

## Big Questions



## NOEL JOHNSTON

Clerk of Course, Ulster Grand Prix

**What is your career background?**

I've spent the last 20 odd years in sales and outside catering and although that's the day job, for the last nine years I've been Clerk of the Course for the Ulster Grand Prix. The time I spend year round preparing for the event amounts to another full time job but what can I say, it's a labour of love.

**What was your first job and how much were you paid?**

I started out with as an electrician's apprentice, earning the princely sum of £17 a week. It seemed like a lot at the time but I soon found out the career wasn't for me.

**Have you ever had a job you hated?**

I'm fortunate to be able to say 'no' to this. I've always enjoyed my work and I think it's down to the people I've met along the way. Any job is bearable if you're lucky enough to work with good people.

**What is your biggest success?**

Getting the Ulster Grand Prix up and running every year is a big challenge. It almost didn't happen this year due to a lack of funds but we got there in the end and I'm so thankful we did, as it turned out to be one of the best day's racing I've ever seen. Everything came together on the day; the weather, the crowds, the atmosphere and the most tightly fought races from the world's greatest road racers.

**What business figure do you most admire?**

Probably Richard Branson. He's not afraid to take a risk and never lets a little adversity get him down.

**Have you ever made a big mistake in business and if so what did you learn from it?**

Nothing major and the thing to remember is that everyone makes mistakes - that's why there's rubbers on the end of pencils! The trick is to pick yourself up and just keep going.

**What is the most valuable piece of business advice you have ever been given?**

Listen and learn - there's not a day that goes by you don't learn something new. Take constructive criticism and don't take it personally!

**What one item would you take with you to a desert island and why?**

I don't really fancy being on a desert island, I'm too used to being on the go constantly. So I'd bring my iPhone so I could keep in touch with everyone.

**Do you have a business mantra?**

It's an oldie but a goody - if at first you don't succeed, try try again.

**What items do you always carry with you?**

My iPhone and a hanky.

**When will you retire?**

I think I'll know when the time is right. When the day comes that I realise I can't take the Ulster GP any further, I'll hang up my chequered flag and pass the baton on.

## 40 years of baking bread for Gerry

BY RICHARD SHERRIFF

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ONE of the Northern Ireland bakery industry's most popular characters is celebrating 40 years service at Northern Ireland's biggest baker.

Although the idea of working for 40 years with the same company is almost unimaginable to most people, Gerry Cassidy joined Allied Bakeries Ireland as a van sales boy in April 1970 at the tender age of 15 and has 'risen' to national account manager.

In that time, it is estimated that Gerry has sold more than 300 million loaves, which laid end to end would circle the globe twice and if you include other bakery products, Gerry has sold enough to give a slice of bread, pancake, soda or potato farl to the entire population of the world.

"Bread was in our family for a long time and my grandfather sold bread from a horse-driven cart, so it wasn't a big surprise that I wanted to work in the bakery industry from an early age," he said.

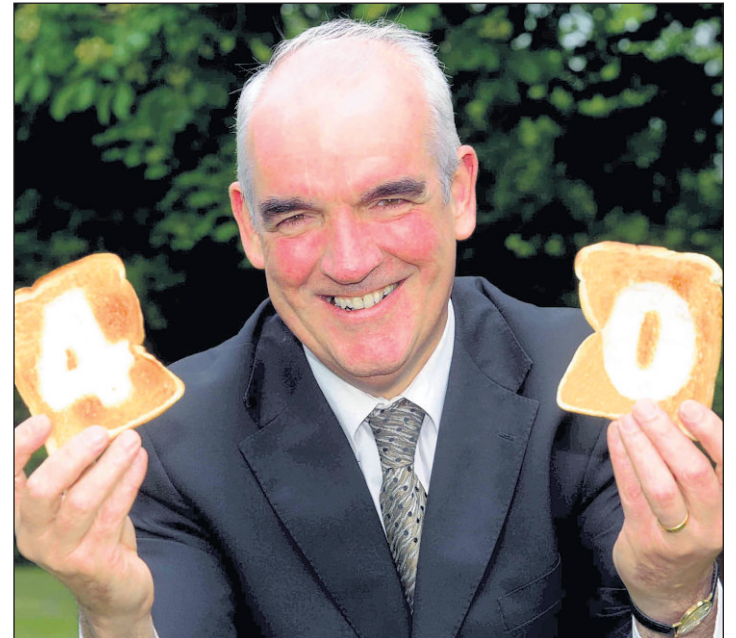
"Looking back at the industry in those early days, there were about a dozen big household name bakeries compared to nowadays when there

