



RELEASE: SIR IAN CHESHIRE DISCUSSES MENTAL HEALTH AND BUSINESS PERFORMANCE - "THRIVING AT WORK"

Interview with Ian Jindal, published in InternetRetailing Magazine, July 2018, previewing Sir Ian's keynote at the inaugural MadWorldForum Summit on 9 October, 2018 in London.

KEY POINTS:

- Mental health is one of the final taboos in the workplace
- Mental health is not a constant, but rather a 'flux'
- confidence: staff lack confidence in their managers' ability to understand and deal with mental health issues; managers in turn lack confidence in how to deal with staff mental health issues. New toolkits for business are available, to support greater awareness and capability
- The development of 'employee engagement' metrics to harness the total staff ability in the business
- three areas for preparation - acquire data on your current state, build managers' confidence and creating the right culture of openness and support
- the role of Their Royal Highnesses in changing the conversation on mental health
- "Business doesn't need all of the answers - we can start by talking".

ABOUT INTERNETRETAILING:

- InternetRetailing provides insight and analysis to professionals in multichannel retail, ecommerce and digital business
- Published since 2006 the membership business reaches over 60,000 subscribers globally
- InternetRetailing ranks the performance of the best retailers and brands in Europe via the annual IREU Top500 Index
- Available in print, online and research events

www.internetretailing.net

ABOUT MAD WORLD FORUM:

Mad World is Europe's only solutions-focused conference and exhibition with a mission: to accelerate the shift from stigma to solutions and usher in a new era of mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. Focused on fresh thinking for the future of workplace wellbeing and mental health, the event will provide a stimulating meeting of minds, blending commercial imperatives with practitioner expertise and the millennial mindset.

The agenda includes leaders from Airbus, Bosch, Bank of England, Barclays, Google, Monzo Bank, Wonderbly and Dice. Mad World has been independently evaluated by The CPD Certification Service.

www.madworldforum.com

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Image: Barclays UK

▲ Sir Ian Cheshire (c) Barclays UK.

“Thrive”

An insight into the developing awareness of mental health and wellbeing at the core of our people-based sector’s performance”.

In anticipation of his upcoming keynote at MadWorldConference, *Sir Ian Cheshire* in conversation with *Ian Jindal* on how retail - and retail’s people - can thrive,

The retail industry employs 21% of the UK working population and contributes 11% of the UK’s GDP ^[1]. Moreover, those not directly employed are all customers of the products, services and experiences that retailers provide. Retail is a ‘people business’. However, until recently, we have treated our people as “assets” - to be developed, optimised, trained and leveraged to a peak of ‘performance’: much as we would any asset from a warehouse to an IT system.

Missing from this debate around people performance has been the mental health and wellbeing of our staff. Beyond gym membership, fruit in the office and at-

desk massage, our understanding of the commercial and societal benefits of mental health and business performance has lagged behind other areas of our complex business.

Mental health is one of the final taboos in the workplace. Hand in hand with progress in society, retailers have embraced diversity, gender equality, and are striving to become disability confident, yet discussing and dealing with mental health issues in the workplace lags behind a society’s increasing awareness. Fewer than 2% of staff would be willing to discuss their mental health and its impact on their role, and employers also feel exposed and under-confident in discussions with staff.

The retail sector is under pressure to perform, yet is also transforming to an experience- and talent-based industry - from shop floor service to data scientists, via technologists and contact centres. There's an emerging understanding of the benefits of addressing the 'whole person' - the mental health as well as physical health. We need to balance performance with sustainability - how do we get from "survive" to "thrive"?

Leading the debate in retail is Sir Ian Cheshire, via a coordinated set of initiatives spanning the UK Government, national expert charities and business. Ian Jindal spoke with Sir Ian, in advance of his opening keynote at the MadWorldForum conference on October 9 in London.

IR: WHAT HAS BEEN THE DRIVER TO MAKE MENTAL HEALTH SUCH A BROADLY DISCUSSED TOPIC IN SOCIETY AND THE WORKPLACE?

"Realistically it feels like an issue whose time has come. There is a recognition at large that mental health is an issue - with the pressures of social media being particularly acute for young people. The emergent recognition has been reinforced by campaigns like "Time to Change" that Mind has led over many years. The "Heads Together" initiative - led by three of the most famous people on the planet - has started to change the stigma around discussing mental health issues. When the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and the Duke of Sussex started talking openly, sharing that they've had issues and providing a forum for discussion, it struck an extraordinary chord last year. The topic was no longer an abstract, vaguely institutional one. As happened with other major societal issues like same-sex marriage or HIV awareness, there was a tipping point at which highly conventional role models ask for the issues to be reassessed, and society was ready to listen to that call.

It's a revelation for people that we have physical health and also mental health. People know how to manage their physical health, and who to call when we break a leg, for example. However the first few steps of managing mental health - how to talk about it, where to go for help - are less well understood.

