

# Westchester Human Resource Management Association



## WHRMA News

May 2009



### From the President...by Edwin Bowman

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WHRMA had an outstanding 2009 first quarter. I am pleased to announce that the chapter is on track to have another outstanding year of initiatives that advance the profession of human resource management. Following are some of the highlights:

- Our programs in the first three months included quality speakers and the meetings received high ratings from attendees;
- We have streamlined the HRCI Certification process and all programs were approved through April, 2009;
- Breakfast Programs have been well attended with 40 or more members participating;
- All leadership positions on the WHRMA Board were filled in January and are functioning with significant programs in all areas;
- Membership increased

and our monitoring and reporting has become more accurate;

- Involvement with area college and university student groups increased during the quarter through efforts of our College Relations Committee. Programs at Pace University, Monroe College, and Westchester Community College as well as attendance at Breakfast Programs by students from both the HR Club of Monroe College and Manhattanville College made WHRMA more visible in the academic community;
- WHRMA forged productive relationships with the NYS SHRM Council in the areas of Workforce Readiness, Diversity, and Website Management;
- We have increased survey capability and will utilize it more in an effort to increase communications with chapter members.

We are looking forward to continuing to grow the membership, facilitating excellent quality programs on issues that are important to the HR community, and providing effective information to our members.

One of our key objectives is to encourage members to get involved with chapter initiatives and to volunteer for leadership roles or subcommittees as needs arise. We are pleased to report that the spirit of volunteerism has been on the rise, making the chapter more vibrant and attractive to prospective members.

Lastly, I want to assure all chapter members that each member on the Board reaffirms their commitment to our **By-Laws and Code of Ethics**. We believe that this ongoing reaffirmation will be a key ingredient for making our chapter one of the best in the country as we enhance the profession.

#### HR JOBS:

Visit our website [www.whrma.org](http://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 if you are interested. Any questions? Send an email to Angela Bellizzi: [anbellizzi@aol.com](mailto:anbellizzi@aol.com).

#### JACKSON LEWIS EMPLOYMENT ROUNDTABLE PROGRAMS:

##### Program Dates are:

Wednesday, May 27th—Topic TBD

Wednesday, July 15th—Topic TBD

Wednesday, November 4th—Topic TBD

All sessions will take place from 3 pm to 5 pm in the Jackson Lewis Offices in White Plains. These roundtables are free and available to WHRMA members only.

## What to Ask BEFORE Implementing That Hiring Freeze

Excerpted from HR Magazine, March 2009

We all look for the fast way out when dealing with the economy and its effect on our workplace. Before you implement a hiring freeze, ask yourself the following:

- ◆ What problem is this intended to solve—is this the right solution for the problem at hand?
- ◆ How will you maintain productivity levels if people in key jobs leave?
- ◆ How long do you expect this to last?
- ◆ What groups will be affected?
- ◆ What hiring “work in process” will you allow? For instance, if offers to candidates are outstanding can these people be hired?
- ◆ Will there be an exception process?
- ◆ What will you communicate externally?
  
- ◆ What will you communicate internally?
- ◆ What milestones will signify an end for the program?
  
- ◆ Will the groups most affected by the freeze be treated any differently when the freeze is lifted?

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## Q&A—Excerpted from HR Magazine, March 2009

**Q. What kind of advice can I give a manager who gets defensive when his director tries to give him helpful feedback? The director is not always as diplomatic as he could be.**

A: Some people are better than others at giving criticism that is useful to the recipient. But even if the director errs when giving criticism, the manager can learn to make the most of the feedback.

First the manager must acknowledge that even if the director lacks diplomacy or communication skills, the director may still have valid points. It may be a treasure hunt trying to find the nuggets of helpful information in the director’s message, but the manager will never unearth them if he doesn’t intentionally dig through the negativity. Next, the manager may need to set aside the desire to explain the deficiencies or obstacles. When the director is on the offensive, he may not be willing to listen. It is a judgment call, but often explanations are futile and may make the manager look defensive or insubordinate.

