



Greater Houston Chapter

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

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

November 2008

Officers and Directors 08/09

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November Meeting

St. Regis Hotel
1919 Briar Oaks Lane
Houston, TX 77027

Host:

Syed Ashraf

Directions:

<http://www.starwoodhotels.com/stregis/property/area/directions.html?propertyID=247>

Speakers:

Carolyn Davis, Getachew Haile

Subject:

Workforce Development: Cutting Through the Chase

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

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

**Date: Thursday, November 20th 2008
Time: 6^{pm} - 7^{pm} Cocktails Hors d'oeuvres
7^{pm} - 8^{pm} Dinner
8^{pm} -9pm Speaker**

RSVP:

<http://www.hftphouston.org/Calendarlist.asp>
or email Eric Ehsan at President@HFTPHouston.org.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Colleagues;

I would like to start my first letter as a President of HFTP Houston Chapter by thanking everyone who put confidence in me to serve as their president for 2008-2009. I also would like to congratulate our officers including Bret Myers, Amy Cheng, Ursula Cornish and Jason Cernik as well as our directors James Doolittle, Tanya Venegas and Robbi Pierce for their success. HFTP Houston chapter under the leadership of John Smith as president for 2007-2008, continued to improve the organization of our chapter as well as the quality of our monthly meetings. Under his leadership, HFTP Houston chapter again presented our chapter for: "The Chapter Choice Award" in Nashville, Tennessee in September 2008. We'll continue our efforts to win Chapter Choice Award and Chapter of the Year award in 2008-2009.

The focus for this year for our chapter would be to,

- Increase membership participation to attend monthly meetings and recruit more professionals from Hospitality industry around the Houston area.
- Plan to hold a Regional Conference with the cooperation and participation of other Texas and Louisiana chapters.
- Plan to win the Chapter Choice and/or Chapter of the Year awards.
- Plan to continue sponsoring HFTP Cougar Chapter students to attend the annual convention.
- Plan to hold combined meetings with other hospitality associations including American Payroll Association (APA), Club Managers Association of America (CMAA) and American Hotel and Lodging Association (AH&LA) to introduce the benefits of joining HFTP International which will eventually enhance our recruitment efforts.

As you can tell from reading the above items, we have a lot of work ahead of us and in order to accomplish all of these items successfully, we'll need lots of participation from our membership. I would urge all of you to volunteer your time at your convenience to send in your ideas how to accomplish any or all of the above. Let's make the Houston Chapter an exemplary and very successful chapter in the nation.

I shall finish my letter by requesting all of you to attend our November 2008 monthly meeting at St. Regis hotel near the Galleria to start a successful 2008-2009 year. See you all on November 20, 2008 at St. Regis.

Best Regards,
Eric Ehsan

WHEN A GOOD EMPLOYEE LOSES PASSION FOR THE JOB

His attitude is affecting his work and other employees

New hires start out brimming with optimism and new ideas. But after a few months, the sheen can wear off – and with it, the employee’s high morale.

That’s the situation manager Melanie Kent found herself in when one employee’s gloomy mood affected the entire office.

Getting through the day

“You OK, Jack?” Melanie asked. “You seem tired.”

“A little bit,” Jack said. “But it is Monday. I’m just trying to get through the day.”

“That’s actually what I came to talk to you about,” Melanie said. “Lately you don’t seem as enthusiastic about your job as you once were. It’s worrisome.”

‘Work is work’

“What do you want me to say?” Jack asked.

“Work is work. I’m not the type who goes around with a smile on his face 24/7.”

“I don’t expect that,” Melanie said. “But we also can’t have employees coming in, looking like they’d rather drive off a cliff than be here.”

“Well, I don’t know,” Jack said. “Maybe things have changed for me. I just don’t enjoy doing things like I used to.”

A new attitude

“And why is that?” Melanie asked. “At first, I liked coming in to work every day. I felt important and useful. Now it’s a struggle to get up in the morning. I hate to say it, but I kinda dread being here,” Jack said.

“And your work is starting to reflect your new attitude,” said Melanie. “It would be great to have the old Jack back.”

“I know,” Jack said. “But I just don’t feel passionate about this stuff.”

“So, am I hearing that you don’t really want to work here anymore?” Melanie asked.

“I need this job,” Jack said. “And I think I could be good at it again.”

The big question

Jack had once been a very productive and enthusiastic worker. But his negative attitude was clearly taking a toll on his work. And having an unhappy employee around certainly didn’t help the overall mood in the office.

Melanie didn’t want to have an unproductive, unhappy worker on the team – but after his outstanding prior efforts, she was reluctant to give up on him entirely.

