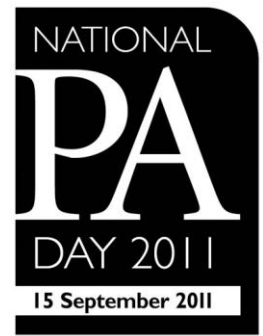


PRESS RELEASE

To be released on 14 September 2011



1st annual National PA Survey results announced

UK Survey reveals feelings of the nation's PAs

To coincide with the launch of the UK's first ever National PA Day, event organisers Diversified Business Communications UK have announced a summary of the UK's 1st annual National PA Survey results, which are set to be unveiled in full at the office* show at Earls Court, London, tomorrow, Thursday.

Introduced to discover more about the feelings and aspirations of the UK's estimated 600,000 personal assistants and executive assistants, the 1st annual National PA Survey – one of the most comprehensive surveys of Britain's PAs ever undertaken – was completed by 1,637 respondents during the last week of August 2011 (Friday 26 August and Thursday 1 September).

Providing a 'snapshot' of how today's PAs view their role in the workplace, the results show that the majority of survey participants are highly motivated and enjoy the important work that they do. When asked what three things most motivated respondents to go to work, 'Good Pay' actually came in sixth place (34%), behind 'Working Environment' (41%), 'My Colleagues' (40%), and 'Feeling Recognised and Respected' (36%), whilst the most popular answer – perhaps unsurprisingly given the nature of the close working relationship required – was a 'Great Boss' at 46%, followed closely by 'Variety of Role' at 45%.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, the three things that most frustrated respondents about their job was a perceived 'Lack of Career Opportunities' at 46%, followed by 'Pay' at 35% and 'Lack of Recognition' at 32%. Only 8% thought their career prospects were 'Very Good', with a further 63% saying they were reasonable but that the onus was very much on them.

It is the results to the survey's question on loyalty however, that perhaps most illustrate the uniqueness of the PA's role in the work place. When asked who they felt most loyal to, the majority of PAs – over 56% – responded with 'My Boss', compared to 'The Company' at 24% and 'My Colleagues' at 20%. The results offer a succinct reminder of how important a strong, close working relationship is to ensuring the professional success of both individuals – the PA and their respective boss.

Dispelling the myths and common misconceptions of overworked and under-paid PAs, the overall results of the 1st annual National PA Survey paint a distinctly positive picture of how recognised and valued the UK's PAs

actually feel, with 63% of respondents stating that they felt 'Very valued' by their boss, and 53% 'Very valued' by their work colleagues.

Whilst some of the survey's results are perhaps not too surprising, it was the incredible variety of responses to the final two questions that is perhaps the most revealing about today's PA workforce. When asked what the 'best thing' that respondents had been asked to do, answers ranged from "spending half a million on corporate gifts in Harrods" to holidaying in their "boss's house in Antigua". Some PAs meet PMs and royalty regularly, whilst many visited events around the world as a matter of course, often travelling in 1st Class, and sometimes even in private planes.

Of course whilst every job has its ups and downs, its perks and its 'that's not in my job description' moments, many of the survey's respondents had much more to say on the latter. When asked about the 'most ridiculous thing' they had ever been asked to do, answers included a host of inappropriate 'personal' requests such as "Spy on a husband"; "Buy birthday cards for the boss's wife and new mistress at the same time"; "Collect boss's father's ashes"; "Escort our MD to the station as he was afraid of getting lost"; "Shopping for a rubber ring for a piles sufferer"; "Fly to Berlin in order to get access to Duty Free at Heathrow to buy a Chanel bag for my boss's wife"; "Writing love letters to female friends", and being told to "Walk like a model!".

Commenting on the results, Carsten Holm, managing director of Diversified Business Communications UK, organiser of office*, the UK's only dedicated annual event for PAs and EAs, said: "Thankfully, the majority of the PAs we surveyed have a fantastic relationship with their bosses and feel their skills are valued and respected. However, there were always going to be exceptions out of over 1600 responses."

"Whilst some of the responses to our last survey question may produce a chuckle or two, it's important to remember that PAs are highly-skilled professionals doing a fantastic job. They are a surrogate wife or husband. Although it's easy to see how some personal/professional boundaries can cross over at times, it's vital that all bosses recognise what an important asset their PA is, one that certainly shouldn't ever get taken for granted," says Holm.

The full survey results will be unveiled at office* today, taking place at Earls Court Exhibition Centre, London. The two-day event features over 160 exhibitors, free Keynotes, expert training and unparalleled networking for over 5000 PAs.

To register free in advance, please visit www.officeshow.co.uk quoting priority code OFF11206 (please note it is £20 to register onsite after midnight on 14 September).

Summary of 1st annual National PA Survey

Last month, as part of the launch of the new National PA Day, office* conducted one of the most comprehensive surveys of PAs ever undertaken. With 1637 completed questionnaires returned and analysed, the results provide a fascinating insight into what motivates you, your likes and dislikes and some great anecdotes. The

results of this survey are being unveiled for the first time at office*, with the full list of responses available at www.officeshow.co.uk after 19 September.

What are the three things that most motivate you to go to work?

Great Boss	46%
Variety of Role	45%
Working Environment	41%
My Colleagues	40%
Feeling Recognised and Respected	36%
Good Pay	34%
Responsibility	22%
Convenient	14%
Great Career Opportunity	9%
Good Perks	7%

What are the three things that most frustrate you about your job?

Lack of Career Opportunities	46%
Pay	35%
Lack of Recognition	32%
Lack of Perks	30%
Isolation from Rest of Company	25%
My Boss	19%
Lack of Variety	16%
My Colleagues	15%
Working Environment	14%
Lack of Responsibility	8%

How good do you consider your career prospects to be?

