



West Sound Human Resource Management Association

West Sound Happenings

December 2005

*Save The
Date*

Monthly Luncheons

January 2006

**Legislative Update
with
Jennifer Lambert**

January 11, 2006

11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

E-mail Deanne Hull at
wshrma@artanderson.com
or call 360-479-5600
x2265 to reserve your
spot!

Please continue to check
our website at
www.wshrma.org
for updated information
on the above events.



SHRM®



WSHRMA HOLIDAY LUNCHEON GUEST SPEAKER: DE HICKS, STUART CONSULTING AWARDS PRESENTATION AND SILENT AUCTION DECEMBER 14, 2005— SILVERDALE RED LION INN

Happy holidays and good cheer to you as we bring to an end one of the most successful years in WSHRMA history. This year we exceeded 100 members continuously and had consistently high attendance at our luncheons and both the spring and fall conferences. There were luncheons/conferences that covered such useful and relevant topics as “Hand on Transactional Management”, “Facing the Tiger: Turning Conflict into Positive Change” and “Writing Effective Policies and Procedures”. Your new board looks forward to providing you with more top notch presentations next year.

But for now, you’re invited to a special holiday luncheon, to bring the year to a close. Join us for an enjoyable presentation by De Hicks that will surely be entertaining, motivating, humorous and above all de-stressing as we go into the holiday season. See who won the Most Distinguished Member Award and buy that perfect basket at the silent auction benefiting the SHRM Foundation (contact Linda Yerger if you would like to donate a basket).

Hope to see you there!!



RSVP by December 9, 2005

Date: December 14, 2005
Time: 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Place: Silverdale Red Lion Inn
Price: Free to Members
Non-WSHRMA Members—\$25

RSVP: Deanne Hull
wshrma@artanderson.com
360-479-5600 x2265.


**RED LION
SILVERDALE HOTEL**

3073 NW Bucklin Hill Road
Silverdale, WA 98383
360-337-8800

HR

**LEADING PEOPLE
LEADING ORGANIZATIONS**

IN THE NEWS SHRM.ORG



Become A Member

Are you interested in a SHRM Membership or transferring your membership to our chapter? Please give Sharlene Harrigan, VP of Membership a call with any questions. 360-478-2366 or e-mail at sharlene@pchsweb.org

AFFILIATE OF



Job Bank

Please check out our website at www.wshrma.org for current job openings. If you would like to advertise an open HR position in the WSHRMA job bank, please contact Debbie Laudenslager at 360-415-6533 or e-mail to dlaudenslager@kpshealthplan.com

Senate approves tougher pension plan funding rules

Comprehensive pension reform took a quantum leap forward on Nov. 16 when the U.S. Senate voted 97-2 to approve the Pension Security and Transparency Act of 2005 ([S. 1783](#)). The 618-page bill would create sweeping reforms for defined benefit pension plans by toughening funding requirements. It would increase employer fee payments to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp. (PBGC), the federally operated insurance agency that guarantees at least partial payment of individual retirement benefits when sponsoring companies cannot pay them.

The legislation gained overwhelming bipartisan approval from the Senate after an unusually cordial floor debate. S. 1783 appeared to be on a fast track after being introduced in September, but the legislation ground to a halt in early October when Sen. Mike DeWine, R-Ohio, and Sen. Barbara Mikulski, D-Md., requested a legislative “hold” on the measure. DeWine and Mikulski, with the backing of several business-related groups, objected to a provision that would tie pension funding requirements directly to a company’s credit ratings.

The provision, which would stiffen funding requirements for businesses with poor credit ratings, has drawn sharp criticism. Business groups contend that the new funding standards would prove too costly and would force many employers to cut back or eliminate company-paid retirement benefits for their workers. “While we applaud the effort of the Senate to pass comprehensive pension reform, S. 1783 imposes additional liabilities on companies with less than investment grade credit ratings—even if their pension plans are well-funded and pose little if any financial risk to the PBGC,” said James Klein, president of the American Benefits Council in Washington, D.C. “Placing onerous costs on financially weakened companies undermines their ability to recover and, ironically, could force the termination of pension plans rather than guarantee their survival.”

