment to dialogue; there is sufficient time and space for people to get together, meet, reflect and discuss organisational challenges; and by providing training in the skills and techniques of appreciative inquiry and effective conversations.

Let's promote technology, which facilitates conversation rather than relegates it to a lost art.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

ACI Asia-Pacific regional director, **Patti Chau**, is to leave her position at the end of 2019 after seven years in the hot-seat and 15 years with the organisation. Chau feels that the time is right to return home to Canada and focus on her young family.

Alexis Higgins has been confirmed as the permanent CEO of Tulsa Airports Improvement Trust (TAIT) after assuming the role on a temporary basis following the departure of predecessor Mark VanLoh. Higgins is a 19-year employee of TAIT, serving the majority of that time as deputy airports director overseeing marketing and air service development.

Former Chicago Department of Aviation Commissioner, **Ginger Evans**, is the new CEO of Reach Airports, a US-based airport management joint venture between Munich Airport International and The Carlyle Group's CAG Holdings.

Fraport AG's supervisory board has appointed **Dr Pierre Dominique Prümm** to the company's executive board, effective July 2019. Prümm will take over board responsibility for Fraport's 'Airside and Terminal Management, Corporate Safety and Security' strategic business unit and the 'Corporate Infrastructure Management' service unit.

Máximo Luis Bomchil is the new chairman of Corporación América Airports whose global airport portfolio includes airports in Argentina, Armenia, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru and Uruguay. He replaces **Eduardo Eurnekian**, the 86-year old founder of Corporación América Group, who will continue with his other business ventures as well as philanthropic activities.

Martha's Vineyard Airport in Massachusetts has taken the almost unprecedented step of announcing that it has offered former Glacier Park International boss, **Cindi Martin**, the job of airport director and is waiting for her response. If she accepts, she will replace **Ann Richart** who left her post earlier this year to lead the Nebraska Department of Transportation Division of Aeronautics.

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AW

PEOPLE matters



Invest in yourself

Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey provide their thoughts on self-development.

Earlier in our careers, we often came across organisation leaders who believed that people didn't need to learn anything new once they had graduated from college and that any subsequent training and development was a waste of time.

In their opinion, a career should be spent putting into practice what had already been learnt at school and university. Investing in development was pointless. Learning was for the young.

These ideas are now seen as typical of leadership's Generation 'D' – the Dinosaurs. Mainstream thinking has moved on considerably. In the 1990s, Peter Senge, in his book *The Fifth Discipline*, talked about the importance of developing a learning organisation as a primary source of competitive advantage – one that is open to new ideas, innovation and encouraging learning.

It's an approach which has been embraced enthusiastically by many of the world's top organisations. It implies encouraging a development ethos and 'growth mindset' throughout an organisation.

Formal training is a part of this. Those who take part in training courses are usually there because their organisation values them sufficiently to support their learning and invest in their development. So far, so good. But is it the whole story?

It's a question we ask every year to the dozens of people we take through the ACI World 'Airport Human Resources' programme. We've run courses in locations as diverse as Bucharest, Abu Dhabi, Johannesburg and Kuala Lumpur. Participants say formal training broadens their perspective and gives them new skills. Yet when we talk deeply with them about how they actually learn, change and develop in practice, it turns out that training, while important, is just one part of a bigger picture.

Our participants report they learn through a wide variety of routes in addition to formal education and training. For example, work experience in different roles; involvement in projects; having to face up to unexpected change and crises at work and outside; dealing with personal challenges; voluntary work, sports, hobbies and pastimes; managing difficult family situations; watching films, TV, theatre; interacting on social media; observing others; and from reflecting and learning from experience and their own successes and mistakes.

This fits with current research on neuropsychology that shows how the brain has the ability to form new connections and pathways, and hence learn new things, throughout adulthood. There are always learning opportunities and we are never too old to learn. We just need to keep our brains exercised. How can we best do this?

- Have a 'growth mindset' – an attitude of 'Yes, I can' and 'You're never too old'
- Try new things. As we get older, we can become so worried about making mistakes and looking foolish that we restrict our opportunities to learn
- Make time for it. A few minutes each day reflecting on what went well and what might have been done differently is time well spent.

Organisations should invest in their people, and people should invest in themselves.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Anna Strömwall is the new director of Göteborg Landvetter Airport in Sweden. She moves from Swedavia's consultancy subsidiary, Swedavia Consult, and has many years of management experience in the transport and logistics sector including a previous role as head of security screening at Stockholm Arlanda.

Chad Newton has been confirmed as the new CEO of Wayne County Airport Authority (WCAA), operator of Detroit Metropolitan and Willow Run airports. The WCAA board voted to appoint him CEO last November and his appointment was approved in mid-January.

London Luton Airport (LLA) has promoted planning and investment director, **Alberto Martin**, to the position of CEO. Before joining LLA, he gained 20 years' experience in airports, holding a variety of executive roles across Europe, including 10 years as managing director of Gran Canaria and Fuerteventura airports.

His LLA predecessor, **Nick Barton** is the new chief executive of Birmingham Airport. Speaking about his decision to join the midlands gateway, Barton commented: "Birmingham Airport is on the threshold of a very exciting chapter in its development and I am delighted to have been given the responsibility to lead and shape the future of the airport."

Canberra Airport's new aviation director is **Michael Thomson.** He is best known in Australia for being the man that helped ACT Brumbles out of its financial doldrums.

Renato 'Ren' Camacho is the new president and CEO of Akron-Canton Airport, succeeding the retiring **Rick McQueen** who enjoyed a 36-year association with the Ohio gateway. Camacho moves from Cleveland's Department of Port Control where he was chief of planning and engineering.

New Zealand's Queenstown Airport Corporation (QAC) has welcomed experienced finance executive **Andrew Williamson** as its new chief financial officer and company secretary.

Bangor International Airport has appointed **Brian Veneziano** as its new assistant director. The joint civil-military public airport is located in Maine, USA, and is currently served by Allegiant, American, Delta and United.

Bristol Airport in the UK has named **Dave Lees** as its new CEO, although he won't take up the post until August 1. He is currently managing director of Southampton Airport.

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PEOPLE matters

Lost in transit

Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey provide their thoughts on wayfaring.

Navigating your way through an airport can be an anxiety provoking experience. It's an activity often undertaken under less than ideal conditions – when we are tired, we have arrived late at night somewhere and the airport is deserted, or we have to rush to get another connection.

Even the most experienced of travellers, in the most well organised, well-established airports, can find it a challenge. Madrid Barajas, Paris CDG and Luton have all left members of our team confused in some way, resulting in difficulty in finding the way out, reaching our intended departure gate, and even missing a connection. That may tell more about us than the airports, but it shows that the problem remains a real one.

How can airports help us with questions such as "Where exactly am I?"; "What direction am I facing (so I don't start walking the wrong way)?" or "How long will it take to get through security, so I don't miss my connection?"

Wayfaring has been a challenge for centuries. The Romans in Britain solved the problem by inventing the milestone, a stone column placed at regular intervals along the long straight roads from London. In Ireland, informal conversation was the traditional folklore solution. "Go up the Dublin road to the pub at the crossroads and turn right. When you are about half a mile up the road, just past the turning on the right turn left. If you cross over a bridge then you have gone too far!"

Signs are a more recent innovation. Airport signs should be provided at key decision points, where the traveller has to make a choice. If symbols are used, they should be universally understood. Arrows should clearly point in the right direction and continue to the final destination and not mysteriously disappear midway through the route. There should be a primary path through the airport which is intrinsically obvious.

Best practice means good design. An example of designing with the passenger in mind is Hartsfield Jackson Atlanta International Airport. Clear, unobstructed lines of sight, angled service desks which encourage people to move the right way, well-structured paths, landmarks to provide orientation cues and clear signage all help nudge passengers in the right direction.

But even these steps aren't always enough as airports get bigger and the variety of passengers increases. Placing shopping malls along the route may be good for the retailer but can be a source of disorientation and confusion for someone who just want to get to gate B98.

Airport concierge services which help people to their destination are increasing in popularity. And expect to see more mobile phone 'airport map apps' which guide people through the airport.

In the meantime, everyone who works in an airport can play a big part in helping passengers find their way. If you see someone who appears lost or disoriented, ask them if they need assistance. The human touch makes a difference.

We wish you happy orienting in 2019. Get to the airport early, follow the signs, and don't get too distracted by the shopping!

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Airports Company South Africa has appointed **Bongiwe Mbomvu** as acting CEO while it searches for a replacement for **Bongani Maseko**, who left the company at the end of November. ACSA noted that Maseko's leadership had been vital to significant achievements such as the development of Durban's King Shaka International Airport and infrastructure expansion at other airports.

US airport CEOs **Rochelle Cameron** (Philadelphia), **Deborah Flint** (Los Angeles World Airports) and **Ricky Smith** (Baltimore/Washington) have been elected to the Board of Directors of the Airport Minority Advisory Council (AMAC). Cameron said: "I am thrilled to be part of the important work AMAC is doing for minorities and women."

Mark VanLoh is the new CEO of Jacksonville Aviation Authority. The Florida airport operator owns and manages Jacksonville International Airport and three general aviation gateways. VanLoh most recently served as president and CEO of Tulsa Airport Authority but is probably best for his 12 year stint as head of the Kansas City Aviation Department. He has replaced the retiring **Steve Grossman.**

London Luton Airport (LLA) has promoted planning and investment director, **Alberto Martin,** to the position of CEO with immediate effect. He replaces **Nick Barton** who has become the new chief executive of Birmingham Airport.

Australia's Sunshine Coast Airport has named **Andrew Brodie** as its new CEO, replacing veteran **Peter Pallot,** who retired at the end of 2018.

Aberdeen International Airport in the UK has confirmed the appointment of **Steve Szalay** as its new managing director. A graduate of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, Szalay has held a number of senior executive roles within the aviation sector including positions with UK airline Jet2.com and global ground handling company, dnata.

Rob Holden is the new chairman of London City Airport and will lead the Board and oversee the gateway as it continues its £500 million development programme. He replaces **Sir Terry Morgan** who left to become chairman of HS2.

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PEOPLE matters



Wellbeing@Work

Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey provide their thoughts on how the changing nature of work can impact psychological wellbeing.

Working in paid employment can be good for us. Having a job gives us an income, and provides a sense of purpose, meaning and structure to our lives.

We have the opportunity to develop our skills and competencies, build social networks and friendships, and feel that we are contributing to society. Feeling engaged and absorbed in our work can be a wonderfully positive and fulfilling experience.

So, perhaps it's not surprising that the evidence shows that people who are employed generally have better psychological health than those who are unemployed.

But the nature of work is changing. There are increasing demands for higher standards of performance; innovation and new technology are reshaping the workplace; and there are much higher expectations around customer service quality.

Workloads can be high and leave people with little time to reflect or recover. Jobs are less secure than they used to be as roles change and new skills and competencies are needed. And an 'always on' culture means that, for many, there is work to be done outside conventional working hours. In the airport sector, simply coping with rapid growth is constantly ratcheting up the workload.

In short, organisational life is becoming more challenging. Just 'keeping your head down' and looking for an easy life is rarely an option. Organisations expect people not just to turn up and do their job but to deliver results: be responsible, adaptable, show initiative, be positive about change, learn new skills, work hard, put in extra time when necessary, show empathy with the customers and embrace innovation. And be loyal and cheerful!

The good news is that it's possible to create a working environment where all this can be the norm, where people love their jobs and can perform at levels than they hardly believed possible.

This can happen when organisations pay sufficient attention to their people and commit to creating people-friendly workplaces.

Where this is missing, psychological well-being cannot be guaranteed. Depression, anxiety and burnout become real risks. Organisations can drift towards a culture of absenteeism, high turnover and low motivation with all the attending financial and industrial relations consequences.

'Psychological wellbeing' needs to be a leadership priority. The key is to identify and systematically eliminate and eradicate those outmoded approaches and practices which give rise to a toxic organisation culture.

These include poorly designed jobs with unclear objectives, excessive workloads and inadequate support; lack of attention to the needs of those in the front line; inadequate communication on the reasons for change; badly trained and 'old school' style managers with a lack of empathy and human understanding; and an absence of 'psychological safety' which stifles risk taking and innovation.

Involve people; give them control of their work as far as possible; invest in the development of skills in personal leadership, resilience, relationship building and team working. People matter.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, the world's busiest airport handling in excess of 100mppa, has a new boss following the arrival of **John Selden** as its new general manager. Announcing his appointment, Atlanta Mayor, Keisha Lance Bottoms, said: "Hartsfield-Jackson is without question one of our city and state's most valuable assets, with an annual economic impact of nearly $35 billion for metro Atlanta. It has allowed our city to become a gateway to the world and it serves as a critical cargo hub for North America. I am excited that we have identified someone with the qualifications and passion of John Selden to lead our airport into the future." A former navy and commercial pilot, Selden moves from the role of deputy general manager of New York's John F Kennedy International Airport, the US's sixth busiest passenger gateway.

London Stansted has a new chief operating officer – former Virgin Atlantic COO, **Steve Griffiths**. Griffiths, most recently chief operating officer for the London Underground at Transport for London, will be responsible for the safe and secure day to day leadership of the airport whilst it undertakes its biggest ever capital programme.

Auckland Airport has announced the appointment of **Mary-Liz Tuck** as its general manager of corporate services. In this role, Mary-Liz will be responsible for leading key corporate functions including legal, people, safety and public affairs.

Groupe ADP has announced four new appointments – **Aude Ferrand** has become its new chief retail officer; **Mélanie Carron** has been promoted to the position of chief marketing officer; **Eric Labrune** takes up the role of chief customer satisfaction and operations officer; and **Guillaume Arrigoni** is its new chief marketing officer, whose role includes managing the route development strategy of Paris's airports.

Inez Bartolo is the new airport director of Ports of Jersey, the operator of Jersey Airport in the Channel Islands. He replaces the retiring Stephen Driscoll who worked at the gateway for an incredible 44 years, initially as an electrician, before working his way up the ladder.

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AW

PEOPLE matters



Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey provide their thoughts on uncertainty, anxiety and the passenger experience.

Over the last couple of months both of us have flown independently on long-haul return flights from Europe to North America for business and personal reasons.

