

# HFTP



## Greater Houston Chapter

Gateway to HFTP \* <http://www.hftp.org>

Greater Houston Chapter Website <http://www.hftphouston.org>

August 2008

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## August Meeting

### Intercontinental Marriott

18700 JFK Blvd  
Houston, TX 77032

#### Directions:

<http://www.marriott.com/hotels/maps/travel/iahap-houston-airport-marriott-at-george-bush-intercontinental/>

#### Speaker:

Nancy J. Brown  
Gardere Wynne Sewell LLP

#### Subject:

"WHEN IS AN OWNER/OCCUPIER LIABLE FOR CRIMES  
COMMITTED ON ITS PREMISES?"

Cost is \$35 per person  
Students \$17 per person

**Cancellations accepted 48hrs from Events Start time  
Otherwise you will be billed**

Date: Thursday, August 21st 2008  
Time: 6<sup>pm</sup> - 7<sup>pm</sup> Cocktails Hors d'oeuvres  
7<sup>pm</sup> - 8<sup>pm</sup> Dinner  
8<sup>pm</sup> -9pm Speaker

#### RSVP:

<http://www.hftphouston.org/Calendarlist.asp>  
or email JohnSmith at [President@HFTPHouston.org](mailto:President@HFTPHouston.org).

# **PRESIDENT'S LETTER**

Dear Colleagues; Summer is quickly winding down and the kids are getting ready for school. It's also time for us to regroup and get back in the business swing again. There are a lot of things happening in the near future.

1: Annual Convention is just around the corner - September 24<sup>th</sup> through 27<sup>th</sup> in Nashville, TN. It is my hope that we have several members of our chapter attend. For any of you who may be interested in holding a chapter office in the next few years, please sign up to attend the Leadership Academy that starts on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. We are not limited in the number of attendees and there is no additional cost except an extra night or 2 in the hotel.

2: We'll be forming our nominating slate for next year's officers starting at this month's meeting and holding elections in September. I encourage you to volunteer for a leadership position in the chapter. Excited leaders will ensure that our chapter stays successful. The more volunteers, the less work each has to contribute.

We'll be meeting at the Marriott IAH hotel and Rosa Tang will be our hostess. The date is Thursday, August 21 starting at 6:00. Please RSVP at your earliest convenience.

Yours in Hospitality,

John Smith, CHAE, CHTP

# When Workplace cliques zap morale and kill productivity

## *'The boys' club needs to tone it down'*

Relationships are important to any team, but even a group of great employees can exclude others without knowing it.

And when problems go unresolved, the whole team's performance can suffer.

That's the situation manager Angela Halpin found herself in when behavior by on half of a team left the others feeling uncomfortable.

### **'I hate the boys' club!'**

"Can you shut the kitchen door for me?" asked employee Tracy Watkins. "I don't feel like listening to the guys on my lunch break." "Just need 'quiet time,' right" asked Angela. "I know what you mean." "Who knows what's going to come out their mouths next?" asked Tracy. "I've already had enough of their clique for a month, and it's only Tuesday. "The boys' club needs to tone it down."

### **'It's like being back in high school!'**

"A clique? You've worked on projects with some of the guys before without a problem, haven't you?" asked Angela. "That was until the 'whole gang' had to get together," said Tracy. "Ever since we started this project, it's like the guys are back in high school again. They're acting like a bunch of teenagers."

"Did you tell them it bothers you?" asked Angela. "They might not realize what they're doing."

### **'They just roll their eyes'**

"Please, Joyce and I called them on it three times," Tracy said. "Now it's even worse," said Tracy. "They're always goofing off when we're not around. "And during meetings, all they do is snicker and roll their eyes at us." "You might just be reading into it," said Angela. "There's no reason why we should have to put up with their clique. "I don't care how well they work together – they're downright rude!" said Tracy.

"Time to get back to class – I mean, the project. I can't wait until this whole ordeal's over with."

### **The Big Question**

Tracy had already brought up her concerns with the rest of the team. But Angela knew it was more than a language problem. They guys might get the project done, but it'd be at the cost of someone else's morale.

### **What you need to know:**

Team members don't always realize they're slighting others. Don't hesitate to remind them:

- One person's actions can negatively impact a whole team, and
- Collegiality is good for morale, but not when it gets in the way of business.

*If you were in Angela's situation what would you do?*

## How Two Managers Would Solve the Above Communication Problem

### 1 Explain how their actions appear

Cliques are tricky, but a division between genders is even more of a problem. Since it's a group of guys excluding the female team members, it only takes one off comment for feelings of harassment to boil over. I'd pull the male team members aside and express to them how their actions and attitudes are being perceived by other people in the group. They might not mean to treat the rest of the team rudely, but the other members are feeling jilted – that's what matters.

*Cora Lambert, Office Manager  
Valley MRI Center, Stockton, CA*

### 2 Need to work as a team, not two groups

I've heard the story from Angela's point of view, but I'd need to see how the other side of the team views things before stepping in. Team members can form into cliques, but because Angela's feelings are so extreme, it sounds like there's a perception problem between the two sides. They're not just supposed to finish the project – they're supposed to complete the work as a team. Even if one side is putting out great results, it's not worth the other members of the team feeling completely ostracized.

