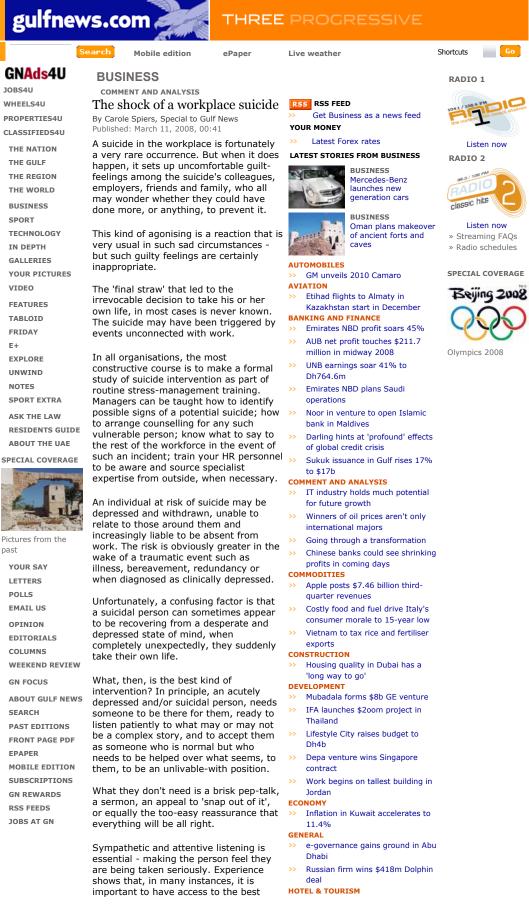
Last updated: 16:00 (GMT+04) Wednesday, July 23, 2008. Rajab 20, 1429.



professional back-up you can source.

The other day I was presented with the case of a van-driver who had tried to hang himself in his van - which, had he succeeded, would have involved his employers in a full inquest. By moving immediately into our emergency procedure, we were able to minimise the chance of another attempt. We provided immediate crisis intervention support, including access to a 24-hour counselling >> hotline. We also briefed his line-manager on how best to handle this particular situation, which had, in fact, been sparked by the recent suicide of the driver's own son, for which he blamed himself.

Key points: Caring for lives

- Identifying suicidal symptoms in advance can be formally taught.
- Sympathetic and attentive listening >> is essential.
- Expert professional backup should be ready to deploy, without delay, when necessary.

- The writer is a BBC broadcaster and motivational speaker, with 20 years' experience as CEO of Carole Spiers Group, an international stress consultancy based in London.

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