Culturing an Understanding of Pronouns, Yogurt and the Petri Dish

Our March speaker is unique in his ability to facilitate the creation of Organizations of Attraction.

Deep within his client companies, an infectious dose of learning cultures shapes the behavior and consciousness within high performing organizations.

Our speaker has helped people come to grips with the culture they are fostering and given them serious cause to examine where they are in relation to where they want to be. By making the essential choices, every business and its people have the power to create what they want. People learn culture.

It’s a reality that exceptional companies recognize: Top talent joins a company in order to learn. Talented people also crave intellectual challenge; they excel at the forefront of the knowledge economy. And as leaders have known for centuries, a culture must teach, inspire, and support its people in order to sustain success.

Jim Ullery is the president of the Center for Organizational Energy, LLC. His work began as a business partner with Lester J. Heath, III in a training department of the Albany Ladder Company nearly 20 years ago. The company was recognized internationally for its premier corporate learning culture in the US and world. In 1993, Inc. Magazine named Lester J. Heath, III, Entrepreneur of the Year for Social Responsibility in large part for the use of innovative employee programs, family-oriented corporate culture and empowerment of each individual. Ullery and Heath created company-training programs to empower their coworkers and give them opportunities for personal reflection and transformation. Their clear purpose: to bring love and joy to the world. They served others, opened them to choices and possibility, helped them learn and delighted in the growth of people.

March Program

Ullery is a partner with Josephine Ashworth in the distribution of Achieve Global, 360 Solutions and Crestcom products which are focused on providing executives, management, sales, office and personnel with training and consulting services.

His work includes firms such as Albany Ladder, General Mechanical Group, Inc, The Gorman Group, Inter-magnetics General SuperPower, Hannay Reels, DiNapoli Opticians, Urbach Kahn & Werlin Advisors, Inc. CPAs - Centerprise Advisors, Inc., Corpak Medical Systems, New York Independent System Operator (NYISO), Albany County Department of Social Services which are in part evidence of his work.

Visit Albany Day Reminder

- Influence the New York State legislative process during “Visit Albany Day” from 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. on March 5.
- Participate in a Forum with key legislators from both the state Senate and Assembly Labor Committees.
- Let your views on current HR-related bills be heard during this key election year.
- Network with fellow HR colleagues from around the State.
- Consume a delicious lunch sponsored by our very own CRHRA chapter.
- Allow Tom Minnick, from the NYS Business Council to schedule an optional individual appointment with your own state Senator or Assembly member.

Register today! Contact Tom through Janet Carroll, The Business Council of NYS, Inc., @ 465-7511 Ext. 217.
Legal Q&A  John M. Bagyi, Esq., SPHR

Question: If an employee owes his/her employer money, is it lawful for the employer to deduct that sum from the employee’s final paycheck?

If an employee is indebted to his/her employer (e.g., when the employer loaned the employee money), the employer has a legitimate interest in having the debt satisfied when the employment relationship ends. However, employers are not permitted to engage in “self help” with regard to monetary disputes with their employees.

Unless an employer has an employee’s written authorization to do so, it is generally unlawful for the employer to make deductions from the employees’ wages to satisfy a debt to the employer. With limited exceptions, New York’s Labor Law prohibits employers from deducting any sum from an employee’s wages. Exceptions to this general rule include deductions required by law and administrative rules and regulations (such as taxes and garnishments) and those “expressly authorized in writing by the employee ... for the benefit of the employee.”

With the employee’s written authorization, an employer may legally make deductions from the employee’s wages for insurance premiums, pension, health and welfare benefits, contributions to charitable organizations, payments for dues and assessments to a labor organization, and similar payments for the benefit of the employee.

Thus, if an employer anticipates making a deduction from wages to cover a debt owed, the employer should obtain the employee’s authorization when the debt is incurred and the authorization should clearly state the benefit derived by the employee in authorizing the deduction (e.g., not having to immediately repay the amount).

The information contained in the column is not a substitute for professional counseling or advice.