We have a fascination with airports and are both seasoned travellers, but comparing notes we realised that, even for us, the experience of inter-continental travel still ranks highly on the scale of stressful and frustrating experiences. And it's not only the long duration flights and time zone changes which we need to cope with.

Our combined list of additional challenges for these journeys included a time consuming visa application process with the US Embassy; the airline carrier IT system declining to print a boarding card with no explanation; heavier than usual traffic to the airport; a very long security queue; an unexpected random selection for an additional personal security check; a gate change which was not communicated and meant a rush to the correct gate at the last minute; a need to negotiate a move to a different part of the plane because of a large, head-lolling, sleeping passenger in the next seat; and a rip-off taxi ride at one of the destinations.

Travel doesn't seem to be getting any easier! One of our flights was business class, the other economy, but the numbers of people who now travel and the growing impact of geo-politics mean that whatever class you pay for, there are bound to be frustrations. And that's despite the tremendous effort airports have already made to improve the passenger experience.

What more could airports do? Well, from a psychological perspective we know that uncertainty is particularly difficult for people to manage. The same areas of the brain are activated by uncertainty as by danger and risk. This impacts our physiology, and it can be hard to stop ourselves becoming anxious, angry and reacting emotionally. Anything airports can do to mitigate uncertainty can help. What might this mean in practice?

- Providing clear up to date information on what's happening is the starting point. Explanations of flight delays, queue times, and guidance for official taxis all fall into this category. The best airports should never hear their passengers say: "They didn't even tell us what was going on".
- Human reassurance is the second part of the equation. Having some friendly, knowledgeable people around to confirm we are on the right lines is helpful: they can answer questions, provide guidance, and respond flexibly to a wide diversity of passengers. They provide a human touch. The best airports should never hear the phrase "There was no one we could find to help us".

Is 'emotional security' on your airport's radar?

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Jamie Rhee is the new commissioner of the Chicago Department of Aviation. She took up the post on August 1 following the resignation of predecessor, Ginger Evans. Rhee is a 24-year veteran city official, most recently serving as Chicago's procurement services commissioner.

Fraport AG's supervisory board has approved an early contract extension for the company's executive board chairman (CEO), **Dr Stefan Schulte**. Effective September 1, 2019, Schulte's contract will be extended for an additional five years until August 31, 2024.

Balram Bheodari is the new interim general manager of Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, succeeding **Roosevelt Council** who has been named as the chief financial officer of the City of Atlanta.

Copenhagen Airport has named **Rasmus Lund** as its new chief financial officer. He moves from a similar position at the Saxo Bank and will take up the position on December 1.

Akron-Canton Airport's new president and CEO will be **Renato 'Ren' Camacho**, currently chief of planning and engineering at Cleveland Hopkins International Airport. Camacho starts his new job on October 1, replacing the long serving **Rick McQueen** who is retiring at the end of the year.

Aberdeen International Airport in the UK is looking for a new managing director following **Carol Benzie's** decision to step down from the role after five years in the hot-seat and 10 years at the gateway. Derek Provan, CEO of owner, AGS Airports Limited, and a former managing director of the airport will oversee the business until a permanent replacement is found.

Former Liverpool and Shannon Airport boss, **Neil Pakey**, has been appointed CEO of Nieuport Aviation, which operates the terminal building at Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport.

Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) has announced the appointment of two new deputy executive directors. **Bernardo Gogna** will serve as the deputy executive director of the Landside Access Modernization Program (LAMP) Executive and **Michelle Schwartz** will serve as the deputy executive director–chief of external affairs.

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PEOPLE matters



Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey provide their thoughts on how airports can attract employees.

Why would anyone be attracted to work in your airport? In a fast-growing industry where on average the number of passengers has been doubling every fifteen years, finding sufficient people of the right calibre can be quite a challenge.

Take Keflavik Airport in Reykjavik, Iceland, for example. Since 2009, a boom in tourism and connecting low cost flights has resulted in a fivefold increase in passenger numbers, from approximately two million to ten million passengers per year, and a doubling in the demand for staff – in a country with a population of less than 350,000.

How are airports tackling this issue? Well, it's important that they are well run and have the basics in place. They need to be clear on their vision, values and 'employer brand'.

They have to work out the kind of people and skills they need to attract. Their pay and conditions must be competitive. Most importantly, they need to be able to articulate their 'employee value proposition' – what it is they have to offer to potential employees.

Describing the expectations, excitement and challenges of working in airports is one side of the coin. Developing a better understanding of people's expectations and aspirations in terms of, for example, personal development, flexibility, societal contribution and preferred style of working, is the other.

Keflavik Airport has taken this approach seriously. It has peak staffing requirements in operations over summer months and realised these needs could be met by students working over their vacation.

It has 'reached out' to schools, colleges and universities and built strong relationships with these institutions and their students. Recruitment programmes now fit in with college timetables, communal transport is provided (the 'sleep bus'), and tailored social and health offerings have been developed.

In return the students have performed responsibly. Those who do well are invited back the next year. Some will become long-term employees.

Organisations also need to pay attention to ensuring that the 'employee experience', the overall perception that employees have about the totality of their experience at work, is a positive as possible.

How best to go about this will always depend on the specific circumstances of the organisation, the type of work and the people involved, but we have developed our own check list of items which we have found are usually important. Check out your E numbers!

- Empathy: understand what people are looking for at work
- Encouraging: consider people as individuals with diverse needs
- Expectations: make expectations clear on all sides
- Engaging: ensure work is interesting and challenging
- Empowering: give people responsibility
- Education: provide learning and development opportunities
- Evidence: agree targets, review and reward
- Experimenting: encourage creativity and innovation
- Enthusiasm: more important than skill which can be learned
- Equity: treat people fairly

Understand where people are coming from, adjust your offerings, make sure the employee experience is fulfilling, and make your airport attractive to potential employees.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Dr Michael Kerkloh will serve a second term as ACI Europe's president following his re-election at the organisation's recent General Congress in Brussels. He said "I would like to thank you for the trust you have placed in me. This is an interesting time in our industry and the wider air transport sector. Robust growth and yet, significant and fast-emerging risks. I'm not just talking about the usual cyclical nature of air transport, but also the volatile geopolitical situation, the disruption happening to the retail and other non-aeronautical revenues in our business and regulatory risk from the aggressive campaigning by airlines on the aero-revenue side. All of which means that ACI Europe has a lot of work on its plate."

Gudny Langgaard is the new CEO of Vágar Airport in the Faroe Islands. She takes over from Jákup Sverri Kass who left in November 2017. Vágar is the only airport in the remote self-governing archipelago and home-base for Faroese national airline, Atlantic Airways.

The chief executive of the Hong Kong Special Administration Region has elected to extend **Jack So Chak-kwong's** position as chairman of the Board of Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) for another three years. He said: "The next few years will be critical to the development of Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) as a series of strategic expansion and enhancements are underway, including the Three-runway System construction, SKYCITY, cargo development and smart airport initiatives."

The shareholders of Toulouse-Blagnac Airport have appointed **Charles Champion** to take over from Anne-Marie Idrac as chair of the Supervisory Board.

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AW

PEOPLE matters



Terri Morrissey and Richard Plenty provide their thoughts on the importance of empathy for the passenger experience.

Enhancing the passenger experience is a worthy objective for anyone working in an airport. But what does it actually mean?

Passengers come in many shapes and sizes, with differing tastes, expectations and needs. Some just want to minimise their interaction with the transit part of travelling to get to their destination as quickly as possible without any fuss.

Others wish to savour every minute of their experience, lingering in the luxury goods emporia, sipping exotic cocktails, experiencing foot massages, indulging in exciting sights and sounds. Romantics, pragmatists, grumps ...all travel through airports.

This provides quite a challenge. Understanding how people who may be very different from ourselves feel – and being prepared to modify our own attitudes and behaviours accordingly – requires empathy. Putting ourselves in other people's shoes and seeing things from their perspective is important if we are to improve their travel experience.

Recently, both authors have had personal experiences of what it is like to be a 'Person of Restricted Mobility' (PRM). For one of us, the cause was a broken ankle; for the other, a hip operation.

'Walking in the other person's shoes' never became more relevant! What an impact it made. A simple trip to the bathroom, making a cup of coffee or even a visit to the local supermarket required planning, effort, and inventiveness. Let alone international travel.

We found we had become part of a community of people in similar circumstances. Walking stick users, people with crutches, zimmer frames and electric mobility scooters, generally acknowledged us cheerily with a nod, a smile or a wave of recognition. Neither of us had noticed before how many of us there were.

The response of the general population was more variable. Some offered assistance when we couldn't negotiate swinging doors or getting into taxis; others ignored us. We asked ourselves: should we have to experience what it is like to have reduced mobility to empathise with those who live these lives every day? Is it possible to really understand something without experiencing it personally? Well, yes, we believe that it is possible.

- It starts with empathetic design. It is not beyond the wit of woman or man to design environments for those permanently or temporarily incapacitated who still want or need to travel. It should be possible to say goodbye to escalators that are so fast or steep you can't get on or off easily; to provide seating on the long interminable walks to distant boarding gates; to loosen up stiff, unyielding doors that can't be opened; or to have other options than to climb wet, rickety steps in windy conditions on the tarmac.
- And... the human touch is as important. Empathic skills can be learnt and become habits. Every passenger should be considered as an individual with their own unique personal needs. A helping hand, a smile and small acts of kindness make a huge difference.

As we found for ourselves.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Dick Benschop has succeeded the retiring Jos Nijhuis as CEO of the Royal Schiphol Group, operator of Amsterdam Schiphol Airport. Benschop was State Secretary for Foreign Affairs in the second Dutch cabinet led by Prime Minister, Wim Kok, From 1998 to 2002. He says: "Schiphol is a special place and a wonderful company that I have worked for previously. I am really looking forward to the opportunity of leading one of the most dynamic organisations in the Netherlands."

Judy Ross has officially become the assistant director of aviation for Mineta San José International Airport after holding the role on an interim basis for close to a year. Since joining SJC in 2015, Ross has played a key role on the management team in leading the design and construction activities of numerous safety, security, and customer-service capital improvement projects totalling over $50 million.

Québec City Jean Lesage International Airport has announced that **Mathieu Claise** has been appointed director of government and public affairs and will be in charge of creating and maintaining close relations with the various communities in the greater Québec City region.

JFK International Air Terminal, LLC (JFKIAT), the operator of Terminal 4 at New York's John F Kennedy International Airport has named Dutchman, **Roel Huinink,** as its new CEO. Huinink, an international transportation executive with two decades of leadership in business development, commercial management and marketing consulting, will replace Gert-Jan de Graaff on August 1.

Meanwhile in the UK, **David Grant** has assumed the role of managing director of Durham Tees Valley Airport and **Karen Smart** has been appointed managing director of East Midlands Airport. The former director of landside operations at London Stansted succeeds **Andy Cliffe** in the hot-seat. Charlie Cornish, Group CEO of MAG, said: "Karen Smart is an exceptional leader and with her strong track record I'm sure she will build on the great foundations that exist at East Midlands Airport."

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PEOPLE matters



The people crunch

Terri Morrissey and Richard Plenty provide their thoughts on the importance of succession planning and talent management.

Imagine you are finding it difficult to get around. After careful thought you decide the best solution is to buy a new car.

You spend weeks researching various options before choosing the model, find out the best way of financing the deal, investigate the cheapest suppliers, and after tough negotiation, agree a delivery date.

The great day arrives, and you look proudly at the shining vehicle in the driveway. Now for driving lessons! It's only then you discover there are very few instructors available and there is a very long waiting to take a driving test. You have invested in new capacity, but it can't be used.

A relevant example? Well, the theme of this edition of *Airport World* is the 'Capacity Crunch'. This refers to pressure on space and operations and consequently the potential inability to meet the demand for travel. It typically means lack of physical infrastructure: terminals, runways, slots, planes. Long lead times for planning and construction compound the problem.

Yet, there is another 'crunch' that is sometimes overlooked: having the people in place to manage and run the airport. Even if brand new infrastructure is designed and built, the parallel process of ensuring the right people, capabilities and talent are in place can often stall the operation, thus limiting its usefulness and the return on investment.

In the fast-growing airport sector there is massive competition with other sectors for the best and brightest talent. Leadership succession is also a major challenge. There are increasing demands on the skills needed to run the complex, regulated, commercial and technical organisations that airports have become.

Shortages in expert skill sets in technology and engineering run alongside gluts in areas where needs are declining, such as manual operations and administration.

Even with the best intentions, it is not always possible to upskill or retrain existing staff – and it can be difficult to find people in the external market with the specialised knowledge and experience needed. What can be done about it?

- Better workforce planning is part of the answer, even though this is not an exact science. Developments in technology, the economic environment, societal expectations and competition can make 'supply and demand' hard to predict.
- Retaining and engaging people through creating 'great places to work', where contributions are recognised and valued, helps to ensure a viable talent pool. High attrition rates erode the capacity of the operation and place further pressures on the organisation to meet demand.
- Succession planning and talent management, particularly for leadership positions and those roles critical for the operational performance of an airport, are essential. This means identifying key positions and then building a talent pipeline though individual development and training plans which provide opportunities for mobility, skills development, and increasing responsibility.

Avoid the 'People Crunch' by investing time and resources in talent management alongside putting into place the future infrastructure. Or you may have to invest in a driverless car!

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Lester Sola is the new boss of Miami International Airport, succeeding Emilio González, who quit as the director and CEO of Miami-Dade Aviation Department in November after four-and-a-half years in the hot seat.

Groupe ADP has made a number of key appointments in Q1 2018, they include **Henri-Michel Comet** being named as deputy chief executive officer and member of the executive committee; **Régis Lacote** as director of Paris-Orly Airport; and **Christophe Laurent** as deputy director of Paris CDG.

Brisbane Airport Corporation (BAC) has announced that former executive and current president and CEO of New York-JFK's Terminal 4 operator, JFKIAT, **Gert-Jan De Graaff**, will lead the company from June 2018. De Graaff will replace the long serving **Julieanne Alroe** who will retire from the company at the end of the financial year.

