Each year I go to see my consultant for my health check. He talks to me with an ease and a quiet self-belief and confidence. So where does this expertise come from? It comes from years and years of him specialising in his field of medicine right there at the patient interface.

Compare this to many EHP’s in the public sector. They spend their formative years working their patch and developing their professional skills. Within a few years they have become excellent practitioners, with that same assurance as my consultant.

Whether it be the lure of a warm office or a desire to get stuck into performance measures, many EHP’s have a programmed ambition to move on and up and make their first move into management. Within a few more years many progress further and find themselves, like I did, sitting in committee at 10pm debating a subject completely foreign to environmental health .... and wondering why on earth they are there.

It was a chance introduction to ‘The Dilbert Principle’ (Author: Scott Adams) that totally changed my outlook on management. The book talks about anybody with the following in their job titles: *Strategy, Procurement, Re-engineering, Corporate improvement,* and questions their worth.

It is therefore sad to hear in recent months of many excellent practitioners being made redundant from the public sector, when those policy/strategy/procurement officers remain in office.

However, I have a message for those ‘out of work’ EHP’s. There is work out there in the private sector for you that will re-invigorate you and get you back to your environmental and public health roots. Five years into private consultancy, I wake up and look forward to every working day.

And at 10 o clock in the evening you will now find me relaxing having a beer ... or work/life balance as they call it.