

SOCIAL OUTING SPOTLIGHT

Wine Tasting Fun!

By Kim Panzuto

The WHA Wine Tasting Social, the first of its kind for WHA, was held on October 24, 2009. This wine tasting event gave members and guests the opportunity to network with colleagues and learn how to officially taste wine at Vinatero Wine Shop, a two-time My Fox LA's Hotlist winner, located in historic downtown Whittier. (www.VinateroWineShop.com)

While applying the "5-S method" (see, swirl, smell, and swallow or spit), the group tasted several different wines including Etz Gruner Veltiner, Tres Sabores Sauvignon Blanc, Trinitas Chardonnay, Suited Sangiovese, Arceno Primavoce and Corison Cabernet Sauvignon. I personally enjoyed the Trinitas Chardonnay and would recommend it to anyone, particularly someone like myself who is not always fond of the rich and buttery Chardonnay.

All wines were enjoyed in an intimate and friendly atmosphere with select meats and a few different delicious cheeses such as Humboldt fog, Spanish Manchego and drunken goat.

During the tasting, the sommelier spoke about well-known women wine makers, including Julie Johnson, creator of the Tres Sabores Sauvignon Blanc and Cathy Corison, creator of the Corison Cabernet Sauvignon, noting their accomplishments and contributions related to the world of wine. ☒



Diane Ung and Monica Waggoner learn about the 5-S's of wine tasting.



Attendees network at the Vinatero Wine Shop



Ada Clark enjoys a glass of wine while perusing the day's tasting menu.

PLEASE JOIN US

Meet the 2010 WHA Board

SATURDAY, JANUARY 30, 2010

WEST LOS ANGELES, CA

11:00AM – 2:00PM NETWORKING/HORS D'OEUVRES

Contact Michelle at mtui@ca.rr.com for more information.

SEPTEMBER 2009 EVENT

A Panel Discussion For Students: Postgraduate Careers

By Tuoya Bao

The one goal that every student aims to achieve upon graduation is finding “the job.” That is no surprise – the challenge is HOW. On Friday, September 18th, WHA assembled a panel of early careerists from various parts of the industry to share the paths they took and participate in a question-and-answer session on career, lifestyle, and skills needed to make the transition from academic student to valuable employee. This student-g geared event brought more than 40 people ranging from undergraduates, graduate-school students, and recent post-graduates.

The six panelists presiding over the panel discussion and Q & A session were: 1) Ling Kung, MBA - Business Consulting Lead with Kaiser Permanente; 2) Suzanne Yu, MHA - Project Manager with Facey Medical Foundation; 3) Vicky Tai, MHA - Business Systems Analyst with Cedars-Sinai Medical Center; 4) Ada Clark, MPH - Administrative Officer with VA Long Beach Healthcare System; 5) Noor Ahmed, MPH - Consultant with PriceWaterhouseCoopers; and 6) Amy Wittig with HealthNet. One of the key themes throughout the discussion is that knowledge and experience is not only important to a successful job hunt, but is also an essential component to your future career success. Below are some notes from the questions and answers that were posed during the lively session.

1. How can we get to where we want, from where we are now?

Amy answered: “learning happens not only from school, but also from work places. Networking is important.” Another tip Ada shared was to look into various fellowship programs that accept newly graduated students. These types of positions often allow students to rotate through different departments throughout the company. Suzanne added that, in the short term, internships are valuable opportunities to both network and gain experience. Ling reminded the students to remember that passion(s) are often triggered by your interest and experiences. “Your first job is not your last job. It’s always a journey.” At the end of the day,

it is no surprise that each panelist promotes the idea of giving 120% or more to accelerate your job!

2. What are the benefits of attending a Master’s program?

The panelists seem to agree that going through a master’s program is a way to “speed up” your career. Postgraduate programs help accelerate the learning of terminology and the healthcare “lingo” and set you apart from other candidates. “Going through an advanced program will benefit you more than you can imagine” said Noor with enthusiasm. In regards to whether students should choose to start a Master’s program or work first, Vicky suggested that it does not need to be either/or; rather a student can successfully do both! “Many programs offer evening and weekend courses so you can do a part-time job while your classes are not in session.” As many students are aware, it is all about balancing your time and energy!