In another wrinkle, President Bush has threatened to veto the final measure if it allows financially strapped U.S. airlines too much time to meet their pension obligations to their workers. The Senate bill includes provisions affecting defined contribution plans—including 401(k) plans. The provisions would protect employees from being forced to invest in their employer’s stock, would make it easier for organizations to enroll employees automatically into a 401(k) plan, and would limit legal liability for retirement plan managers who provide investment advice to plan participants.

The Senate bill had sat idle for more than a month as supporters of the legislation negotiated with DeWine and Mikulski to end the impasse and to give pension reform a chance to become law this year. On Nov. 14, Senate leaders announced they had reached a compromise by agreeing to pay specific attention to the provisions in question when the bill reaches a conference committee with members of the House.

The House of Representatives version of the bill ([H.R. 2830](#)) also began moving when the Ways and Means Committee voted on Nov. 9 to approve it. The full House is scheduled to begin consideration of H.R. 2830 in early December after a recess. “The Senate vote represents another important step toward enacting the first comprehensive reforms to the traditional worker pension system in more than a generation,” said Rep. John

Cont. Page 3—Senate

Mark Your Calendar

and Plan to Attend!



NHRMA
REGIONAL
CONFERENCE

September 20-22, 2006
 Spokane Convention Center
 Spokane, Washington



Cont. from Page 2—Senate

Boehner, R-Ohio, chairman of the House Education and the Workforce Committee and chief sponsor of H.R. 2830, in a statement. “I expect the House to vote on the Pension Protection Act when we return to session after Thanksgiving, and I remain hopeful we can send a final bill to President Bush very soon.” The flurry of activity on pension legislation in both houses of Congress gave rise to new expectations that a substantive reform package could be passed before Congress adjourns for the year in December. Congress has already extended its fall session far beyond its original target adjournment date of early October. “The strong bipartisan vote in the Senate and assurances from the House leadership that a vote is pending on H.R. 2830 means we could see a final bill passed before the end of this year,” said Mike Aitken, director of governmental affairs for the Society for Human Resource Management. “There is still quite a bit of work that needs to be done on these bills and some issues that need to be addressed, and we will be watching carefully what the House does with their version of the reform legislation when they return in early December.”

Bill Leonard is senior writer for HR News.

WASHINGTON INSIDER NOVEMBER 2005



I-9 Grace Period Ends, SHRM Asks DHS to Provide Guidance on Receipt Rule

On September 6, 2005, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security announced that a 45-day grace period on enforcement sanctions with regard to identification or work authorization documents would be provided to employers who had offered employment opportunities to victims of Hurricane Katrina. The 45-day grace period satisfied the documentation requirements of the employment verification process (on Form I-9). The interim policy did not excuse employers from completing the I-9, nor did it permit employment of unauthorized workers. However, the grace period provided temporary flexibility on the requirement to present identification and/or work authorization documents, as many job seekers lost all of their possessions in the flood and needed additional time to replace lost or damaged documents.

The 45-day grace period expired on October 21, 2005. The process for obtaining replacement identification documents can be lengthy, however and inability to obtain replacement still can prevent many displaced employees from obtaining employment. As a result, there is much confusion and concern among employers and job applicants.

SHRM and other organizations in Washington, D.C., have identified the receipt rule at C.F.R. § 274.2 as one that would alleviate some of the concerns being expressed by human resource professionals and employers. SHRM has petitioned the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to request that it notify the general public through guidance on how the receipt rule applies to the situation in the Gulf Coast region and the nation at large on the receipt rule in these situations. " The relevant part of the receipt rule states:

(vi) Special rules for receipt: unless the individual indicates or the employer or recruiter or referrer for a fee has actual or constructive knowledge that the individual is not authorized to work, an employer or recruiter or referrer for a fee must accept a receipt for the application for a replacement document ... in lieu of the required document in order to comply with any requirement to examine documentation imposed by this section, in the following circumstances:

[SM1](A) Application for a replacement document. The individual:

(1) Is unable to provide the required document within the time specified in this section because the document was lost, stolen, or damaged;

(2) Presents a receipt for the application for the replacement document within the time specified in this section; and

(3) Presents the replacement document within 90 days of the hire or, in the case of re-verification, the date employment authorization expires; ...

