



West Sound Human Resource Management Association

West Sound Happenings

June 2005



Monthly Luncheons

July 13, 2005
11:45 a.m. —1:30 p.m.

**Effective Interviewing
Techniques: Why Traditional Models Don't
Work**

Presented by:
Liz Oaksmith, M.Ed.
LMHC

August 10, 2005
7:45 a.m.—9:30 a.m.
(Note morning meeting)

**Employee Relations:
Understanding the
Complexities of EEO,
Diversity, and
Affirmative Action**

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



WSHRMA June Luncheon

Building Competence for Critical Conversations

Presented by: Greg Abell, Sr. Partner, Sound Options Group, LLC

June 8, 2005— Red Lion Silverdale Hotel

An essential characteristic of effective people in any organization is their ability to engage successfully in "Crucial" and "Difficult" Conversations. HR professionals often find themselves engaged in, or facilitating these difficult encounters. This presentation will introduce a framework for understanding the dynamics of difficult conversations along with strategies for improving your personal and organizational effectiveness.

Greg Abell is Senior Partner at Sound Options Group, LLC, a consulting firm that specializes in mediation, facilitation, and professional development opportunities for individuals and organizations. Greg is responsible for coordinating the design, implementation, and delivery of all services. His particular expertise is in assisting agencies, organizations, and communities in designing and implementing systems for more effectively managing conflict, and facilitating productive and collaborative work environments.

RSVP by June 3, 2005

Date: June 8, 2005
Time: 11:45 am—1:30 pm
Place: Red Lion Silverdale Hotel
Price: \$15.00 Member*
\$25.00 Non-Members*
RSVP: wshrma@artanderson.com
360-479-5600 x2265

*Add \$10 with no reservation. Cancellations must be received at least 2 days prior to receive refund.



**RED LION
SILVERDALE HOTEL**
3073 NW Bucklin Hill Road
Silverdale, WA 98383
360-337-8800



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



SOCIETY FOR HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

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

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HOW DO RETIREMENT PLANS AFFECT EMPLOYEE RETENTION?

Employees who are most satisfied with their defined benefit plan are more than three times more likely than other employees to intend on remaining with their employer until retirement, [according to research by Watson Wyatt](#). An equivalent relationship emerges for employees who are highly satisfied with their defined contribution plans.

For defined benefit plans, employees' overall satisfaction was determined by combining employee ratings of eight features: value of benefits as future income, information about current value, information about projected value, form of benefit payout, benefit availability age, years of service before vesting, ability to access funds before retirement and how the plan compares with competitors' plans.

- More than one-half of younger workers who neither value their plans highly nor express high satisfaction indicate a low probability of staying with their employer.

5/2/05

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ETHICS IMPROVING IN U.S. CORPORATIONS, SURVEY SAYS

The United States may see a rebound from recent ethical lapses in the business world, according to the [National Benchmark Study](#) (NBS) for fiscal 2004, which surveys employees to evaluate working conditions at 1,000 of the nation's largest firms.

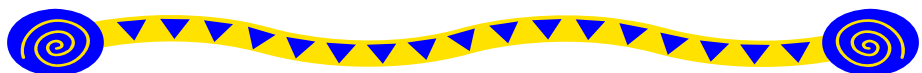
Scores for ethics and fairness increased from 65.2 percent to 74.7 percent, the only statistically significant change in that survey, according to a press release.

The companies in the study are selected by the *Wall Street Journal* as a representative sample of all publicly held corporations in the United States and account for about 98 percent of the nation's total stock-market value. The NBS sample represents 22 million employees at the corporations.

The University of Michigan and Employee Motivation & Performance Assessment (EMPA), a research firm specializing in workplace assessments and surveys, jointly conducted the study.

Employees from government agencies, small or new corporations, privately held companies and nonprofit organizations are excluded from the study.

EMPA and the HR departments of firms participating in the confidential study randomly selected 100 employees at each company. The overall response rate within participating corporations was 44 percent. Margin of error was +/- 2.9 percent.



