

UPDATE

AN ELECTRONIC REPORT FROM THE CUNA HUMAN RESOURCE COUNCIL



CUNA HR COUNCIL SPRING UPDATE

By: Todd Surline, Vice President - HR, Michigan State University FCU - CUNA HR Council Chair

Greetings and happy spring to one and all. I hope this update finds you and your families happy, healthy, and successfully taking on the challenges facing you in 2002. I would like to give you a brief update on some of the initiatives and activities your Council has been working on for you, our members.

- **Eighth Annual CUNA HR Council Summit —Blueprint for the Future —** You no doubt have seen the brochures, read about the agenda and speakers, and hopefully, made arrangements to join your peers in San Francisco on April 28-May 1. This promises to be the biggest credit union human resources event of the year and we hope you can be part of it. To say we are excited about this year's Summit is like saying the Golden Gate is just another bridge. Our Conference Committee Co-Chairs Michael Hiller and Susan Looney have put together an agenda based on feedback you provided us at last year's Summit as well as on the CUNA HR Council Survey we conducted last summer. New this year is a Training and Development track that we hope expands the appeal and value of our Summit. Also new this year, we will have a Summit Weaver. Never heard of a Summit Weaver? Join the club. We like to try new things. Cindy Stynchula of Stynchula & Associates will literally weave throughout the Summit activities and promote networking, learning, and creative thinking. In the closing session she will wrap up key points from the Summit and put them in a nice neat "package" for you to take home and put to use. Should be interesting, huh? You just have to be there!
- **Regional HR Issues Seminars —** In partnership with CUNA Mutual Group (CMG) we conducted two regional semi-

nars in March. The idea of doing regional seminars has been on your Council's plate for many years but didn't really take off until we were able to team up with CMG. The two seminars were held in Ohio and Michigan and were well received by the attendees. Both the content and the value for the cost of the seminar were rated "very good".

Unfortunately, we did not get as many HR professionals to attend as we had hoped. We are now assessing how to proceed with future seminars with attendance being a key issue. Please feel free to share with me any and all thoughts you may have on this initiative.

- **Training and Development Initiative—** Your Executive Committee is progressing nicely on the direction you gave us over the past few years to add offerings that appeal to the Training and Development professionals and HR professionals with training responsibilities. We appointed **Tracy Laurie, Director of Training and Development, Boeing Employees Credit Union**, to fill Mark Brennan's unexpired term. Tracy is creating a Human Resource Council Training Advisory Group to explore future benefits for our members. As I mentioned earlier, we have added sessions to our conference agenda to address this initiative. We also have updated our CUNA HR Council logo to include training and development. We worked with the folks in CUNA & Affiliates' Center for Professional Development to include our membership with interests in training on an active listserv (Trainers Listserv) that they had already developed. We are now receiving a Trainers Newsletter electronically and have a Trainers Corner on our website

Blueprint for the Future

which offers resources and information for training professionals.

- **CUNA HR Council Listserv** —We continue to experience growth and vitality on our listserv. It certainly has taken off beyond our expectations and there have been some “growing pains”. It is hard to believe that just a couple years ago this excellent resource did not exist. The listserv has quickly become one of the best benefits of being a member of the Council and we are really only at the beginning of it’s development. We ask that you help us in this endeavor by populating the Attachment Archives with materials as you respond to requests for information. Please put your programs, policies, position descriptions, benefits, forms, etc. in the Archive so the entire membership can access them. The instructions for doing so are found on our website. Please feel free to share your thoughts and suggestions on the future of the listserv.

Well, that’s some of the highlights I wanted to cover with you. As I mentioned earlier, we like to try new things and we will continue to expand and fine-tune the benefits you receive as members of the CUNA HR Council. Please always keep in mind that your Executive Committee works for you as elected volunteers and we truly do our best to respond to your needs. Always feel free to share your comments with us.