If you were in Melanie’s situation, what would you do? One of the ideas offered below might provide some guidance.

What you need to know:

If employees become unhappy in their jobs:

- Provide a mentor for them to work through their issues, and
- Give them the opportunity to do more challenging and different work projects.

HOW TWO MANAGERS WOULD SOLVE THE ABOVE COMMUNICATION PROBLEM

1. OFFER HIM NEW PROJECTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Jack doesn't seem to be sure what's caused him to lose interest in his work. So I'd search for different ways to motivate him – first by asking him what his interests are and what drew him to the job in the first place. From there perhaps we could work on incorporating his interests into the job. Maybe a new project or a change of scenery would give him a fresh outlook – or he could just be bored and looking for new responsibilities. The only way to keep him in the job is to find something that he enjoys and can do well.

*Norma Fink, Library Director
Attica Public Library, Attica, IN*

2. FIND OUT WHY HE'S SO MOODY

From the way Jack is acting, it seems obvious that something in his life has thrown him off course. He was a superb employee to begin with, so I'd want to give him every chance to return to top form. I'd try to find out the cause for this behavior. What is bothering him – inside and outside of work – and what might be keeping him from performing his best? It's important these issues are addressed if they're affecting his morale and productivity. If he wasn't comfortable speaking with me, I would refer him to another supervisor, HR or a counselor.

*Richard Lareau, General Manager
The Briar Club, Houston, TX*

Getting the Workplace Control Freak to Work Well with Others

Employee is rubbing co-workers the wrong way

Overachievers can be great for productivity and efficiency. But sometimes their controlling tendencies also can create tension. That's the situation manager Mary DeWitt found herself in when an employee wouldn't stop working – and wouldn't let anyone else help.

Another late night

"Whoa, Drew!" Mary said as she passed by his desk. "What are you doing here so late?"

"Just staying until I get this report finished," said employee Drew Struthers. "Luckily, I picked up some Red Bull to help me through!"

"You've stayed late every night this week," Mary pointed out. "I think it's time you take a break."

Drew shrugged. "I don't mind. And besides, if I don't get this done now, everyone will be mad at me later!"

Just his personality?

"Well, can you spare a few minutes to talk to me?"

"Sure," said Drew. "What's up?"

"I'm worried about you," Mary said. "You don't take breaks or lunch anymore, and I see you typing furiously long after everyone else has gone home."

"I'm fine," Drew said. "I just like to get things done. I would rather not take lunches and stuff. Don't really know what I'd do during that time anyway."

Rather do it myself

“It’s not just that,” said Mary. “Some of your co-workers say you aren’t letting them contribute to the report. Is that true?”

“I guess,” said Drew. “I don’t think it’ll get done unless I do it myself.”

“I think you’re taking this a little too far,” said Mary. “It’s not healthy to work nonstop.”

“I’m not sure I know how to be any other way,” said Drew.

The big question

Mary knew some employees weren’t thrilled with Drew. Part of being a great employee meant working well with others – and that was something Drew wasn’t so good at. Plus, she didn’t want Drew – or any employee – to burn out. Mary didn’t want to dampen Drew’s enthusiasm. But something needed to be done or the project and morale would suffer.

If you were in Mary’s situation, what would you do? One of the ideas offered by our readers below might provide you with some guidance.

What you need to know:

Tips on keeping overachievers in check:

- Make lunch mandatory and insist employees leave at a reasonable time
- Provide employees with mentors or counselors, and
- Reward for work quality, not numbers of hours spent.

How Two Managers Would Solve the Above Communication Problem

1. Set new priorities and goals

I’d work with Drew to identify goals and objectives. From there, we’d set his priorities together so he could work smarter, not harder. This kind of behavior could be a sign that he’s not clear on what his expectations and assignments are. For instance, he probably thinks all his additional work is a positive thing, when in reality, it’s the opposite. I’d explain different ways he can be productive without going overboard. He needs to learn morale and teamwork are just as important as productivity, and that his success will be measured along all of those lines.

*Sheri Greenhoe, Communications Director
Michigan State Medical Society, East Lansing, MI*

2. Be mindful of personal problems

It sounds like up until this point, Drew’s been an excellent employee. Perhaps he’s been throwing himself into his work to avoid something in his personal life. I’d let him know that teamwork is an essential part of success in any company. But in case there is something else going on, I’d offer my support and counsel so he knows he’s allowed to reach out for help. Then I would monitor him during the day to make sure he’s taking breaks and maintaining reasonable goals.