If the manager commits to listening carefully, it will give him the opportunity to learn from the director and possibly to deliver a thoughtful rebuttal at a time when the director is more receptive. Further, if the rebuttal is delivered via email, it will give the manager time to rethink and revise, and it will create documentation of the conversation that may be helpful to both parties.

The manager will get better feedback from the director if he maintains eye contact and open body language. This can be hard to do if the manager feels attacked, but a defensive posture may put the director in more of an offensive position. If the manager listens actively, seeking clarification and paraphrasing the director’s point of view, the director may be less inclined to become shrill in making a point. This will make both parties feel better about the exchange.

Once the conversation is over, the manager should look for specific behaviors that were mentioned and consider ways to change those behaviors. Further, the manager should view the conversation as a first step toward solving a problem and should follow up on the conversation with steps for resolving the concerns that were discussed.

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## Your Board—Your WHRMA Resource

### President

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

### Immediate Past President

Alan Pearlman, CCP  
Director, Compensation/ Benefits, MBIA  
914-765-3872  
Alan.Pearlman@mbia.com

### Secretary

Lisa Marziliano, PHR  
HR Manager, Quorum Federal Credit  
Union  
914-641-3747  
Lisa.marziliano@quorumfcu.org

### Treasurer

Diana Clay  
HR Manager, Bunge Limited  
914-220-2563  
Diana.clay@bunge.com

### Hospitality Chair

Vicki Rowe  
Manager of Human Resources, Farrand  
Controls  
914-287-4028  
vrowe@ruhle.com

### College Relations

Debbie Callaghan, MS, PHR  
HR Officer, Mahopac Nat'l Bank  
845-278-1079  
dcallaghan@mahopacnationalbank.com

### Program Chair

Danielle Martin, MBA, MS  
Manager Human Resources  
A&E Television Networks  
203-353-7285  
Danielle.martin@aetn.com

### 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, Grace Church Community  
914-949-3098 ext. 140  
Jnesbitt@gcccares.org

### HR Job Bank & Networking Chair

Angela Bellizzi, SPHR  
914-325-6952  
anbellizzi@aol.com

### Legislative Chair

*Currently Vacant*

### 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 HR, 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 Annual Conference will be held from  
July 19–21, 2009 at the  
Turning Stone Resort Conference Center in Verona, NY.  
Details will be posted on [www.NYSSHRM.org](http://www.NYSSHRM.org) once finalized.**

**We have an immediate opening on the WHRMA Board as Legislative Representative. Because of a work reassignment, Robert Grabel will be vacating his position on the Board. Bob was an enthusiastic contributor with great ideas to keep the HR community up to date on local, state and federal legislation and serving as chapter liaison with Jackson Lewis. Please let one of the Board members know if you are interested. We also have a position description available for you to review.**

## March Meeting Recap

Our March Breakfast meeting focused on the topic of Global HR. Although not all attendees have international responsibilities, it was a true learning experience for us all!

Sylvia Erlich, Chair of our International HR Special Interest Group served as moderator for our panel. Each speaker had their own perspective to offer.

The cost of an international assignment is usually 3 to 5 times the person's annual income. Since it's an expensive venture, employers need to be prepared. Some of the things to keep in mind:

- Provide the appropriate supports for the employee *and* family members.
- *Get regular feedback* from the employee and spouse, to ensure the process is working.
- Remember that US laws do not necessarily apply to overseas countries.
- The few laws that do follow the worker overseas is Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, the ADEA, and the ADA.
- Ensure you have the appropriate processes in place, especially when

terminating or reducing the workforce.

- HR needs to communicate the risks to businesses.
- I-9; E-Verify; and a number of other upcoming laws were reviewed as well.

There is just not enough space to review the program in its entirety. It was interesting, informative, and insightful.

Thank you to our panel for a job well done!

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## Book Review: GUANIXI (The Art of Relationships) by: R. Buderie and G. T. Huang Submitted by Dave Adams

Guanixi can carry a negative connotation of favoritism and cronyism but in this case the book refers to good Guanixi and it's four basic principles of trust, favor, dependence and adaptation.

