

Westchester Human Resource Management Association



WHRMA News

January 2009



WHRMA President's Note— January 2009 By: Edwin Bowman

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I want to wish the HR community, WHRMA members, and our community at large the very best in 2009.

I especially want to thank the 2009 WHRMA Board of Directors for their volunteerism and enthusiasm in supporting both the national SHRM and our chapter's goals and objectives this year for advancing the profession of human resource management. Our past achievements are commendable in growing the membership of colleagues in our community and addressing the professional issues we face. And, we should all take pride in being a Merit Award Chapter that is in good standing with the charter and mission of the Society for Human Resource Management.

The new year, and perhaps the *new era*, promises to place additional demands on us as HR professionals, as everything we do will be done against the backdrop of "today's economic environment." Notwithstanding, our long held belief that truly institutionalized

policies and practices should withstand organizational, management, and environmental change, we must continue to be a strategic partner in achieving short term objectives that drive long term value in a truly dynamic climate.

It is my hope that we will energize and encourage sharing knowledge through participation with our various WHRMA forums, special interest groups, monthly breakfast meetings, and professional networking events and serve as a viable resource on human resource management issues in our Westchester and surrounding counties.

The 2008 SHRM Annual Report highlights the top three human capital issues that keep business executives up at night:

- 1) Succession Planning,
 - 2) Providing leaders with the skills they need to be successful, and
 - 3) Recruiting talented employees.
- I believe that many of the WHRMA initiatives we've either discussed or are actively involved in attest to these findings. Therefore, I believe

that our planned programs and initiatives in the areas of Workforce Readiness, Legislative Awareness and Advocacy, Diversity Management, Strategic Management, Professional Development, and College Relations will make significant contributions to mitigate the challenges that we all face, now.

And, let us not forget our influence on the future; especially upon those who will inherit our triumphs and tragedies and even the professional positions we occupy. Encouragement to pursue the profession and to mentor the development of future HR professionals is on *our* shift.

As a chapter, I hope that WHRMA will continue to be a professional forum where all human resource managers can pool our collective knowledge and exchange ideas to provide the best practices to our workplace in an ever changing, and challenging work environment.

I look forward to seeing you at our next Breakfast Program.

Edwin

Here is a reminder directly from our Code of Ethics. Please make note:

As a member of the Westchester Human Resource Management Association (WHRMA), I recognize the primary aim of the organization is to further the professionalism and knowledge of its membership. In Keeping with this aim, I understand and agree:

- I will not solicit or initiate business from any member either at meetings or through the use of information provided to me as a member of WHRMA.
- I will assist in the networking of chapter members by sharing general knowledge in areas of my expertise to advance the knowledge of all members.
- If provided the opportunity to make a presentation to the general membership, this presentation is to be viewed as an opportunity to educate and inform members and not as an opportunity to solicit business. However, any materials I distribute in conjunction with such a presentation may contain information concerning my business interests.

Book Review: Why Should the Boss Listen to You? The 7 Disciplines of the Trusted Strategic Advisor **Author: Jim Lukaszewski (fellow WHRMA Member) Submitted by: Elizabeth Rossi**

In his book, Jim tackles the age old question about HR and its value (perceived or actual) to organizations. This is an important book for all HR professionals. Jim provides us with both a roadmap and the tools to help each and everyone of us get a "seat at the table". Even if you already have a seat, the information provided in his book will help you to fine-tune your skills, understand the broader picture of organizations, gives you hints and ideas to proving your strategic value, and remind us that we are much more than just HR—we are a strategic part of a much larger team! Jim uses many examples from his professional career to get his point across; some of these examples are eye openers (we know certain things happen, but we just can't believe it!). Although we are faced with many challenges, it is important that we, as HR professionals, take advantage of opportunities that are offered. We must have the courage to tell people what they need to hear vs. what they want to hear. OK, not all organizations can handle this information and some of your bosses may not always be open. However, it is our job as the HR professional to gain the trust and respect of our boss and colleagues so that we can be in this position.

HR JOBS:

Visit our website
www.whrma.org for HR
 openings in our area.
 We'll be happy to list
 any openings you may
 have as well!

You can also post your
 resume on the site as
 well.

Any questions? Send
 an email to Angela
 Bellizzi:
anbellizzi@aol.com.

"Simple management behaviors such as giving timely recognition to employees, supporting their continued development, and providing coaching and guidance mean a lot to employees – especially when they are anxious. During these times, it is even more important to create an environment where everyone is respected."

