

ISMA UK - Central group meeting 12th September 09

RECIPE FOR A GOOD DAY

Take a lovely sunny, Saturday morning.

Two excellent speakers.

A decent lunch.

One slightly frazzled organiser!

And finally add a group of friendly people with lively minds, and much experience to draw on. Mix the ingredients and allow to listen, question and contribute ideas. The end result is a versatile dish of professional development. I'm already looking forward to the next serving.

Jeff Marshall, Head of Clinical Services from **Combat Stress** created so much interest in Post Traumatic Stress Disorder that the group kept him talking for twice as long as originally scheduled. He vividly brought to life the impact of PTSD and how service personnel acquire and experience it. The data on time of request for treatment was fascinating, anything from 14 to 40 years! Not just a result of "macho" culture as I had believed, but of being trained not to follow the normal human instinct to remove oneself from life threatening situations. A series of moving case studies gave an often heart rending insight into the impact of fear, guilt and shame leading to PTSD. The indicators suggest that instances will grow in future, so if you want to find out more go to www.combatstress.org.uk

Our next speaker, **Ann McCracken**, gave us an informative presentation on **Absence Management** by "wearing" two hats! The first gave us a knowledgeable and clear view of the processes involved, measures used and benchmarking for short and long term management. So now we know the systems, but for any system to work the line manager is key. Ann then



changed her hat and graphically illustrated what happens when the systems don't think about the implications of hasty disciplinary action on the people accused. Three case studies showed that the consequences for people include IBS, Agoraphobia, Insomnia and Anxiety. The case was well made that rigid adherence to the Absence Management system, misuse of the system and lack of cultural awareness in managers lead to disaster for those on the receiving end. As a result of Ann's thought provoking session I shall certainly be asking more challenging questions of the organisations that I work with in the future.

Comments from those attending include, "**worth travelling 125 miles to**

hear it” and “great day last Sat, we need to tell at least 2 or 3 people of how good it was”, “MIMO, miss it, miss out”, “I’m already seeing how I can apply this in my work”

If reading this has whetted your appetite, you might want to know that the next meeting is in **January 2010**, date to be confirmed.

I’d love to hear ideas for topics that you would like to have on our future agenda. Also if you would be prepared to speak, let me know.

Contact me at carolyn@workpositivetraining.com Carolyn Svahn - Central Region