Lastly I would like to thank three members who have generously given their time, experience, and talent to assist us in putting together this year’s Summit. Ed Cassady, VP of Human Resources at Patelco Credit Union, Eleanor Levy, VP- Human Resources/Administration at Pacific Service Credit Union, and Tom Swedberg, VP-Human Resources at Western Corporate Federal Credit Union were instrumental in selecting the program and speakers this year. The Executive Committee is very grateful for their assistance. ♦

Blueprint for the Future: Your Summit Weaver’s Perspective

By: Cindy Stynchula, Stynchula & Associates, San Antonio, TX



A blueprint is a plan of action. And it can remain just that—an untried, untested piece of paper - until someone’s action brings it life. The same can be said for our experience at the 8th Annual CUNA HR Council Summit. We can unleash the

real power of our summit experience by taking action on our **Blueprint for the Future**.... And your summit weaver is here to help you do just that.

A ‘weaver’ is a unique role and one that I’m excited to perform. I’ll attend the content-packed sessions, listening and asking questions just like everyone else. During breaks and at lunch, you’ll find me sitting with you and your colleagues having informal and impromptu conversations. Here’s where I’ll hear even

blue · print *n* 1. A photographic reproduction, as of architectural plans or technical drawings, with white lines on a blue background. 2. A carefully designed and usually detailed plan of action.

more about what’s important to you and what you’re learning that can make a positive difference in your work. Sure, I’ll present a session or two. Yes, I’ll even get to introduce some of the great speakers CUNA HR Council has invited. And of course, I’ll join you for the fun events the HR Council has planned that showcase this beautiful city by the bay.

Most important of all, as your weaver, I’ll create experiences so you can:

- Think about what you’ve learned from the expert speakers and panelists,
- Decide what’s most important to your credit union today,
- Develop a plan to act on what you’ve learned immediately when you return to your credit union, and
- Identify which of your colleagues—from

credit unions around the country—can best support you in making your unique plan a reality.

Perhaps by now you’ve figured out



why my role is called a 'weaver'. My job is to help you weave all the learnings, experiences, and activities together so that you have a unique, memorable, and productive experience.

When you and I have done our job right, you'll leave the 8th Annual CUNA HR Council Summit in San Francisco saying, "WOW! Not only did I learn a lot, I had fun, I connected

with a bunch of new people, and I know exactly what my first step will be to make a difference in my credit union!"

Yes, you'll have a **Blueprint for the Future...** and by knowing what action you'll take right after the summit, your future will become a reality today.

I look forward to seeing you in San Francisco on April 28th! ♦

CUNA Councils Launch Regional Roundtables with Credit Union Leagues

By: Michael Millis, CUNA Councils Director, CUNA & Affiliates, Madison, WI

As part of a strategic initiative identified for 2002, the CUNA Councils are reaching out to leagues across the country to develop and implement regional roundtables for credit union professionals. During the first quarter of 2002, CUNA Councils staff met with representatives from the Texas and Oklahoma Credit Union Leagues to identify best practices for the formation and development of regional councils, and both the CUNA CFO Council and the CUNA HR Council sponsored regional roundtable discussions and workshops in Texas, Ohio, and Michigan.

The purpose of the effort toward regionalization of the CUNA Councils is to spread the word about the value of peer-networking within the credit union movement, and to offer educational opportunities that are more affordable for local credit unions. The initiative was identified by the CUNA Council Forum at their annual planning session in San Francisco, CA, in June of 2001. The Council Forum is comprised of the chairs and vice-chairs from each of the six CUNA Councils (CFO, Lending, Marketing, HR, Technology, and COO) plus the Forum chair, Gayle Gustafson, Vice President of Financial Services at Safeway Northwest Credit Union in Beaverton, OR.

In February, CUNA Council managers Pam Frey and Cheryl Sorenson, along with Council director Michael Millis, met with Amber Hughes, Carol Luebke, Susan Looney, and Bob Gallman of the TX Credit Union League, and John Bock, SVP/CIO at Community Credit Union in Plano, TX, to identify the complimentary and unique features of the six CUNA Councils and the eight Texas Councils. The group identified local networking, inexpensive travel, and the opportunity for

larger credit unions to mentor smaller credit unions as primary strengths of the local councils. On a national level, the broader contact with credit unions in other regions, the large extent of the listserv, and the research and discussion generated through whitepapers and the annual conference ranked among the strengths of the CUNA Councils. Dual membership in both the local and the national councils was considered to be the best option for credit unions because it provides a dual support system and reinforces the credit union system structure.

