



Cape Cod Human Resources Association

HR NEWS

Cape Cod Human Resources Association P.O. Box 665, Hyannis, MA 02601

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www.cchraonline.com

Meeting Review

HR As A Strategic Partner

What is the HR Manager's role? "Therapist to the CEO" says **Dan Wolf, President and CEO of Cape Air**. I want "someone to do everything I do only better than I do it." This draws a laugh from the audience; however, the common response of our guests is "strategic partner." **Jack Sample, President of Onset Computers Corporation** believes his HR partner, Laurie Colwell, is very tactical when keeping their employees happy. She drives and facilitates the company's strategic planning and is a partner to both management and staff. "She is the voice of our culture" and hires the right people. Mr. Sample further states "instead of imposing a plan, management and HR participate in the planning. Each year the conversation level comes up and we are improving our planning and getting to the point where we are internalizing it as part of our process." Mr. Wolf of CapeAir states HR does our strategic planning. "It's a smart thing to do."

Other important qualities of HR professionals are confidentiality with the CEO and employees. Mr. Wolf expands saying "Employees must feel safe and have a place to go to figure out life's issues." Promoting the organization's culture and values and consistent communication were also discussed.

So to be fair our moderator, **Ann Egan**, asks the HR professionals "what do you look for in a CEO?"

Linda Markham, VP of Human Resources at Cape Air, is looking for a partner. She states it is "important our visions are aligned completely."

Each organization is committed to business planning. So what are their top initiatives? **Carol Sims, President & CEO of Rehabilitative Hospital of the Cape & Islands**, holds a half-day leadership retreat to determine just that. Top goals this year are culture maintenance and staff development. She wants to optimize the partnership with Partners Healthcare while reconciling cultural differences. RHCI is also further developing their supervisors and managers by addressing any skill gaps. **Laurie Colwell, HR Director at Onset Computers Corp.**, says their top initiative is strategic planning with a focus on product development and engineering. They are also improving hiring processes by using Dr. Paul Green's Behavioral Interviewing and outsourcing their searches. Onset is exploring self-service HR software which will assist with paperless time cards, on-line paperwork and information accessibility. Ms. Markham says CapeAir has 17 initiatives, 3 of which are HR focused. They are managing payroll, succession planning and being one of the Best 100 Companies to Work For.

When asked about effective communication strategies most of the organizations use similar

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

This Season's Speaker Series

Building A Strong Workforce

February 26, 2009, 7:30 am

Effective Organizational Change

Peggy Holtman, of Margaret P. Holtman and Associates, LLC, specializes in talent management with focus on leadership assessment and development, executive coaching and team development. Her creative and customized leadership solutions include consultation, training and facilitation, senior leadership meeting design and delivery, as well as keynote presentations.

Peggy's presentation will be on how managers can lead change from the head and heart. She will discuss the major components needed to drive transformation. Her approach will be a systematic overview that includes identifying the major stakeholders and creating communication plans that will achieve sustainable change. She will also explore the human side of change and offer tips and techniques for dealing with obstacles and conflict.

Peggy is co-author of [Leading at the Edge: Leadership Lessons from the Extraordinary Saga of Shackleton's Antarctic Expedition](#), which describes the use of adventure, story and metaphor to teach about leadership and change. She will use this compelling true account as a case study for her presentation.

Ms. Holtman will be donating her book for our raffle!

Holiday Inn, Route 132 Hyannis

Meeting Review, Cont.

methods including internal websites, "town meetings," small regional or team meetings and newsletters. Ms. Sim of RHCI says HR also reminds her of important events for employees such as births and deaths so she can send a personalized note. "This is important to RHCI's culture."

Training and development is implemented by all represented organizations and even in difficult economic times they continue to be dedicated to staff development. RHCI uses different training methods such as a three-month new supervisor training program, on-line training ("which hasn't really stuck," says Ms. Sim), outside training and internal mentoring. Ms. Sim is a fan of Southwest Airlines' model. RHCI now leverages its training budget by setting individual goals for learning, receiving training grants from Workforce Training and when one person attends a conference he/she presents the information to colleagues. "We try to approach training on all different levels" and "our training budget is being maintained."

CapeAir has a strong pilot training program including on-line training and recurrent training. There is a curriculum for customer service, ramp and reservations personnel. Managers and supervisors attend outside courses. They also participate in Workforce Investment. CapeAir offers a pilot mentoring program and an internship program.

An audience member asked about crisis management plans. All companies have a plan although they naturally vary. CapeAir is a 24-hour operation in many time zones. "Crisis management is a major on-going initiative to determine the what-ifs" says Mr. Wolf. They have playbooks for every position in the firm in the

event of absence or turnover and an emergency response plan.

Another audience member inquired about employee surveys. All panelists conduct employee surveys regularly. RHCI uses their survey to benchmark against other healthcare providers and to resolve issues. Onset is very proud that 95% of their surveyed employees would recommend working for the company. "The owners say you have to fix problems. They don't go away," says Mr. Sample. CapeAir does 360 feedback on leadership and management. They use the information to reward, coach, manage or move out. CapeAir also does face-to-face meetings as a form of surveying employees.

Many thanks to our panelists who were very open about their business and were willing to share ideas. Thanks also to our excellent moderator, Ann Egan.

Resources

Book of the Month

HR Scorecard: Linking People, Strategy, and Performance. Brian Becker, Mark Huselid & Dave Ulrich

Up-Coming Events

2009 SHRM Employment Law & Legislative Conference
Washington DC March 9-11
www.shrm.org

Women's Business Exchange
Selling Yourself and Your Services
March 12
www.communitybank.com

Cape Cod Young Professionals
March 13: Bowling Night
March 19: Night time Networking
www.capecodyoungprofessionals.org

PHR/SPHR Certification Preparation Course
www.shrm.org
March 30-April 1, 2009
Boston Park Plaza

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Michele Rocray is the Principal of Pleasant Bay Associates. She founded the company seven years ago after a successful 20 year career in corporate management and training. She takes great pride in the fact that the majority of her business has been referred to her from experienced and respected professionals within her large network.

Prior to starting her company her passion for employee development and success was demonstrated in a variety of corporations and educational institutions including Merrill Lynch, Putnam Investor Services, Wentworth Institute of Technology, Bank of America (formerly Bank of Boston) and BONY Mellon (formerly Standish Ayer and Wood Inc.).

Michele received her Masters degree in Training and Development from Lesley University. As part of her degree she completed an internship in the Education Department at the Museum of Fine Art. She received her Bachelor degree from Wheaton College in Norton MA. Michele continues to develop her skills and knowledge including the completion of the Certificate in Human Resource Development from Bentley College.

Michele balances her life with a dedication to community service which includes volunteering for a resource center for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, participating on the CCHRA Board, and supporting the Academy Playhouse in Orleans.

Pleasant Bay Associates specializes in facilitating an organization's development, competitiveness and success through the implementation of employee performance and retention strategies.

Membership

Dues are \$60/\$165. For more information contact Laura Johnson, Membership Chair at ljohnson_ma@hotmail.com or 508-385-3009.