Genelle Allen has been appointed interim CEO of Detroit's Wayne County Airport Authority, replacing the outgoing **Joseph Nardone** who has taken up a new role as boss of Columbus Regional Airport Authority. In her new role, Allen will lead the airport authority, the independent governmental entity tasked with management and operation of Detroit Metropolitan (DTW) and Willow Run (YIP) airports, until the Board selects a longer-term replacement for Nardone.

Dan Mann is Louisville Regional Airport Authority's new executive director, succeeding CT 'Skip' Miller who retired in March after 15 years in the hot-seat. Mann joins from South Carolina's Columbia Metropolitan Airport where he was executive director.

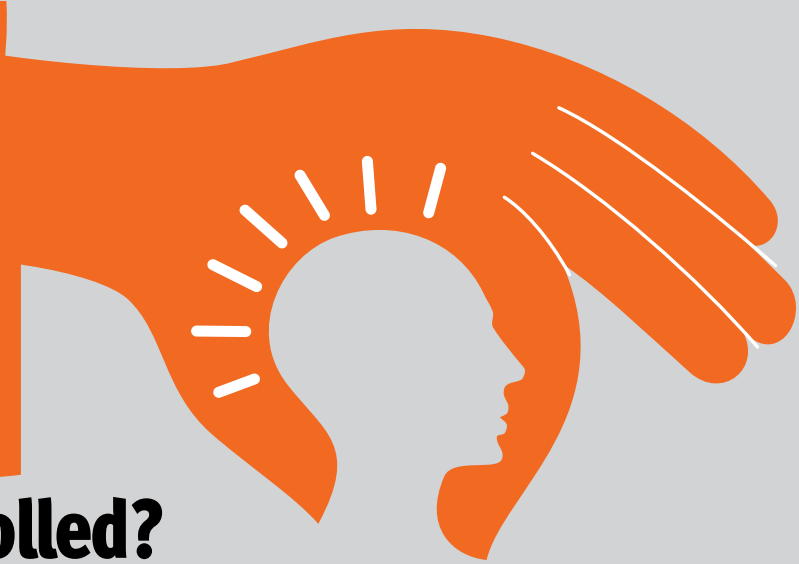
In the UK, Liverpool John Lennon Airport's new CEO is **John Irving**; AGS Airports Ltd has announced that **Derek Provan** will succeed Amanda McMillan as its new CEO and managing director of Glasgow Airport; and **Dave Lees** will quit the post of managing director at Southampton Airport this summer to become the new CEO of Bristol Airport.

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AW

PEOPLE matters



Control or be controlled?

Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey reflect on the importance of taking control of technology.

Writing this article together, in both London and Dublin, separated by 300 miles and the Irish Sea, we noted that technology allows us to collaborate in a way that would have been next to impossible a few years ago.

And we found ourselves wondering that if the pace of change were to continue, could this column be written eventually by robots!

There could be advantages. We are both busy and are looking forward to a break at the end of the year. It would be nice to have the option of escaping from the dark autumn days of Northern Europe a little earlier rather than having to worry about meeting tight deadlines.

We remember reading twenty years ago about a world of unlimited leisure time promised by automation. That promise has not yet been kept. Most of us feel we are busier than ever.

That may change with the latest wave of technology. The recent opening of Singapore Changi's Terminal 4 provides one glimpse of the future. Highly automated check-in, security, immigration and boarding aim to provide a seamless service – without any people.

Technology is increasingly able to perform what were previously seen as skilled and expert activities.

Should we embrace this level of technological change or be anxious and fearful? On the one hand, there will be painful disruption as traditional roles disappear; on the other hand, we know from previous experience that ultimately new jobs will be created and exciting new opportunities will emerge.

We see the key to successful change as ensuring people feel as much as possible in control:

- **Involve people and listen to them.** The Insurance group AVIVA has asked its UK staff whether a robot could do their jobs better. Those who answer 'yes' are retrained for new roles. Engaging people in the selection, design and implementation of new systems develops ownership and understanding and a sense of being in control.
- **Encourage people to take personal responsibility for learning.** Acknowledge working lives are bound to change: flexibility, adaptability and new skills will be needed. Ensure teams keep up to date with developments and support them in making time for learning and relearning.
- **Prioritise technology, which empowers people.** We should design systems that facilitate people to do what people do best: meaningful work, which requires judgment, co-operation, creativity and the 'human touch'. We need to say 'no' to automation, which creates a form of indentured slavery, with excessively tightly controlled duties and unrealistic deadlines.

A balance of automation and autonomy should allow us to have more time in the sun.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority has named **Mike Stewart** as vice president and airport manager for Washington Dulles International Airport. He will transition into his new role following the December 8 retirement of Brian Leuck, who has served as vice president and airport manager since January 2017. **Carl Schultz** succeeds Stewart as MWAA's interim vice president for airline business development.

Geoff Culbert is to succeed Kerrie Mather as CEO of Sydney Airport in January 2018. He has served as president and chief executive of GE Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea since 2014. Sydney Airport chairman, Trevor Gerber, said: "Aviation is one of the most dynamic and fast changing industries in the world. Geoff embraces innovation and technology and this ongoing focus will position Sydney Airport for future success."

Greater Toronto Airports Authority (GTAA) has a new chief financial officer after interim CFO, **Ian Clarke**, took up the position on a permanent basis in mid-November.

Former Heathrow CEO, **Tony Douglas,** is the new CEO of the Etihad Aviation Group. Douglas joins Etihad from the United Kingdom's Ministry of Defence, where he has served as CEO of the Defence Equipment and Support department, responsible for procuring and supporting all the equipment and services for the British Armed Forces.

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PEOPLE matters



Security pass

Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey reflect on airport security and its impact on passengers.

What role does the security experience play in shaping the passenger experience?

It has to be said that the prospect of standing in a long queue at an airport, having to submit to a body search, and then having one's carefully packed bag taken apart piece by piece by a suspicious official is not something that most people look forward to.

So, what if anything, can be done to make the passenger experience of airport security as good as possible?

Dealing appropriately with passengers is a challenge. The prime reason for airport security nowadays is to minimise the risk to civil aviation from terrorism. The nature of the role requires security staff to remain alert and open to the possibility that any individual passenger could pose a threat.

Technology can help, but detection of dangerous items still ultimately depends on human judgement. At the same time as having to remain perpetually vigilant, security staff are under pressure to ensure efficient operation and good service. It is a difficult balance to strike.

Fortunately, most people accept that security is a necessity and will put up with a lot if they feel they are being treated fairly, reasonably and professionally. What can help to achieve this?

Educating passengers in advance

Passenger experience is shaped by the gap between expectations and reality. It's important to find ways of increasing people's awareness of security before they get there.

For example, letting people know about anticipated queue times helps people to prepare and can make the waiting more acceptable. More generally, those who rarely travel deserve particular attention as they don't know what to expect, and can cause bottlenecks and problems for themselves and others.

Find ways of engaging and motivating security staff

Security is a challenging area to work in. The environment is busy and bustling with activity. Many of the jobs are shift-based, have a short cycle time and are relentlessly repetitive. Rules and regulations change frequently. As a consequence, turnover is often higher than in other areas.

In these circumstances, it's important that airport leaders pay attention to their people. Well thought through processes are the foundations. Proper training is essential. Communication is of the essence.

A genuine concern for the wellbeing of security staff also makes a difference. Naples Airport in Italy, for example, has built a relaxation facility close to the work. Feedback on this has been very positive.

Invest in the development of interpersonal skills

People of every possible disposition, background, and culture pass through airport screening. Being treated fairly is the starting point. Thereafter, it's amazing how much difference a smile, encouraging word, non-verbal behaviour and the style of interacting with colleagues can make.

A professional, considerate and helpful approach to security can transform the passenger experience, reducing the stress for all involved and preventing a bad start to a journey.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Dublin born **Dalton Philips** is the new chief executive of Irish airport operator, daa, succeeding Kevin Toland, who left earlier this year. He has held a number of senior leadership roles in retail and related industries, working in 14 countries for companies including Walmart, Loblaw (Canada's leading retailer) and Morrisons. "Daa plays an essential role within the Irish economy, with Dublin and Cork airports alone generating or facilitating more than 100,000 jobs in the Irish economy and contributing the equivalent of 4.4% of GDP," says Philips. "Our focus will continue to be on providing the best customer experience for the millions of passengers who travel through our airports every year."

London City Airport (LCY) has announced that **Wilma Allan** will become its new chief finance officer in early 2018. She has over 20 years' experience in finance, procurement, systems and IT management and is currently the CFO for Govia Thameslink Railway. She said: "I relish the opportunity to be involved in adding much needed aviation infrastructure, connecting London and London business to new and emerging global markets and continuing to provide, what I already consider to be, a market leading passenger proposition."

Con Dooney is Cork Airport's new general manager of operations and safety. He will have responsibility for leading the Cork Airport operations and asset care teams, ensuring safe, reliable and effective operations.

On the other side of the world, **Julia Hoare** is expected to join the Board of Auckland Airport as an independent non-executive director. Her appointment, recommended by the Board, will be rubber-stamped by shareholders at the airport's AGM on October 26.

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ) has named acting chief security officer, **John Bilich**, a former NYPD deputy commissioner of operations and chief investigator at the Brooklyn District Attorney's office, as its new permanent chief security officer.

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PEOPLE matters



Building human capital

Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey reflect on the importance of building a strong airport team.

It's quite a challenge to finance, design and build the physical infrastructure for a new airport development. But once you've built it, how can you ensure that it works as well as you had hoped?

That's not so much a question of the physical assets themselves, important though they are. It's more to do with human capital – the people that lead, manage and operate the airport. And fundamental to that is having people of the right quality.

Yet, whilst the planning of airport physical infrastructure is rarely left to chance, the approach taken to developing an airport's human capital can be more variable. With a few notable exceptions, there isn't the same emphasis and intense focus on building people capacity and capability in airports as you find in companies like Google.

And could you imagine a world-class competitive sports team paying more attention to its stadium than the identification, recruitment and development of talented players?

The key to building a strong and capable airport team is strategic people planning. When people join an airport organisation, they can end up staying with it for a very long time. Indeed, twenty or thirty years of service is not unusual. In that time, much will change. Airports are a growth sector, becoming more complex and competitive, heavily influenced by technology, with sustainability and the passenger experience central to success.

Strategic people planning involves analysis of the future needs for both 'own employees' and 'contractors' and succession planning for key positions. It is also likely to include plans for:

- Attracting people who aspire to senior leadership roles with the ability to manage uncertainty and complexity, as well as delivering consistently on objectives. This places strong demands on intellectual capacity, self-mastery and relationship skills in addition to the more traditional leadership qualities of drive, energy and determination.
- Recruiting and selecting people at all levels who not only have the right technical skills, but the right attitudes and values. These are the kinds of people who are prepared to take personal accountability and ownership for their actions, are keen to develop and are open to learning.
- Developing people already in the system to reach their full potential. A systematic approach to talent management is essential. Substantial gains can be made by identifying the hidden talent that exists in most organisations, and giving such people the opportunities for development and growth. Remember that development takes place not only through formal training but through experience in work assignments and on projects.

Investing in people is as important as investing in physical infrastructure.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Manchester Airports Group (MAG) has decided to reshuffle its management team with the current CEOs of London Stansted **(Andrew Cowan)** and Manchester Airport **(Ken O'Toole)** swapping jobs and **Collette Roche** taking up the new position of chief of staff. MAG CEO, Charlie Cornish, said: "Both airports are about to embark on significant periods of development and investment, and Ken and Andrew are the right people to lead them during this critical time."

Andrea Pal is the new chief executive officer of Fraport Brasil, the subsidiary set up by Fraport AG to operate and develop Brazil's Fortaleza and Porto Alegre airports. Pal has served as deputy general manager and chief financial officer of St Petersburg-Pulkovo operator, Northern Capital Gateway, for the last seven years. She said: "Moving from one BRIC country in the northern hemisphere to another in the southern hemisphere is an exciting new challenge. I look forward to leading the Fraport Brasil team in South America's largest market. Our commitment is to create two modern, efficient and customer-oriented gateways."

Tim Clarke is the new chairman of Birmingham Airport in the UK, succeeding John Hudson OBE who is retiring after holding the position for the last 20 years. Long-standing resident of the Birmingham area, Clarke has extensive experience of the leisure and retail sectors.

In the US, **David Pekoske** has been sworn in as the seventh administrator of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). He is a former vice commandant of the US Coast Guard. ACI-NA president and CEO, Kevin Burke, says: "Assistant Secretary Pekoske's proven track record of mission-focused strategic management is essential in reinforcing the importance of a risk-based approach to aviation security."

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PEOPLE matters



Is small beautiful?

Terri Morrissey and Dr Richard Plenty reflect on the pros and cons of working in small organisations.

Ambitious young people often ask us whether it's better to work for a small organisation or to join a larger one. "Which would give me the best opportunities?" is probably the most asked question, quickly followed by "Which would give me the better prospects for growth and help develop my future career?"

As with most teasers, the answer is, 'it depends'. Not very satisfactory for someone wanting a definitive answer, but there are advantages and disadvantages associated with either option.

Large organisations, simply by being large, can offer many advantages. They are likely to offer more structured jobs and career development. You can switch roles to gain more experience in a variety of work areas without having to leave the organisation.

The downside is that the jobs you are given may be very specialised. And change can be so slow. For those with ambition, it can be frustrating and difficult to leave a mark or legacy when you feel you are being treated like a 'number' and people don't have the time to listen to you.

By contrast, smaller organisations provide the opportunity to make an immediate impact as one's success is easily visible. Small organisations are more agile and flexible; they require people to take more ownership and real accountability.

Sometimes people find they can be asked to take on an enormous breadth of responsibilities with potential for personal growth that they simply wouldn't have in a larger company. Longer term though, opportunities for promotion and development can be scarce and pay and benefits packages may be worse. And, of course, while success is more clearly visible, so is failure!

The ideal solution, of course, is to get the best of both worlds and gain experience in each type of organisation. This is becoming more of a realistic option in the airport sector as larger airport groups take over independent airports providing wider development opportunities.

And technology means small organisations are increasingly 'connected' to the outside world and open to learning. At ACI Europe's recent Regional Airports Conference and Exhibition (RACE) in Cork, we chaired a session on people engagement, and were struck by the standard of work being done by small airports such as Bristol in the UK.