Very Good	7.7%
Good	22.2%
Okay (up to me!)	41.2%
Not Great	23.5%
Very Poor	5.4%

Who do you feel most loyal to?

My Boss	56%
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The Company	24%
My Colleagues	20%

In terms of recognition, how valued do you feel by your work colleagues?

Extremely	15%
Very	38%
Quite	35%
Not Very	11%

In terms of recognition, how valued do you feel by your boss?

Extremely	26%
Very	37%
Quite	26%
Not Very	12%

What is the best thing that you have been asked to do?

The incredible variety of responses to this question just goes to show what a satisfying career being a PA or EA can be – and sometimes not short of a few glamorous perks. Here’s just some of the highlights:

- Spending half a million pounds in Harrods on corporate gifts and being in charge of the interior design of my boss’s new house
- Organising a corporate day for our prime customers. An events company quoted £18,000 – I did it myself for £8,000!
- Go to our head office in Washington to receive an award for my hard work
- Giving my personal opinion on business ideas for the company
- Pass on my expertise to other PAs
- Setting up a regional office from scratch
- Getting more responsibility – being asked to do the marketing plan and social media strategy and own it, has been a huge highlight
- Arranging and attending conferences overseas
- Project managing the refurbishment of our offices
- Working on my own initiative
- My input is valued in major projects – feels great to be recognized!
- Take lead when boss is absent
- To offer support at a Reception at No 11 Downing Street and meeting the PM
- House-sit in £3 million Eaton Square, complete with Range Rover to drive....
- Accompany my boss when she moved to a new company

- Helping to present medals at UEFA Cup Final
- Organising a conference in Italy
- Going on holiday to my boss's house in Antigua
- Organising a Royal Visit
- Coordinating a meeting for the Secretary of State
- Representing my boss at meetings
- Organise an executive off-site event in Davos in an igloo
- Going to New York, staying at the Ritz, to organize an event
- Leading our training team
- Travel to the Bahamas on a private plane
- Managing the Corporate Head Office

That's NOT in my job description!

For a little light relief, the survey also asked what the most ridiculous thing respondents had been asked to do. Thankfully, whilst most PAs have a fantastic relationship with their bosses and feel valued and respected, out of over 1600 responses from some of the best PAs in the country, there was always going to be a few exceptional 'exceptions'. Here's a few excerpts guaranteed to make you smile...

- Get the Prime Minister on the phone
- To ring a hotel to see if they had found my boss's underpants
- Buy a Valentines card for a boss's wife - and sign and send!
- Courier my boss's urine sample (in a sunflower oil large bottle)
- Collect boss's fathers ashes
- Cut the chicken off the bone!
- Sack the nanny
- Go shopping for a rubber ring for a piles sufferer
- Spy on a husband as she thought he was having an affair (which he was!!!)
- Photocopy all my boss's bank statements for his divorce application
- Buy birthday cards for the ex wife and new girlfriend at the same time
- "Here's £60K, go and buy me a car - only stipulation, it has to be black!"
- Ask why BA had cancelled a flight due to fog
- Hire a chauffeur to drive the boss's dog from England to South of France for a family holiday (and back again!)
- To open a banana for a director who claimed not to know how to!
- Check the phone bills for calls under 10 seconds, then call the phone company to ask for a refund!
- Iron my boss's pyjamas
- Check temperature of swimming pool at hotel
- Ring up all the airlines that fly to Australia to ask how far their arm rests go back!
- Being forwarded an email saying "forward this email to XYZ"

- My boss lost his parking ticket and couldn't get out of the car park. So he asked me to hire a tow truck to go to the car park and collect the car, but he couldn't remember which car park it was!
- Keep a record of mouse sighting for Health & Safety records
- Get a piece of cake encapsulated into a paperweight
- Attend a function, and pretend to be the MD's wife
- Go out and buy a complete shooting outfit for my boss!
- Escort our MD to the station as he was afraid to get lost
- Bid on something on ebay for my boss
- Buy girlfriend's Christmas presents
- My boss had an eye complaint and I had to administer his eye drops on a daily basis
- Send romantic emails for one of my former bosses
- Book a 2 week luxury holiday in the Caribbean, including 1st class flights, for my boss's mistress and her sister!
- Choose presents for family members I have never met
- Complete a personal tax return
- Collect kids from school
- To purchase a new calculator that works out the new tax rate!
- Writing love letters to female friends
- 'Lost sunglasses somewhere between home and Russia. Can you try and find them?'
- Ring up Virgin to ask why my boss's preferred seat was not available to him.....
- Arrange a funeral
- Ask the travel company for a 4p refund
- Collect daughter at the airport. At 2AM!
- Tie his shoes!

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Notes:

Press passes are available to editorial staff writers employed by a trade publication, mainstream media outlet (newspaper, radio, TV, etc), or online magazines. Freelance writers, contributing editors, or bloggers may request press passes from ejones@divcom.co.uk if the event is being covered for a specific publication or topic-related article.

Diversified Business Communications UK (*Diversified UK*) is a fast growing event organising and publishing company based in Brighton. In addition to office*, Diversified UK also organises lunch!, Natural & Organic Products Europe, camexpo, the Independent Health Store Conference, and the Service Desk & IT Support Show. The company publishes Natural Products magazine and the Natural Beauty Yearbook.

office* 2011 Visitor Information:

Admission: Free to pre-registered visitors, £20 on-the-door

Location: Brompton Hall, Earls Court, London SW5 9TA

Opening hours: Thursday 15 September, 9.30-17.30 & Friday 16 September, 9.30-17.00

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