Douglas Klein, President of Sirota Survey Intelligence [Source: Training Magazine, January 2009]

Q&A

Q. I think strong leaders can't be concerned about how well they are liked by employees. However, some leaders are well liked, and they accomplish great things. What makes these leaders different? How can I be more like them?

A. You are describing the difference between a good leader and a good boss. Great leadership does not always accompany traits that endear the leader to those they supervise. Many leaders accomplish great things and earn respect, but may not be viewed as good bosses. Jack Welch, former CEO of GE, is a legendary leader. He had a reputation for firing the bottom 10% of his managers each year. He was named "Manager of the Century" by Fortune magazine, but what about "best boss"? Being a good boss can be tough work because you must have skills that go beyond leadership to include great listening ability, excellent communication, and common courtesy. A good boss understands and empathizes with people from all backgrounds, all races, both genders, and all ages. The good boss is never "too good" to associate with employees and demonstrate the "common touch". Develop these soft skills and you can become the leader you want to be.

Source: [Frontline Supervisor](#), January 2009

Your Board—Your WHRMA Resource

Here is a directory of your board members for 2009

President

Edwin L. Bowman
Bowman Bekcer Consultancy, LLC
914-682-4137
edwin.bowman@bowmanbecker.com

Immediate Past President

Alan Pearlman, CCP
Director, Compensation/ Benefits, MBIA
914-765-3872
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Secretary

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Treasurer

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HR Officer
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Program Chair

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Membership Co-Chairs

Rhonda James, PHR
Dir., Human Resources
Baker Companies
914-747-1550
Rjames@thebakercompanies.com
AND

Danielle Martin, MBA, MS
See contact information above.

Diversity Chair

Julia Nesbitt, PHR
Director of HR
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914-949-3098 ext. 140
Jnesbitt@gcccares.org

HR Job Bank & Networking Chair

Angela Bellizzi, SPHR
914-325-6952
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Legislative Chair

Robert Grabel
Corporate Events Director
Start! Heart Walk
914-640-3266
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Certification Chair

Greg Chartier, Ph.D., SPHR
Principal
914-548-1689
greg@hrinfo4u.com (as of 1/31/09)

Website e-Commerce Chair

Grant Schneider, SPHR
VP Human Resources
973-597-6433 ext. 135
gschneider@briad.com

Communications Chair

Elizabeth Rossi, PHR
Director Human Resources
The Osborn
914-925-8222
erossi@theosborn.org

SHRM Foundation Chair

Currently Vacant

Workforce Readiness Chair

Omayra Wheeler, MBA
HR & Management Consultant
914-734-1290
oj10566@aol.com

The NYS SHRM can also be a great resource to our membership.

Their website is very detailed and informative.

Check them out at www.nyshrm.org.

House Passes Ledbetter Fair Pay Act



From HR Hero NewsAlerts, January 9, 2009:

In one of its first major employment law actions of the year, The US House of Representatives has passed legislation that will significantly ease the time limits for employees to file wage discrimination claims.

The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009 (HR 11) passed the House January 9th with a vote of 247-171. The Act amends Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act to declare that an unlawful employment practice occurs not only upon adoption of a discriminatory compensation decision or practice, but also when the individual becomes subject to the decision or practice, as well as each additional application of that decision or

practice. In other words, each time compensation is paid.

While expanding the time limit during which claims are filed, the Act also permits aggrieved employees to recover back pay for up to two years before the claim filing date.

The Act came as a direct response to a 2007 US Supreme Court ruling in the case of Lilly Ledbetter vs. Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company. In that decision, Ledbetter, a longtime employee of Goodyear, charged her employer with wage discrimination when she discovered that she had been paid less than a male supervisor at another plant. By the time she learned of the practice, several years had passed, and she had since retired. In a 5—4 decision,

the Supreme Court ruled that she was no longer entitled to file a claim because she had failed to do so within 180 days of the initial discriminatory wage decision.

Under the Fair Pay Act, claims such as Ledbetter's would be permitted because a new unlawful employment practice could occur with each paycheck that comes after the initial discriminatory wage decision. Thus, the 180-day statute of limitations would reset with each paycheck or other application of the discriminatory decision or practice.

Though an identical bill passed the House in 2008, the Act died after failing to pass the Senate. The new measure is expected to be brought before the Senate.

Ethics & Morality Across Cultures

From the CAL Learning Newsletter, January 2009

Differences in morals and ethics can lead to a great deal of cross cultural conflict and miscommunication. How a culture defines its morals and ethics can be described as either Universalist or Particularist. Which cultures hold each viewpoint, and how do these differing views affect workplace relationships?

Particularist or Universalist?