When it comes to 'large or small', consider all the factors, including your life style and values before making your decision. A wise choice can pay off. Niall McCarthy took the opportunity to move from Dublin Airport to gain experience. He is now the managing director of Cork Airport, the winner of ACI Europe's Small Airports Award for 2017.

And as we are sure Niall himself would agree, not only does he have a challenging and rewarding role, but also he and his family now live in an attractive part of the Irish country. Small can indeed be beautiful!

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Robert Sinclair is to succeed Declan Collier as the CEO of London City Airport. Sinclair is currently the CEO of Bristol Airport but has decided to leave the position he has held since 2008 for the challenge of running London City Airport (LCY). He is expected to take up the role at the gateway on October 30.

Fernando Echegaray is the new director of international operations for Groupe ADP. Spanish born Echegaray, who joins from AENA, will manage and develop Groupe ADP's network of 23 airports in France and around the world, reporting directly to executive director in charge of international affairs for Groupe ADP, Antonin Beurrier.

Birmingham Airport in the UK is looking for a new chief executive after **Paul Kehoe's** decision to step down from the top job on July 12. Kehoe, a familiar face at aviation industry events across the globe, feels that it is time for "the next generation to take the business forward" after nine years at the helm.

Leeds Bradford Airport has appointed former airport fireman, **David Laws**, as its new chief executive. He succeeds John Parkin who is retiring, having substantially developed the UK airport during the last 10 years. "My passion is for airport development and ensuring that the customer journey is a truly great experience," says Laws.

Kevin Toland is to step down as chief executive of Irish airport operator, daa, later this year to take over the hot seat at the publicly quoted food group, ARYZTA AG. Toland, who became daa chief executive in January 2013, will join ARYZTA following a six-month notice period, or earlier, if agreed.

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PEOPLE matters



Searching for the truth

Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey reflect on the importance of evidence in people issues.

When it comes to people, nearly everyone claims to be an expert. Many of us consider ourselves to be excellent judges of character. Understanding other people's motivations and intentions is often seen as a matter of simple common sense.

Experienced managers in particular tend to be convinced that their view of their employees' attitudes and behaviours is correct. Not unreasonably, many will argue forcibly that if they weren't able to understand others, they would not have risen to positions of responsibility.

Indeed, many will say that they have a very clear insight into what motivates their people. "Trust me", they say, "I know what they're like!"

But common sense alone does not provide a good guide to human behaviour in large and complex systems. We may have a sound view of what motivates those closest to us, but this can be misleading in a wider context.

Our own views on others are limited by our personal experience, prejudices and perspective. People who work in airport organisations come from diverse backgrounds with values and attitudes shaped by gender, generation and ethnicities, which may differ markedly from our own.

In these types of circumstances, it can be easy for leaders and managers to misjudge a situation.

In our own work we have had experience of a situation with a large multi-national organisation where there was a high turnover of talented, young skilled engineers. The general view was that this could be remedied by better induction, training, more pay and staged career progression.

These were put in place at some cost, but the engineers still kept on leaving.

It was only when the evidence from employee survey data, turnover statistics and leaver interviews were put together that it became obvious that the real reason for people leaving was that there wasn't enough challenge in the job. People wanted more real responsibility rather than more support.

Evidence based approaches to organisation and people issues are the key to sustainable high performance. Measuring 'intangibles' brings them to life.

Collecting data on employee numbers, turnover and sickness absence is the starting point. This can be augmented with information on employee attitudes, behaviours and perceptions.

Modern data analytics allow this information to be used to show how these human factors are connected to, and drive, business performance and customer satisfaction.

The true value of an evidence-based approach though is that it allows us to challenge our own assumptions and beliefs.

San Diego International Airport uses people analytics imaginatively to encourage dialogue and discussion at a local level for just this purpose. Naples Airport has used the ACI AirPeople survey with great success to identify with precision the areas that need attention.

For in the end, false beliefs about people and organisations are even more damaging than ignorance. As Mark Twain said: "It ain't what you don't know that gets you into trouble. It's what you know for sure that just ain't so."

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Kimberly Becker has succeeded Thella Bowens as president and CEO of San Diego County Regional Airport Authority. The former director of San Jose International Airport enthuses: "This is an extraordinary opportunity that I am honoured to have. Thella has built a strong organisation and culture. Succeeding her allows me to leverage all that I have done in San Jose and to build on a very solid foundation. My excitement is mirrored in SAN's tagline – Let's GO!"

Berlin Brandenburg GmbH has a new CEO, **Engelbert Lütke Daldrup**, who has reportedly promised to lead the company "as transparently as possible". Daldrup quit his position as State Secretary in the Berlin Senate to take up the role, signing a three-year contract with the airport operator. Former acting CEO, Dr Karsten Mühlenfeld, has left the company.

Tulsa International Airport and RL Jones Jnr Airport have a new CEO, **Mark VanLoh**. He was the unanimous choice of the Tulsa Airports Improvement Trust (TAIT), whose members believe that his 26 years of airport leadership experience will serve the Oklahoma gateways well.

Heading through the outdoor is Salt Lake City Department of Airport's executive director, **Maureen Riley**, who is retiring on June 30 after more than a decade in charge. "She has been an incredible director of our airport during a historic era of passenger growth, and has been a steward of the facility's largest-ever construction project," said Salt Lake City Mayor, Jackie Biskupski.

Shannon Group, operator of Ireland's Shannon Airport, has shuffled the pack and promoted from within to make company secretary, **Mary Considine**, its new group deputy CEO for finance and corporate services; and group chief commercial officer, **Andrew Murphy**, the new managing director of Shannon Airport.

Sydney Airport has announced that **Kerrie Mather** has decided to retire as managing director and CEO. An international recruitment firm has been appointed to undertake a global search for a new CEO and she will stay onboard until a successor is found.

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PEOPLE matters



Expect the unexpected

Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey reflect on: Uncertainty.

We do our very best to predict the future. In the airport industry, for example, decisions to invest in major new infrastructure are not taken lightly. A thorough business case must be prepared before money is committed.

Passenger growth projections are reviewed, business scenarios developed and cash flow forecasts examined. Environmental and social impact studies are commissioned.

Yet in reality, these plans, forecasts and projections rarely turn out as expected. Who, for instance, could have foreseen that an exploding Icelandic volcano in 2010 would result in the largest air traffic shut down since the Second World War?

And who really knows what the impact of technological innovation, environmental considerations, security concerns or social and political change will be on future demand for air travel?

The fact is that we live in a 'VUCA' world – a world characterised by Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity – which makes the unexpected the real predictability.

We need to be prepared not only to expect the unexpected but also to have strategies for dealing with it.

Yet most people find dealing with uncertainty difficult. Rather than face up to VUCA realities, our tendency is to look for facts and evidence that support our preconceptions or to follow people who claim confidently that they alone have the answer. Are there other approaches that might be better?

Have the courage to experiment

Old mindsets and mental models don't always work when times are changing. As Peter Drucker says: "The greatest danger in times of turbulence is not the turbulence – it is to act with yesterday's logic." Innovative approaches may be required. Learn from others who have had similar experiences and be ready to try out new approaches.

Prepare for the worst

People have an inbuilt 'optimism bias', which means we don't like to think through worst case scenarios or indeed any potential outcomes we don't like. This positive tendency serves us well and keeps us healthy in everyday situations, but is unhelpful in times of crisis or uncertainty. 'Thinking the unthinkable' saves us time and helps us be prepared when things don't turn out as we'd hoped.

Build resilience and mental toughness

Why do some people and organisations persevere through difficulties and others give up? Research carried out to identify the characteristics which allow some people to thrive under pressure shows the importance of confidence, a sense of being in control and seeing unexpected change as an opportunity rather than a threat. These qualities can all be developed and learned.

Making plans for the future is sensible but we must be prepared for a wide range of possible outcomes and develop the capabilities to adjust and adapt speedily when the unexpected happens.

In a VUCA world, the only thing we should ever doubt is certainty.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

The aviation industry will lose another leading light on March 31 when **Thella Bowens** retires after 15 years as president and CEO of San Diego County Regional Airport Authority. Bowens, who plans returning "home" to Texas where she once worked and many members of her family reside, said: "I have passionately enjoyed my time here, and I am so very proud of our exemplary organisation and high-performing team."

Huntley Lawrence is the new director of aviation at the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, succeeding the retiring Thomas Bosco as the head of the US's largest airport system.

Atlanta City Council has confirmed **Roosevelt Council** as the new general manager of Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. "Roosevelt Council is the right person to lead our administration's efforts to ensure Hartsfield-Jackson retains its position as the world's leading passenger airport," said Atlanta Mayor, Kasim Reed.

Joseph Nardone is the new boss of Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport, succeeding Thomas Naughton who retired last year. Nardone will also be responsible for Willow Run Airport (YIP) in his capacity as CEO of Wayne County Airport Authority.

Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) has appointed **Alex Kwan King-fai** as its new executive director for engineering and technology, succeeding the retiring John Chai Sung-veng. Kwan will report to AAHK CEO, Fred Lam.

San Antonio Airport System has named **Russell Handy** as its new aviation director. Retired US Air Force general, Handy, will be responsible for overseeing the future success of San Antonio International Airport (SAT) and Stinson Municipal Airport.

Former fighter pilot and diplomat **Gratien Maire** is the new CEO of Groupe ADP subsidiary, ADP Ingénierie (ADPI). He succeeds **Olivier Berger** who will develop engineering and innovation for Groupe ADP after successfully turning around ADPI's performance and devising its new business plan.

Indianapolis Airport Authority's governing board has elected **Barbara Glass** as president and **Steve Dillinger** as vice president.

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PEOPLE matters



The human touch

Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey reflect on the importance of stakeholder engagement.

Walking into the Arrivals Hall at Dublin Airport's Terminal 2 last December was an uplifting experience. As the doors to the Hall slid open from the functional but rather soulless customs area, a wave of familiar festive tunes provided a wall of cheer for everyone, whether visiting the country or returning home for Christmas.

For the incoming passenger the warmth of the welcome was striking, the more so since the local community were taking the lead with adult choirs, choral societies, orchestras and even schools contributing to the entertainment.

There was a sense that people had turned out voluntarily in a spirited and concerted effort to make first impressions memorable.

The airport experience should be all about the joy of connecting people and places – and episodes like this remind us of that. Unfortunately, only too often all that gets remembered is the hassle of travel. Fears about personal safety, long lines at security and immigration, lost baggage, endless walks through buildings undergoing renovation – not to mention traffic to and from the airport – can all make the journey stressful and difficult for the passenger.

The human touch plays a major role in mitigating the strain and stress of travel. However, to do this well, day in and day out, is difficult to achieve. Everyone who works at an airport, whether employed by the airport itself, by airlines, contractors, concessionaires or government authorities have some part to play in the passenger experience, either directly or indirectly.

How can airport leaders ensure the human touch gets the attention it deserves given the number of players involved?

- Walk in the passengers' shoes and see things with their eyes. Map their journey through the airport; identify the bottlenecks and potential difficulties in interfaces with people. Seek passenger feedback, including ASQ data and complaints. Redesign where necessary to improve their experience
- Make the time and resources available to explain to all stakeholders the customer experience vision for the airport. Ensure training is in place for all stakeholders, not just direct employees. Aim to get people enthusiastic and engaged in the passenger experience. Involve them in the process, listen to their ideas and address any issues they may have

Leaders don't always give stakeholder engagement the priority it deserves. It can seem much less important than pressing operational, security and technical issues.

But improvements in passenger experience depend critically on the contributions of many different groups and all stakeholders have a role to play. Investing in the resources needed to bring stakeholders on board makes good sense.

While airports connect people with places, airport leaders connect stakeholders with the customer.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Philippe Rainville will become the new president and CEO of Aéroports de Montréal (ADM) on January 1, 2017, succeeding James Cherry, who retires at the end of 2016. He has served as ADM's vice-president of planning, engineering and construction since 2014 and therefore knows the airport well.

The former managing director of Tirana International Airport in Albania, **Andrea Gebbeken**, has joined the top table at Munich Airport as the managing director responsible for end-customer business, corporate security, and quality and project management.

Robert Gilbert is the new chief development officer of Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA). He will be responsible for leading and co-ordinating the planning and delivery of all elements of the LAWA capital programme including LAX's Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

London Heathrow has a new chief financial officer, **Javier Echave**, who has assumed the position permanently after a period as interim CFO. Since joining Heathrow (then BAA) in 2008, he has advised the board and chief executive on establishing the company's current capital structure and positioning Heathrow with a strong credit rating in the financial markets.

Bert van der Stege has been appointed vice president business development and chief commercial officer of Halifax International Airport Authority (HIAA), replacing Ian Arthur, who recently resigned from HIAA for family reasons.

London City Airport has recruited from within and named **Alison FitzGerald** as its new chief operating officer following the departure of Darren Grover. FitzGerald, who joined the airport in 2014 as chief information officer, takes on responsibility for all operational areas of the business across the terminal and airfield. She will also retain responsibility for technology.

Auckland Airport has announced the appointment of **Shakeel Adam** as its new general manager aeronautical commercial. He will start work at Auckland Airport in the New Year.

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PEOPLE matters



Learning from crises

Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey reflect on what we can learn from disasters following presentations made at the ACI World Annual General Assembly in Montréal.

On March 22nd this year, 16 people were killed and 150 injured in a terrorist attack at Zaventem Airport in Brussels.

The damage to the airport was profound. Reports at the time suggested that it would be closed for many months. Yet within 12 days a first flight had departed and in 72 days it was back to full capacity. The airport had achieved an amazing recovery from a massive blow.

Brussels is not the only example of a recent crisis that has provided major challenges for airport leaders and their people. Consider, for example, the devastation caused by the raging natural wildfires at Fort McMurray or the complexities associated with the extended crisis of the missing MH370 airliner.

Few of us would want to be caught up in such traumatic and extreme events. Yet invariably those involved have a powerful story to tell about what happened and how they managed. What lessons can be learned?