EFFECTIVE INTERVIEWING TECHNIQUES: WHY TRADITIONAL MODELS DON'T WORK

PRESENTED BY: LIZ OAKSMITH, M.ED. LMHC
BLUE HAT CONSULTING

JULY 13, 2005, 11:45 A.M. TO 1:30 P.M.



Liz distinguishes between Talent, Skills, and Knowledge, and why you must hire for Talent. "The Traditional competency-based 60 minute interview is simply not a good predictor of success." Liz will cover both external and internal hiring processes. Liz brings energy, humor, and a little irreverence to her presentations and she encourages audience participation. Join her on July 13th and assess how you and your organization are performing in the area of hiring.

Liz is co-founder of Blue Hat Consulting; a regional organizational consulting group with a background in Psychology. Liz has 20 years experience working as a Mental Health Professional and a Business Manager in private, public, non-profit, and for-profit settings. Her focus is on maximizing an organization's greatest asset; human potential. As a consultant she has provided individual coaching, designed and conducted internal hiring, trained supervisors, and provided specialized trainings on topics such as "Managing Work Stress" and "Strength-Based Supervising". "Excelling at hiring, training, and developing, top grade employees is critical for a successful organization. The greatest Mission, the best Strategic or Financial Plan cannot succeed unless executed by exceptional people." Liz received her Master of Education from the University of Washington and she is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor.

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS: UNDERSTANDING THE COMPLEXITIES OF EEO, DIVERSITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

PRESENTED BY: CYNTHIA WINDER, EEO OFFICER
CITY OF TACOMA

AUGUST 10, 2005, 7:45 A.M. TO 9:30 A.M.



Cynthia will walk us through how these programs interface and how we can make them work for us. She covers, in an understandable methodology, EEO Requirements, Affirmative Action Representation and Diversity Relationships.

Check our website often for a more in-depth understanding of Cynthia's presentation. You won't want to miss this simple but insightful presentation of these vital employment laws. www.wshrma.org.

PLEASE NOTE THIS IS A MORNING MEETING.



Thank you to all that attended the Spring Conference on FAST and HOT Management. We hope you enjoyed the incredibly energizing presentation by Carolyn Martin and brought away useful material that you can implement in your job. Feedback on our programs is always welcome. Please contact Sharon Tucker at tucker@kitsapcu.org.

We'd like to thank our sponsors once again for making this conference a success. They are: **Gold Sponsors: The Sun, Kitsap Federal Credit Union, Harrison Hospital, and DiMartino Associates, Inc.** **Silver Sponsors: KPS Health Plans, EHL Insurance and Bremerton Chamber of Commerce.** **Bronze Sponsor: Chapman University.**

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MONTHLY FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE—THE INSIDER— April 2005

HEALTH CARE

Senate Bill Would Allow Small Employers to Establish Cafeteria Health Plans

On April 6, 2005, Senator Olympia Snowe (R-ME), chair of the [Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship](#), introduced bipartisan legislation to allow small businesses to establish nontaxable cafeteria health plans for their employees. A cafeteria plan is an account created by section 125 of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) that allows participants to pay their health insurance premiums and other employee benefit expenses on a pre-tax basis. Under current law, most small businesses are unable to meet the nondiscrimination cafeteria plan rules due to their size. S. 723 has been referred to the Senate Finance Committee.

Modeled after the 1996 Savings Incentive Match Plan for Employees pension plan, [S. 723](#), the SIMPLE Cafeteria Plan Act, would amend the IRC to allow most small businesses to establish a cafeteria plan without satisfying current nondiscrimination rules.

Key Provisions of the SIMPLE Cafeteria Plan Act:

Safe harbor from nondiscrimination rules—S. 723 would waive the nondiscrimination rules for section 125 cafeteria plans to allow more small businesses to participate without satisfying current nondiscrimination rules.

Employer contributions—To be eligible for this safe harbor from current nondiscrimination rules, the small employer must contribute two percent or match employee contributions up to three percent of the employee's compensation.

Health Care Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs)—The legislation would modify the current “use it or lose it” rule by allowing up to \$500 in unused funds to roll over to the following year or into a Health Savings Account or 401(k). Health FSA's would be capped at \$7,500, although this limit would be increased by \$2,500 for each additional individual covered by the FSA. This amount would be indexed for inflation.

Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA's)—Under the bill, the applicable dollar limit for the dependent care account would be increased to \$10,000 for employees with two or more qualifying individuals, and this amount would be indexed for inflation.

FSA rules changes—S. 723 would eliminate the “uniform coverage” requirement that applies to health FSAs, so that a plan is only required to reimburse a participant for expenses up to the amount of the participant's account balance. Additionally, the “change in status” rules would be amended to allow a participant to modify any FSA election at any time for any reason.

Long-term care insurance—S. 723 would amend section 125 of the IRC to allow participants to use pretax dollars to pay for qualified long-term care insurance premiums. Section 126 of the IRC would also be amended to allow employees to receive tax-free reimbursements from their health FSA for qualified long-term care services.

INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING

YOUR SERVICES TO HELP ON WSHRMA PROJECTS?

Contact any Board Member (see page 6 for contact information)

if you are interested in volunteering your services to assist

with membership activities, fall conference or to help on other projects that may interest you.



Washington State Legislative Update

April 2005



REFERENCE CHECKING

House Bill 1625 states that an employer who discloses information about a former or current employee to a prospective employer or employment agency at the request of the employer or employment agency is presumed to be acting in good faith and is immune from civil liability for the disclosure if the information. Information relating to the employee's ability to perform his or her job; the employee's diligence, skill, or reliability in carrying out job duties; or illegal or wrongful acts committed by the employee when related to job duties is protected by this bill. Additionally, this bill does provide clarification of a presumption of good faith by stating that any presumption may be rebutted by clear and convincing evidence that the information disclosed was knowingly false, deliberately misleading, or made with reckless disregard for the truth. The bill advises employers to keep a written record of the identity of persons or entities to which the disclosure is made for a period of no less than two years and states that if a written record is made, the record must be included in the employee's personnel file, and the employee has a right to inspect the record. This bill was signed by Governor Christine Gregoire (D) on April 21, 2005 and is effective on July 24, 2005. This bill is now found as Chapter 103 of the 2005 Laws.

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Webcast

Fiduciary Responsibilities for Retirement Plan Sponsors

Presenter: Clark M. Blackman II, CPA/PFS, Investec Advisory Group, and

Joel Framson, CPA/PFS, Glowacki Framson Financial Advisors

Date: June 7, 2005, 2 p.m. ET; 11 a.m. PST

Free to
Members

Register at
SHRM.org

The corporate landscape has been littered with "breach of fiduciary duty" lawsuits involving 401(k) and related retirement plans. ERISA fiduciary obligations are among the "highest known to the law" and do not permit fiduciaries to ignore grave risks to plan assets, stand idly by while participants' retirement security is destroyed and then blithely assert that they had no responsibility for the resulting harm. And while officers and directors are typically named as defendants in these cases, HR professionals have a responsibility to ensure that retirement plans are managed in a way that does not trigger fiduciary breaches. That responsibility remains even when a third-party administrator (TPA) is hired to take care of all aspects of a 401(k) plan, including investment choices.

Clark M. Blackman II, CFA, CIMA, CPA/PFS, CFP, is executive vice president, managing director and CFO for Investec Advisory Group, L.P., Houston. Blackman was one of eight experts serving on the national "resource panel" for the American Institute of CPAs' Center for Investment Advisory Services, and led the Institute's "Prudent Practices" task force responsible for editing *Prudent Investment Practices--A Handbook for Investment Fiduciaries*. He has contributed to four books on financial and investment planning and fiduciary issues, including *The New Fiduciary Standard*, published by Bloomberg Press. He was awarded the Distinguished Service to the Profession honor by the Houston CPA society in 2004.

Joel H. Framson, CPA/PFS, CFP, recipient of the 2002 AICPA Distinguished Service Award, is a partner of Glowacki Framson Financial Advisors in Los Angeles and has served as chairman of the AICPA Center for Investment Advisory Services resource panel. *Worth* magazine included him in its 2002 ranking of the nation's top 250 financial advisers

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