This rule provides much needed flexibility to hurricane victims who have lost all of their belongings, including identification or immigration documents. Moreover, it will allow employers to apply the receipt rule regulation with confidence and certainty.



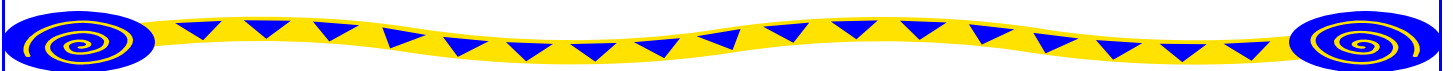
HRCI STUDY GROUP

The WSHRMA study group for the Human Resource Certification Exam will meet Tuesdays beginning January 24, 2006 at 5:15 p.m. at Olympic College. If you are interested in joining the group contact Annie Davis at 360-479-0781 or e-mail Adavis@oc.ctc.edu

You may access detailed information on the HRCI exams, including cost, application process, registration deadlines, and other valuable information by visiting the website www.shrm.org/hrci. You must be a SHRM member to be eligible to participate in the WSHRMA study group.

Fees: WSHRMA members— free.

All other SHRM Members (at large and other chapter members)— \$125 for the Winter/Spring Session



FINAL ARTICLE IN A SERIES OF FIVE
BUILDING COMPETENCE FOR CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS:
PART V—REBUILD SAFETY BY CREATING MUTUAL PURPOSE

BY: DOUG NATHAN, MEDIATOR AND CONSULTANT
SOUND OPTIONS GROUPS, LLC

If you find yourself at cross-purposes with people you work with, a natural tendency is to either defend your turf, or give in. This behavior is often a sign that you are feeling unsafe in a conversation that has just turned crucial—there are strong emotions, differing opinions, and high stakes. A better option is to re-establish mutual purpose and get back into dialogue—the free exchange of meaning between two or more people.

To rebuild mutual purpose:

1. Commit to seeking mutual purpose.
2. Recognize the purpose behind the strategy.
3. Invent a mutual purpose.

Brainstorm new strategies.

For example, Marci travels most of the week for her job. During the weekends, she just wants to stay home, eat simply and hang out. Her husband Kyle works out of their house. He likes to make plans for the weekend like dinners out, movies and parties with friends, and camping trips. Marci was beginning to dread coming home for weekends—and their ensuing arguments.

The first step toward reestablishing mutual purpose is to commit to seeking a common goal with the other person. This reduces uncertainty, confusion and fear. “We seem to be arguing and defending our ideas. I’d like to take a moment to explore what we each need in this situation and find a way to move forward together.”

Next, recognize the purpose behind the strategy. We often confuse our strategy with our purpose. A strategy describes *how* we will obtain something we want (our purpose). Separating strategies from purpose helps you clarify what you really want and gives you common ground on which to brainstorm new options. In our example, Marci’s purpose is to rest and relax with Kyle. Kyle’s purpose is to have fun with Marci.

Now that both of their individual purposes are clear, they can invent a new mutual purpose—a statement that combines both of their goals. To do this, they can join their individual purposes together in an “And” statement. Their new mutual purpose is to rest and relax *and* have fun together. They realize that what matters most to them is that they spend time over the weekend together.

With this new awareness, Marci and Kyle can brainstorm new strategies, such as cooking a simple meal together and watching a movie at home this weekend. Next weekend, they could go out for dinner and dancing with friends. After a couple of weekends at home, they could go camping. Their new strategies would be based on the mutual purpose they identified of relaxing, recharging and enjoying fun activities together.



SOUND
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GROUP

Doug Nathan is a mediator and consultant with [Sound Options Group, LLC](#), offering consulting, training, and facilitation services for over eleven years. Sound Options Group helps local, state-wide and national organizations hold difficult conversations so they can manage change, develop leaders, and build high-performance teams. Doug is a certified trainer of *Crucial Conversations*[®], a two-day course based on the *New York Times* best selling book that equips people with the tools to handle life’s most difficult and important conversations and achieve positive results.

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