The first jointly offered regional sessions between CUNA Councils, the leagues, and CUNA Mutual Group also occurred in the first quarter of this year. On February 12th over 40 representatives from credit unions in Texas, Oklahoma, Colorado, Louisiana, and New Mexico participated in a Regional CUNA CFO Council Roundtable, where they discussed regulatory issues, investments, accounting, and asset liability management issues. Intense discussions occurred around the topic of liquidity, especially since many credit unions have felt a tight squeeze on their margins for the past several months. On March 5th, twenty representatives from credit unions in Ohio participated in a Regional HR Issues Seminar offered by the CUNA HR Council, the Ohio League, and CUNA Mutual Group. On March 7th the Seminar was repeated for thirty credit union attendees in Lansing, MI, and sponsored again by the CUNA HR Council and CUNA Mutual Group. In both of these seminars, participants discussed recent developments in the management of employee benefits, human resource administration, and staff training and development.

With three successful regional programs already completed this year, the CUNA Councils are moving forward with scheduling additional sessions for HR professionals, CFO's, and lenders. Look for more informa-

tion to come as the dates and locations are confirmed in the next few weeks. For more information about the CUNA Councils in general, visit our website at www.cunacouncils.org. ♦

Survey Partnership Continuing

It's been one year since the CUNA HR Council and the Business Insights Group formed a strategic partnership. Together we are offering premium Web-based employee opinion surveys at discounted rates.

The surveys are administered on the Internet, which allows for quick completion and very fast turn around for reports. During the first year of this relationship they have provided employee surveys for credit unions across the country from Florida to California and have sufficient participants to benchmark many factors.

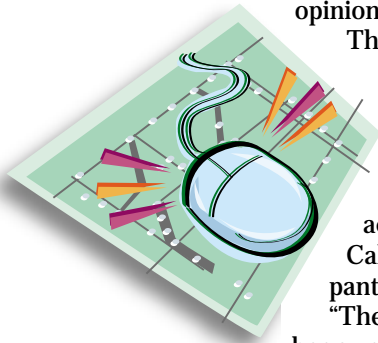
"The feedback from HR professionals has been very positive" says HR Council Chairman, Todd Surline. The results of the survey can have a significant positive impact on your organization. The Business Insights Group does an excellent job of working with

each credit union to get the most out of the survey. The benefits of these surveys far exceed the costs."

Mark Brennan, VP of HR from US Airways FCU has utilized their surveys several times. Mark said, "We've been able to make positive changes in our culture from information gained through this process."

This year the Business Insights Group is adding Web-based 360 Degree Surveys to the list of services available for HR Council member credit unions.

The principals from the Business Insights Group will be speaking at this year's CUNA HR Council Summit in San Francisco. Along with a panel of HR professionals, they will discuss how to have a successful survey project. We hope you join us for the conference and if you do, look for their session. You will enjoy it! ♦



Horizons

By: Michael T. Hiller, VP - Administration, Stanford Federal Credit Union, Palo Alto, CA

When I used to drive home from work (I now wisely take the train) I used to look forward to several hills along the way that would allow me the opportunity to look ahead and see what traffic conditions were going to be like for the next couple of miles or so. Absent any other kind of reconnaissance, these hills served a useful purpose as I made my way home.

One of the things that has developed in HR over the last decade or so is the notion that HR can be and is a full member of any management team, a contributor to any bottom line. If this is true, and I think that it is, then HR professionals must be conversant not only with their own disciplines, but the disciplines of others in the credit union as well.

With these thoughts in mind we have arranged for a "Technology Update" at our CUNA HR Council Summit in San Francisco in April. This is not a technology update that is limited to and focused on HR technologies.

We have done that and will continue to do so. This update is centered on what technologies are going to change and shape our industry over the next few years.

Think about it. How has email changed your operations? How are your members responding to the web? Have computers changed the way you train your employees or your members? What on-line solutions to training or recruiting have you become aware of in the last two years?

Technology for the financial industry is being driven by customer (meaning member) need. They are in charge of this market, and it's a demanding one. Whether it's hand-helds or at home computing—customers are letting the industry know what it wants. And what about the coming generations - what are their abilities when it comes to technology?

As an HR professional, you need to know about the technologies that your credit union may be adopting within the next five years. It

may change the kind of employee that you need to recruit, hire, train, and retain. It will change the way that you talk to your peers in your credit union. It will change your ability to know what your members need and what kind of demands that will make on you and your staff.