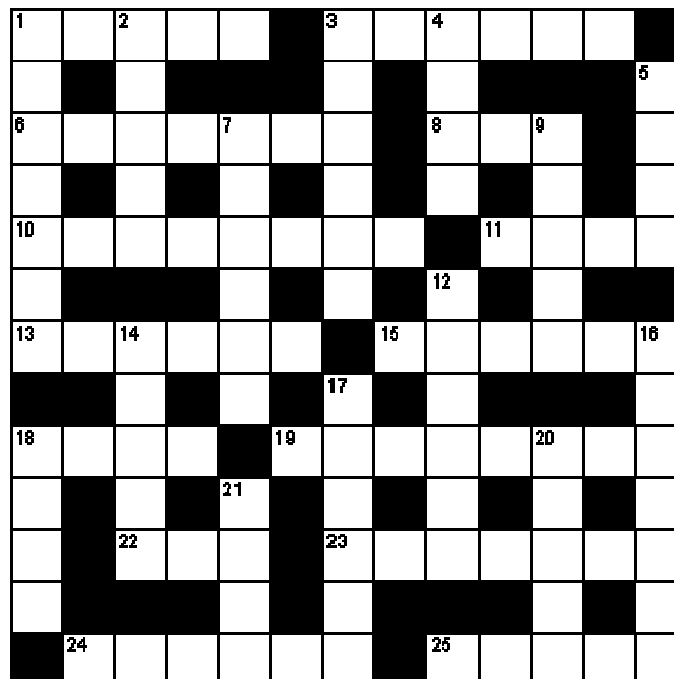
*Michele Mabe, Director of Educational Services
Johnston Memorial Hospital, Abingdon, VA*

***Both Articles are from Communication Bulletin for Managers and Supervisors**

A cryptogram is a code made by substituting a different letter for each letter of the alphabet. In a particular code, for example, the l's might be replaced by j's, & the j's might be replaced by b's. Every letter is usually changed, & a different code is used for each problem. I encourage you to use any reference materials you think might help on the following 20 cryptograms. Be aware that some of the puzzles may take a while to solve, so don't get frustrated - only a true cryptographer could decipher more than 10 of them! Many of the cryptograms were made using famous (and sometimes humorous) sayings, proverbs, adages & maxims. Have fun!

1. Hsen owsj sud, zq't erkvzkwtj; hsen owsj qas, zq't wdtdkwhp.
2. Y zyufa cbhvxa cw rna oawr uahcqa ivu nyqqcbaww C alau nayuj vi.
3. Jk cwjv sqzhe, kqcwjpk jv lozcmjk txc eomcw mke cmfov.
4. Kqozy kfq vzzx hq rz zmius kahf ozy sulx uorahaqy.

Themed Crossword – 01



Across

1. Fruit (5)
3. Retail food seller (6)
6. Italian rice (7)
8. Consume (5)
10. Type of lobster (8)
11. Used to season and preserve food (4)
13. Sampled (6)
15. Pestle and ____ (6)
18. Aromatic leaves (4)
19. Thick syrup (8)
22. Cereal grass (3)
23. Pear-shaped tropical fruit (7)
24. Type of cake (6)
25. Very thin pancake (5)

Down

1. Downy fruit (7)
2. Shaped and dried dough (5)
3. Game bird (6)
4. Kitchen appliance (4)
5. Open pastry with fruit filling (4)
7. Sticky candy (6)
9. Heated bread (5)
12. Edible tuber (6)
14. Sweetner (5)
16. Cooked meat or fish coated in egg and breadcrumbs and fried (7)
17. Thick soup (6)
18. Cook slowly in liquid (4)
20. Large edible ray (5)
21. Vegetable (4)

SAVE THE DATE

Christmas Party Details to date...

The Christmas Party will be held at

San Luis Hotel
5222 Seawall Blvd
Galveston, TX 77551
409-744-8452

On
December 20th 2008

The price for the Party will be \$55 per person.
Rob Shumate has secured us a rate of \$69 per Room for those who want to stay overnight.

We are trying to get group rates to have an outing on Sunday to Moody Gardens and maybe The Aquarium. Additional Prices and further details to follow.

Upcoming Meetings

DATES

November 20th
December 20th
January 15th
February 19th
March 20th

PLACES

St. Regis Hotel
San Luis-Galveston
Open
Open
Open

SPEAKERS

Carolyn Davis
Xmas Party
Open
Open
Open

We are still in need of venues and speakers.

Please contact:

Bret Myers for Venues 713-465-8381, bmyers@houstoncc.com

Amy Cheng for Speakers 713-577-6003, amy_cheng@hilton.com