- Having an inspiring vision, mission and sense of purpose which everyone can buy into – a light at the end of the tunnel – becomes really important when times are difficult. It doesn't have to be complicated. In the Brussels case, a determination that the airport would 'come back stronger' proved a very effective rallying cry.
- A co-ordinated approach to communication is essential. In a world of social media and 24/7 news coverage, continuous professional support needs to be available as speculation and misinformation can swiftly fill any communications vacuum. The Malaysian authorities found that as soon as relevant and accurate information emerged, it needed to be communicated. A balance must be struck between 'rationality and humanity' in the tone of messaging.
- A decentralised management approach based on mutual trust is helpful. Natural leaders emerge, sometimes unexpectedly, in response to fast moving and rapidly changing local circumstances. It's important that the organisation gets behind these leaders and teams. In Brussels, empowered and agile teams provided the energy, commitment, ideas and capacity to deal with varying situations.
- Support for people is important. In situations such as Fort McMurray and Brussels, there is a human toll with emotional and physical exhaustion, fear, and anxiety very common. People may also have financial concerns. A combination of practical and psychological support is required, provided by managers, peers and sometimes professional psychologists and counsellors. Assistance has to be tailored to individual circumstances

These are tales of human spirit, strength and resilience. In a complex world where the unpredictable is becoming the norm, the lessons learnt from crises are directly relevant to the way we manage change and our everyday operations.

As Veronique Vogeleer, human resources and corporate communications director at Brussels Airport says: "It's the people that make the difference."

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

ACI-NA has unveiled **William (Bill) Vanecek**, director of aviation at Buffalo Niagara International Airport as its chair, succeeding Salt Lake City's Maureen Riley in the hot seat. "Bill brings the determination necessary to find solutions that ensure airports can keep up with the demands placed on them by their local communities. We look forward to continuing our work for the airport industry under Bill's leadership," says ACI-NA president and CEO, Kevin Burke.

North QLD Airports, which operates Cairns and Mackay airports in Australia, has named **Norris Carter** as its the new CEO, although he is not expected to take up the position until December. Carter, currently general manager aeronautical commercial at Auckland Airport, will succeed Kevin Brown who resigned in April to take up the role of chief executive at Perth Airport. North QLD Board chairman, Ross Rolfe, says: "We are excited by the experience that Norris brings to the role and believe he is the ideal candidate to drive future growth in the business by attracting new services to Cairns and Mackay airports as well as continuing to support our existing customers to grow their businesses."

Frank Miller has accepted an offer from TBI Airport Management (TBI) to oversee day-to-day operations as the executive director of Hollywood Burbank Airport. Aviation veteran Miller served as the aviation director of Florida's Pensacola Regional Airport for 22 years, although most recently held the top job at San Antonio International Airport. "Frank's strong background in the airport industry, along with his excellent reputation for performance and community involvement, make him eminently qualified to pick up the torch at Burbank," says Larry Gouldthorpe, president, TBI US Operations.

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PEOPLE matters



The value of respect

Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey provide their thoughts on: Respect.

Before making a final decision on recruiting someone for his senior team, James Cherry, president and CEO of Aéroports de Montréal, takes them to dinner at his local restaurant.

He's not checking their table manners, conversation skills or knowledge of fine cuisine. Rather he takes note of how they treat the waiter. Did they treat the waiter with respect?

Jim, who is retiring later this year after a highly successful career, only hires those who do. He believes that the ability to engage stakeholders is the cornerstone of successful leadership and the key to long-term success.

Being able to motivate, influence and persuade others depends on interacting with them as human beings with different and distinct personalities and circumstances. This means treating other people, whatever their role, background or level, with respect.

Cherry's viewpoint is consistent with current thinking on organisational leadership and is an important building block for airports aspiring to sustainable high performance:

- Leading and inspiring others in times of change requires airport leaders to be good communicators. They must be able to explain things to people at all levels in their organisation and listen carefully to what they have to say.
- The relentless focus on the 'customer' required for airports to be successful needs people to work together seamlessly. Collaboration and co-operation are essential for both consistent, repeatable operational performance and innovation. 'Respect' provides the behavioural underpinning for better organisation connectivity.
- Casting the net widely and without prejudice when recruiting and selecting people makes it far easier to attract and retain the best talent. An organisational environment where differences are valued, facilitates this approach.

Unfortunately, 'respect for others' is still too often put on the back burner, particularly where the stakes are high and there is intense pressure for results.

In a competitive world – whether it be business, sport or politics – there is always the temptation to shred the reputation of peers, colleagues and competitors in an attempt to gain immediate advantage.

Indeed, some businesses achieve high growth and excellent financial results – for a time – with few concessions to their customers. In our own sector, there are many airports which focus nearly all their efforts on infrastructure and pay very little attention to their people.

In practice, this kind of approach is rarely sustainable. Too many enemies are made and too many bridges burnt. Apparently simple solutions to complex issues are found not to work in practice. There is a strong resistance to change.

So making the effort to develop a culture of respect is a much better option. It takes time and may require investing in education, training and personal and professional development to give people the understanding, skills and confidence to be able to contribute fully.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

The search is on for a new CEO at Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport after **Thomas Naughton** announced his decision to retire at the end of September. Naughton, who has been at Wayne County Airport Authority (WCAA) for 14 years and CEO since 2012, says: "It has been an honour and a privilege to lead one of the best teams of aviation professionals in the world."

Airports Authority of India has appointed **Dr Guruprasad Mohapatra** as its new chairman. Mohapatra, who moves from the position of Joint Secretary in the Department of Commerce for the Indian government, has worked extensively in the power sector, urban development and industry.

Vijay Bathija is the new chief executive officer of Canada's John C Munro Hamilton International Airport. Bathija comes to the gateway from the Air Canada Leisure Group, which includes Air Canada Vacations and Air Canada rouge.

Elsewhere in North America, **Justin Erbacci** has been appointed deputy executive director – chief innovation and technology officer for Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA); **Amy Gonzalez** is the new general counsel of San Diego County Airport Authority; and **Darryl Jones** has joined Denver International Airport as its new chief real estate officer.

Swedish airport operator, Swedavia, has announced that **Jonas Abrahamsson** will be their next president and CEO, although he may not be onboard until January 2017. His appointment ends Swedavia's search for a full-time president and CEO since Torborg Chetkovich left in December 2015. "Jonas has the right background and previous experience to lead Swedavia in a time of investment needs, now facing the company, in conjunction with increasing air traffic," says Åke Svensson, chairman of the board at Swedavia.

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PEOPLE matters



Complacency – the enemy of growth

Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey provide their thoughts on: Taking responsibility for your own development.

Past performance is no guarantee of future success in a fast changing world. Yet many of us are reluctant to invest time and effort in our own development unless we are compelled to do so.

Why risk change if what you have done already has been successful and taken you to your current level? How much time and effort would it take to learn any new skills required? Would a new way of doing things work as well in practice?

These are all legitimate questions. Yet we know that top performers in any field constantly learn, adjust and refine their approach to make sure they stay on top of their game. The world of competitive sport, for example, provides many excellent examples of the benefits of adopting a 'continuous improvement' mindset.

The same principles are relevant in the workplace. 'Learning as you go' provides competitive advantages.

If you stand still and take little interest in your self-development, you run the risk of being left behind as technology and the world move on. By the time you are forced to make changes, you may be left playing 'catch up' with too much to learn in too short a time. Skills, which were once relevant, become obsolete, and performance deteriorates.

Age should not be a barrier to learning. Research shows that whilst some people are naturally more open to learning and new experiences than others, we all have the capacity to learn new things throughout our lives.

The human brain retains its ability to form new neural connections and learn at any age, so-called neuro plasticity. A lifetime of experience provides a rich database for reference. The key is to treat personal development as an ongoing priority on a par with operational delivery.

This is easier said than done. To carve out the time for personal development in a busy working environment requires considerable determination and mental toughness. Psychologist professor, Peter Clough, calls this the 'penicillin of personal development'.

We see the following as critical:

- Take control of your time to make space for learning and don't get bogged down in trivia. Opportunities for learning are not confined to training courses. Spend a few minutes at the end of each day systematically reflecting on lessons learned from work experiences
- Develop the confidence to seek out feedback, listen to what others have to say and try out new ways of working. People who are embarrassed by being wrong or making mistakes don't learn
- Be persistent – stick at something and keep practising it until you get it right!

Don't rest on your laurels or you run the risk of getting left behind!

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ) has named **Diane Papaianni** as its new general manager of New Jersey Airports, which includes Newark Liberty International Airport. Papaianni, Newark Liberty's deputy general manager since 2014, replaces **Richard Heslin**, who is retiring from the agency after a 45-year career. In her new role, Papaianni will be responsible for both Newark Liberty and Teterboro airports and will oversee plans for a new $2.3 billion Terminal A at Newark Liberty. She joined the agency in 1979 and has held a number of senior management positions at Newark Liberty since then.

Two other PANYNJ veterans also are moving into new roles. **Doug Stearns**, deputy general manager of LaGuardia Airport for the last two years, is succeeding Papaianni as deputy general manager of New Jersey Airports. **Anthony Vero**, LaGuardia's manager of physical plant and redevelopment, has been appointed the new deputy general manager at LaGuardia.

New Heathrow hire, **Ali Jafarey**, is believed to be the world's first airport cycle officer and is tasked with persuading more of the 16,500 staff that live within a five-kilometre distance of the gateway to ride bikes to work.

Sydney Airport CEO, **Kerrie Mather**, is the new president of ACI Asia-Pacific, succeeding the retiring **Dennis Chant**. "As president of ACI Asia-Pacific, I will continue to work closely with the Regional Board and the Regional Office in promoting professional excellence in airport management and operations," she promised.

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PEOPLE matters



The toxic triangle

Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey provide their thoughts on: The dark side of performance management on wellbeing at work.

How many of us have worked in organisations where workloads are high and we feel under continuous pressure to perform, yet there seems to be little consideration of us as people?

Many organisations faced with pressures from their shareholders for quick results end up by default with an extreme performance culture. Extremely ambitious non-negotiable targets are set from the top, with high rewards for success and correspondingly high penalties for failure.

Across the organisation there are tight deadlines and relentless time pressures. Immediate results are all that seem to matter.

The best leaders find ways to use these pressures positively to stimulate, energise and inspire those who work with them. They are focused and driven to achieve results, but at the same time respect their people and take their personal circumstances into account. They listen to their staff knowing this will help get sustainable results.

Unfortunately, not all leaders are that enlightened. Some people are primarily attracted to the power and status associated with leadership roles. The pressures of an 'extreme performance culture' to get immediate results can reinforce any tendencies they have to be arrogant, manipulative, and bullying. It can also encourage them to cut corners and engage in dubious business practices.

This is the dark side of performance management. In circumstances like these, many employees may not dare to challenge or speak out. Some feel that they don't have the power to effect change. Some may be afraid, preferring to keep their heads down for career reasons. Others will have low self-esteem.

And there are always those who secretly admire their dysfunctional leaders for appearing certain and confident – and go along with them whatever they say.

The 'toxic triangle' of susceptible followers, over-the top leadership and extreme performance culture is a very dangerous combination. It leads to stress, burnout, inflexibility, lack of innovation, and suboptimal, non-sustainable performance. Enron provides a classic example where it ultimately resulted in the failure of an entire corporation.

How can it be avoided? All three sides of the toxic triangle need to be addressed:

- Develop an ethical culture where how things are done matters as well as what is achieved. Use balanced scorecards to measure performance and encourage open dialogue.
- Keep leaders' feet on the ground. Watch out for signs of hubristic behaviour and ensure leaders are held to account. Ensure governance checks and balances are in place.
- Develop courageous followers. Encourage people to be brave, forthright and speak out where necessary – and develop their mental toughness and resilience.

As Anatole France said: "It is the certainty that they possess the truth that makes men cruel."

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

ACI World has announced the appointment of **Stefano Baronci** as director of economics and programme development. He joins from IATA and counts serving as a senior policy manager for ACI Europe and secretary general of Italian airport association, Assaeroporti, among his previous positions.

Former chief strategy officer of the MAG Group and managing director of Manchester Airport, **Andrew Cowan**, is the new CEO of London Stansted Airport. Going in the other direction is Andrew Harrison who has left the role of managing director of Stansted to replace Cowan as chief strategy officer at MAG, based in Manchester.

The Port of Seattle has made two key appointments – **Dave Soike** has been promoted from aviation director of facilities and capital programs to the recently created position of chief operating officer (COO) and **Ron Peck** has been taken on as tourism director. Peck's responsibilities include finding "innovative ways" of boosting visitor numbers.

According to an article in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, new Philadelphia International Airport CEO, **Rochelle 'Chellie' Cameron**, has three priorities –improving customer service and the passenger experience, making best use of the airport's existing facilities, and continuing with the airport expansion plan.

Martin Langaas is joining Avinor as its new manager for cargo development on June 1. He currently works in project and development manager position with Collicare. Elsewhere, **Leslie Fella** has been hired as the new marketing and air service director at Evansville Regional Airport in Vanderburgh County, Indiana.

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PEOPLE matters



Nurturing talent

Terri Morrissey and Dr Richard Plenty provide their thoughts on: Entrepreneurial spirit and innovation.

Victor Kiam once said: "Entrepreneurs are simply those who understand there is little difference between obstacle and opportunity and are able to turn both to their advantage."

The American entrepreneur succinctly sums up the positive mindset and 'can do' attitude often associated with the entrepreneurial spirit.

At a time when financial pressures on airports are so intense, the creativity, resilience, enthusiasm and innovation shown by entrepreneurs are qualities which are essential and ideally should be available 'in-house'. So what can we learn from them?

Firstly, entrepreneurs are skilled in both identifying opportunities and in capitalising on them. Consider the case of Canadian, Kyle MacDonald. Starting with one red paper clip, MacDonald wondered whether it would be possible to make enough trades to eventually buy a house. One year and one day after he started his adventure, he made his fourteenth incremental online trade for a three bedroom house in Kipling, Saskatchewan.

His learning from the experience was, "Start small, think big, have fun and get started! If you really want it, you can get it."

Secondly, entrepreneurs share a number of personal characteristics including; a high desire to be self-reliant; an openness to new experiences; a 'passion for action', to experiment and try things out; high levels of self-efficacy; and a preparedness to work hard.

Those who are successful in growing sustainable businesses also manage to balance their aspirations for independence with a willingness to build collaborative networks and partnerships with a wide and diverse set of stakeholders.

So how well do established organisations – including airports – encourage people who have this kind of creative approach to join their ranks and make a difference?