Latin, African and Asian cultures are Particularist. English and German speaking countries are Universalist. Basically, the Universalist follows rules. The Particularist is situational. For the Universalist, all laws apply to all people and morals do not waiver. The rules are the rules and they apply equally to everyone. No one is above the law (in theory anyway).

Particularists, on the other hand, see things as situational. They know that there are many truths, and that there are multiple perspectives on any situation. How you view an event depends on your role in it, who else is involved, and the context. Hard and fast rules don't make sense to the Particularist. How can you apply the same rules to all situations? Particularists also spend more time building relationships and value personal obligation more than Universalists, who often underestimate or ignore their importance.

Contracts are legal and binding for the Universalist, whereas for the Particularist contracts may be amended or adjusted if the situation or context changes. American companies doing business in China frequently face

this cross cultural impasse, where the American believes it is a deal. The Chinese, on the other hand, see agreements changing if the situation changes. It is the trustworthy person who is known to honor the changing circumstances. For the Universalist, it is the complete opposite. A trustworthy person keeps his word.

When you are interacting with a Universalist or a Particularist you can expect certain communication patterns. By recognizing them, you can adapt your own style to better communicate across cultures. Always think: What is the most effective communication style for interacting in this culture? What is the best way to get my message across? What interactional skills do I need to apply?

WHRMA now has sponsorship and advertising opportunities. If interested, please contact Danielle Martin, Manager Human Resources, A&E Television Networks, 203-353-7285, Danielle.martin@aetn.com

Welcome to Our New Members!!!!

We have one new member since our last publication....

Welcome to Karen Eidelman of Manpower



Doing It Right, excerpted from *HR Executive*, January 2009

John Gibbons has some advice for HR leaders at organizations that decide the poor economy leaves them with no choice but to downsize their workforce: Think about the survivors.

Gibbons, whose previous experience before becoming a senior research associate at the Conference Board includes serving as director of HR for The Gap's Northeast region and, before that, as HR director at a jewelry factory owned by Crystal Brands—is a veteran of downsizing at both companies.

At both firms, company leaders made a point of being on-site when staff reductions were announced, he says. “They were willing to take it on the chin and actually speak to employees face-to-face and say, ‘this was a tough decision, but it was my decision and the accountability and the responsibility for the decision that’s impacting you rests with me,’” says Gibbons. By doing this, leaders will maintain their integrity with both sets of employees, he says. “Even though you may not like what you’re hearing from a senior team member, the fact that [he or she is] at least brave enough to face you and say, ‘This was a tough decision, I anguished over it and I have to live with it’ - that really resonates with people,” says Gibbons.

At the Gap, the company also strove to be as generous as it could with severance packages for employees who were laid off, including part-timers, and allowed them to continue accessing benefits such as the company EAP even after they left. “We understood that employees who were staying would remember how we treated those who had to leave,” says Gibbons.

2009 SHRM Programs—Make Your Plans Now...

SHRM Employment Law & Legislative Conference

Washington, DC
March 9—11, 2009

SHRM 61st Annual Conference & Exposition

New Orleans, LA
June 28—July 1, 2009

SHRM Global Conference and Exposition

Toronto, Ontario, Canada
March 30—April 1, 2009

For more information, check out the SHRM site at www.shrm.org.

SHRM Staffing Management Conference & Exposition

Las Vegas, Nevada
April 28—30, 2009



2009 Chapter Meeting Dates

All are breakfast meetings EXCEPT for September, which is a dinner meeting.

Tuesday, February 17th Social Networking—Linked In; Speaker: Brian Tietje

Tuesday, March 17th A presentation by our International Special Interest Group; Speaker: Sylvia Ehrlich

Tuesday, April 21st Financial Literacy—Employer Fiduciary; Speaker: Frank Alcorn

Tuesday, May 19th Health and Wellness

Tuesday, June 16th Diversity Conference

Tuesday, September 15th Annual Compensation Dinner

Tuesday, October 20th Panel Discussion on HSAs

Tuesday, November 17th TBD

More details can be found on the website as they are finalized: www.whrma.org.

Our Purpose:

1. To provide a forum for educational presentations and the discussion of topics relative to the HR profession.
2. To encourage and support members in their pursuit of professional certification.
3. To provide a clearing house of human resource information to the business community.
4. To cooperate with other human resource organizations in meeting the needs of the HR professional.
5. To provide information and services to serve the professional and advance the profession.

International SIG Dates Compensation/ER SIG

2009: February 10th from 9am to 11am at the offices of Jackson Lewis
Speaker: Rob Lesser, Morgan Stanley

2009 Meeting Schedule:

- Wednesday, February 11th
- Wednesday, March 11th
- Wednesday, April 15th



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