Consumer Countries/Markets

Inflation in Britain: Up to the top of the hill...

As the pound has weakened since the Brexit referendum, so the cost of British imports, and thus inflation, have jumped. Figures released today showed that consumer-price inflation in Britain was 3% in October, the joint-highest level since 2012. But it should soon fall. Recent growth in nominal wages has been around 2% a year. Service industries have not jacked up prices. And the effect of the pound’s plunge will soon fade.

Socio-Cultural Environment

Too Much Togetherness? The Downside of Workplace Collaboration

The mere mention of keeping up with overflowing email, constant meetings, and time-sucking conference calls makes many of us groan and roll our eyes. How did we all get so busy? A major culprit is the sharp rise in cross-functional collaboration over the past several years. Today, it’s often not enough to just put your head down and work in one department for one boss. Demands can come at you daily from other functional areas of the company — marketing, R&D, finance — sometimes from colleagues you barely know, both within the country and overseas in other time zones. And if you work in an open-plan office, your colleagues will often walk around starting impromptu discussions (when it’s convenient for them, not necessarily you). It can be overwhelming. Yet collaboration has long been touted as a key to success.

The collaborative structure can have serious down sides, and must be implemented with careful planning and thought. For example, says Bidwell, the matrix organization “slows things down a lot. You get great decisions, but they take forever to make.” The reason is that unlike in the traditional hierarchy where there’s one decision maker, you have “messy lines of reporting.” A lot of time is spent
swapping information and getting everybody on board.
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