The Technology Update will be moderated by Wayne Young, Director of HR & Training at First Tech Credit Union in Beaverton, Oregon. Panel members include Pete Kneisler, Director

of Internet Technology at CGI, Canada, Jim Morrell, Vice President–Information Services at Clark County School Employees Credit Union, Vancouver, WA and Vice Chair of the CUNA Technology Council.

It is something that you shouldn't miss - setting your horizons as an HR professional firmly in the future. ♦

Back by Popular Demand

By: Tracy Laurie, Director of Training and Development, Boeing FCU, Seattle WA - CUNA HR Council Executive Committee Member

What does express desktop learning, teller retention, reducing turnover, and organizational goals and bonus plans have in common? They are all innovative strategies that will be shared by your fellow HR practitioners at the Summit in San Francisco's Best Practices Session!

Back by popular demand, the Best Practices Session, is being offered to help you uncover creative strategies to help you with your credit

union's HR efforts. Past attendees have commented that this information sharing session provides simple alternatives to previously thought difficult endeavors.

The time you spend at the Best Practices Session will be time well spent. This session is just one reason that the Summit in San Francisco should be at the top of your priority list! ♦

Issues of Concern at Credit Unions

By Harris M. Plotkin, The Plotkin Group

We recently completed a survey of credit union executives and human resources directors to determine what were the most pressing human resource issues at their respective credit unions. The results of our survey revealed the following concerns.

The number one concern was Getting The Right Person Into The Right Job.

Studies by Michigan State University and other respected organizations have shown the best method of placing the right person in the right job is with written assessments, e.g., honesty, personality, aptitude, attitude, or skill tests, as long as they are accurate, validated, non-discriminatory, and legal. In addition, a good structured interview and role playing to put the applicant in situations which are likely to occur on the job will provide more objective data as to whether this person would be good in dealing with customers. *Remember, if the right person is not in the right job, no amount of training will make that person fit the job.*

As Harvey McKay, author of *How to Swim with the Sharks without Being Eaten Alive*, says, "Stress isn't caused by the people you fire. Stress is caused by the people you didn't fire, but should have."

The major changes we have seen in the needs and concerns of our clients have changed dramatically. Most of our clients have been complaining for several years of the dearth of candidates for job openings. Some of our clients even reduced their cutoff scores on the different tests we provide to take in less qualified people than they normally would because the candidate pool was so small in most of the country.

However, that has now changed 180 degrees. The current recession and horrible tragedy that the country suffered on September 11th has changed the labor pool. Before, clients were vying with each other for the few decent candidates there were. Now, they are finding an abundance of people available. They may not always be in their city, but they are available someplace in their state or



in other parts of the country.

For any of you that have read my previous articles, you know I have reported that for the past five years there have been decent candidates available. An average of 600,000 to 700,000 people a year have been laid off because of mergers, and acquisitions. Through no fault of their own, these employees have lost their jobs because they were with the wrong company at the wrong place and the wrong time. A lot of them could have filled needs back then.

Now, in October alone, we had over 400,000 people laid off. It is likely that another 1,000,000 were laid off by the end of the year. This should bring the total for 2001 to over 2,000,000 people laid off. A large percentage of them are likely to be capable people who can probably meet many of your needs.

Now is the time to select those that will stay with you, and not leave when the job market gets better in a year, or a few years. You want to make sure that the person isn't over qualified for the job you have to offer, has a genuine interest in your industry, and most importantly has a genuine interest in staying with your organization.

To accomplish that, one needs to structure interview questions which will draw out that type of information, and do the same thing with reference checks. However, most importantly of all, use those tests that will identify whether the individual not only has the qualities for the job you are offering, but more importantly fits the values, culture, and personality of your organization. It is this latter factor that increases retention.

In second place, was Employee Turnover.

This is a major problem in all industries. Too few organizations realize the significant cost of employee turnover. It's not just the cost of having to write new ads, interview new applicants, test new applicants, train those you hire—it's the lack of productivity of the new employees until they are fully trained and proficient that costs a significant amount of money.

Employee turnover is extremely expensive. Not hiring the right person for the right job with the right attitude affects your customers and therefore, your sales. It can also create problems among the employees, leading to less teamwork and less productivity.

