

Westchester Human Resource Management Association



WHRMA News

July 2009

AFFILIATE OF
SHRMTM
SOCIETY FOR HUMAN
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

From the President...by Edwin Bowman

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I am pleased to announce that our chapter remains healthy, busy, and achievement oriented. The second quarter of 2009 was full of major accomplishments that included programs and activities designed to meet our mission of enhancing the profession of human resource management. Meeting the goals and objectives also led to maintaining or improving our brand as evidenced by great attendance at breakfast programs, increase in new members, and positive feedback from the various communities with which we have engaged with programs and activities.

Highlights include:

- Programs that focused on International Human Resources Management, Employee Wealth Management, & Diversity and Inclusion. Feedback on all of the programs was positive and reflected members' satisfaction with quality and content;
- College Relations continues to be strong with the

chapter as evidenced by the numerous requests for WHRMA HR professionals to be a resource for area college and university student groups;

- Workforce Readiness programs have become a highlight in our leadership areas, forging meaningful educational programs and tutelage in the local academic community, neighborhood organizations, and affinity groups;
- Enthusiasm on the part of WHRMA members to volunteer for activities remained high, affording us the opportunity to assure that all leadership areas are staffed with back-up strength when necessary;
- The HRCI process has become a smoother process to service our members more efficiently and in a timely fashion;
- WHRMA's Diversity leadership area matured this year, culminating in a special meeting that met or exceeded the expectations of attendees.

Most significantly is the sentiment that the chapter continues to be a leader in this subject matter area locally and with the state and national SHRM initiatives;

- Service to our members with effective communications on the website and with the newsletter has assured that all members have access to relevant and current information. And, our increasing use of surveys among members has helped guide program and activity development that is important to our members;

Finally, the chapter's corporate governance remains exemplary in all areas including Treasury, Hospitality, and Membership and the office of the Secretary.

We certainly expect that the rest of 2009 will be as eventful for our chapter as the past six months. With the Networking Event, the next Legal Roundtable, and breakfast program topics already on the calendar, combined with our various SIG meeting plans, we have a jump start on the remainder of the year.

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 if you are interested. Any questions? Send an email to Angela Bellizzi: anbellizzi@aol.com.

JACKSON LEWIS EMPLOYMENT ROUNDTABLE PROGRAMS:

Program Dates are:

Wednesday, July 15th—A new age of harassment; bullying, social networks & health conditions

Wednesday, November 4th—Topic TBD

All sessions will take place from 3 pm to 4:30 pm in the Jackson Lewis Offices in White Plains. These roundtables are free and available to WHRMA members only.

May Meeting Re-Cap Submitted by Danielle Martin

How do you “Boost Below Standard Employee Performance?” The attendees of our May 19th breakfast meeting were all ears as presenter Jen Forgie led the discussion. Employee performance problems and how they are addressed has long been an issue for HR professionals. Unfortunately much of the problem rests with the managers. Research has indicated that managers are reluctant to confront issues and lack the skills needed to coach and improve employee performance. Managers must set expectations and be clear about what constitutes an employee who is at standard and above. The performance management system that a company utilizes can help or hurt the process. Just by automating the review process, and thereby simplifying the paperwork does not solve how you boost the employee from below standard.

Seven Tips to Boost Below Standard Performance

1. Paint a clear picture of what “good” looks like
2. Communicate your expectations
3. Don’t delay
4. Don’t let expertise or revenue production be an excuse
5. Provide both scheduled and “on the spot” coaching and feedback
6. Celebrate small victories
7. Don’t underestimate the importance of goal setting and coaching skills

June Meeting Re-Cap

Our June program was presented as a panel and focused on the topic of Diversity; however, Diversity not as a compliance issue but rather focusing on the topic as a business case. Our panel moderator was Jonathon Trafimow, Esq., Morrit Hock Hamroff & Horowitz; and our panelists were Grant Schneider, President, Performance Development Strategies; Michael Brathwaite, VP Morgan Stanley and Talk Show Host; and Nivia Viera, Founder & Publisher, Kids X-press. To start, the panel discussed the definition of Diversity from a business perspective—“creating opportunities for the best qualified; seeing differences in individuals and using them to the advantage of the organization.” Our typical view on diversity is usually very narrow—it was agreed that we need to expand the view on diversity to look at a wider range of abilities and capabilities. Our diversity initiatives should not just focus on race or gender or religion or any of the other “traits” we have typically referred to as diversity, but also difference in thoughts and ideas; language; communication tools; and technology to name a few. The business mindset must change as well, taking the organization away from a compliance focus to a business focus; both the company culture and the customer culture need to be acknowledged and blended; large and small organizations must take action, and the sooner the better. Every worker’s perspective is based on “where they came from”; therefore, there is a very varied approach to work and the workplace. Each of these different perspectives can be beneficial to an organization and can add value. Organizations need to: (a) embrace diversity; (b) cultivate innovation; (c) recognize differences in individuals; and (d) create opportunities. By doing so, an organization will become agile, flexible, insightful, etc. which will only lead to benefits for the organization: improved bottom line results, increased productivity, reduced turnover, and so much more!