In 1994, Bill Gates, Chair of Microsoft, made his first visit to China. When Gates was picked up at the airport the Chinese expected a man wearing a suit and instead they met a man wearing jeans and tennis shoes. He had a backpack (with computer inside, no surprise) but no other luggage. It was a short visit with President Jiang mentioning that Bill should learn more about Chinese culture, a polite way of saying the president was insulted. On the next trip in 1995, President Jiang invited Gates to a resort and then asked Gates where he would visit this time. Bill mentioned Xi'an, the Terra Cotta warriors and horses, The Three Gorges, and the Yangtze River. He also asked to

try all different kinds of transportation, Chinese airlines, trains, boat, bicycle and camel! President Jiang's response: "You're doing well. If you keep working hard you'll succeed even more."

During a conversation on the trip Bill talked with Jiang about the stock market, and what responsibility there was to shareholders. The President's response at the end of the discussion was: "I guess I understand. This whole thing is not very rational." After which Gates replied, "You know, Mr. Jiang, you are a real capitalist!"

Postgraduate degrees in China had jumped from 107 in 1949 to 160,000 by 2004. The 19 million college undergraduates dwarf the 14 million in the United States. The academic potential for China was growing steadily and Microsoft saw the potential for another investment similar to Cambridge Labs. Microsoft had

established the Cambridge, England, lab and had committed to investing \$80 million over the next five years—growing the lab to 100 researchers in the process. When asked by Lee what the deliverables are for establishing a similar operation in China, Gates said "Hire Great people, do great stuff." The response was: in what areas and the reply, "Whatever the great people want to do, as long as it is relevant to Microsoft in five to seven years." When asked how much money do you want to save, the response was "We're not there to save money. Pay the great people what you need to hire them." Lee felt it was too good to be true but it was true!

The book continues with relationship building and how Microsoft has developed the Guanixi that has facilitated Microsoft, China, and Bill Gates' plan to win the road ahead. Not only a good read but a lesson on Guanixi that we all can learn from.

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## Welcome to Our New Members!!!!

Laura Schachter	President	Professional Placement Associates
Lora Tuttle	HR Administrator	HRH Construction
Donald Rankin	Vice President	Interconex, Inc.
Allison Madison	President/Owner	Reinhard-Madison Approach Staffing
Kathleen Clarke	Director of Human Resources	Concordia College
Linda Smith	Director of Human Resources	Lawrence Hospital
Emilia Williams-Gaston	Manager, Leadership & Talent Management	Verizon
Caren Annuzzelli		
Deeanne McCarthy	Director of Human Resources	Andrus on Hudson



## Membership Renewal Time Is Upon Us!

**Your WHRMA membership will expire on April 30, 2009.**

We value you as a member of the Westchester Human Resources Management Association (WHRMA) and we don't want you to miss out on the upcoming meetings, events and the many benefits you can receive from WHRMA!!

Please remember to keep your email information up to date so that you receive all of our communications.

The fastest way to renew your membership is on the website, [www.whrma.org](http://www.whrma.org). Please logon and click on Membership Renewal on the left side of the screen. You may pay the \$50.00 dues by credit card or check.

We look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events!

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## 2009 SHRM Annual Conference

### SHRM 61st Annual Conference & Exposition

New Orleans, LA  
June 28—July 1, 2009

For more information, check out the SHRM site at [www.shrm.org](http://www.shrm.org).



**2009 Chapter Meeting Dates**

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

Tuesday, May 19th Building a Culture of Accountability Speaker: Jennifer Forgie of OnPoint Consulting

Tuesday, June 16th Diversity Conference

Tuesday, September 15th Compensation

Tuesday, October 20th Panel Discussion on HSAs

Tuesday, November 17th Health & Wellness

More details can be found on the website as they are finalized: [www.whrma.org](http://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**

**UPCOMING MEETING DATES:**

September 22nd

TBD For May & June

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