The best method of reducing employee turnover is to spend more time and money in

the selection process to avoid hiring people who don't fit. Another method is to conduct an employee attitude survey to determine how the employees feel about how they are paid, their benefits, and their treatment by supervisors and managers. Exit interviews can also be conducted to determine why employees leave. All of this information can then be evaluated so that appropriate action can be taken to minimize turnover.

The third concern was Upgrading The Quality And Capability Of The Workforce.

This involves a strong commitment, and must be carried out in several areas:

1. Doing a diligent, scientific, objective job of selecting the right people for the right job.
2. Looking at existing personnel to determine which ones don't fit or aren't doing the job, and removing them from the workforce, or transferring them to a job they do fit.

3. Making the effort to train employees in not only their own jobs, but in the attitude you want them to have in dealing with customers.

4. Treating employees not the way you personally want to be treated, but the way *they want to be treated*, and yet hold them accountable to the expectations you have of them in dealing with customers.

There are also a variety of written assessment tools that will help existing employees identify areas that need improvement. The popular 360 degree assessment enables an individual to see themselves as others do, which is invaluable if one is to correct behavior that is causing problems. Other instruments identify the strengths and weaknesses of an individual and provide methods on how best to communicate with them. All of these instruments can help upgrade employees.

The fourth concern was Identifying How To Motivate Existing Employees.

I am sure many of you share this concern. The present generation would not be, in the wildest stretch of the imagination, considered a highly motivated group. The young people would rather find ways to get around doing tasks than actually doing them. Studies done in fast food restaurants show that many young people are lacking a sense of values, and would prefer to avoid work.

Pre-employment tests can help identify applicants who are motivated. Many credit

unions utilize these tests to make better hiring decisions. There are other tests to determine how to communicate with and motivate existing employees. For the most part, too many credit unions have not taken advantage of the availability of these instruments—perhaps out of lack of knowledge that they exist and are accurate and legal.

Considering the economy, the questionable values of the new generation, and the litigious society that our country has become, it is more important than ever for all of us to do a more diligent job when screening applicants.

The fifth concern was Developing Employees To Their Ultimate Potential.

This requires skilled management at the supervisory, managerial, and general managerial levels. It requires extra work, but will lead to producing employees who are loyal to the organization, and fit the values that you would like to have in your people. Using a combination of written assessments and training programs, one can undertake to develop employees to their ultimate potential.

We hope the survey and our recommendations have provided you with useful information. ♦

About the author... Harris (Hank) Plotkin is the author of Building A Winning Team, and creator of the ABOVE and BEYOND customer service training program. His expertise is in the area of hiring, training, managing, and retaining employees. Hank is a nationally known speaker who delivers dynamic, informative, and humorous presentations on topics vital to the success of all businesses—Building A Winning Team, Taking The Guesswork Out of Hiring, Recruiting and Retaining Quality Employees, and a number of other subjects. He is the founder of The Plotkin Group, a 33-year-old management consulting and training firm which uses the latest scientific employee testing and training programs to help organizations select, train, and retain employees. For more information call The Plotkin Group at (800) 877-5685, or Fax: (760) 603-8570, E-mail: buytests@plotkingroup.com, or visit us at www.plotkingroup.com.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

“If the shoe fits . . .” We’d like to welcome the following new members to the CUNA HR Council.

Christin Lehman

Elkhart VO Farm Bureau CU
Goshen, IN

Mary E. Preecs

AMOCO FCU
Texas City, TX

Cathy Meyers

Community FCU
Plymouth, MI

Patrick McElhenie

CUNA Mutual Group
Madison, WI

Susie Truong

First Entertainment CU
Hollywood, CA

Nancy Harmon

Macomb Schools & Gov’t CU
Mount Clemens, MI

Sharon Thompson

Park FCU
Louisville, KY

Vivien Winnke

Orange County Teachers FCU
Santa Ana, CA

Terry Elrod

USA FCU
San Diego, CA

April 28-May 1, 2002 • Hilton San Francisco & Towers • San Francisco, CA

THE HR SUMMIT IS AROUND THE BEND,

and we want to give you a sneak peak at what’s ahead. Here’s a copy of the agenda, and a quick glance at the presenters. If you haven’t registered yet, it is not too late. Click on the Conference tab on the main page and see what’s going to be happening at the HR Summit. ♦



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