There is no way to capture the entire discussion—there were so many ideas presented, questions asked, and great interaction with the audience, that you really needed to be there.

Our thanks to Julia Nesbitt, our Diversity Chair, and the diversity committee for putting this excellent program together.

Your Board—Your WHRMA Resource

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**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 once finalized.**

**Welcome and Congratulations to
Lena Bodin for volunteering for our
Legislative Representative Opening
on the WHRMA Board. We are very
happy to have Lena join us and we
look forward to working with her.**

Q&A Excerpted from Workforce Magazine's Dear Workforce, June 2009

Q: How do I approach a new employee that I suspect may be drinking prior to arriving at work?

A: Don't delay. If you have good reason to believe an employee is drinking before coming to work, act immediately. This situation could have a negative impact on morale, is a potential safety issue and does nothing to promote an engaging work environment.

Leverage the conversation. There is nothing wrong with asking the employee if he or she has been drinking, provided you have credible reason to believe so. You have safety on your side, more than likely company policy, and applicable state laws. These conversations are best conducted when at least two company representatives are present, along with the employee.

Examine the Policy. It is important to have sufficient detail in the policy to cover most situations, and if it needs to be adjusted to be more comprehensive, then the company should move to make that happen. Taking a look at the company policy regarding drinking, you will know the exact parameters.

Consider Safety. Employee safety is paramount. An employee who is drinking prior to work puts people at risk. This is especially true in organizations that use heavy equipment, but could certainly apply in an office environment as well.

Offer Help. If the employee admits to drinking, then do your best to offer help if you are able to through your organization's employee assistance program. HR Directors do themselves a favor by not offering counseling themselves to a person

drinking. Let professional drug and alcohol counselors apply their skills instead.

Seek Discipline. An employee is suspected of drinking. The employee says that he or she was not drinking and will not admit to doing so. If you still suspect drinking occurred, then have the person take a blood-alcohol test. It is important that an HR representative escort the employee. The results of the test will determine whether you need to take disciplinary action.

Promote a healthy work environment. People drink for a variety of reasons that could be lessened by an engaging, healthy work environment. Some companies use vendors that provide programs focused on healthy living. These include assistance with alcohol reduction, tobacco cessation, weight loss and physical fitness.

5 Ways to Prevent Discrimination Charges From CAL Learning, June 2009 Newsletter

As more people lose their jobs in a shaky economy, charges of workplace discrimination are rising. According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) discrimination claims have jumped 15% during the past year. How can you protect your organization from having ex-employees file discrimination claims?

Rising unemployment leads to increases in discrimination claims. Companies are laying off thousands of employees, and many of them are charging discrimination in being terminated. The most common charges are discrimination based on race, sex, and retaliation. As more Baby Boomers are losing their jobs, age discrimination has jumped 25% in 2008—the biggest increase ever.

Lower Your Chances of Discrimination Claims

Employers can help lower their chances with discrimination proactively, first by creating a non-discriminatory work environment,

and by being respectful of your employees. You should:

1. Know the Law

Make sure you and your employees understand anti-discrimination laws, and that they are enforced at work. Most employees are familiar with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, which protects employees from discrimination based on age, disability, national origin, race, religion or gender. However, they also need to stay up to date on new laws that affect discrimination, such as the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and changes in the Family Medical Leave Act.

2. Be Consistent

Make sure you are consistent in application of workplace rules and employee expectations. Don't have one set of rules for some people but not others. Show consistently through your words and actions that discrimination will not be tolerated.

3. Maintain Employee Dignity

When you must let a worker go, do so directly, calmly and with respect

to the employee. Don't fire someone by email. Take time to meet with them & explain calmly why they are being let go. Let the employee vent, if necessary, and listen closely. Do his comments have validity? What can you learn from understanding his perspective? If you are laying off workers, give them notice. Employees who feel respected are less likely to seek retaliation.

4. Keep Documentation

Keep email records, meeting notes & personnel reviews. If you must fire someone, it is always helpful to have documentation of support. You may avoid potential discrimination charges if it is clear that you maintain accurate records.

5. Diversity Awareness Training

Diversity training can help prevent litigious behavior on the part of your employees. Organizations that have diversity awareness training have lower rates of discrimination claims & real long term benefits, including improved productivity, team work, customer service and employee relations.

Welcome to Our New Members!!!!

Allison Malescio	YMCA of White Plains
Irene Newman	
Mara Weissman	Wise HR Strategies, LLC
Stacy Datorre	MetroPCS
Seddrick O'Connor	NY Presbyterian Hospital
Aileen McGorty	Affinity Health Plan
Kathryn Meany	



Don't forget about our Networking Event scheduled for Thursday, July 9th at the Pleasantville Country Club. This is a very reasonably priced way to get to know other HR professionals, network, and learn more about our chapter.

To register, log onto www.wrhrm.org.

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.



2009 Chapter Meeting Dates

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

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.

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.

UPCOMING MEETING DATES:

International SIG Dates	Compensation/ER SIG
September 22nd	TBD for the Fall
December 7th	

Consulting requires

the balance of data, judgement and business knowledge.

For information, call (914) 633-3335



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