IR: WHAT IS BUSINESS' ROLE IN THIS REASSESSMENT?

"Businesses have put in their annual reports that 'people are our asset' for many years, but in an increasingly digital, complicated and remote-working world, the quality engagement and performance of your teams is indeed the most critical success factor in business. Businesses are waking up to the fact that if they can help, support and make the most of their teams it'll be a good result for their business - not just in the short term.

Consider that most of the population goes to work, and therefore most of their time is spent in some sort of workplace. It's a critical place in terms of mental wellbeing. Until recently companies were concerned that this might be an extra burden - more to look after.

"THRIVING AT WORK" - THE STEPHENSON/FARMER REPORT

Released in October 2017 this is an independent report conducted by Paul Farmer and Lord Dennis Stephenson. The Prime Minister Theresa May commissioned the report in January 2017 saying "Many employers are already creating healthy, inclusive workplaces, but more needs to be done so that employers provide the support needed for employees with mental health conditions". She continued a thread of interest that her predecessor David Cameron had also supported.

The report's summary talks of the mental health challenge in the workplace. While there are more people with mental health problems in work than ever before, some 300,000 people with long term mental health problems lose their jobs each year.

In addition, some 15% of people in work have had symptoms of a mental health condition. The cost to employers is between £33bn and £42bn a year. The report makes the case for increased productivity and quality of life as the joint results of an increase in mental health - a point borne out by a series of academic studies and 200 case studies for the report.

The Report's Vision is that in ten years' time:

- Employees have good work, which contributes positively to their mental health, society and the economy.
- we all have the knowledge, tools and confidence, to understand and look after our own mental health and the mental health of those around us.
- All organisations, will be aware and equipped to recruit, support and develop individuals with mental health conditions, and aware of how to get expert, timely support.

To achieve this, the report sets out what we describe as "mental health core standards" that all organisations are capable of, namely:

- a mental health at work plan;
- mental health awareness among employees;
- open conversations about mental health and the support available when employees are struggling;
- good working conditions and a healthy work life balance
- effective people management;
- monitor mental health and wellbeing.

'Enhanced' standards for larger and exemplar businesses include:

- Increase transparency and accountability through internal and external reporting
- Demonstrate accountability
- Improve the disclosure process
- Ensure provision of tailored in-house mental health support and signposting to clinical help

The report is available at the UK Government's website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/thriving-at-work-a-review-of-mental-health-and-employers>

However there's a realisation that they can make a contribution: by keeping someone mentally fit you can increase productivity, energise the contribution of staff, reduce sickness leave and minimise the disruption of staff leaving the workplace due to catastrophic mental illness. For business, this is an idea whose time has come.

In all of the businesses I've been involved with, the key success factor is the people: the team. Businesses need technology, need capital, but the engine of any business is the human capital, the talent, the energy of the people.

People are the drivers of the business rather than just one of the assets.

IR: YOU HAVE SPOKEN IN THE FARMER REPORT (SEE SIDEBAR) ABOUT THE 'FLUX' IN MENTAL HEALTH. HOW CAN BUSINESSES THEMSELVES FLEX TO ACCOMMODATE THIS?

"On the back of greater understanding, Mental health is an oscillating state - much as in physical terms we may gain and lose weight, or become ill and recover. Modern life has become more flexible, more technology-enabled, with more flexible working. In parallel there's an increased understanding that there's variation in how people feel. Businesses can provide means to talk openly and flex their procedures to support these changes - allowing breaks, take time away from tasks, and speaking honestly, for example. Staff will perhaps say that they are physically ill rather than admit that they are anxious or depressed. If we can adapt to flexible working then the next stage is to adapt to the 'cadence of working', a cycle of wellbeing, and have an open conversation about this.

IR: WE HAVE KPIS IN RETAIL FOR THE 'OUTPUT' AND PRODUCTIVITY OF OUR PEOPLE - DO YOU THINK THAT THERE ARE MEASURES REGARDING THE HEALTH OF OUR TEAMS?

"From personal experience, running B&Q and then Kingfisher, we had employee engagement as a major KPI. We used the Gallup Q12 scoring^[2] for our employee engagement KPI. Engaged staff gave better service, resulting in improved sales. At the other end we measured customer impact via the Net Promoter Score, and so both the input and the result were tracked. Arriving at Barclays I find that these are the two measures they've adopted too.

Behind the use of the employee engagement there's an understanding that you have to engage with the 'whole individual'. Looking after their physical wellbeing and working conditions are important, but we need to include the mental health aspect too. If an employee is able to thrive then their contribution, capacity, resilience and performance will increase - individually and as a team.

IR: SUPPORTING MENTAL WELLBEING IS A NEW DEMAND UPON LEADERS AND THE ORGANISATION - HOW CAN RETAILERS PREPARE?

"There are three areas - getting data and an understanding of your current state; building managers' confidence; and creating the right culture of openness and support.