3. What skills do you need in the workforce that you do not learn in your Master’s program?

“People skills!” Ling responded. “You will be working with co-workers from a variety of backgrounds including physicians and nurses. Most importantly, the skill of managing up is critical, but is not something you learn in lectures.” Suzanne added that hard skills like mastering MS Excel, PowerPoint, Visio, Access, etc. are critical and should be easy to achieve especially as students. Try to learn as many shortcuts as you can! Ada added “being resourceful, such as looking for best practices, browsing current articles, and building relationship with others” are practical skills that you will need regardless of the position you take.

4. How has the economy affected your organization?

Although each panelist admitted to seeing cost cutting over the past year, many seem to still be fiscally strong. Amy acknowledged that there are new hiring opportu-

SEPTEMBER 2009 EVENT (CONT'D FROM PAGE 2)**... Panel Discussion**

nities in insurance side. Suzanne mentioned Facey is cutting costs along with the industry, but has been fortunate to be “financially healthy the past few years and looking toward future growth.”

5. What publications do you recommend to encourage further reading?

- American College of Health Executives magazine/online
- Kaiser Family Foundation
- Modern Healthcare
- California HealthCare Foundation
- Health Leaders Media ✕

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Please remember to send in your WHA ballot for the 2010 WHA Board!

Thank you!

WHA would love to hear from you!

Please let us know of any important news in your lives, ideas for events and activities, book reviews, articles, etc. Better yet, get involved and lend your talent and ideas by joining one of the WHA committees!

WHA Scholarship Application for 2010 Now Available

WHA is pleased to announce a competitive scholarship award of \$1,500 for 2010.

The scholarship will be awarded to a full-time graduate student in the first or second year of studies who is currently enrolled in a public health or health administration degree program in a California college or university accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. In addition, the scholarship recipient will be given a one-year student membership in WHA.

Scholarship applications must be postmarked no later than January 31, 2010.

For more information and the scholarship application, go to www.womeninhealthadministration.com, and select the “Scholarship” link on the left side of the page.

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ARTICLE: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Writing Effective Employee Evaluations

By Marie Bouvier, WordSculpture

For many managers, writing employee evaluations is one of the hardest parts of the job. I recently worked with a manager who was an entire *year* behind on writing employee evaluations. “It was beyond writer’s block,” he said. “I couldn’t seem to put my thoughts on paper.”

Fortunately, a few simple tips helped him get started—and got him better prepared to write future evaluations. Follow these steps to create more effective evaluations for your employees.

Step One: Evaluate the work, not the worker.

Because you work with your staff every day, it can be hard to distance yourself enough to write a truly effective evaluation, particularly when there are performance issues. This is where a great deal of management-level writer’s block begins.

First, go back to that employee’s job description or previous year’s evaluation. Then ask yourself, “If I were a consultant coming into this workplace for the first time, would this staff person meet the criteria for the job?”

Utilize the job criteria to begin writing your evaluation. You might want to list them as bullet points, then write some factual information about how that employee did or did not meet each of the criteria.

Use analytical, not subjective, language to explain each of your points. Then add anecdotal information from that employee’s performance to illustrate your analysis. This creates the framework for your evaluation.

Step Two: Set measurable goals. Be specific.

An effective employee evaluation is more than just a report card. It provides a clear path for an employee to determine what is being done well, what needs to be corrected, and how to accomplish those goals. Being specific on all points is critical to achieving those changes.

Be clear about what was accomplished—and what still needs to be done. Set goals, and offer constructive ad-

vice on how to achieve them. Create deadlines and expectations. The more clear and concrete you are, the more helpful the evaluation will be.

Build the goals and guidelines into the framework of your evaluation. Remember to be as specific in praise as you are in correction. Employees want to know that this is not just a form, but a recognition of their efforts all year.