*Hope Kirkpatrick, Quality Assurance Supervisor  
Sunglo Home Health Services, Inc., Harlingen, TX*

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# Welcome Welcome

**Shoby John**, President and CEO of Integrasys Technologies

**Lesvia Lopez**, Manager of Information Technology of Westin Galleria & Oaks Houston

**David Yeager**, Assistant Director of Finance of Hilton Americas- Houston

## Upcoming Meetings

### DATES

• August 21<sup>st</sup>  
• September 18<sup>th</sup>  
• October 16<sup>th</sup>  
• November 20<sup>th</sup>  
• December 18<sup>th</sup>

### PLACES

• Marriott Intercontinental  
• Bentwater Country Club-Golf Outing  
• Hilton Conrad- UH

• **Social Event**

### SPEAKERS

• Nancy Brown  
• Arlene Ramirez  
• Carolyn Davis

**We are still in need of venues and speakers.**

*Please contact:*

*Bret Myers for Speakers 713-465-8381, [bmyers@houstoncc.com](mailto:bmyers@houstoncc.com)*

*Eric Ehsan for Venues 713-622-3667, [controller@thebriarclub.com](mailto:controller@thebriarclub.com)*

# They're whispering again: Getting the complainers back to work They're spending more time whining than working

Keeping the peace throughout a department is vital to productivity. But it's even more of a challenge when the entire staff is split between several projects and employees complain about their personal workloads. That's the situation manager Jenny Nelson found herself in when staff members couldn't help but think their projects were more important than others'.

## 'I had to get away'

Jenny heard the conference room door slam behind employee Adam Landon. "Gosh, you scared me more than half to death," said Jenny as she opened the door and followed him in. "What gives?" "Sorry," said Adam. "If I didn't get away from the whispers, I swear I was going to scream at someone."

## Whispers from the walls

"Whispers?" asked Jenny. "I haven't heard anything." "You should stop by my cube sometime – it's a real blast," said Adam. "Every 10 minutes, Erica and Steve get together next door and they start talking all hush-hush. "Like they're fooling anyone," said Adam. "They're complaining about that project due next week." "It's a pretty big hill to get over for them," said Jenny. "They've got to check in with each other often."

"I don't care how much work they have to take care of, we've all got our own stuff to work on," said Adam. "You don't hear me chatting up everyone about how tough my job is."

## 'Quit the moaning'

"If all they're going to do all day is whisper and moan, they should take it outside," said Adam. "Slamming doors to the conference room isn't going to make things much better," said Jenny. "I already told'em to quit their little cubicle complain-fest," said Adam. "They just stared at me and when whispered a whole lot more when I sat back down. "Some of us have important work to do, and in here is the only place I don't have to deal with *their* project."

## The Big Question

Jenny needed the staff to realize the value of everyone's work. Adam was probably blowing off steam, but the rampant complaints were sure to get on someone else's nerves.

If you were in Jenny's situation, what would you do?

## What you need to know:

To keep unresolved conflicts from dragging down performance:

- Encourage employees to bring up problems
- No matter how small, address conflicts early on, and
- Get both sides talking to each other so each party will understand the other's view.

## How Two Managers Would Solve the Above Communication Problem

### 1 They need to respect each other's work

Situations like this come up often for us. The real problem is that employees aren't respecting everyone else's work as much as their own. I'd approach the whisperers in private and remind them there are lots of projects going on at once. In this instance, the staff really needs its privacy to focus on its own tasks. Of course, if Erica and Steve need to legitimately go over something, they should do it. But moving to a separate area – like a conference room, minus the door slamming – would give everyone else the space and focus they need.

*Deborah Mayhue, HR Director  
Neptune Township Library, Neptune, NJ*

## 2 Only solution is between the two parties

This kind of problem can only be dealt with by the people involved. Adam may not have asked for help directly, but causing a scene is a red flag that the situation isn't getting any better. He already brought up the whispering and complaining issue with his co-workers. But because he's still ticked off by it, odds are good he wasn't clear enough when he explained his side to them. He needs to be up-front, but not in a way that's just going to cause more conflict. After he's had time to cool down, I'd have him talk to the whisperers again and stress that it's nothing personal – he just needs to get work done, and can't do it with the distractions.

*Victor Kostenko, COO  
Fox Subacute Center, Plymouth Meeting, PA*

\* both articles are from *Communication Bulletin for Managers and Supervisors*



### \*\*\*\*\* JOB POSTINGS \*\*\*\*\*

#### Assistant Controller

Posted: 7/14/2008

#### CoolhausWORKS

Houston, TX

##### Contact Email

[melissa.mount@mycoolhaus.com](mailto:melissa.mount@mycoolhaus.com)

##### Website

[www.coolhausworks.com](http://www.coolhausworks.com)

#### Description

- Position will be responsible for supervising/managing/overseeing the following departments: Accounting and Night Audit personnel
- In preparing for this position, candidate ideally will have worked in at least the following departments or positions: Accounting in Hospitality
- Requires a minimum of 2 year(s) of supervisory experience.
- Requires a minimum of 5 year(s) of experience.
- Approximate full time staff under this position: 8
- This position reports to: Controller
- Must have experience at properties of similar size and quality.
- Position will be required to work a varied schedule that may include evenings, nights, and week-ends.
- Salary depends on experience