Unfortunately, many traditional organisations are better at killing ideas off at birth than encouraging independent thinking and innovation. Bureaucracy, concern for hierarchy and status, the "not invented here" syndrome, protection of the status quo and demarcation lines mitigate against new ideas and change.

Many 'lifers' can become stuck in their ways. Such organisations lack the experience, skills and calibre of staff needed to foster creativity.

So what can be done to encourage an entrepreneurial spirit if you need to find creative ways of generating revenue, delighting customers or improving effectiveness?

- Conduct a 'positive review'. Take stock: what's worked well so far? What's stopping you from being more entrepreneurial?
- Identify, develop and, if necessary, recruit people with an entrepreneurial mindset, skills and experience and support and reward them for trying out new approaches
- Encourage people to continually look outside for new ideas and best practice

See obstacles not just as problems but as challenges and opportunities for growth.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

It has been a case of all change at Queensland Airports Limited (QAL) over the past few months with the appointment of a new CEO and COO. **Chris Mills** has succeeded the retiring Dennis Chant and long-time friend of both ACI and *Airport World* in the top job. And **Marion Charlton**, who has been with Gold Coast Airport for 11 years, has been promoted to chief operations officer. Mills says it is an honour to follow in the footsteps of Chant. "Since joining the company, I have been impressed by the many talented people we have in the business, and the exciting opportunities we are pursuing," he notes.

Former airline man, **Mariusz Szpikowski**, is the new general director of Polish airport operator, PPL, and director of the country's capital city gateway, Warsaw Chopin Airport. He replaces Michał Kaczmarzyk who resigned from the position. Szpikowski began his professional career at international auditing companies, KPMG and Ernst & Young.

David Malek is new chief financial officer of Brisbane Airport Corporation (BAC). He formerly served as the company's treasurer. BAC CEO and managing director, Julieanne Alroe, said: "David is a highly experienced senior financial executive whose career has spanned the infrastructure, energy, financial services and property sectors."

Sergey Furs is the new CEO of Northern Capital Gateway, the operator of St Petersburg's Pulkovo Airport, following the departure of predecessor, Sergey Emdin. Furs has held the position of procurement and warehousing director with the group since 2010.

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PEOPLE matters



Happy talk!

Terri Morrissey and Dr Richard Plenty provide their thoughts on: The importance of recognition.

We always find it surprising that so few airport leaders take the time to recognise and celebrate success – and we don't mean chartering private jets to go to the Caribbean!

Millions has been spent on research studies on 'motivation' and 'engagement'. Yet, with hardly any expenditure at all, a whole culture can be shifted by changing mindset to a more positive approach: emphasising gratitude instead of blame, moving from fault finding and put-downs to positive reinforcement and compliments, and building on strengths rather than weaknesses.

And it really does not take that much to recognise someone's efforts, to celebrate success and to express gratitude. Simple things like saying 'well done', 'thank you', and 'I really appreciate it' are phrases which can make all the difference to how people feel.

Of course these compliments must be genuine and based on real achievements to have an impact. Still, a small shift in this direction can make a huge difference. As Mark Twain said: "I can live two months on a good compliment!"

We were once asked to coach a highly driven CEO who wanted to understand why his staff were so disinclined to go the extra mile for him. He achieved excellent business results but there was a constant turnover of staff leaving for other apparently less attractive opportunities. He really did not know why.

We asked him when he had last praised a member of his team for a job well done. When had he surprised someone with a birthday card?

When had he last taken the time to have a coffee with someone and not just talk about work? Had he ever taken time out to celebrate his own personal achievements?

Evidence from the field of positive psychology, made popular over recent years by Martin Seligman, an American psychologist, shows how accentuating the positive can help build confidence and competence.

Taking the time to reflect on success – and the competencies and qualities that are needed to achieve it – is time well spent. Altruistic behaviour has been shown to improve the resilience and health of the giver as well as the receiver.

Anne Herbert is accredited with first coining the term 'random act of kindness' when she wrote it on a napkin in a café in Sausalito. It's an idea, which has been picked up by social media and has resulted in initiatives which benefit the wider community.

Never underestimate the long-term impact of thinking and caring about others. Invest time and effort in recognising and celebrating success if you want to achieve sustainable performance and encourage commitment.

And in that spirit, we'd like to congratulate editor, Joe Bates, and the *Airport World* team on 20 successful years of publication!

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Halifax International Airport Authority has made two new appointments – **Ian Arthur** joining as its new chief commercial officer and **Glen Boone** as director of real estate and commercial development. Arthur will be responsible for overseeing strategies to increase flights, passengers and cargo tonnage at Halifax Stanfield International Airport and will lead the gateway's efforts to grow its non-aeronautical revenues.

Olivier Berger is the new CEO of ADP Ingénierie (ADPI), the engineering and design subsidiary of French airport operator, Aéroports de Paris. Berger, 50, is a qualified engineer from the École Polytechnique et des Pontset-Chaussée and has managed a number of large-scale infrastructure development projects over the past decade. He succeeded Guillaume Sauvé as ADPI's chief operating officer in January 2015.

Mike Stewart has been named vice president of airline business development at the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) and will succeed **Mark Treadaway** as vice president for air service planning and development when he retires. Treadaway has served MWAA for 24 years, prompting its executive vice president and chief revenue officer, Jerome Davis, to note: "Mark's leadership has been responsible for helping make Dulles a major gateway for international travel."

Going through the outdoor is **Maarten de Groof** who has announced that he will leave his position as chief commercial officer of the Schiphol Group on April 1, 2016, after eight years in the role. Schiphol Group's president and CEO, Jos Nijhuis, said: "Maarten de Groof has been of great value for Schiphol. He shared his enthusiasm and knowledge and that has been very good for the airport."

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PEOPLE matters



All together now

Terri Morrissey and Dr Richard Plenty provide their thoughts on: Cutting bureaucracy by empowering people.

An international airport can be an exciting place to work with lots of variety and the knowledge that connecting people and places is a 'grand endeavour' and one to be proud of.

Why is it then that the results of ACI Europe's AirPeople employee survey show that airport staff rate their working environment a little less favourably than those in other sectors?

Bureaucracy is the major cause of their frustration and concern. Airport staff are generally very positive about their industry and their employers but dislike the slow convoluted decision-making and inefficient work organisation that they experience.

Perhaps this should not surprise us. Many airports are, or have recently been, state owned entities which are rarely stellar examples of efficiency and effectiveness.

The industry is also heavily regulated with a strong safety culture, which means that formal procedures are rightly required in many safety-critical areas.

Bureaucracy is not the same as necessary procedures. Many bureaucratic procedures develop over time from well-intentioned efforts to standardise and simplify highly complex processes. Quite often these "grow legs", get added to and outgrow their usefulness.

Steps are continually added to try to cater for all eventualities. These are rarely updated or dropped as time and technology move on. Unnecessary meetings and slow decision-making result.

People can hide behind the rules and a bureaucratic mindset can set in. Commonly heard phrases such as "I can't do that unless it's in writing", "I'll have to wait to ask my manager", and "that's not my job", are used to avoid taking responsibility. This does little to help customer focus, innovation, effectiveness, or speedy response.

'Good intentions' should not be an excuse for burdening those parts of the business, which need agility, flexibility and the ability to respond rapidly to changing circumstances.

Encouraging and developing a mindset of initiative taking and proactivity can lead to better results, lower costs and help build a more entrepreneurial organisation.

Allowing people to think for themselves and have the courage to take decisions can bring about a more engaged and committed workforce.

This can be helped along by:

- Ensuring that people understand the overall vision and direction of the company and the role they play
- Freeing people up to do their jobs so they have the authority, responsibility and skills, without the necessity for constant supervision and control
- Encouraging people to work together and across boundaries to continuously simplify and improve processes and get rid of redundant practices

People who feel that they have some control over their work are more likely to be positive about their organisations, express higher levels of engagement and perform to higher standards.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

IATA is looking for a new director general and CEO following **Tony Tyler's** announcement that he will retire in June 2016 after serving five years in the position. He says: "I believe it will be time for me to retire and leave the organisation. It is a great privilege and responsibility to lead IATA, and I am proud of what the IATA team is achieving during my term of office. I remain fully committed until my successor is appointed in June next year." Before joining IATA, Tyler was chief executive of Cathay Pacific Airways in Hong Kong.

Stobart Aviation – which operates London Southend Airport and also Carlisle Lake District Airport – has appointed two aviation industry specialists to spearhead its operations. Former Luton Airport managing director, **Glyn Jones**, is its new CEO and ex-Cardiff Airport boss, **Jon Horne**, its chief operating officer.

Darryn Holder has joined HOK's Aviation & Transportation practice as senior vice president and regional leader in London. A recognised industry leader, Holder brings 27 years of international planning and design experience to HOK's A+T clients. He will focus on project opportunities in Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

Warren Jones is the new director of TIACA. He is based at TIACA's Miami headquarters and reports directly to secretary general, Doug Brittin. Jones brings over 18 years' air cargo experience to his new post, including senior roles at IATA, Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport and Chapman Freeborn.

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PEOPLE matters



Give us a break

Terri Morrissey and Dr Richard Plenty provide their thoughts on: The importance of taking a break from the digital world.

When was the last time you went on a holiday without your phone, iPad, iPod, laptop or other electronic communication devices?

When did you last have a real holiday where you could switch off from work related issues; where you were not contacted by some member of your team or your boss; where you had to become involved in some 'urgent' decision, discussion, problem, procedure, people matter?

When did you wake up in the morning to greet the day, not expecting to see an email, text, tweet, diary reminder or red-flagged item?

There was a time when people who went on holiday actually went on holiday. Organisations had developed a system called 'acting up'. This involved someone on the team, a potential successor or report, stepping into the holiday taker's role. They took over the position and made all the decisions in the other's absence.

This system had a number of advantages:

- It gave the 'acting up' person the development opportunity to operate at the level above them, making decisions, taking the responsibility
- The system ensured cover for key operations
- The 'holidaymaker' could 'switch off' and enjoy their holiday with their family and friends and return to the job refreshed

This practice is rare today. What tends to happen now is that people never 'switch off'; they are on constant call; their physiological state does not get as refreshed.

Alex Soojung-Kim Pang points out in his book *The Distraction Addiction* that our desire to remain connected at all times has become a stress-inducing burden.

Other experts agree. "We have been seduced by distraction," says psychologist Daniel Goleman. "We are being pulled away from paying attention to the things that enrich our lives."

Intrusive technology has created a situation whereby we can be available at all times and in all places. The UK communications regulator Ofcom's statistics show that people spend more time looking at media than they do asleep.

Medical concerns are being expressed about the increasing adverse health effects such as obesity and diabetes. CIPD research shows that people have less downtime, are more stressed and experience burnout more frequently at work than in the past.

What can we do about it? Well, why not bring back succession planning in the form of 'acting up' so we can take our holidays in peace; Bring in workplace policies to insist people take their holidays and ban contacting them except in an emergency; and trust those back at the ranch to cope!

By doing so we build organisation and individual resilience, enhance the talent pipeline and encourage true engagement and trust.

As Seneca the Younger said over 2,000 years ago: "The love of bustle is not industry, it is only the restlessness of a hunted mind".

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Eric Dumas is the new chief executive of Aéroport de Tahiti (ADT), succeeding Frédéric Mor who has taken up a new role at the HQ of Egis Airport Operation in France. Dumas has worked as the operations manager of ADT since leaving Lyon-Bron Airport in 2013. Egis has a 19% stake in ADT.

Melbourne Airport has announced the appointment of **Simon Gandy** as its acting chief executive officer. The appointment follows the departure of former CEO, Chris Woodruff, who officially left the role at the end of June.

Vienna Airport's executive directors **Julian Jäger** and **Günther Ofner** have had their contracts extended to 2021 by the Austrian gateway's Supervisory Board. Both men were appointed in 2011 and their deals were due to expire in September 2016.

Mark Reis, managing director of the Port of Seattle's Aviation Division and long time friend of *Airport World* is to retire in early 2016. He has worked for the Port of Seattle for 27 years, the last 11 of them in the hot seat. "Mark's dedication to the Port of Seattle, the airport, and the people of this region has helped us manage both the recent record-breaking growth at the airport and the economic downturn before that," said Port of Seattle CEO, Ted Fick.

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PEOPLE matters



Building bridges

Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey discuss the importance of co-operation, collaboration and partnerships.

A quotation widely attributed to Sir Isaac Newton, "Men build too many walls and not enough bridges" greets visitors to the lobby of the Aéroports de Paris (ADP) Customer Service Academy.

The words may be around 300 years old, yet the sentiment remains valid today.

Effective co-operation and partnerships are the keys to creating value, optimising efficiency and minimising risk in large complex systems. For example, Jeff Poole director general of CANSO has spoken of the need for cross border collaboration across the air traffic system.

Most people would accept that working together not only provides the opportunity for improved organisational performance, but also reduces conflict and stress. Why then can collaboration be so difficult?

The reasons are not hard to determine. Airport systems involve many different organisations, which have to work together to achieve their shared goal of transporting people safely. Each has their own set of goals and objectives and often just don't have the time, the capability or will to focus on issues other than operational 'business as usual'.

Furthermore, a longer term perspective – and a degree of patience – is necessary to allow people to invest their time in building trust, developing relationships and ensuring the quality of communication and information sharing necessary for effective cooperation.

Efforts to bring multiple stakeholders together on key issues – for example in Airport Collaborative Decision Making (ACDM) – have tended to focus on technological and infrastructural solutions. Huge investment has gone into designing systems to "talk to each other" and organisations such as IATA, CANSO and EUROCONTROL have issued a mandate for European airports to comply with a collaborative approach. Despite this, gains have sometimes been difficult to achieve.

It is on the 'people' side where most work remains to be done. An interesting initiative, the EU FP7 PROSPERO project (16 organisations across eight countries led by Trinity College Dublin), analyses risk from a whole systems perspective. The research has shown that effective collaboration requires:

- A whole system approach: taking into account the 'socio-technical' system and understanding the risks associated with new technology and change
- Sharing information and knowledge: ensuring that relevant information is available to the right people in a timely, understandable format at key process and decision points
- Building social cohesion: ensuring efforts are made to build trust, encourage interdependent working, and ensure mutual respect and accountability

The quality of communication and dialogue is key to success, and this can require establishing platforms and linkages to facilitate the exchange of ideas between organisations and departments.