Step Three: Create simple progress tracking.

As you plan for future evaluations, don’t rely on your memory or on a formal employee file for a year’s worth of information on each employee. Instead, create a simple method of tracking each employee’s progress all year long.

Develop a tracking system that works with the way you work. Make a quick note on your calendar when you speak to an employee about performance (good or bad). Start a new email folder for each staff member, and drag copies of relevant emails to that folder throughout the year. Work smarter, not harder, and employee evaluations will be easier to write next year.

Effective employee evaluations can lead to better bottom line results, increasing your division’s productivity and improving morale. By following these three steps, you’ll be on your way to creating employee evaluations that generate real results for your employees and for you as a manager. ☒

*Marie Bouvier is a professional business writer and editor with WordSculpture. She has extensive experience with resume writing and job searches. For more information, visit www.wordsculpture.com. **Mention WHA for a 25% discount off all services.***

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FEATURED ARTICLE

Building and Managing Geographically Dispersed Teams

By Cathy Bolger, Ph.D.

"My biggest frustrations in working as part of a remote team are the lack of trust, accountability to others, and lack of working toward a common goal."—Member of geographically dispersed team

Similar challenges are found managing and building both co-located and geographically dispersed teams—only dispersed teams require more management and communication, and they often get less.

If the research from Rainmakerthinking, Inc., an international consulting firm, is correct about the epidemic of undermanagement, the effectiveness of dispersed teams is open to questions. Indeed, results of a study conducted by Rainmakerthinking, Inc. reported in a keynote speech by founder Bruce Tulgan, included a lack of:

- Clear performance parameters and deadlines.
- Accurate monitoring of performance.
- Feedback and guidance.
- Fair distribution of rewards/detriments.

So what must dispersed team members do to make sure they are involved in a team that is high performing? When compiling "lessons learned" from a dispersed team, team expert Rita Sterling of Sterling Insights found the following to be important to success:

- Clear expectations of the lead
- Shared view of what the project should look like
- Clarity about each person's role in completion of the project
- Adequate time commitments from each member
- Agreed upon norms around communication

According to the research of John Adams, PhD, Director of the Organizational Systems Program at Saybrook, in order to be high performing, dispersed teams must be customer-centric, and must include members committed to common, clear, agreed on guidelines, roles and responsibilities. Adams also found high team spirit, including trust and respect to be important.

The authors of *The Distance Manager* also believe that one of the keys to the success of a dispersed team is members who stay well connected. The foundation for staying connected is an agreement on how and how often to communicate. This would include an awareness of the preferences of individual team members, email, voice, telephone, written word, etc.

In addition, most resources cited the importance of the startup to the success of the team. According to the authors of *The Distance Manager*, "Perhaps no other factor is as critical to a dispersed team's long-term success as a good start-up." It is highly desirable that the startup be created with all members present, in person.

Outcomes of an effective startup would include a clear mission

statement, team norms, clear roles and responsibilities, and the beginning of building rapport and trust among members. Rita Sterling, team expert mentioned above, emphasizes the importance of rapport building. She believes one way to improve rapport is to find ways team members can discover commonality. One possibility is to place all team members' profiles online. In addition to name, work location, job overview and background/expertise, these profiles could include needs and interests.

Telecommuting expert, Maggi Payment of the Center for WorkTime Options in San Diego, reminds us that not only is effective management crucial to all teams, and especially dispersed or virtual teams, effective "Managing Up" is also crucial. In other words, everyone has to try harder at clarifying roles, responsibilities and expectations, both the team lead and the team members.

To improve "Managing Up," Payment suggests "people who don't see the boss often, if ever, need to make sure they keep the boss informed of their progress on the priorities they have agreed on." Payment continues, a good approach to training the boss to increase trust is to use weekly updates called 15/5. Take 15 minutes at the end of the week to write out what you accomplished on each priority, what challenges you foresee, what you need from your boss (and by what date) and anything else the boss should know. Distill the information to only take five minutes of the boss's time. At the end of the five-minute update, ask if there is something else the boss needs to tell you.