John M. Bagyi counsels and represents employers in a variety of labor and employment related contexts and is associated with Bond, Schoeneck & King’s Albany office. If you have a question you would like to submit, you are encouraged to do so by email (jbagyi@bsk.com) or fax (518-462-7441).
From the President ...  
Ruth Margolis Yorker, SPHR

Since the hot topic du jour is Enron, I thought I’d put my two cents worth in. Did you ever think you would see such a business scandal; a once respected company fall so far so fast, thousands losing their jobs and their life savings and the top executives stonewalling information?

What implications does the Enron debacle have for Human Resource Professionals? Plenty in my estimation, especially in the area of pension management and employee education. I see this as a wake-up call to ensure that we understand our fiduciary responsibilities for our organizations’ pension and 401(k) plans.

It seems to me that part of our charge, as Human Resource Professionals, is to ensure that we understand our plans and those managing them. We should make sure we are educated in our plans and how they are being invested in a defined benefit plan, or if we have appropriate and varied offerings for our 401(k)’s.

Do we provide education for our employees? Do we give them enough information to be able to make choices that will allow them to have comfortable retirements? What can we do to provide educational opportunities? Many certified financial planners will provide free information and education to your employees. Your plan holder should also be able to provide information for your employees and there are also lots of websites we can point people to.

The bottom line is that we can no longer be passive participants in our future. I plan to start to educate myself better in pension-speak, make sure I provide educational opportunities for my employees and hopefully, help people feel more secure about their choices for the future. I hope this becomes part of your goals, too.

Student Chapter News

Diane Lustenader and Suzanne O’Connor would like to thank all the CRHRA professionals who have so graciously volunteered their time and energy to welcome and assist the human resource students from our area colleges and universities.

We are planning a Speakers Panel for the students - the tentative date is Wednesday, March 13. Location TBA.

The format will include 4-5 HR managers addressing their respective specialties including HR planning, HRIS, recruitment, selection, and training. We have had several volunteers express interest in participating. If others are interested in participating on this panel or a future event, please contact Suzanne O’Connor at 465-6211 or so@pwai.com.

Our committee has also had several students express interest in job shadowing experiences. We are seeking CRHRA members to host college students for a day or part of a day to introduce them to their HR departments. Please contact Diane Lustenader on dl@lakebiz.com or Suzanne O’Connor to participate.

AGENDA

Wednesday, March 13
Century House, Latham

Registration......... 7:00 - 7:30 a.m.
Breakfast ............. 7:30 - 8:00 a.m.
Program ............. 8:00 - 9:00 a.m.

Breakfast:
• Breakfast Buffet

Cost:
• $19.00 - Members
• $27.00 - Guests
• $10.00 - Students

Please send in your reservations and payment using the enclosed return envelope. Also, please be sure to check-in when you arrive.

RESERVATIONS and cancellations are required by 5 p.m. on MONDAY prior to the meeting. Reservations made and not kept will be billed to you. Please call Jackie Dederick at 463-8687.

We are sorry that we are unable to honor walk-ins on the day of the meeting. Casual attire is acceptable.
Upcoming Events

• Thursday, March 14, Albany JSEC Meeting, “Managing Remote Locations - Suggestions and Techniques to Supervise Out Stationed Staff,” Quality Inn, 3 Watervliet Extension, Albany, 8:00-8:30 AM breakfast and 8:30-10:00 AM program, advance registration cost of $12.00 and day of event registration cost of $15.00, for reservations contact Lenora Boehlert 869-3576 or Gary Nicklaus 464-6250, by Tuesday, March 12 COB.

• Wednesday, March 20, Rensselaer JSEC Meeting, “Unemployment Insurance Mock Hearing and Q & A Period,” Daisy Baker’s, 36 Second Street, Troy, 8:00-8:30 AM breakfast and 8:30-10:00 AM program, registration cost of $15.00, for reservations contact Debbie Izzo, 402-0773, by Thursday, March 14, COB.


Please Note: No local Vendor Fair this year, exhibitors are invited to participate at the SHRM conference.

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