Our own practical experience demonstrates the importance of getting people together in the same location to work through issues as early as possible, establishing common structures and processes, building a shared vision and common goal, and developing conversation skills. Build bridges, not walls!

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

The Los Angeles Board of Airport Commissioners (BOAC) has unanimously approved the nomination of Oakland International Airport director, **Deborah Ale Flint**, as the next executive director of Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA).

BOAC president Sean Burton said: "Deborah Ale Flint is the absolute right person to build on what has been accomplished by LAWA and to lead this organisation to the next level of world-class airports with sustained excellence.

"She is a rising star in the airport sector and has direct and relevant experience that will serve her well at LAWA."

Ale Flint's appointment is subject to confirmation by the Los Angeles City Council. If confirmed, she will succeed Gina Marie Lindsey, who will retire on July 1 after a 39-year career, 33 working in the aviation industry, including eight years at LAWA.

Elsewhere, UK airport operator, MAG, has appointed **Rosemarie Andolino** to the newly created role of CEO and president of MAG US. The former Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Aviation will oversee the development of MAG's airport services business in North America where it aims to work with airports to develop and operate terminal and retail solutions, passenger lounges and car parking facilities.

In other news, Heathrow's new CFO is **Michael Uzielli**; **Gisela Shanahan** is the new CFO/executive vice president of finance at Denver International Airport; and **David Au Ho-cheung** is the new executive director of property development at Airport Authority Hong Kong.

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AW

PEOPLE matters



The good, the bad and the ugly

Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrisey provide their thoughts on: The customer service role of frontline staff.

Seemingly insignificant events can result in long-lasting memories and stories to be told, both favourable and unfavourable.

Two recent personal interactions brought home to us how attitudes and behaviours of frontline staff towards the customer can lead to totally different customer experiences – and ultimately influence future commercial decisions.

In the first case, the scene was the women's restroom in a well-known London hotel. One of the authors, Terri, noticed that the soap dispenser was empty. A male attendant was fixing the adjoining sink dispenser. She mentioned the lack of soap and asked for his assistance. He replied that his task was to repair the broken dispenser and told her that she would have to talk to housekeeping about the soap, as that was their job. He seemed indifferent to her immediate plight and focused solely on his task.

The second incident took place in Terminal 2 at Heathrow Airport two hours later. On arrival at the airport, Terri needed to make an urgent call to a business colleague but found that her phone was not picking up a Vodafone signal.

She approached a friendly looking woman at one of the check-in desks and asked her if the signal was OK. The woman asked a number of her colleagues if their phones were working, but none had Vodafone. Refusing to accept defeat, the woman then phoned her mother who lived nearby and learnt that the Vodafone signal had been erratic over the last few days.

She then handed Terri her own phone and suggested she use it to call her business colleague. When this number turned out to be busy, she told Terri to leave a message for her colleague to call the phone back and she would explain the situation. This all happened within five minutes.

These two stories illustrate how customer experience is very often the outcome of the interaction between the customer and the behaviour of the person in the frontline. The key behaviours that differentiate poor from outstanding experiences are:

- Taking responsibility for the customer and not just the task. It's important to make time for the customer even when under pressure
- Empathy, listening and concern for the customer's dilemma
- Creativity, humour and the smile ☺
- Using a problem-solving approach
- And...going the extra mile

Competent and confident employees and stakeholders focused on the customer create the real unique customer proposition.

Never underestimate the impact of friendly, engaged, trained, customer-focused staff on reputation and ultimately the bottom line!

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

John Aitken has been promoted to assistant director of aviation for Mineta San José International Airport (SJC). He has served as acting assistant director of aviation since 2013 and deputy director of aviation – operations at Silicon Valley's airport since 2002, and he has been with SJC since 1993. "After a national search, I'm pleased to announce the right candidate for SJC's assistant director of aviation has been working alongside me for the past several years," enthused director of aviation, Kim Becker Aguirre.

Abu Dhabi Airports has appointed **Mohamed Mubarak Al Mazrouei** as its new CEO, succeeding Tony Douglas who announced that he was leaving earlier this year. According to Abu Dhabi's airport operator, Al Mazrouei possesses considerable experience in major infrastructure projects, and in the aviation and transportation sectors. Douglas is returning home to the UK to work as chief executive of defence and support at the Ministry of Defence.

In the UK, former Cardiff International Airport CEO, **Jon Horne**, has been appointed interim managing director of London Southend Airport; **Ken O'Toole** has been promoted to the position of managing director of Manchester Airport; and London Gatwick has named **Raymond Melee** as its new director of development, responsible for taking its £1 billion investment programme forward.

Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) executive director, **Gina Marie Lindsey**, is to retire. After eight years in the LAWA hot seat and 33 years working in the aviation industry, Lindsey believes the time is right "to move on to other adventures" this spring. "This is an appropriate time for a transition," says Lindsey. "The next LAWA executive director will be able to take the Airports Development Program through its next major phase, its next round of projects that will last at least 10 years."

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AW

PEOPLE matters



Developing risk awareness

Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey provide their thoughts on: The psychology of risk management.

Airports that manage risk transparently well are more likely to be attractive to investors and better able to attract the capital they need to develop.

The ability to assess, manage and take well judged risk lies at the heart of successful business leadership, but to do so well is a challenge. Whilst there is an excellent body of work on risk management focusing on the objective assessment of risk and how this can be most effectively managed and controlled, managing 'mindset' remains difficult.

Commercial organisations can struggle to ensure that peoples' attitudes and behaviours strike a sensible balance between excessive caution and reckless adventure. Too wary, and the business may fall behind; too risky, and ethics may be compromised and financial disaster could ensue.

The aviation industry has long been expert in finding ways of minimising operational, safety and security risks through the use of standardised processes, procedures and protocols which have a bedrock of 'non-negotiable' operating practices. However, as the industry continues its shift out of public ownership and becomes increasingly commercial and competitive, a different approach is required for non-safety critical systems.

Managing risk in these circumstances requires an understanding of psychology and the factors which influence individual decision-making rather than focus on regulation and organisation procedures. Initiative, pro-activity, entrepreneurial spirit and empowerment are all desirable features of the high performance organisation. These features can be stifled by unnecessary bureaucracy.

People's propensity for risk-taking depends on the nature of the situation – the size of the risk, the degree of choice, and the likely consequences. It is also shaped by:

- Organisation culture: The organisation's values and reward system, exemplified by the role model behaviours of leaders, managers and peers.
- The perceived risk: This is likely to be influenced by recent runs of 'success' or 'failure' (those on a winning streak take more risks), publicity, and emotional cues.
- Personality and risk appetite: People fall into different 'risk types' with different styles and approaches to taking risk, depending on their need for excitement, their tolerance of uncertainty and ambiguity and how anxious they become when faced with the unknown.

The key to managing risk in a high performance culture is to develop an awareness of it and thus raise the standard of 'risk intelligence' in the organisation. This can be done by encouraging greater transparency, openness and dialogue.

Building awareness of individual propensity to take risks provides an excellent starting point to help identify and review those situations where risk judgements are critical. Breadth and depth of knowledge and relevant expertise helps people to be more objective, confident and sound in their judgements.

Invest in developing risk awareness, and reap the returns!

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Melbourne Airport CEO, **Chris Woodruff**, has served notice of his intention to leave his position by June 30, 2015, at the latest. Woodruff, who has led operator Australia Pacific Airports Corporation (APAC) for seven-and-a-half years, believes that with the airport's new-look Terminal 4 set to open shortly the time is right to step aside and let a new CEO lead the next phase of the gateway's expansion.

Munich Airport's president and CEO, **Dr Michael Kerkloh**, has announced that his "long-haul flight" at the gateway will continue for at least another two years after agreeing to the supervisory board request to remain in office until the end of 2018.

Denver International Airport has made two key senior appointments after naming two new executive vice presidents (EVP). **Ken Greene** has been selected as the new chief operating officer EVP who will lead the business unit that includes airport infrastructure management, technologies, airport operations, the hotel and transit center and special projects. **Bhavesh A Patel** is the airport's new chief revenue officer EVP in charge of the commercial, concessions and real estate business unit.

Heathrow Airport Holdings has named **Michael Uzielli** as its new chief financial officer. He is currently finance director for British Gas and will succeed the outgoing José Leo in March. At British Gas, Uzielli gained a reputation for driving revenue growth and for building strong relationships with the government and energy industry regulators.

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AW

PEOPLE matters



Getting the message across

Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey provide their thoughts on: motivation and performance.

ACI World's recent Airport Human Resources training and development course in Kuala Lumpur provided a great opportunity for us to hear about and reflect on some of the practical challenges facing airport leaders.

High on the list of issues confronting participants was how to ensure the continuing motivation of both employees and contractors to perform to a high standard, particularly in a cost-constrained environment. In many operational areas, notably security, this is a matter of immediate importance.

So what can airport leaders do to maintain motivation and high performance?

Explain what and why

Many performance issues arise because people don't know what they are supposed to do or why their contribution is important. Does everyone understand where their role fits in to the overall business, what standards are expected and why?

Give examples of what constitutes outstanding performance and explain the consequences of non-performance. Quite often individuals do not realise that their non-performance can have consequences for others, especially customers.

For example, not turning up on time for a handover shift on a security line can result in backlogs in queuing time, stress and irritability on the part of passengers and even missed flights!

Remove barriers to high performance

Don't assume people know exactly how to do their jobs well. Provide proper equipment, processes and systems. Ensure there is sufficient training, coaching and mentoring available. Involve people in finding ways of improving their work.

Encourage conversations about performance

There is no substitute for talking and listening! Is everyone, including you, clear what is actually being delivered and how this compares with expectations?

Can you measure and agree gaps in performance? Can you work together to help close performance gaps by adopting a supportive, challenging and coaching style rather than a critical, blaming approach? And remember to reward and recognise good performance – sometimes a simple 'thank you' is enough!

Do not settle for poor performance

It is all too easy to ignore lapses in performance, to build up a tolerance for under performance and to allow bad habits and attitudes to take hold.

The high performing leader tackles performance issues on the spot, arrests drift and sets a role model for what he/she expects from others. Remember the personal consequences of poor performance can result in loss of self-esteem, resentment from colleagues and 'unpromotability', not to mention ultimate loss of the job!

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Dr Waleed Youssef, TAV Airports' director for the Middle East, has announced that he will leave the company at the end of 2014 to pursue other opportunities. He told *Airport World*: "I have enjoyed my time at TAV immensely, but after six years with the company in various roles, it is time for me to seek a new challenge."

London Luton Airport has announced that former Stansted managing director, **Nick Barton,** will assume the role of CEO from the end of 2014. He joins the gateway at an exciting time, with the airport embarking on an ambitious €126 million transformation plan to increase annual passenger numbers from 10mppa to 18mppa by 2026.

Valley International Airport in Harlingen, Texas, has named **Marv Esterly** as its new director of aviation. Esterly is the current director of airports for the City of Midland, Texas, and has been in that position for fifteen years. He is slated to begin his new role on January 2, 2015.

Chicago Department of Aviation commissioner, **Rosemarie Andolino,** has left her position to work in the private sector. Andolino, who announced her intention to leave earlier this year, said: "This move is both exciting and bittersweet. I'm looking forward to the opportunities that lie ahead, but also know that I'm leaving a position that has been very fulfilling, challenging and rewarding.

"It has truly been an honour and privilege to work for a city I love and to work alongside so many talented industry experts and professionals. I have had a unique opportunity to create positive change for our city and its residents." She will be a tough act to follow.

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AW

PEOPLE matters



Continuing success

Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey provide their thoughts on: Sustaining high performance.

Being a high performing organisation at any given moment is great, but it counts for very little if that level of performance isn't sustainable.

The world does not stand still. The bar is continuously being raised as competitive pressures, innovation, new technologies and stakeholder expectations combine to change perceptions of what is meant by excellence.

In airports, the speed of change has been dramatic. Over the last 20 years, competition has multiplied, ownership models have evolved and the industry has been forced to adopt a more commercial mindset.

Information technology has helped to transform business processes. Passengers have become increasingly demanding.

The best airports strive to keep ahead of the curve. Nevertheless, success can have its price. How sustainable are the changes that have been made?
Are people capable of continuing to deliver consistent high performance without burning out? And where does the enthusiasm for further change come from if things are going well?

Keep an open mindset

Airports striving to be high-performers can become very 'task focused' places, inward looking and with intense social, organisational and commercial pressures to show good results. But continuing high performance needs people who are driven to seek out the reality, however unpalatable.

The best organisations share learning from both their triumphs and mistakes. They also invest time in looking outwards – looking at trends, building external networks and relationships, and learning from others.

Manage work pressures

High performing organisations make tougher demands on their staff than their lower performing counterparts. Workloads are higher, there is more demand for flexibility and work-life balance can be more difficult to achieve.

However, most people generally adapt and thrive on the challenge provided there is high quality leadership and sufficient investment in learning and development. If the changes are major, it may be necessary to bring in some new people.

Lead change sensitively

People are not machines. Imposing new processes and technology without taking into account the 'people' implications is rarely successful in the long run. The most successful organisations manage change in a culturally sensitive manner – and develop policies, systems and processes that allow for some flexibility.

It's important to optimise the socio-technical system, not just the technical, and think through clearly how best to involve and engage people.

Achieving success is difficult; sustaining it can be harder. It is a journey, not a destination.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Airports Company South Africa has appointed **Bongiwe Pityi** as the new general manager of OR Tambo International Airport. She becomes the first woman to take the helm at Africa's busiest hub.

Ted Fick is the new CEO of Seattle-Tacoma International Airport operator, the Port of Seattle. He has over 25 years of leadership experience in major manufacturing and transportation organisations.

ACI-North America has elected **James Cherry**, president and CEO of Aéroports de Montréal, as its new chairman for 2015. Other key changes made during its recent Annual Conference & Exhibition in Atlanta included the appointment of Salt Lake City's executive director, **Maureen Riley**, as its first vice chair and **William Vanecek**, director of aviation at Buffalo Niagara International Airport, as second vice chair.