are just three. Selling bread was very personal and direct. Door to door sales were vital to the business and we were literally canvassing like politicians to attract new customers to our brands.

Having served his time as a salesman from 1970, Gerry eventually made the move into wholesale management and was part of the team that established the bakery's first sales in the Republic of Ireland market.

Following a spell as Wholesale Sales Manager, Gerry took up his current position as National Account Manager in 1992, by which time the bakery was known as Allied Bakeries.

"I loved the job as I've always enjoyed meeting people and selling products. At the time I didn't realise that I would be with the same company for 40 years but here I am and I still love what I do. Even though the business has changed dramatically over the years, I still get a buzz from selling and working with people. Indeed, I would classify many of the buyers I deal with as friends as well as business acquaintances," he added.



Slice above the rest...Gerry Cassidy, National Account Manager for Allied Bakeries Ireland, celebrates the milestone of 40 years with Northern Ireland's biggest bakery

# Are the contents of your desk killing your business?

HAVING an untidy desk covered in clutter could be stopping you achieving the business success you want.

That is according to Jayne Morris, founder of Power Up Coaching who has helped many clients transform their business by starting with the "stuff" on their desks.

She maintains that clearing your desk has the power to transform your business. How? Jayne says that clutter in your outer environment is the physical manifestation of all the clutter going on inside you. Clearing clutter off your desk has a ripple effect across your entire life - including your work. It can transform your business from a stagnant pond to a fast flowing river.

"When our minds are cluttered with overwhelm, fears, worries and limiting beliefs they show up in our lives as physical clutter - in our homes and in our business. Clutter has far-reaching negative effects on every area of our lives. Clutter prevents us from living our lives to the full and receiving the recognition and success we deserve," she says.

"For many of us in the 21st century our business lives are an important part of who we are and how we feel, but if we allow that aspect of our lives to get cluttered then it's clear we won't be reaching our potential.

"Our internal and external worlds are intrinsically linked. Clearing clutter on the external has a direct effect on the internal and visa



Decluttering the physical environment, like the workspace, will have a positive impact on your internal world

versa. Clearing out your physical environment - even if it's just a small space, like your desk or the overflowing filing cabinet - will instantly impact your internal world, your mental health and wellbeing. You'll be creating more "space" for the clients and opportunities you want - as well as the money and success you deserve. It's a great way to get your business moving forward," she adds.

Jayne suggests making a start on clearing your physical clutter today with these 6 Starter Steps:

1. **Select a Starting Point** - Ask yourself 'Which area of my physical environment would make the

best place for me to start clearing for my highest possible good'. Trust your intuition and start there. Even clearing clutter at home will impact on your business - and vice versa. If you are unsure then the desk is always a great place to start - its small and clearly defined.

2. **Shift Your Focus** - Shift your focus so that your clutter becomes your ally, like a friend helping to highlight the things you have hidden, but actually want to keep.

3. **Find Your Treasures** - Begin your clearing process by sorting through the area you are clearing and putting aside all the things you instantly feel drawn to that you

defiantly want to keep.

4. **Trash or Treasure?** - Some things you may not feel instantly drawn to keep and may find indecisiveness creeping in about whether they are trash or treasure. Ask yourself 'does this item expand or deplete my energy?'

5. **Trash Fast!** - When you have finished clearing your selected area trust your instincts on what to trash and trash fast!

6. **Trust Your Space** - If you've held on to clutter for sometime you will definitely feel a sense of energetic lightness when you let go of things that have been draining you.



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Michael Moss, Manager, Portstewart Golf Club

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