The team member quoted at the beginning of the article suggests, "Managers need to be proactive—keep open the lines of communication and make the team a priority. Everyone on the team needs to be accountable to each other. Everyone needs to be working towards the common goal. Regular meetings should be scheduled for updates and team building, usually via teleconference, but quarterly in-person meetings should also take place.

More and more of the team members we coach and train are members of geographically dispersed teams. With the added challenge of different time zones, cultures, and ways of doing things, the skills trainers teach are essential to high performance of teams. ☒

Fisher, Kimball and Maureen Duncan Fisher. *The Distance Manager*. McGraw-Hill, 2001.

Jude-York et al. *Virtual Teaming*. Crisp Publications, 2000.

Kossler, Michael E. and Sonya Prestridge. *Leading Dispersed Teams*, Center for Creative Leadership, 2004.

Cathy Bolger is a San Diego-based consultant specializing in Presentation, Meeting and Conflict Management skills. She can be reached at Cathy@CathyBolger.com.

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**Social Networking with WHA**

Be sure to join our groups to receive the latest events updates and to network with fellow members.

Directions to Join

Facebook: Select 'Groups' on home page -> Type in 'WHA' in the 'Search for Groups' box -> Select 'WHA' -> Select 'Join This Group'

LinkedIn: Select 'Groups' on home page -> Select 'Group Directory' -> Type in 'WHA' in the 'Search Groups' box -> Select 'WHA' -> Select 'Join This Group'

**MEMBERS ON THE MOVE
& NEW MEMBERS****New Members**

Noor Jehan Ahmed is a Healthcare Consultant at PricewaterhouseCoopers LLC.

Claudia Alvidrez is a student at CSULB and a surgery scheduler at St Joseph's Hospital.

Leah Anderson is Purchasing Manager/Pomona Valley Hospital and a Student La Verne University.

Jennifer Anwar is a student at USC

Zabina Bhasin is VP of New Initiatives at Health Talent/NIPINC.

Eleanor Chen is a student at USC.

Grace Chiang is Project Manager at Kaiser Permanente.

Amanda Diaz is an Associate at PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Erin Elarton is a Manager, Physician Practice Growth at DaVita

Maureen Fernando is a student at CSUN.

Angela Fong is a student at CSUN.

Brenda Freshman is an Assistant Professor at Cal State Univ Long Beach.

Kellie Gonzales is a Business Change Manager at Anthem Blue Cross.

Sharona Jarrahan Shephalie Lahri is a student at USC.

is a student at CSUN.

Joanna Jurich is a student at USC.

Elizabeth Kabanyanis is an Officer Manager/UHC, Inc. and a Student at CSUN.

Mariam Memon is an Insurance Verification Rep/American Med Response and a student at CSULB.

Mary Narguizian is a student at USC.

Lily Huynh Hoa Nguyen is a student at CSULB.

Christine Oriel is a student at CSULB.

Ashwini Parmar is a student at CSULB.

Natalie Rincon is a Project Manager, Operations at Healthcare Partners Medical Group.

Sarah Rinn is a student at CSULB.

Indu Bulbul Sanwal is a Business Analyst II at RAND.

Valerie Zapanta is a student at Univ. of La Verne and an Office Supervisor at Eastside Orthopedic Med Assoc.

Kristina Ziegler is a student at CSULB.

Virginia St. Amant is a new WHA Member.

Melissa Chiles is a student at CSULB.

Members on the Move

Melissa Biel is now Principal at Biel Consulting.

Janice Marcus is now Director of Reimbursement at Sinaiko Healthcare Consulting, Inc.

Simran Sahny is now Project Manager III at Kaiser Permanente, Delivery System Strategy.

Deborah Salas is now Association VP, Claims Projects & Configuration at Molina Healthcare, Inc.

Debbie Walsh has taken over as CEO of Fountain Valley Regional Hospital and Medical Center.