Lew Bleiweis, executive director of the Greater Asheville Regional Airport Authority, was elected as the chair of the US Policy Board.

In other news, the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) has appointed **Jerome Davis** as its new executive vice president and chief revenue officer. The newly created position recognises MWAA's strategic objective to keep costs low for airlines and travellers by maximising potential revenue from other sources.

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Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey are directors of This Is... and are co-organisers of ACI Europe's Airport Leadership and Change Management Summit in Munich, Germany, this December 1-3. For information and to book your place www.airport-leadership.com

PEOPLE matters



Two journeys, not one

Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey provide their thoughts on: Investing in your organisation.

Investment in infrastructure is vitally important in enabling airports to accommodate passenger growth and improve the quality of their passengers' experience. Brand-new facilities can make an enormous difference to the aesthetics and 'look and feel' of an airport, the efficiency of transit, and the cost-effectiveness of the operation.

But a modern airport operated by an outdated, old fashioned workforce is liable to disappoint. Simply constructing and building new facilities, important though this is, won't in itself create a high-performing, efficient, customer-focused organisation.

To do that requires a parallel investment – not in 'things' but in organisation, leadership and human capital. New facilities can provide the opportunity to review and streamline work processes and organisational structure, to identify and progress the careers of talented individuals and to ensure that people are trained from the outset to work effectively.

Most importantly it provides the opportunity to transform organisation culture and promulgate a customer focus and 'delivery' mindset driven by engaged and motivated staff.

Where are the principal areas for human capital investment? We see three priorities:

- Review organisation structure and processes. Use the trigger of new investment to ensure that organisational processes are 'lean' and fit for purpose, that organisation hierarchy is minimised, staff are given autonomy, responsibility and meaningful roles, and that costs are kept to a minimum. Team working is important: restrictive practices and strict demarcation hamper customer focus and delivery mindset.
- Take a close look at your talent. Make sure that you attract and recruit people not just with the right technical skills but with positive attitudes, the ability to work well with others and the intelligence to understand the 'big picture'. Then provide them with training and development to enhance their leadership, business and interpersonal skills and ensure they understand the organisation as a whole.
- Revamp the performance management system. Take the opportunity to review your vision, values and strategic objectives. Ensure these are properly communicated and that there is a clear line of sight between the overall strategy and both individual and team objectives. Recognise those who perform well and manage those that don't.

Conclusion

To do all this properly requires investment in project teams, structured staff involvement, industrial and employee relations skills, training, and external expertise and facilitation. But, if you are spending many millions on investment in new facilities, 'hundreds of thousands' on human capital is money well spent.

Transforming an airport means transforming the organisation and its leadership as well as its infrastructure. It's two journeys, not one.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

It was a summer of change for many airports, with a number of key appointments across the globe. They included **Fred Lam** being named as the new CEO of the Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK); **Datuk Badlisham** replacing the long-serving Tan Sri Bashir Ahmad Abdul Majid as the managing director of Malaysia Airports Holdings Berhad (MAHB); and John Holland-Kaye replacing Colin Matthews in the hot seat at Heathrow.

Hong Kong's Lam, who succeeds the retiring Stanley Hui, leaves his role as executive director of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) and will take up the position for a three-year term on October 1, 2014.

Talking about Lam's appointment, Vincent Lo Hong-sui, chairman of the AAHK, says: "This is an important moment in HKIA's development, and Lam is the right leader to champion our plans and initiatives that will keep the airport competitive well into the future."

MAHB has gone on record as expressing its 'heartfelt gratitude' to Badlisham's predecessor Tan Sri Bashir, claiming that the company achieved 'stellar performances' under his stewardship. Badlisham was formerly CEO of Multimedia Development Corporation (MDeC).

Elsewhere, Copenhagen Airports has announced that Peter Krogsgaard will leave his position as managing director of Fujitsu Denmark and Norway to become its new chief commercial officer on September 1.

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PEOPLE matters



Lessons from Nelson Mandela

Dr Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey provide their thoughts on: Courageous leadership.

In the airport environment, there is a premium on reliable operations and keeping risks to a minimum.

Unfortunately, life does not always go smoothly, and people in airport leadership roles sometimes have to face the challenges of uncertainty, change and turbulence.

Periods of instability can arise through restructuring and reorganisation, political pressures, changing ownership, governance and leadership, commercial challenges and even crises involving physical danger and threat.

To negotiate these times successfully puts intense personal demands on those in leadership roles at all levels. In particular, it requires courage – the ability, willingness and spirit that enables people to overcome their fears and face up to risk, danger, uncertainty and intimidation with self possession, self confidence, determination and resolution.

Courage is needed when it is necessary to speak out and tell people the truth; to confront difficult situations and people; to persevere with a course of action in the face of problems and opposition, to build relationships and bridges with those who are not on your side; and to make decisions that are in the best interests of the organisation even where these involve some personal risk.

The late, great, Nelson Mandela provided a brilliant role model of a courageous leader, demonstrating principled leadership, perseverance, patience, resilience and mental toughness in his drive to achieve goals of equality and freedom. He did so over many years in the face of adversity and personal danger.

He had respect for all, and was able to build deep relationships and gain support from all kinds of people, including those who had imprisoned him.

Whilst prepared to take a tough stand where necessary, he demonstrated tolerance, forgiveness and compassion and was intensely pragmatic in his approach to problem solving. He was always looking for the 'middle way' – solutions which addressed the needs of all stakeholders.

What can we learn from Nelson Mandela about 'courageous leadership'?

- Make sure you know what you stand for, communicate this clearly to others, and stand up for what you believe in – even if it is not the popular view
- Act in a way that is consistent with what you say
- Create an environment where there is mutual respect, co-operation and listening –where people are encouraged to speak openly
- 'Reach out' to build relationships with a wide range of people – even apparent adversaries
- Look for pragmatic solutions which preserve everyone's interests – take the middle way
- Be patient, disciplined and persistent

Leadership is about 'doing the right thing' – and leadership without courage isn't true leadership.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Miami-Dade Aviation Department (MDAD) has filled three key posts in its leadership team.

Long-time MDAD executive **Gregory Owens** has been promoted to assistant director for business retention and development; **Joseph Napoli** is the new chief of staff and senior policy advisor; and **Dan Agostino** has joined the MDAD team as assistant director for operations.

They join **Hiram Barroso** who was named as MDAD's senior executive assistant to the director and deputy chief of staff late last year.

Director, Emilio González, explains: "Like any large organisation, MDAD is only as good as the people who lead it, and I'm confident these four leaders will keep our department on an upward trajectory.

"Each of them brings a unique set of skills and experiences to the table that will serve our organisation, our business partners and our passengers well."

Operator of New York JFK's Terminal 4, JFK International Air Terminal, has named **Gert-Jan de Graaff** as its new president and CEO, succeeding the retiring Alain Maca.

Long time Schiphol Group employee De Graaff has previously held senior roles at Amsterdam Schiphol and Stockholm Arlanda airports and has also worked for the Brisbane Airport Corporation, where the Schiphol Group is a 19% shareholder.

Mineta San José International Airport has appointed **Meenakshi ('Meena') Singh** as its new deputy director of aviation, planning and development. In her role, she will oversee the Airport's Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

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PEOPLE matters



Cool head in a crisis

Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey provide their thoughts on: Crisis management.

The ongoing mystery around the tragic loss of flight MH370 dramatically illustrates how something completely unplanned and unanticipated can disrupt even the best laid plans, and place enormous challenges on organisations and their leaders.

Whilst crises differ in nature, duration and impact, all well run organisations need to ask themselves how well prepared they are for a crisis. How can they be sure that their leaders – who may never have faced a real crisis – will be up to the job when the time comes?

One aspect that makes handling crises difficult is that human nature means that the first instinct of people faced with unexpected danger, risk and/or uncertainty tends to be emotional rather than rational.

Psychologists describe a number of typical dysfunctional response patterns: 'Unconflicted adherence' – often described as ignorance is bliss; 'Defensive avoidance' – sometimes called wishful thinking; 'Unconflicted change' – a refusal to consider a fallback position; or 'Hyper vigilance' – more commonly described as panic.

Leadership in a crisis involves rising above these emotions and keeping a cool head. First, making sense of the situation, taking into account the facts and the data. Secondly, finding ways of communicating this effectively and bringing stakeholders on board who may themselves be distraught, in denial or afraid. And, thirdly, ensuring that accountabilities for action and decision-making are clear and accepted when multiple players become involved and traditional lines of authority don't work well.

The best crisis leaders have the intellectual capacity to understand complexity, integrate rapidly multiple sources of information – and still remain open minded and flexible as the situation evolves.

They need to have the emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills to lead others and gain respect – collaborate, communicate clearly, delegate and trust. And, they need to have personal qualities of mental toughness, emotional self control and self confidence, as well as a commitment to a successful outcome, not their personal glorification.

The best organisations spend time preparing and practising for crises before they happen:

- They think through as many different scenarios as they can, so people have the capacity and 'bandwidth' to think rationally and not emotionally when crisis hits.
- They define their core crisis leadership team in advance, selecting the right people and skills for the team. They clarify roles and skills, especially those dealing with external interfaces. They then expand the team as necessary in a real situation.
- Crucially, they make the time to rehearse and practice, and make this as realistic as possible. They learn from what happens, and are prepared to adapt roles and personnel accordingly.

In crisis situations, it is impossible to get everything right. Indeed, in the case of MH370, the lack of certainty and information on what happened, the protracted nature of the crisis and the many countries, agencies and cultures involved, make the leadership task extremely difficult.

Sometimes there are no easy answers, only more questions.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Incheon International Airport Corporation has appointed **Choi Hong-Yeol** as its acting president and CEO following the departure of Dr Jung Chang-Soo who resigned for "political reasons". Choi has more than 30 years experience in the aviation industry and previously served as executive vice-president of IIAC's administration division. It is understood that Dr Jung intends to run for governor of Gangwon province.

Joyce Carter has been named as the new president and CEO of Halifax International Airport Authority (HIAA). "Since joining HIAA in 1999, Joyce has been an integral part of our airport community and HIAA's growth and development," says chairman of the board, Peter McDonough.

Aéroports de Paris (ADP) subsidiary, Aéroports de Paris Management (ADPM) has appointed **Frédéric Dupeyron** as its new CEO. In 2008, Dupeyron negotiated the industrial alliance between ADP and the Schiphol Group and in 2013 he joined the Prime Minister's office to run the Programme des Investissements d'Avenir (Investing in the Future Programme), which promotes the digital economy.

Heathrow's chief executive officer, **Colin Matthews**, has announced that he will leave the role later this year, claiming that after six years at the helm, it was time to "pass on the baton".

He is expected to go shortly after the summer opening of Terminal 2: The Queen's Terminal.

"The terminal's opening is a further important step in the transformation of Heathrow, where the long-term prospects are bright following the decision of the Airports Commission to shortlist our proposal for a new runway," says Matthews.

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PEOPLE matters



Worth the investment

Richard Plenty and Terri Morrissey provide their thoughts on: Investing in people.

Welcome to the first regular 'people' column in *Airport World* where we will look at some of the key leadership, organisation and people challenges faced by airport managers and leaders around the world.

We'll be drawing on our experience as organisers of the annual ACI Europe Leadership and Change Management Summit and as the designers and trainers of the ACI World Airport HR programme to ensure we choose relevant topics!

Let's start with a basic question. Do airport managers spend sufficient time on people matters – in particular developing a high performance ethos and organisation culture?

Put it another way, does a relentless focus on 'doing things' – answering the email, ticking off the daily 'to do' list, attending routine meetings – get in the way of investing the time, energy and commitment needed to motivate and engage people and get the most out of them?

People are generally the second biggest cost for airports after infrastructure and capital. There's a mass of data to show that organisations with motivated and engaged staff get much better business results than those which don't – hardly surprising when the evidence shows motivated people are generally more committed and prepared to go the extra mile for their organisation.

Yet in our experience the investment in management time, effort and energy needed to optimise this investment in human resources is rarely adequate.

So what can be done? We see three important steps:

- Persuading the top management team that making a systematic effort in designing a high performance culture and improving staff engagement is worth spending time on and will ultimately result in dramatic improvements in business performance.
- Developing a clear and deep understanding of the current organisation culture and climate. Many efforts that are made to improve motivation are targeted too imprecisely and make very little real difference.

  Staff motivation can be affected by many factors including: leadership, clear objectives and targets, clarity of roles, communication, training, adequate systems, good support and colleagues, fairness of pay and conditions, personal development opportunities and business circumstances. So make the time to speak with people individually, use focus groups and team meetings to understand the problems and, if possible, conduct a benchmarked survey (such as the ACI Europe AirPeople Survey) to pinpoint specific issues.
- Design, deliver and communicate an action plan that is consistent with the airport business strategy – and have the courage to follow it up.

Invest more time in your people – and you will get results!

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

It has been a busy start to 2014 with a number of high-profile changes in the top jobs at airports across the globe.

In Sharjah, long-serving director general and former ACI World chairman, **Ghanem Al Hajri,** has retired after 36 years with the UAE gateway. Al Hajri, who helped launch Sharjah-based low-cost carrier Air Arabia, has been replaced by Salim Al Midfa who will serve as chairman of Sharjah Airport Authority.

Meanwhile in India, **Alok Sinha,** the country's Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Civil Aviation has been appointed chairman of the Airports Authority of India (AAI) after the sudden departure of **VP Agrawal**. Sinha will act as chairman until a permanent replacement is found.

Elsewhere, Warsaw Chopin and Polish Airports have a new general director after **Michał Kaczmarzyk** replaced **Michał Marzec** in early February. Kaczmarzyk is a graduate of the Global ACI-ICAO Airport Management Professional Accreditation Programme (AMPAP) and former president of the board of LOT Cargo.

And, ACI-NA has named **Kevin Burke** as its new president, succeeding interim president, Deborah McElroy, who held the reins after Greg Principato stepped down.

"When ACI-NA undertook the search for a new CEO, our priority was finding a dynamic, visionary individual who could lead us confidently toward our goals," enthuses chairman, Mark Reis.

Burke comes to ACI-NA after nearly 13 years as the CEO of the American Apparel and Footwear Association.

Principato recently joined National Strategies LLC as the company's senior adviser for its transportation and infrastructure practice.

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