Firstly, using a mapping tool will give you a version of an engagement index specifically focused on mental wellbeing. Business in the Community and others have developed a free, online toolset (see sidebar). This data will allow retailers to target efforts and development.

The tools aren't simply for big companies. Large enterprises have an opportunity to lead throughout their supply chain, but there are also solutions aimed at SMEs who lack HR departments and large teams.

The second is to build the confidence of managers, to equip them with the tools of what to say and do, and where they can get help. When a team-member admits 'actually I'm struggling a bit' the manager might worry that their actions could make things worse or that they could be in trouble. Just as we now have 'disability

SIR IAN CHESHIRE

Sir Ian has a storied career in retail and business, and is currently the Government Lead Non-Executive, working with Secretaries of State (in the UK Government's Cabinet) to improve governance across Whitehall. This is in addition to his roles as Chairman of Barclays UK and a non-executive director at Whitbread.

He is currently chairman of Debenhams PLC and was Group CEO of Kingfisher (having been CEO of B&Q immediately prior to that) and he served as Chairman of the British Retail Consortium.

Sir Ian chairs the board of **Heads Together** and is President of the Business Disability Forum President's Group. Previously he was Chairman of the Prince of Wales Corporate Leaders Group on Climate Change.

Sir Ian was knighted in 2014 for services to business, sustainability and the environment.

HEADS TOGETHER - "CHANGING THE CONVERSATION ON MENTAL HEALTH" (www.headstogether.org.uk)

Heads together was a campaign initiated by TRH the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and the Duke of Sussex to tackle mental health stigma. Bringing 8 leading charities in the sector together with new funding. They changed the debate around mental health not only through their patronage of charities but their their own example of speaking aloud and with others about the challenges of mental health issues. Allied with media and sporting figures, the royal trio's openness has done much to change attitudes.

The charity partners comprise CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably), Anna Freud, The Mix, Place2Be, Contact, YoungMinds, Best Beginnings and Mind. Funding partners are Unilever, Virgin Money and DixonsCarphone.

MADWORLD FORUM - LONDON SUMMIT, 9 OCTOBER 2018.




'MOVING FROM STIGMA TO SOLUTIONS'

Good mental health in the workplace is fundamental to business success. Mad World is Europe's only event that puts mental health at the heart of the business agenda.

InternetRetailing is proud to partner with MadWorldForum to ensure that retail and ecommerce - a sector driven by human capability - benefits from an open and effective approach to mental health. Delegates will:

- learn how to integrate mental health into existing wellbeing strategies
- gain inspiration from innovative leaders
- uncover the right solutions for their organisation
- share ideas and experiences with peers.

Sir Ian Cheshire is one of the opening keynotes, and you can see the whole agenda, speakers and reserve your place at www.madworldforum.com or engage with the team on twitter at @madworldforum. 

confident businesses' we could have 'mental health confident' leaders in future.

Thirdly, create an open and honest culture within the organisation. A powerful technique is to use stories to build culture. Where people, especially leaders, share

their experiences of having, sharing and surmounting issues then all staff realise that there is support, a career even if they experience ‘flux’ in their own mental health. Talking also teaches people how to speak about their mental health.

I’ve found that inside Barclays (where we’ve done a ‘This is Me’ campaign) one of the most powerful parts is where senior people say they’ve had an issue, how

they’ve dealt with it, and that it’s a part of my life, and part of my reality.

“ Business doesn’t need all of the answers - we can start by talking. ”

InternetRetailing will be covering the topic of mental health and sustained performance as part of our “People” theme at InternetRetailing.net. Our thanks to Sir Ian Cheshire for this conversation and you can hear more at his keynote on 9 October, 2018 at the inaugural MadWorldForum Summit in London. Please visit www.madworldforum.com

ACTION SUPPORT FOR BUSINESS



Business in the Community (BITC) has created, with Mental Health England, a free online toolkit to help every organisation support the mental health and wellbeing of its employees. Covering positive actions on culture, understanding, how to get and give help. BITC encourages larger businesses to share this resource with their supply chain partners too, and it’s clear that retailers have a role to play in amplifying understanding and good practice.

The toolkit is available free of charge at:

<https://wellbeing.bitc.org.uk/all-resources/toolkits/mental-health-employers>



Also, in September, **Heads Together** is launching a Mental Health at Work portal to support smaller businesses who may not have the resources of an enterprise HR department. Launching in conjunction with Mind and Unilever, the initiative draws on the learning of the **Stevenson Farmer Report** and the BITC to create an accessible and practical tool. HRH The Duke of Cambridge noted at the launch that “the number of people who would feel able to talk to their HR departments about their mental health was a mere 2%”, according to **Heads Together** research.

^[1] House of Commons Briefing Paper 06186, 21 March 2018: “The retail industry: statistics and policy”, Chris Rhodes & Philip Brien

^[2] Gallup’s Q12 survey - employee engagement tools. <https://q12.gallup.com/>