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UNITE

THE UNION IN AXA UK

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POWER TO THE PEOPLE

AXA Personal yesterday announced the restructure of their part of the business and a radical de-layering of management which will not only provide cost savings but also increase empowerment for staff, reducing bureaucracy and unnecessary sign off. The new slimmed down structure has been designed to support Personal Lines ambitious 2015 growth targets.

Unite in AXA has for some time challenged the company over the the numbers of managers and spans of control. This was not a case of "them and us" but reflected the fact that **AXA** operations in Europe have lower numbers of managers compared to staff and with the increasing cost challenges faced by **AXA UK** that surely this was not an expense that could be supported.

We have also been pushing for greater empowerment for staff. Over the years **AXA** has become more bureaucratic with rework becoming the order of the day, which is extremely demotivating for employees capable of doing their job and providing great customer service.

Thankfully it appears that Steve Hardy, **AXA Personal Lines** CEO, also holds with the view that you "don't buy a dog and bark yourself" and the new structure is designed to allow clearer

accountabilities, quicker decision making and greater empowerment.

Not only has he reduced the layers of employees between CEO and customer from 11 to 6 (and let's be honest the 11 doesn't include some of the parallel bureaucratic management sign offs), but wants to bring a culture of back to basics where managers will manage, team leaders lead, account managers manage accounts and customer service representatives deal with customers.

Of course all this has human ramifications in that people will lose their jobs through no fault of their own. It is awful that employees who work hard and have dedicated their efforts to the company will have their services dispensed with because of poor

management decisions in the past. Both **AXA** and the union will work to identify redeployment opportunities to minimise the impact but the sad fact remains that redundancies will occur.

Our challenge to the company is to ensure that 'management creep' does not occur again and that levels of management staff are kept lean and fit for purposes.

No one wants to be revisiting management levels again in five or ten years time and making people redundant because the eye was taken off the ball.

